

IMPACT REPORT



2022 - 2023

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HEY BRISTOL

How are you? Seriously, how are you?

We know things are a bit really sh*t right now, but we wanted to let you know: good things are happening. Change is coming in the form of a gentle revolution called Rising Arts Agency.

As creatives, we're rethinking what it means to work in a world where living has a cost. We are imagining a radical future where all young people are leaders, and actually making it happen. We're ready, and we can't wait any longer.

We ALL deserve better. So, we're over here caring for ourselves and each other, resting in spite of hustle culture and still creating the most beautiful, radical art you've ever seen.

Hold onto each other and come be part of what we're creating.

Big love,
Rising Arts Agency

—

Led by Young Creatives (like actually, from our Directors to our team)

Please note: We work Monday-Thursday and use the last 4 hours of our week for reflection

Read our access documents (aka how to work with us)
rising.org.uk / [@RisingArtsAgency](https://www.instagram.com/RisingArtsAgency)

TURE
Y?



arch project,
s-
or and
creatives of
framework
and
for us.

2018

BUILDING A MOVEMENT



We create 'All in the Mind', an exhibition exploring mental health through art. We also start building a community of industry members and young creatives, planting seeds and hire our first employees!

#AllInTheMind

2017

RISING IS BORN



First generation of our
young creatives get
the opportunity to
work on our projects
and to be agents

#RisingIsBorn

2016

WHY A SOCIAL ENTERPRISE?



Being a part of the 'All in the Mind' project, we have been able to build a community of industry members and young creatives, planting seeds and hire our first employees!

#AllInTheMind

2018

THE NUMBERS

It was a tough year financially for a lot of people and as a small team with no core funding, we still managed to deliver for our community at a scale that was sustainable for us and them:

£32,703

income from donations - thank you for believing in our work!

45%

of our income comes from our agency work

72

paid opportunities for young creatives.
28 POC
28 women
3 non-binary
18 neurodivergent

£51,508

paid to young people

35

partners worked with

**RISING
ARTS
AGENCY**



2022-23 AT A GLANCE

It was great to see the dialogue that was started as a result of last year's [Impact \(Failure\) Report](#), where we modelled the honesty and transparency that we think is needed to create real change in the sector.

Take a look at this year:

WE CELEBRATED OUR FIRST YEAR AT ARNOLFINI AND WITH TWO YOUNG CO-DIRECTORS AT OUR 6TH BIRTHDAY PARTY

Our new home at Arnolfini has led to lots of new surprises and so for our 6th birthday we took over the whole second floor to showcase our diverse community of creatives, make stuff together and map all the relationships that make up Rising.

WE HAD OUR FIRST RETROSPECTIVE EXHIBITION

BE[LOVED] Exhibition at Arnolfini ran alongside Gary Fabian Miller's ADORE exhibition. We looked back at the last seven years of Rising to create a timeline of our proudest moments and showcased Rising to a whole new audience.

WE LAUNCHED THE RISING PODCAST

We launched a podcast! This is something we've wanted to do for a while. This was a chance for us to share the deeper thinking behind our work, and connect with our allies and co-conspirators. The podcast kicked off with a series about our Collaborate funded research into sector power dynamics.

WE PRIORITISED ACCESS

We consulted our disabled community members for a new billboard campaign centring disability justice, had a complete access audit of our work and the whole team wrote our first access riders.

WE SOLIDIFIED OUR PLACE AS A LEADING NATIONAL VOICE ON NEW MODELS OF LEADERSHIP AND RADICAL GOVERNANCE

We used our voice on local, national (and even international) platforms to showcase young people as leaders now, who are pioneering new ways of care-centred leading, doing and creating.

WE TOOK THE WHOLE MONTH OF AUGUST OFF FROM PUBLIC FACING WORK

to rest, reflect, research and ready ourselves for the rest of the year. This has impacted our work throughout the year and felt like the perfect moment - in the first year of our new Co-Directors - to make a statement about how we want to move forward.



WE CAME TOGETHER



© Mercedes Polo Portillo / Rising Arts Agency

We spent time connecting and being together with our community as they navigated a turbulent freelance world.

