MAPPING THE TERRITORY 2

A ROUND TABLE FOR THE MUSEUMS, ARTS AND FORMAL EDUCATION SECTORS WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE HELD AT IMMA 29 MAY 2007

THE ARK, A CULTURAL CENTRE FOR CHILDREN_THE HERITAGE COUNCIL_ IRISH MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Background to Mapping the Territory 2

This event and the following brief report demonstrate the need for an active network to harness, and support, the growing sector of arts and cultural practitioners that are engaging with the formal education sectors. This sector has grown exponentially over the past twenty years and is supported on an ad hoc basis from county to county or from organisation to organisation.

The quality of engagement between the arts, cultural, museum, and education sectors is reflected in the development of new practices and structures that support these groups in individual situations. There are many successful networks allowing for, and encouraging, a sharing of resources and ideas. Increasingly however, as the widespread support for these events has shown, there is a need for an overarching framework to support and maintain these engagements and the professionals involved. A network that actively engages with the concerns of the sectors could deepen the experience of the profession and develop the quality of creative partnerships.

Such a network would be available as a support mechanism for those charged with formulating national policy in these areas. A co-ordinated network and an operational framework would serve all partners, ensuring the effective delivery and sustainability of good arts, cultural, heritage and education, as well as in education, experiences for all children and young people in Ireland.

Mapping the Territory 2 was organised by The Ark, A Cultural Centre for Children, Irish Museum of Modern Art and the Heritage Council, with the support of a steering group, comprising Sarah Bannan (Irish Film Institute), Michael Finneran (Mary Immaculate College of Education, Limerick), Mary Manley (Primary Curriculum Support Programme),

and Karan Thompson (Independent Consultant). We are very grateful for their support in the planning of this event.

Hugh Maguire — The Heritage Council

Eina McHugh —
The Ark, A Cultural Centre for Children

Helen O'Donoghue — Irish Museum of Modern Art The purpose of the *Mapping the Territory* round table was to explore the feasibility of a national art and education network as a means to progressing the medium-term recommendations set out in the report on *Mapping the Territory 1* held in October 2006. These recommendations were:

- Arrange other meetings along the Mapping the Territory model. There is a real need for more conversations to take place - intrasectorally (particularly within the museums sector), inter-sectorally and at a local and national level.
- Organise some kind of "show and tell" where new sectors can get a sense of good practice and see it in practice.
- Appropriate network/advocacy support models should be investigated (e.g. Theatre Forum); a plan developed and funding sought from key stakeholders to support it. There was no appetite for attempts at networking without personnel dedicated to the task and funding to support it.
- Make a submission to the new recreation policy to be published by the Office of the Minister for Children.

The round table day was organised as a response to recommendation 3 above with funding provided by the Arts Council, IMMA and the Heritage Council. 54 delegates attended coming from a diverse range of backgrounds and contexts. There was a higher proportional attendance of artists and arts organisations, as compared to people representing the education and museums sectors. The early morning consisted of the following inputs:

- _ Introduction to the theme of networking from John Coolahan, Professor Emeritus, National University of Ireland, Maynooth.
- Keynote address from Kaija Kaitavuori, Head of Development at the Art Museum Development Department, KEHYS, in Finland and President of

the Association of Finnish Museum Educators.

Two network case studies:

- A 21 year-old network presented by Deirdre McCrea, Director of Music Network.
- _ A 4 year-old network presented by Tania Banotti, Chief Executive of Theatre Forum.

The rest of the day consisted of two workshops run in parallel with four groups of approximately 20 people in each. These were professionally facilitated by Susan Coughlan, Orla Moloney, June Meehan and Majella Perry. The format used to structure the workshops was the following:

- Establish what motivated people to attend.
- Find out what networks participants were currently involved in that worked across the arts, museums and education sectors.
- Identify people's experiences of networking activities and the likely benefits and drawbacks.
- Discuss what participants found to be most useful or relevant from the speakers' presentations.
- Identify the current context for networking across the sectors and the key challenges that apply.
- Explore potential models and define networking needs.
- Discuss possible ways forward and recommendations.

