



Creative Enrichment Strategy 2024/25



Contents

- 03 Creative Enrichment Strategy
- 04 What is Creative Enrichment?
- 06 Our Mission
- 06 Our Aim
- 07 Case Study: Creativity in Vocational Teaching in Prisons
- 08 Our Strategy
- 09 Case Study: Maintaining Family Ties Through Prison Education
- 10 Key Objectives
- 14 Case Study: National Justice Museum showcases Ingenuity



Learner artwork featured at a Tate Liverpool 2022 exhibition

Creative Enrichment Strategy 2024/25

Welcome to our second Novus Creative Enrichment strategy. It's so good to be rewriting this, 18 months after the first version and looking at all that we've achieved and the difference that a clear strategy has made.

Our mission and aims of the creative enrichment strategy haven't hugely changed since the first version, but rather than starting from scratch this time, we have already developed localised ways of working to make creative enrichment part of the culture of 'how we do things' in prison education.

Creative enrichment isn't just about having an art department, it's embedding new and innovative ways of doing things across the entire curriculum, including vocational subjects, maths, English and science, along with the more expected creative subjects. It's about showing learners that there's lots of different ways to learn and working with partners to bring new opportunities to the classroom, helping to improve the cultural capital of our learners.

Over the last year, we've expanded the range of opportunities for learners and run many projects that improve family ties. We've exposed individuals to live briefs, developing skills to make them work ready and showcased projects to a public audience, fostering conversations around rehabilitation and supporting community cohesion.

But, whilst we have achieved a lot, there is still so much to do, and this next iteration shares how we plan to do that. Thank you to everyone who has supported creative enrichment, from Novus and prison colleagues to partner organisations and the wider community. Everyone has played a part and I can't wait to see what the next 12 months will bring.

*- Sarah Hartley
National lead for Creative Strategies, Novus*

What is Creative Enrichment?

Creative enrichment is the process of enhancing learning experiences by including creative and artistic elements into educational practices. It goes beyond traditional academic approaches to incorporate activities that stimulate imagination, innovation, and self-expression.

Why is it important?

Engagement and Motivation

Creative activities capture learners' interest and motivation, which can make the learning process more enjoyable.

Critical Thinking Skills

Creative Enrichment creates the space for learners to explore, question, and analyse information from different perspectives. It promotes problem-solving skills, which are essential for academic and real-world challenges.

Self-Expression and Communication

Creative activities provide a platform for learners to express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas. This not only enhances their communication skills but also promotes self-awareness and emotional intelligence.

Innovation and Adaptability

By engaging in creative processes, learners develop a mindset of innovation and adaptability, 'thinking outside the box' and finding new solutions to problems, which are essential skills for success on release, but also increases a person's resilience.

Collaboration and Teamwork

Many creative activities involve collaboration, encouraging learners to work together, share ideas, and appreciate diverse perspectives. This not only enhances social skills but also prepares them for collaborative work environments.

Cultural Awareness and Diversity

Creative enrichment often involves exposure to different cultural experiences, fostering an appreciation for diversity. This helps learners to develop cultural awareness, empathy, and a global perspective.

Long-Term Retention

Hands-on activities make learning memorable. When learners are actively involved in the learning process, they are more likely to retain information, as opposed to passive learning methods.

Stress Reduction and Wellbeing

Creative activities have therapeutic benefits, contributing to stress reduction and overall wellbeing. They provide an outlet for self-expression and relaxation.

Preparation for the Future

In a rapidly changing world, Creative Enrichment equips learners with skills such as adaptability, resilience, and creative problem-solving, preparing them for the uncertainties and challenges of the future job market.

It is important to remember that creativity manifests in both tangible forms, such as making and doing, and intangible expressions, like idea generation, problem solving. It is becoming increasingly important in every area thanks to the fast-paced changes in technology and AI. Empowering learners to be critical thinkers as well as able to work technology is fundamental to integration back into society.