"When I first moved here I kept hearing 'Bristol is such a creative city' but couldn't figure out how to actually access it – Rising was the place that helped me do that" – Community Interviewee

"Thank you for inviting me to that, that was really healing and a beautiful space I didn't know I needed" – Coming Together Attendee

18

**events and
community
meet ups**

RETHINKING THE GALLERY SPACE

We did a lot of challenging what it means to be in galleries this year. As part of the British Art Show 9, we supported a group of local young people to tell Plymouth's cultural sector how they'd prefer to show up in galleries - mainly in their pyjamas with lots of comfy spaces to sit!

We also took over the 2nd floor of Arnolfini for our 6th birthday party where we had people making, performing and taking a time out across different gallery spaces, enabling the community to truly feel at home in our new home as Creators in Residence.

WE SHARED THE MEGAPHONE

For our WhoseFuture summer campaign we handed the reins to some of the disabled members of our community to use two billboards to say what they wanted to say to the city.

We also supported the Parenting in the Pandemic campaign where Rising artist Lucy Turner turned parent's voices into impactful posters and billboards across Bristol.

DISABLED LIVES

ARE

COMPLICATED

RISING
ARTS
AGENCY



#WhoseFuture

LET'S MAKE THEM SIMPLER

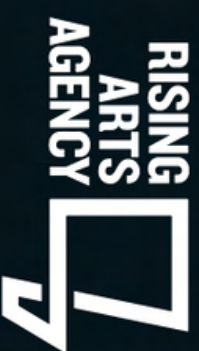


We are Rising Arts Agency.

We are disabled. We are d/Deaf. We are chronically ill. We are neurodivergent.

We are young creatives who want people to understand how the world disables us.

Learn what you can do about it now. #WhoseFuture



WE CHALLENGED



© Mercedes Polo Portillo / Rising Arts Agency

We took time to deepen our practice, challenge the status quo and model the kind of sector we want to exist in.

£154k

of funding decisions overseen by Rising

7

young people onto boards

RESEARCH: POWER AND PARTNERSHIPS

Research has always been a large part of Rising, and this year we've been exploring the role of power imbalances in cultural partnerships - particularly between grassroots organisations and more established institutions.

As an inclusion partner with the Bristol and Bath R&D, we explored and interrogated how reflection can be embedded in partnerships to encourage more effective power redistribution.

We then started working with co-conspirator Dr. Andreana Drencheva from Kings College London through the Centre for Cultural Value's Collaborate Fund to research power imbalances in cultural partnerships. We're using the experiences of our community and the sector to come up with strategies to dismantle these power imbalances and make the sector better for everyone through a series of labs, interviews, podcast series and events.

WE CHALLENGED



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“Rising has long scrutinised the unequal distribution of power in the cultural sector. In fact, our very reason for existence is to call out, counter and disrupt these toxic power dynamics.

We do this by representing the underrepresented: insisting that space be made for the young people usually denied a seat at the table. We want to make that space as large as possible, inviting and supporting others to take part and mobilise for social change. And crucially, once we’ve staked our claim, we want to make sure we are given equity and agency”.

– Rising Co-Directors
announcing the Collaborate
funded research into power.

MAKING FUNDING DECISIONS

Young people being part of the distribution of money is radical and we’re not seeing it enough. We believe young people should be part of decisions about money; where it goes and who has access to it.

Rising sat on 2 major funding panels; ARTCRY and Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) supporting the redistribution of roughly £153,718 between 2022- 23. Our hope is to be able to put more young people on to funding panels to make decisions that contribute to changing the distribution of money.

TRANSFORMING GOVERNANCE

We have continued our industry leading work on not just getting young people into governance but transforming how it works all together. This year we’ve joined Lankelly Chases’s National Enquiry into Transforming Governance supporting organisations with live governance challenges to transition from traditional to transformational ways of operating. We also continue to model our own radical governance through our own board and leadership.



WE CREATED



© Mercedes Polo Portillo / Rising Arts Agency

As well as working on commissions, we were able to nurture our own creativity with some big statements this year, sharing our values with the rest of the world and experimenting with new mediums for the agency



Rising Podcast Artwork designed by Fyona Finn

LAUNCHED A PODCAST

We launched a podcast! This is something we've wanted to do for a while. This is a chance for us to share the deeper thinking behind our work, and connect our allies and co-conspirators. The podcast kicked off with a series about our Collaborate funded research into sector power dynamics.

CO-EDITED A MAGAZINE

We co-edited the Bristol edition of Art Licks magazine with Caraboo and East Bristol Contemporary (ebc). The theme for this edition was 'SCHEDULE: Ways of Making it Work', exploring how our different ways of working manifests in our practices and we were able to commission members of our community to contribute too.