This report is compiled using feedback from each of the workshops written up by rapporteurs Muireann Ahern, Sarah Bannan, Helen Barry and Mags Walsh. The purpose of this report is to is to be faithful to what was discussed but also to synthesise and order the information in a constructive way. The format follows the same structure as that applied to the workshops. The material generated from the day echoed many

Overview Terminology Motivation for attending

of the opinions from the previous event in October and reflected the degree to which issues are interdependent and complex.

A very high level of awareness of networking issues and difficulties and general wisdom of how networking and networks do (or often don't) work in practice was evident on the day. A number of participants reflected that, in the past, many network projects or efforts have failed. It seemed that attempts at establishing networks in the past have been dogged by lack of finance and often been dominated by a few individuals rather than a broad based collaboration of a diverse range of members. Participants across all the sectors reported a sense of optimism that the time might now be right for this to change as there is greater awareness of the necessary conditions for successful networking and collaboration.

Although it was coincidental, the timing of the round table dovetailed with what many participants, at the time, thought would be the imminent publication of the report from the Special Advisory Committee on Arts and Education, as appointed by the Department of Education and Science and the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism. Professor Coolahan referred to draft recommendations from the Committee in his introductory address, which outlined networks and collaboration as an area of importance, including at an all-Ireland level.

Understanding of networks and networking

While the theme of the round table was specifically to look at setting up a network, the conversation in the workshops focused on a wider understanding of networks and networking. In all of the workshop groups the focus tended to be on networking in its broadest sense, i.e. making connections between people.

Formal and informal networks In general the idea of formal networking (e.g. network organisations) and informal networking (e.g. partnerships on the ground) were presented or considered as mutually exclusive. Kaija Kaitavuori described the two as complementary and part of a continuum where informal networking and collaborations arise more easily when supported by a formal network. There was considerable interest in the idea of a formal networking structure. What became clear was that a range of complementary networking actions are required.

Cross-sectoral networking and the inclusion of the museums sector There were fewer participants representing the museums sector in the discussions and much of the content in the presentations related to networking in the context of arts and education (though Kaija Kaitavuori referred to heritage and culture in her presentation). Therefore, what was most often inferred in the term 'cross-sectoral' networking was networking between the arts and formal education sectors. The general view was that it is important that museums continue to be part of the cross-sectoral networking discussion but that this sector is at an earlier stage of development in its education and community work than the arts sector. Many workshop participants strongly advocated the inclusion of the non-formal education sector in the discussion and in future activities, believing that separating these areas would lead to restricted impact and relevance overall.

Participants' motivations for attending the day were extremely diverse. In general most people's reasons were:

- To meet others
- To be less isolated and more connected
- _ To learn from others and see the bigger picture
- To develop cross-sectoral networking

The importance of face-to-face communication, in preference over other forms, was stated many times and a high value placed on events such as Mapping the Territory 2. The issue of isolation was consistently mentioned across the workshop groups. For individual artists, facilitators and consultants, the sense of isolation from organisations and more mainstream networks is still acute. For education curators and outreach workers within organisations and institutions, isolation and a sense of not being professionally valued was an equally important issue. Therefore, there was strong evidence that such individuals are motivated now, and will be in the future, to network (many attended at their own expense).

Participants identified what they perceived to be a changing landscape in the area of arts, education and culture, which they believed might enable more partnerships and joined up thinking to take place. Having said this, there were many who expressed concerns based on their past experiences of networking. In particular, the fear that the cross-sectoral network agenda might prove to be too broad, thus making it too difficult to establish a focus.

Some of the more strategic and developmental motivations given for attending were as follows:

- To research the potential for collaboration between the sectors
- To examine how networking can be expanded across sectors
- To discuss the challenges of funding and presenting the work externally — what are the games that we have to play and at what cost?
- To get a sense of best practice with children and young people
- To discuss ways to integrate the arts into the teaching environment and how to transmit and relay this to colleagues
- To continue the conversations from Mapping the Territory 1 about how to be more strategic in terms of individual projects
- _ To promote policy development in the arts-ineducation and education through the arts both in the formal and non-formal sector
- To see how we can work better together activities are disconnected
- To explore organisation roles in the changing context of arts and education networking
- _ To pick up ideas from other networks
- _ To disseminate information about what we do

Networks that participants are involved in

Participants' experience of networking

Participants were asked to name cross-sectoral or sectoral networks that they are currently, or have been, involved in. These have been categorised below in an attempt to build a picture of existing network activity. It is acknowledged that this is not a comprehensive list and only reflects what arose within the discussions on the day. Even though many of the arts networks named have an education focus, their membership is generally arts based.

