

Top Tips for Community Artists when collaborating with Higher Education Institutions and Research Centres

A quick resource guide generated by UCLanDance alumni of
*MA Dance & Somatic Wellbeing: Connections to the Living
Body*

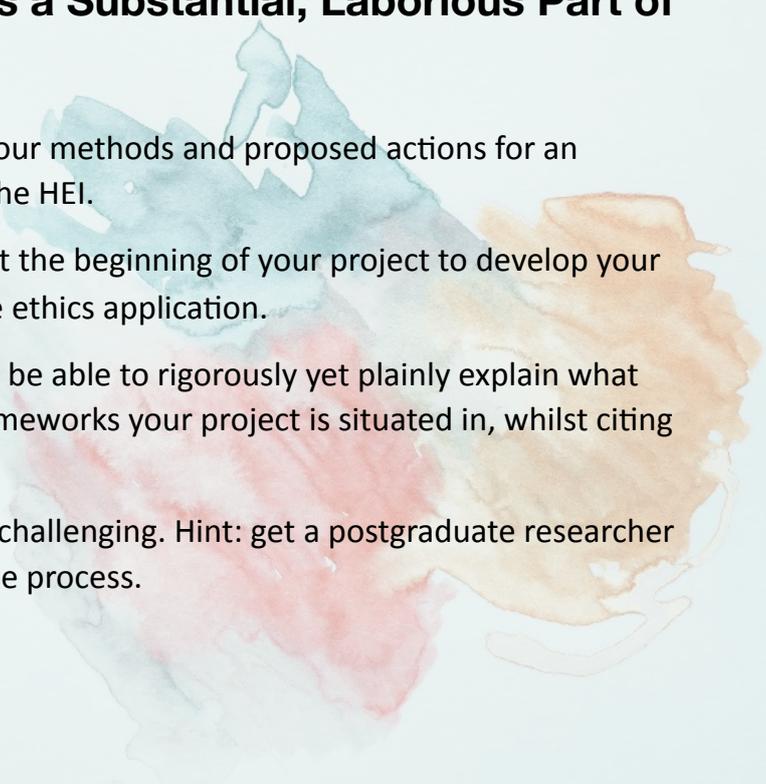
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This document outlines the experience gained through a seed academic research project by a collective of alumni community dance artists from the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) in association with THRIVE (a UCLan research centre), Dance Consortia North West and the Creative Practice Research Academy. These insights will be useful for community artists of all disciplines who intend to collaborate with higher education institutions (referred to as HEI) and any research centres they are affiliated with.

First, Factor in plenty of Time

- Find out all the necessary additional research procedures you will need e.g. funding approval, ethics approval, compulsory/legal training, accessing software, to generate a realistic timeline for your project.
- Add some contingency time on top if you can! Things will take longer than you planned.

Gaining Ethics Approval is a Substantial, Laborious Part of Your Project

- An ethics application lays out your methods and proposed actions for an academic research enquiry to the HEI.
 - Ensure there is plenty of time at the beginning of your project to develop your methodology and complete the ethics application.
 - Academic boards expect you to be able to rigorously yet plainly explain what theoretical/methodological frameworks your project is situated in, whilst citing evidence for its need.
 - Gaining ethics approval can be challenging. Hint: get a postgraduate researcher onboard who is familiar with the process.
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When Recruiting Participants and Delivering Your Project...

- Building trust with others to recruit participants takes time. Plan a year ahead when working with community providers, as short-term responses and support are hard to find. Many organisations have long timelines and little flexibility in staff time and resources for urgent ideas.
- When co-creating with others ensure you have research and development time built into your timeline that reflects the level of inquiry proposed in your methodology. This could allow for themes/threads of enquiry to emerge which artist-researchers can integrate and use for the next stage or session in the project.

When Evaluating and Disseminating your Findings...

- Leave an appropriate amount of time at the end to digest and reflect on your project.
- Robust methods of capturing the process and data throughout will aid in generating your collective and individual research outputs at the end of the project. Journal entries, visual/audio recordings, artworks and any participant feedback/interviews can all be used in your evaluative processes and reporting/sharing (with author consent).
- Be creative with your research outputs, think outside the box! The research world is now keen to include multimedia and non-literary forms of outputs that engage multiple audiences. For example, as well as doing reports for our funders we also held an informal symposium sharing day featuring talks, participatory activities that included a somatic dance workshop, a photography exhibition, and a short film.

About Us

*“Movement Matters:
Moving Together
Through Somatic Dance
In the First 1001 Days of
Life”*



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