BE
[LOVED]



© SEPH Group / Rising Arts Agency

BE[LOVED]

~ noun ~

The simple act of existing, living and being comfortable in your truth is the ultimate, most radical act of love.

To celebrate our one-year anniversary as Creators in Residence at Arnolfini, we are taking over Gallery 5 for three months.

BE[LOVED] is inspired by Garry Fabian Miller's exhibition *ADORE* (on the ground, first and second floors). Rising believes in a future where anyone can be an artist and find a 'home' for their art. Just like Fabian Miller, who found a home for his art at Arnolfini when he was just nineteen.

This exhibition draws on the themes of Rising's work over the last six years by inviting our community of young creatives to share their own dreams for this space. We have selected three of Rising's incredible artists to create and exhibit new work, and share their art with the public for the first time.

WE CREATED

"SCHEDULE feeds directly into our demands to the creative and activist sectors around rest as a form of resistance, collective care as the minimum and radical ways of working as the norm. It feels particularly important right now for us to be coming together to think about how we can do things differently. We hope that those engaging in this magazine feel inspired to pause and pivot to new ways of being and making it work"

– Rising Excerpt from *Art Licks*

£7,462

spent on art materials

PRODUCED AN EXHIBITION

To celebrate our first anniversary being Creators in Residence at Arnolfini, we were invited to be part of Arnolfini's Spring 23 Exhibition, *ADORE*, by Garry Fabian Miller by taking over their top floor gallery for two months with our first exhibition since 2019.

The exhibition, BE[LOVED], was a retrospective on Rising's journey and as part of it we were able to commission three brand new artworks from three members of our community, Iman West, Manoel Akure and Daisy Hvnter, through our Space to Dream funding. It was a big moment of celebration for the agency, our community and with our new partner in our new home at Arnolfini.

Arnolfini also invited us to write the introduction to the exhibition guide and speak at the exhibition opening about how this exhibition and Fabian Miller's own story related to our work around rest and creating space for young creatives.

The word Adore feels like a hug which feels fitting for an exhibition of work that feels a bit like a hug too.

... At Rising Arts Agency we talk a lot about embodiment, which is just a fancy word for feeling something in your body. Like when you get to a place where you feel at home. It goes deeper than just a physical sensation. The spaces we try and create at Rising also aim to enable a sense of belonging in a world that can often feel unwelcoming of difference.

The handwritten opening of the introduction we wrote for Garry Fabien Miller's Exhibition Guide for ADORE.



WE CONSOLIDATED



© Mercedes Polo Portillo / Rising Arts Agency

We stood firmly in our beliefs and worked towards co-creating an agency that is advocating for a better sector for everyone.

45%

of our income comes from our agency work

70%

of our advisory board are under 30

OUR TEAM & LEADERSHIP

We created two new roles for the agency; 'Agency Producer' to blend our community engagement with our agency work more seamlessly. And 'Storyteller', to help us creatively tell Rising's story and communicate our dreams for the sector more clearly and effectively.

We also welcomed Ant Lightfoot and Grace Sodzi-Smith to our board and Roseanna Dias as Non-Executive Director. Our advisory board remains 70% aged 30 and under as a real life testament to the power of young people in leadership.

TRAINING PILOT

Up until now, our unique ways of working have not been easy to share but we've been developing a training programme so that others can make systemic change in their practice, communities and organisations.

In February we piloted 'How to Take Risks in Moments of Uncertainty' with some friends of Rising from across the sector. We'll be developing it based on their feedback ready to launch next year.

THE PROJECTS

The kinds of projects we're working on has grown to include more (inter)national partners as we explore how we can take the energy and expertise of our Bristol-based community, with our radical ways of working, to other places. Here are some of our favourite projects from this year:

"Our initial pilot with Rising's artists helped us inspire Exec leaders with the possibilities from collaborating with diverse young communities. Their response was palpable excitement and commitment to moving an agenda to increase relevance to and connection with young adults."

Working with Rising was a reminder of the profound abilities and innovation of young artists - when afforded space, organisational context and insight, and meaningful power. Because these pilots were framed as genuine collaborations with Rising, I also grew professionally by being firmly alongside Rising's skilled team"

– Jamie Luck, National Trust CYP Engagement Lead

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© Mercedes Polo Portillo / Rising Arts Agency



© Mercedes Polo Portillo / Rising Arts Agency



© Mercedes Polo Portillo / Rising Arts Agency



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The Eden Project

To engage audiences in Bristol with the themes of Eden's new living artwork, Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg's Pollinator Pathmaker, we commissioned three artists – Sophie Cottle, Jade Ayino and Carlo Hornilla – to create an interactive movement piece, a clay making workshop and a social media campaign asking questions about our environment.