Area: Arts

- Education Curators Partnership (Involving Model and Niland Gallery, Sligo; Lewis Glucksman Gallery, Cork; Hugh Lane Dublin City Gallery; Butler Gallery, Kilkenny)
- NAYD National Association of Youth Drama
- Theatre Forum
- VAN Voluntary Arts Network
- Sculpture Society
- Local Authority Arts Officers Network
- Young Irish Filmmakers

Area: Museums

- Heritage Council Museum Accreditation
 Programme
- Irish Museums Association

Area: Education

 National Association of Principals and Deputies (Creative Engagement)

Area: Arts & Education

_ ADEI — Association for Drama-in-Education in Ireland

Area: International

ASSITEJ — International Association of Theatre for Children & Young People

Area: National

Council of National Cultural Institutions —
 Education Community Outreach Group

Area: Regional

- South East Network of Youth Theatres
- ICON network of community development organisations in the North East Inner City of Dublin
- Aontas Youth Arts Initiative in North West Inner City

Area: Local Partnerships

- Informal networks none named
- City Arts and Dublin City Council
- Irish Film Institute Schools Programme
- Blackrock Second Level Support Service and Poetry Ireland
- Music Network and local promoters
- Team Theatre-in-Education company and Local Authority Arts Offices

Partnerships involving the three convening organisations are not listed here as the representatives could not contribute fully to all of the discussions that took place within the break out groups.

Participants noted the lack of formal networking currently taking place, either within each sector (e.g. lack of internal networking opportunities in the education sector), within sub-sectors (such as theatre for children and young people) or across sectors. In addition, gaps were noted in formal national and regional networking which most participants thought to be the most valuable types of networking. Of those present, international networking was limited to larger organisations and institutions. Participants talked about the predominance of informal networks and organisational links. They made the point that these could be just as useful, if not more so, than formalised networks as they yield practical linkages between individuals involved in organisations, events and festivals who share a common interest in engaging children and young people.

Also worth noting was the opportunity that networking events provide for making broader linkages. To give two examples, Mapping the Territory 2 was attended by a representative from the Office of the Minister for Children and the Commissioning Editor of Programmes for Children and Young People at RTE, both of whom have a practical and professional interest in the sector and have access to other relevant networks.

Generally, there was recognition that much of the work that has taken place to date has had its starting point within particular organisations and/or particular sectors and has been led by individuals or small numbers of individuals. As already noted there are few examples of cross sector collaboration or of collaborations even amongst organisations from the same sector.

Those from an arts background identified funding competition and lack of co-operation as the main barriers to sectoral networking. Within education the issues were more to do with the culture of schools operating on an individual basis and the seeming lack of top down commitment to children's cultural education. For the museums sector, which is at an earlier stage of development in terms of education work, the barriers to sectoral and cross sectoral networking are to do with lack of available resources.

Participants described their experiences of networks and networking as follows:

Lack of connectivity There are logical connections between the work of various organisations, but these connections are absent because of a resistance to information sharing due to funding competition. This leads to non-cooperation, lack of knowledge of how other sectors work and lost opportunities for development.

Absence of a clear 'home' for cultural education

In the absence of clear guidance or a dedicated place for artists, arts organisations and museums working in education, many approach their work by stealth and formal networks suffer as a result. Sometimes, the cultural sector makes a tenuous link between formal and informal education policies to secure partnership and funding for their work which can undermine networking possibilities.

Key points from presentations

Absence of arts curricula at second level

The absence of arts curricula at second level is a real barrier.

Limited time and resources/low level priority to cultural education Schools, particularly at the second level, have little time to give to cultural education. Where organisations have been successful in working with secondary schools, this has been achieved by making a clear and meaningful link with the syllabus. This is considered to be a macro issue that requires an advocacy approach and a formal network could play a vital role.

Wide range of interests Participants had wideranging interests and, as a potential network, Mapping the Territory is unique as it represents three complex sectors. People saw this as a strength, rather than a weakness, but felt that it would present real challenges.