We Roar exhibition at HMP Thorn Cross

Mission

The mission of our strategy is to:

1

Promote creative enrichment and foster a culture of enriched educational experiences throughout Novus education delivery nationally.

2

Across all curriculum areas, enable Novus colleagues and learners to access creative enrichment in all forms, that provides learners with new opportunities that widens their experiences and contributes to their personal development.

Our Aim

Our aim is to champion:

- ▶ The arts and its value to society.
- ▶ The communities we work in.
- ▶ The learners that we support.

which will ultimately contribute to reducing reoffending.

Every Novus colleague plays a critical role in contributing to this aim.



Creative Enrichment opportunities serve as a pathway to self-expression, problem-solving, and innovative thinking. They offer individuals a means of self-discovery, skill development, and personal expression.

Particularly impactful for those whose experience of formal education was a negative one, creative opportunities empower individuals, fostering a sense of purpose, confidence, and provide potential avenues for personal and professional growth beyond traditional academic structures.

- Sarah Hartley, National Arts and Enrichment Lead



Case Study

Creativity in Vocational Teaching in Prisons

Many of our tutors in prison education teach vocational subjects that lead directly to careers on release and bricklaying is often a popular choice with our learners. Within the prison workshops, learners build walls (often with elaborate detailing) and in some cases small houses, but at HMP Humber they built a brick boat!

The curriculum area involved was City and Guilds Level 2 bricklaying and the skills required to make the boat were mapped directly to the course criteria. Everything from building a solid wall, to setting out the stone masonry structure, including decorative reinforced brickwork and building a chimney stack were possible within the design.

The brick boat evolved on a day-to-day basis, with different ideas coming from the learners regarding how the boat would work with the limited resources available in the workshop. It took about three weeks to build and created a real buzz within the vocational classrooms. Other curriculum areas also got involved, supplying timber, wallpaper, and paint.

The complex nature of the project has also meant that learners had to use literacy and numeracy skills when setting out the task. It also gave learners real pride and satisfaction in their work and a real desire to continue bricklaying on release. The end result was even recognised in the 2023 Koestler awards!



Learner work
HMP Humber

Our Strategy

We aspire to enhance access to arts and culture for our learners, fostering community development, improving lives, and expanding learning experiences across curriculums in all Novus education departments.

To achieve this, we aim to strengthen existing partnerships and establish new ones, focusing on creative enrichment as a means of reducing reoffending.

Key to this vision is the integration of creative thinking and innovation in employability and social development opportunities. Engaging in creative enrichment provides the opportunity for personal growth.

By offering dynamic activities and opportunities, we empower learners to contribute meaningfully to their communities, fostering positive influences and instilling the confidence to effect positive change in their lives.



Enrichment projects are so important at Stafford as it enables learners to express themselves in a variety of ways, contribute to activities that will support their personal development and interact with professionals from the outside world in preparation for through the gate.