Channel 4

We worked with Channel 4 to create a report that unveils the barriers to entering and reentering the Creative industries at a local level. We commissioned two members of Rising's community, Priyanka Raval and Siobhan McCluskey, to work alongside Rising and Channel 4 to co-design a research process and co-author the report. We hope this report will give the city permission to introduce radical inventions for making the sector more accessible and inclusive for all.

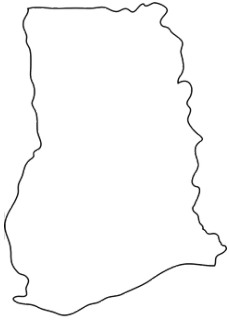
The National Trust

Building on the work we started in 2020 consulting on their new Children and Young People's Strategy - this year we supported the formation of a Young People's Challenge Group for young team members to have a place to influence the direction of the Trust from the inside.

THE PARTNERS

35

partners worked with



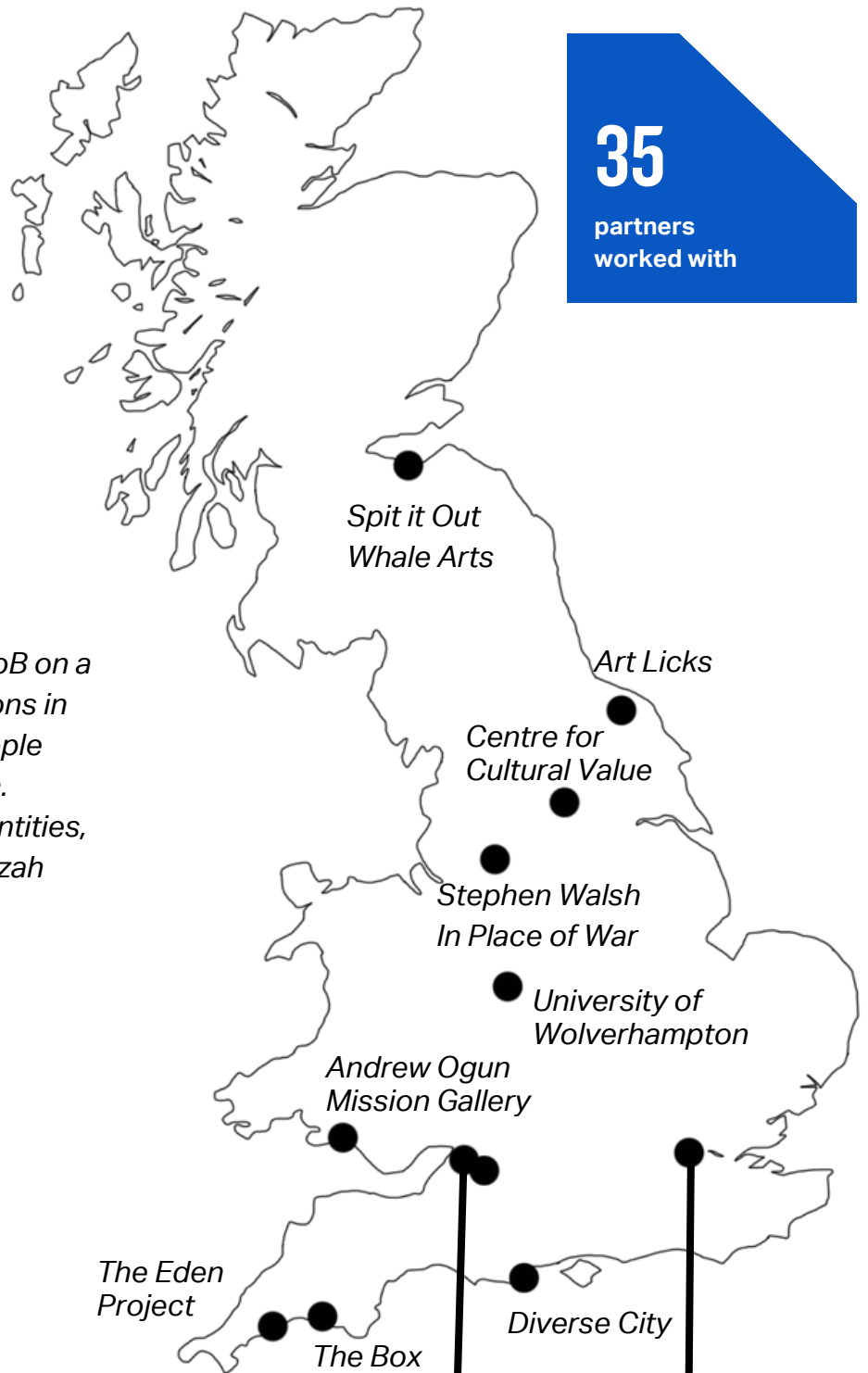
Ghana Project

We worked with researchers from UoB on a project exploring gender presentations in education with a group of young people from the UK and a group from Ghana. Together they discussed gender identities, binaries and inspired a poem by Malizah that was then made into a film.



British Council Mexico

We delivered a session on radical governance to a cohort of Cultural Leaders from Mexico brought to Edinburgh by the British Council. Our messages of care in leadership resonated so strongly with the cohort that one leader started thinking about how she could share her position to have more time off.



UWE, Thresholds, University of Bristol, Arnolfini, Saffron Records, Bristol City Council, Wake the Tiger, Big Team CIC, Out of Hand, Centerspace, Windmill Hill City Farm, Dareshack, Bridge Farm Community

B&G Partners
Studio Soho
Freelands Foundation
Saatchi & Saatchi
Baobab Foundation
Clare Leadership



WE DREAMT



© SEPH Group / Rising Arts Agency

We doubled down on our values of rest, care and dreaming of a better future and took that story on the road to inspire others

£32,703

donations -
thank you for
believing in
our work!

396

out of office replies
sent in August 2022

AUGUST OF REST

We've been big on rest and reflection for a while now, but we're always looking for more ways to really LIVE it as a practice in our work and as an employer. That's why this year for the first time we took an August of Rest. A whole month for the team to invest in themselves personally, as well as together and close to public facing work. The spaciousness gives us a chance to re-calibrate for healthier ways of being and doing and we'll definitely be doing this again next year!

WE TOLD OUR STORY