Lack of value on networking and its benefits

Each sector needs a mindset change to become more positively oriented towards seeing the benefits and value of networking and investing in it. In the education sector, the culture/mindset of individual schools doing their own thing still exists.

The group agreed that the cultural education of the child and young person was the common ground that united all participants and could be the focus of any future network.

The main benefits of networking to individuals, organisations and sectors identified by the participants are:

- _ Training / identifying best or new practice
- Developing audience base
- Shared information, be it on a local or national level

- Promoting arts in schools
- _ Attracting new resources
- A network equals bigger voice and stronger message

The potential benefits of networking on a crosssectoral collaboration basis were identified by participants as:

- Shared knowledge and understanding across sectors
- Sharing of information and documentation
- Openness and communication
- Sharing approaches, processes and best practice
- Potential for organisational and institutional buyin at a higher level
- Increased diversity in programmes, which would enhance the richness of children's and young people's experiences

The main drawbacks:

- Time, energy and resources are required to participate
- Frustration in getting voices heard in large structures
- Experience of networks starting and then peetering out
- Diversity is a challenge and if not managed well can undermine effect and impact
- Lack of resources

Participants found the following points made by the various speakers to be the most pertinent to the discussion about cross-sectoral networking between arts, museums and education.

- _ To be sustained, networks needs to arise from real and identified needs.
- Networks must bring added value to members.
 Members need to be clear about what this is practical things work best.
- Networks only function well if they have a clear purpose.
- Networks require committed people with shared issues that need to be addressed.
- A network needs clear parameters but sufficient flexibility to allow it to evolve.
- Networks are long-term initiatives because they take a long time to establish and to develop effective structures and strategies.
- Networks need to be resourced at a number of levels, not just personnel, e.g. teachers will need to be allocated time by the Department of Education and Science if they are to contribute. Adequate resources are central to success and sustainability.
- A network can bring possibilities for joint funding and collective collaboration.
- _ Networks do not have to operate forever.
- To avoid constantly reinventing the wheel, the lack of networking in each of the individual sectors needs to be addressed.
- _ Find the right model for the specific networking need or purpose one size doesn't fit all.
- Networks need to be linked into existing structures on the ground (e.g. local arts

networks, education centres, regional curriculum support services etc). Networks need to be able to facilitate small scale networking at local/regional level as well as larger national events.

John Coolahan's observation that other countries admired Ireland's success in networking (e.g. social partnership model) did not generally match participants' perception. It made people ask whether we take our networking skills for granted and whether we need to take a fresh look at existing models of practice here. His description of individual 'champions' of arts-in-education who had struggled to achieve things in the past and now found it difficult to pull together and work more collectively, was familiar. A more collaborative approach that is inclusive of diverse perspectives and has the structures to deal with difference, seems to be what is required.

Participants found Kaija Kaitavuori's discussion of the growing success of virtual networks and the use of networking software thought-provoking. The potential of this type of networking struck home, particularly with those working in the area of youth arts, where young people can more easily communicate in chat-rooms instead of attending meetings. She also spoke about the idea of children and young people being involved in redefining arts and cultural institutions. This was attractive to participants who expressed an interest in developing this theme in the future. She spoke about the importance of culture for all and the need to tackle the barriers and disadvantages that exist not only for children and young people, but also for parents. Some participants commented that there was not enough emphasis on the role of parents or ways to work with parents in the presentations.

Kaija Kaitavuori talked about the need to develop a shared vocabulary across different sectors, particularly between education and the other sectors, and the process of translation that is required to support this. Participants familiar with this issue found facilitating shared understandings across arts-in-education to be very challenging, e.g. among teachers and parents and within and between personnel working in teacher training colleges. Participants hoped to find support for alliances within and between sectors at local level as well as a mechanism that connects them at national level.

It was agreed that the timing is appropriate for the formation of a network/ introduction of networking activities for the following reasons:

More work that ever before is being undertaken by artists, arts organisations, cultural providers, museums and the formal and informal education sectors.

At a local level, numerous structures have been recently established, which support the development of this area of work, including local education centres, local authority arts offices, local authority heritage offices, local arts centres, etc.