- Education Manager



Case Study

Maintaining Family Ties Through Prison Education

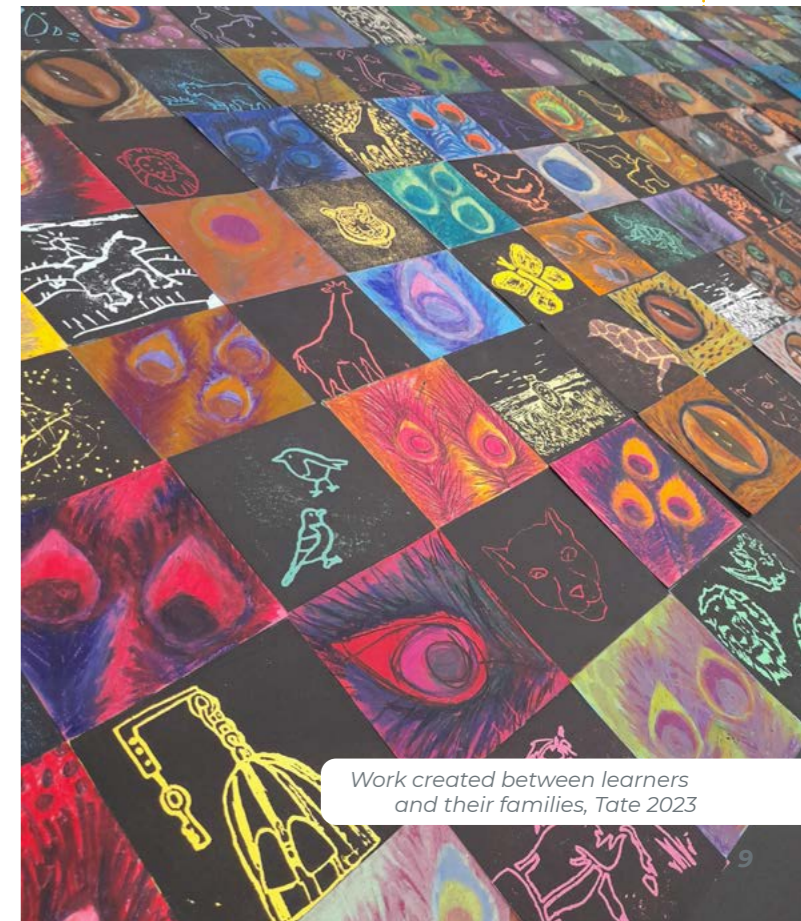
In February 2023, at Tate Liverpool we showcased our Family Ties exhibition. This exhibition was the end point of a programme that was designed to support Novus learners to develop and maintain stronger ties with their families whilst in prison and provide the opportunity for them to engage with our education offer.

Community artists from the Tate used the 2022 Turner Prize Exhibition as a starting point, learners then responded and explored a range of creative techniques.

The sessions took place in seven different prisons across the Northwest and North Wales, with learners engaged in a weeklong block of in-person sessions. Artists from the Tate came in to run sessions that engaged prisoners in creative activities, followed by a family day in the prison, where the learners led their loved ones through a range of creative learning opportunities.

The project supported family ties; the learning created time to consider loved ones needs and interests. It created positive conversations on calls and visits and the family days gave the prisoners a feeling of empowerment as they led activities with their loved ones in a meaningful way.

Work from all sites was showcased at Tate Liverpool, celebrating achievement, as well as creating a space to increase awareness of prison education and family impact. Families were able to visit the exhibition and feel a sense of pride that the work they created was on display for visitors to the gallery to view.



Work created between learners and their families, Tate 2023

Key Objectives

Each of our defined objectives are equally important and they are inter-related. We cannot achieve one without the others and all Novus colleagues play an important role in delivering them to ensure consistency across our provision nationally.

We have **8 clear objectives**. Achieving these objectives will help deliver our aim and mission. We aim to achieve these objectives by **April 2025**.

Our objectives are:

1 *Continue to contribute to the strategic direction of the arts and creativity within prison education.*

How: Maintain presence on boards responsible for setting the strategic direction, including the Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance and National Criminal Justice Art Alliance.

Impact: Novus will be at the forefront of future developments, making sure that our knowledge and expertise is used in future plans and direction of travel.

2 *Implement a creative enrichment community of practice within Novus, with a wide membership including Business Development colleagues, to drive forward access to funding and sharing of best practice.*

How: Establish a community of practice, led by the Novus National Lead for Creative Strategies. This group will plan how we develop our provision, to enhance creativity across the curriculums and the funding required to achieve this. There will be a clear business development approach to new funding to support arts provision in Novus, and to make sure any new funding is well-used.

Impact: Increased opportunities for colleagues and learners throughout Novus linked to the arts and creativity, ultimately improving the quality and impact of our provision and therefore prisoner's lives.

3 *Create creative spaces through Novus' curriculum to enhance learning opportunities.*

How: Through planning with Lot Managers and Lot level teams, plan opportunities that are embedded into functional skills and wider curriculum areas to demonstrate the impact of this new delivery model.

