



Philanthropists' responses to the COVID pandemic

During the pandemic, we saw a number of new initiatives emerge to support the arts and culture sector. Whilst NPAC was not established to seek contributions itself, nor is it planned that a new fund is created, we wanted nonetheless to learn from proactive examples of new philanthropy and extrapolate from these experiences to identify opportunities to attract new philanthropy into the arts and culture sector.

Between March and April 2021, desk research and interviews were carried out into a number of high-profile philanthropic responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. More details of the philanthropic responses reviewed are set out at the end of this report. Some of these initiatives attempted to bring in new support outside traditional sector supporters; what they all had in common was their response to an unprecedented situation, be it funds for new ways of working as we emerge from the pandemic or emergency support for those whose careers and livelihoods are at risk. We wanted to learn more about their success or otherwise, both to help us identify new philanthropy in the future and to share learning.

The key findings from our research are as follows:

- **New fundraising initiatives:** several new initiatives to support the arts and culture sector emerged during the first twelve months of the pandemic; each mobilised donations through setting out a clear cause, be it artists who had lost work, an art form in danger or arts organisations in financial peril.
- **Success of matched funding:** several matched funding programmes were launched including:
 - The Theatrical Guild's campaign to support people working backstage and front of house in theatres who fell between the gaps of available government support, with £40,000 matched funding provided by Sir Ian McKellen; over £100,000 was raised in total.
 - The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment's Regeneration Appeal enabled the OAE to evolve to a new operational model as a result of the impact of COVID, Brexit and the ongoing climate crisis. Matched funding of £150,000 was provided by three key donors; £260,000 was raised in the first month.
- **Donations of all sizes:** the broader campaigns, such as the Theatrical Guild raised donations ranging from £5 to £3,500. And the Genesis Kickstart Fund is open for anyone to donate online using the donation platform Enthuse, with suggested amounts ranging from £50 to £5,000. This fund of one million pounds creates opportunities for creative professionals that wouldn't otherwise be possible due to the impact of Covid and, to date, 60 grants have been made supporting over 680 freelancers.
- **A personal approach:** In several examples a personal approach was particularly successful
 - For example, Tina Vadeneaux, Founder of the new Continuo Foundation individually approached all donors to the fund, which aims to support and preserve period instrument ensembles. To date over £250,000 has been raised and distributed to 37 grantee organisations

- **Creation of new donors:** Many arts organisations across the country faced cancelled performances: they turned to their audience for support, encouraging ticket buyers to donate the value of their tickets. Legislation was passed to enable tax relief to be claimed on these donations. For example:
 - Grange Park Opera raised over £150,000 from 818 ticket donors, the newly named *Pandemicists*
 - Lighthouse, Poole's Centre for the Arts, raised £13,600 in the first two weeks of its closure, with 23% of audiences donating the full price of their ticket and 16% making a partial donation
 - Data from ticketing company Spektrix revealed that two-thirds of customers donated the value of tickets for cancelled events. [Source Arts Professional, 24/3/20]

- **Power of celebrity:** a number of campaigns were spearheaded by celebrity patrons. For example:
 - Theatrical Guild: Sir Ian McKellen donated £40,000 in matched funding to support front and back of house theatre staff who had lost work and not received support.
 - The Theatre Artists Fund, set up by Sam Mendes to support theatre professionals whose livelihoods were threatened by the impact of COVID, has raised more than £7 million (although this includes funding from various trusts and foundations, Arts Council England and Netflix)

- **New models for philanthropy:** a number of new models for philanthropy have emerged:
 - The Theatre Community Fund has raised donations from successful theatre professionals to support those less fortunate; this appeal has raised over £1 million.
 - Sound and Music's *Music Patron* is creating a new model to connect individual philanthropists directly with the composers they would like to support. Initial funding to develop the platform is being provided by the Boltini Foundation.
 - The Achatas Philanthropy Prize changed its format, switching from a competitive model to one that shared case studies of good practice in the way that arts and cultural organisations have responded to the needs of their communities in these difficult times, and how their communities have responded to this work, demonstrating the many ways that the arts create value.

- **Support for artists:** a number of initiatives were created to provide support for freelance artists who lost all their income to the pandemic. In addition to the theatrical models mentioned above, a number of Trusts and Foundations moved quickly to make funds available including the Musicians Benevolent Fund, the Musicians Union, and the Genesis Foundation
 - The RPS Enterprise Fund was created in 2020 to provide funds to help classical musicians develop new skills and devise new ways to showcase their talent in response to the lack of live performance opportunities, with grants totalling over £200,000 made to 87 recipients.
 - Help Musicians launched a £5m Coronavirus Financial Hardship Fund to provide immediate financial relief to musicians. This fund was inundated with requests for support, with four phases of funding announced over the following year. By April 2021, Help Musicians had delivered £15.5m to over 21,000 musicians across the UK.