The Department of Education and Science and the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism have formed the Special Committee on Arts and Education.

The Arts Council in its 'Partnership for the Arts' document, identified work for children and young people as a priority area within their strategy.

The Government established a National Children's Strategy in 2000.

The National Development Plan for 2006 — 2011 sees the cultural institutions as primary drivers of social inclusion policy.

Leadership A network requires strong leadership and needs to guard against evolving as personality-driven, whether in the form of a person, a group of persons, or an organisation. Leadership needs to emerge from and reside in the collective. This takes time and requires skillful facilitation.

Identify a clear purpose Successful networks need to be rooted in a clear mandate and work towards completion of specific, time-based actions but this is extremely challenging to achieve. Sectoral networking needs to support clearer thinking and agreement as to specific networking needs.

Inclusion The arts was the most represented but there was recognition of the importance of involving the museums and education sectors in equal parts.

Removing barriers at local level It is important to break through the barriers to cooperation at a local level but it is not clear how this could be achieved.

Visibility of the work An important function of a network could be to address visibility, as process based work that is 'invisible' is difficult to communicate in a clear and succinct way.

Evaluation and documentation A lot of valuable documentation has been lost. Much of the relevant work over the years has not been satisfactorily evaluated or archived.

Boundaries, ownership and copyright It is valuable and important to share practice but recognising collective ownership and copyright issues are challenging in the collaborative context and require new responses.

Value of art It is difficult in schools where only one individual is an advocate. The value of art is not taken up by the education system in a living way – it is not part of the living culture in schools yet – especially at post primary level. Responsibility should not be left with the committed individual advocate.

The groups discussed their networking needs.

One of the workshop groups organised their responses under the headings: 'Political,', 'Practice Development' and 'Promotion of Shared Understanding.' These have been used below. The needs identified by the other workshop groups have been integrated into this list.

Political

- _ Facilitate the political agenda and enable advocacy/ lobbying for resources.
- Increase appreciation of the value of the work within the arts sector, the education sector and the museums sector.
- Advocate for funding and provision for children and young people to engage in the arts at all levels i.e. within national arts and cultural institutions so that education and outreach work is valued more internally, and to call them to account when this is not the case.
- Encourage national arts and cultural institutions to provide support and mentoring for more localised or regional networks within their own sector.

Practice development

- Support the dissemination of information with regard to what and who is involved in the work and what is happening (across the three sectors and between them).
- _ Enable the sharing of experience and learning.
- Disseminate learning, resource materials, effective marketing strategies etc.
- _ Facilitate access to a canon of arts education work (case studies etc).

Moving forward

- Create smaller-scale, local networking opportunities.
- Enable the formation of partnerships across sectors / institutions / art-forms and support these to develop over a longer timeframe.
- Facilitate the development of high quality programmes for children and young people within and across the sectors.
- Enable arts and cultural institutions to collaborate in the presentation of educational material for schools and young people and ensure it is done in interesting and useful ways.
- Enable schools and youth organisations to facilitate direct contact with artists.
- Promote best practice and explore how it can be further developed.
- Identify and meet training needs including learning opportunities for teachers, artists etc.

Promotion of shared understandings — networking and respect across sectors

- Bring into alignment bottom-up networks (that were formed to address a local need where people developed their own policies and secured funding) and top down networks resourced by national organisations.
- Engender a sense of belonging among organisers and practitioners where they are exposed to different ideas and perspectives, so they feel part of a larger shared vision.
- Promote respect for different perspectives and approaches. This was raised with particular reference to the museums sector, which is not always valued on a par with the arts sector.

Promote discussion between the arts/museums and education sectors in order to clarify thinking about the nature of arts-in-education. particularly in the light of the differences that emerged among the group members during the day. An example of this is the place of the curriculum in arts and education initiatives. Some people saw the importance of promoting the concept of children as citizens with a right to experience the arts as an end in itself and not necessarily linked to the curriculum. Others were disappointed at the perception of the curriculum as a barrier, where it can be seen as the mechanism through which a child can be brought to reflect on the meaning of every experience in their lives.

One of the workshop groups identified the types of networking models that might meet these needs. These are listed below:

A national representative body with members drawn from the national arts, education and museums sectors, plus representatives from other small sectoral networks around the country. Its main emphasis would be to advocate policy and investment in the cultural education of children and young people and so it would need to be quite political.