Impact: Enhanced creativity across the core curriculums ensuring enrichment is utilised to engage learners in core subjects and the wider curriculum.

4 *Embed a core creative enrichment offer in all Novus provision to support parity of opportunities for Novus learners that is promoted across the department's curriculum*

How: Through direct working with the Quality managers and Lot Managers to support a bespoke, local plan for each establishment, with ways of working aligned to and tested by Novus quality processes

Impact: More learners, across the Novus estate, accessing creative enrichment opportunities. Initially increasing both colleague and learner engagement by 10%.



The creative enrichment strand of our work allows us to bring new, exciting opportunities to our learners. Creativity allows us to view and solve problems more openly and with innovation. Creativity opens the mind and can broaded perspectives. The value of this is making learning more accessible and a more enriching experience

- Peter Cox, Managing Director



5

Provide continued opportunities and experiences which will enhance our learners' enjoyment and understanding of the arts and creativity, which can then act as a catalyst for developing critical thinking and exploring new identities.

How: Further develop the annual national arts projects, e.g. ongoing projects with the Tate and regional gallery projects, e.g. The National Justice Museum. We will use arts and culture as a hook to encourage the 'hard to reach' people within establishments to access opportunities including formal education.

Impact: Increased engagement in project opportunities, with a focus of increase among those currently least engaged in arts and culture by at least 10%.

6

Support community cohesion by showcasing creative work.

How: Further develop the annual national arts and creativity project (e.g. Tate Gallery) to expand and showcase across different areas as well as further explore the use of online galleries.

Impact: Increased reach of audience, which supports community cohesion to break down barriers and perception of offenders.

7

Identify individuals and groups, working in both the community and prison arts sector, to use as a key resource to shape and deliver creative educational experiences.

How: Establish a formalised directory of partners to ensure an oversight of historical and existing provision to enable effective coordination.

Impact: To build on good practice and increase opportunities across establishments, through better partnerships within our prisons and in the local communities.

8

Encourage our colleagues and other professionals (e.g. HMPPS) to support the development of creative enrichment in prisons through increased and continuing professional development opportunities.

How: Deliver staff training and CPD opportunities to foster new working methodologies to support a shift in culture around creative curriculums. This will include specific bespoke training sessions, toolbox kits, and 1 Minute Teacher Tips.

Impact: Sustainable approach to ensure longevity of teaching in a creative way, making sure that teacher skills are constantly reviewed and refreshed where needed.

*Collaborative project with Dash Arts where learners were taught 'The Power of Rhetoric'.
Image Credit Dawn Kilner*



Case Study

National Justice Museum showcases Ingenuity

Novus worked with the team at the National Justice Museum, using the museum's historic collection of objects made in prison. Inspired by historic objects, the two teams worked with Novus learners across many of our prison establishments, using arts and enrichment to engage with learners, many of whom had never participated in education before.