- **Emergency support:** a number of major funders including Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Paul Hamlyn Foundation and the Clore Duffield Foundation all made emergency grants available to existing grantees. Arts Council England distributed £160 million of Emergency Funding to organisations and individuals. The Garfield

Weston Foundation created the £30 million Weston Culture Fund to support arts organisations as they began to recover; this fund was more than 4 times over subscribed. The government's Culture Recovery Fund, administered by Arts Council England, has to date provided £849 million of investment to support arts and cultural organisations impacted by the pandemic.

Conclusions

These initiatives demonstrate a number of common themes:

- In each case a clear cause was created to mobilise support, be it artists who had lost work, an artistic genre in peril or a specific organisation which was in significant need of help
- The power of celebrity has been seen to drive public engagement and additional gifts, although it is not essential to a successful campaign
- Matched funding has been seen to be an effective way of generating new support (and encouraging donations of all sizes)
- The flexibility of donors, particularly trusts and foundations, to allow recipient organisations to spend funds on their core costs was notable and welcomed by recipients

The pandemic revealed structural vulnerabilities in funding models for arts organisations. Most arts organisations face a challenge each year to raise private funding which will bridge the gap between costs and the primary sources of funding – public funders and earned income. The pandemic hugely reduced earned income and, in many of the cases we researched, reduced philanthropic support from individuals. A huge number of arts and cultural organisations were kept alive only through public support from both general schemes and the Cultural Recovery funds. There is a need to move from a model which focuses on annual fundraising to bridge a funding gap, to models which encourage investment to help build both longer term sustainability and a sustained impact on people's lives.

The philanthropic responses outlined above were instrumental in supporting the sector and its freelancers. However, as the economy and society start to open up, it will be important for organisations to rebuild with a more sustainable longer-term model, and to demonstrate the positive impact they can have on people's lives.

As we emerge from the pandemic, we have an opportunity to work differently. As arts organisations adapt their operating models, so existing models of philanthropy need to evolve to enable new ways of giving and for a new generation of philanthropists to emerge.

Summary of philanthropic initiatives reviewed:

ORGANISATION	PHILANTHROPIC INITIATIVE
Achates	Achates Philanthropy Prize: celebrating and sharing the stories of first-time supporters of arts and culture
Continuo Foundation	Raising funds to make grants to UK-based period instrument ensembles, creating work for freelance musicians whose careers are at risk due to Covid-19
Department for Culture, Media & Sport	Culture Recovery Fund: administered by Arts Council England to support the cultural, heritage and creative sectors to survive, recover from, and reopen following the pandemic.
Major funders (Arts Council England, Esmée Fairbairn, Garfield Weston, Paul Hamlyn, and Clore Duffield Foundations)	Emergency response funding for organisations facing significant impact and strain during the pandemic
Genesis Foundation	Genesis Kickstart Fund: providing one million pounds in funding to support outstanding freelance talent in the creative sector in the UK
Grange Park Opera	The Pandemicists: asking ticket buyers to donate the price of their tickets rather than request a credit note or refund, to support GPO's artistic community and central costs
Help Musicians	Coronavirus Financial Hardship Fund: for musicians experiencing significant financial hardship as a result of the pandemic
Sound and Music	Music Patron: a new online platform to connect composers directly with donors
Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment	Regeneration Appeal: a matched funding appeal to support the organisation as it evolves to a new operational model as a result of the impact of Covid, Brexit and the ongoing climate crisis
Royal Philharmonic Society	Enterprise Fund: to help performers of classical music develop their skill set and devise new ways to showcase their talent, in light of the pandemic
The Theatrical Guild	A matched funding campaign in partnership with Sir Ian McKellen to support people working in backstage and front of house positions in theatres who had fallen between the gaps for available government support.
Theatre Artists Fund	Set-up by Sam Mendes with headline corporate supporters, grant funding and individual support (including general public) to provide grants of £1,000 towards living costs for those in the theatre community most impacted by the pandemic
Theatre Community Fund	Set-up by theatre industry professionals who have made a lump sum donation and committed to paying a set percentage of earnings over the following two years (not asking for support from general public) to support theatrical artists and professionals whose livelihoods have been impacted by the pandemic