A resourced network organisation along the lines of Theatre Forum, to cater for a range of networking / training / advocacy needs.

An informal voluntary network of interested parties from the three sectors that would meet as issues arose and needed to be dealt with.

A source of funding for focused networking events that could be accessed by organisations that wish to run a cross-sector event anywhere in the country.

There was limited time available for discussing these in any detail and an absolute consensus on the specific steps that need to be taken to move the question of networking forward was not reached on the day. Each of the workshop groups came up with different but related or overlapping recommendations so what is recorded here are the common elements. They reflect aspects of all four models above. What is clear is that leadership, activity, resources and personal and organisational commitment to the principle and the practice of networking must increase to move things forward. It is also clear that a number of recommendations and actions are needed over time.

Strategy Policy Development & Resource Allocation

Action: Advocacy

Activity: Research, Case-building, Publication, Lobbying

Strategy Practice Development

Action: Information sharing

_ Activity: Website, Database of contacts,

E-bulletin

Action: Good practice promotion

_ Activity: Regional workshops, Roadshow

of case studies

Action: Professional development*

_ Activity: Training courses, Accreditation routes

_ **Action:** Collaborative projects

_ **Activity:** Partnership activity

Strategy Promoting Connectivity

Action: Building common understandings

and language, Developing relationships, Identifying sectoral and subsectoral needs

Activity: Annual gathering, Issue-

based seminars

*Generally not seen by the groups to be as important as other areas mentioned

Recommendations / Suggestions

Overall, the pros and cons of establishing a network were discussed in depth by all the groups. It became clear that the potential of a network would be subject to the involvement of clear and credible leadership, available resources (both human and financial) and the commitment and interest of participants. The involvement and leadership of The Ark, A Cultural Centre for Children, IMMA and The Heritage Council was gratefully acknowledged by all and the hope expressed that these organisations, or other like-minded organisations, would be resourced after the holding period, in order for more formal structures to be put in place. Participants thanked the conference organisers for their generosity, planning and effort, all of which made the day a success.

1. Action: National gathering

Purpose: To establish relationships and networking activity / To provide opportunities to participate in collaboratively setting (or responding to) an agenda about future actions and focus for cross-sectoral networking

Characteristics: Use highly participative and creative methodologies, e.g. open space technology or speed-dating style / Focus on a specific question or theme / Be dynamic

Frequency: Annual or bi-annual

2. Action : Seminars

Purpose: To address particular topics of the network agenda. Topics suggested included:

In the education sector: How to bring teachers to a shared understanding of arts processes vs. arts products

Across the three sectors: How to promote the value of arts / museums experiences for children and young people and how to create regional linkages among key people (e.g. skilled artists / interested personnel in education centres etc.)

Characteristics: Smaller groups / Very clear focus / Working group oriented

Frequency: As needed

3. Action: Workshops

Purpose: To help promote regional linkages / To develop sectoral networking

Characteristics: Interactive / Regional or sector specific

4. Action: Virtual

Purpose: To promote opportunities for sharing information and dialogue

Characteristics: Interactive / Message boards / Blogs

Frequency: Constant

5. Action: Leadership

Purpose: To set the advocacy and policy development agenda and to create the opportunities for others to participate

Characteristics: Continued leadership of current partners with new members invited

6. Action: Advocacy

Purpose: To affect policy change

Characteristics: Select one specific target and

work to that

7. Action : Collaborative partnership

Purpose: Out of practice comes everything else

Characteristics: Project based approach

8. Action: Forum for children and young people

Purpose: No further detail provided

Characteristics: No further detail provided









Full list of attendees

Louise Allen Butler Gallery Tania Banotti Theatre Forum Ireland Rebecca Bartlett Arts Consultant Marie-Louise Blaney Model and Niland Gallery Kate Buckley Artist and Arts Facilitator Paula Carolan Wexford Education Centre Aidan Clifford Curriculum Development Unit Michael Corcoran National Transport Museum Joan Dalton Red Kettle Theatre Company Rhona Dunnett National Youth Council of Ireland Gillian de Corás The Hunt Museum Sheila de Courcy RTÉ

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