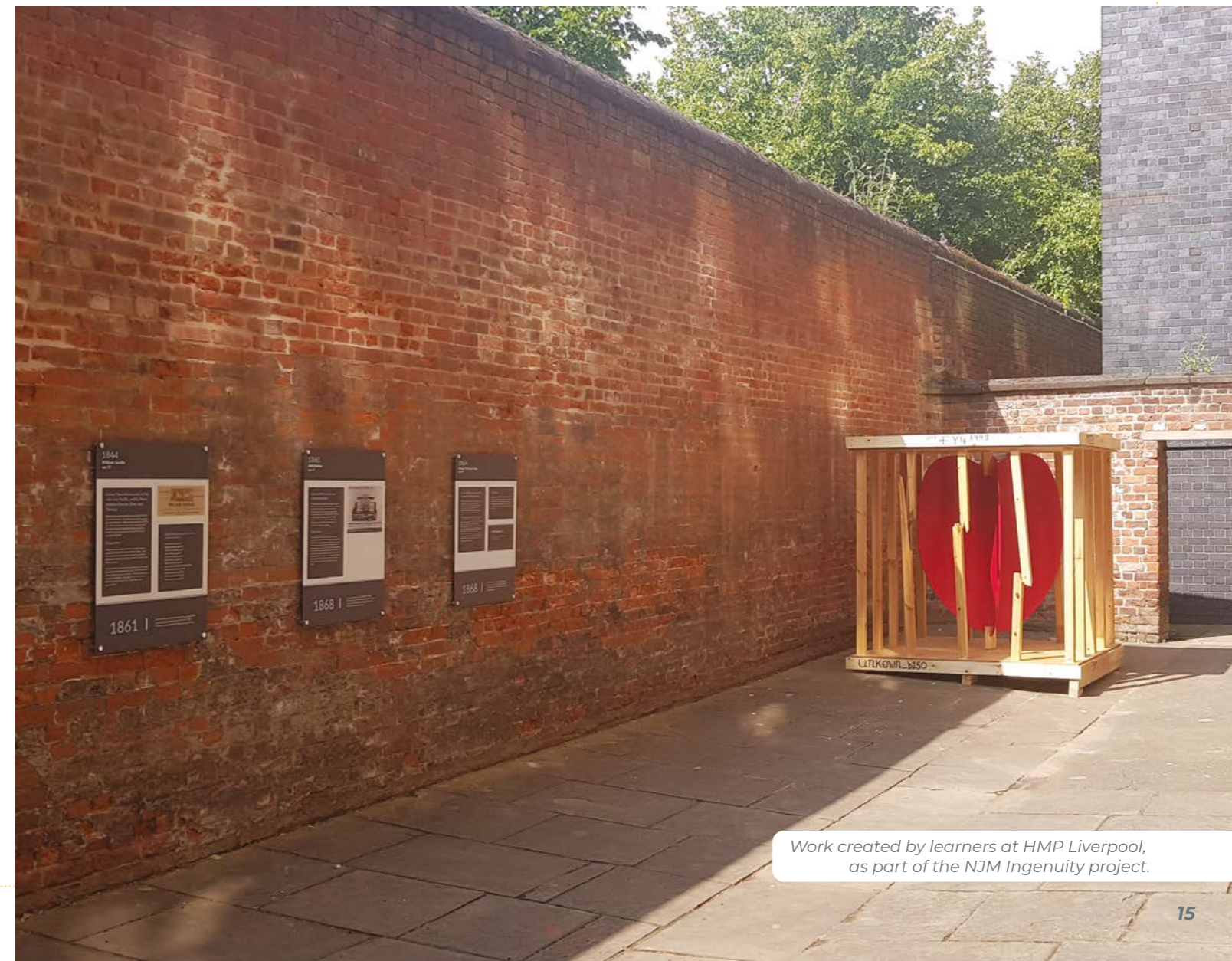
"Having the opportunity to be part of 'Ingenuity' has been fantastic for Novus learners. Through the engagement with the museum collection items, learners have been given autonomy to express themselves and use the various items as a catalyst to be creative. It has acted as a valuable opportunity for personal growth and improved well-being, along with providing the opportunity to develop a wide range of critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills." Sarah Hartley



National Justice Museum
Ingenuity Exhibition

One of the major projects by Novus learners, that was showcased within the museum, was a giant caged heart. This sculpture resided in the Museum's exercise yard. Expertly designed and crafted by Novus learners in the carpentry workshops at HMP Liverpool, it was inspired by a smaller "heart in a cage" object in the Museum's collection.

The piece featured snapped bars, a revolving heart, a hand routed quote and words/symbols of the nicknames of some of the men involved in the project. In the free Project Lab at the National Justice Museum, they shared the creative process of making this impressive object and encouraged visitors to make their own smaller version, helping to generate conversations around prison and its role in society.



Work created by learners at HMP Liverpool,
as part of the NJM Ingenuity project.



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Strategy 2024/25