We were featured in a video for Amplify around challenging perceptions of Arts and Culture, we spoke about the benefits of being a value led agency for WECA in Bath, we were in discussion about giving more 'Power to the People' with B&G Partners, launched some co-leadership research we were part of, hosted a panel of young leaders for Engage's Gathering Momentum and one on wellbeing in governance for Clore and were part of a roundtable discussion on New Futures for Creative Economies.

LOOKING FORWARD



© Olumedia / Rising Arts Agency

As it gets harder every year to be a creative freelancer and live in cities like Bristol we are looking to future-proof our work and the careers of the young people we support in 2023/24

"The effort that Jess and Euella have taken in creating a lovely and hospitable atmosphere, means that I am eager to hear what others have to say and I feel comfortable telling people about the time I failed to persuade my son a lion was more fun than a leaf."

– Training Pilot Attendee

ENDINGS AND BEGINNINGS

As we turn seven, for the first time we will be asking community members who have grown with us, whether they'd like to opt into leaving and creating space for new community members who we'll be recruiting in 2023. This acknowledges the cyclical nature of supporting young people but also the capacity it takes to create the deep meaningful connections we have with our community.

SHARING OUR LEARNING

As our projects develop and come to an end we will be sharing the learning from our power in partnerships research and an evolving equity commitment that we have been working on in lieu of an equality and diversity policy. We hope both will offer solutions to well known problems in the creative and cultural sectors and feed into our evolving training offer.

DEFINING OUR STORY

We will be launching a new website as the identity of the agency has evolved, so we can tell our new story more effectively as we move into a more National platform and look to build on Rising's legacy a pilot fund.



SUPPORT US ON THE REGULAR

Join the Rising Alliance



In the last year Rising has been run by a team of 5 or less people, but as you can see our work impacts hundreds of creatives in Bristol and beyond. We are not currently core funded, and are proud to be independently earning roughly 50% of our income through our agency services.

You've seen what we can do. If you want to see more of it support us to remain an agile not-for-profit who responds to the needs of our community and invests our income into supporting new generations of artists, leaders and activists.

Be part of our story, and join the Rising Alliance

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