



Young at Art
2019/20 Report
including
2020 Belfast Children's Festival



"You outdo yourselves every year. You're great!"

***"I always look forward to the festival
- there is very little like it throughout the year".***

BCF20 audience feedback comments

www.youngatart.co.uk

#BCF20

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Introductions

Introduction from YAA Director, Eibhlín de Barra

Little did we know that when the 'curtain fell' on our 2020 Belfast Children's Festival (BCF20) that it would be the last major event in the city of Belfast before the Covid-19 outbreak closed down schools, theatres and shops and set all of us home.

From our humble start at the dawn of NI's Good Friday Agreement we have grown to become one of the UK and Ireland's largest dedicated children's festivals, with a year-round programme of activity that stretches throughout the year and across NI. And although the immediate future will look very different from how we operated pre-Coronavirus I feel passionate that art and creativity is needed more now than ever before.

I now look back on BCF20's final performance of 'Tetris' on the main stage at The MAC - with the audience onstage dancing joyously together as the dancers sat in the auditorium and applauded - as the last act of 'normality' before we all set up our home offices and, for many of our patrons, struggled coming to grips with 'home schooling'. I feel a range of emotions thinking back on BCF20 now: joy, pride, relief, nostalgia, and a good dollop of a sense of sheer luck! mixed with an anxiety and fear for the immediate future of live events, our artists and our venues.

But we also remember that 2019/20 was a really successful year for YAA. We worked with over 41,800 children and adults right across NI. BCF20 attracted over 22,200 young people and their families over 6 days to explore the festival theme PLACE. Our education and engagement programmes continue to grow and engage with children and families where it is needed most, ensuring that the impact of our work is felt in some of Belfast's most deprived areas. The Board and Staff at Young at Art are proud to share our successes in 2019/20 with you in this report.

We believe every child has the right to access high-quality arts and creative experiences, regardless of who they are or where they came from. We look forward to continuing to bring exceptional arts experience to our youngest citizens, experiences which challenge and change perceptions and ambitions from early childhood on.

Introduction from YAA Chair, Maria Lee

Reading through this annual report it is striking how much the world has shifted since the 2020 Belfast Children's Festival closed in March. But it is also good to remind ourselves of how much was achieved in the financial year 2019-2020. Young at Art, as Northern Ireland's leading children's arts provider, continues to enrich the lives of children and young people through the arts, delivering high-quality programmes and events that inspire joy, creativity, imagination and curiosity.

The Belfast Children's Festival remains at the heart of everything we do and is firmly established as the highlight of the family cultural calendar with a standard of performance work to rival any seen in the country during the rest of the year. Young at Art's education and engagement programmes reach children and young people in some of the city's most marginalised communities. Although the Coronavirus outbreak enforced a premature end to some of these programmes, the impact they have on our young participants is still marked. Young at Art is making such a positive difference to so many young lives and it is something that the Board members and I are very proud of.

During the year, we took some time to reflect on the organisation's strengths, the challenges it faces, its needs for the future and considered carefully how Young at Art can best deliver its new strategic framework. One outcome of this exercise was the agreed decision that, after many years of working together, it was now time for Fighting Words Belfast to become a fully independent organisation – this was done on the 1st April 2020. We have been delighted to support Fighting Words Belfast since the start and throughout this transition, and look forward to seeing it grow and thrive. Further, despite the challenges the arts sector faces as a whole, we still envisage the next four years will be ones of growth and development for the organisation.

We hope you enjoy reading about Young at Art's achievements in this report. Our talented staff continue to harness their creativity and imagination to present innovative year-round programmes and activities in the face of on-going budgetary constraints and rising costs. 2020-2021 will be a very different year from any we have known before but I know that Eibhlín and her team will meet the challenges head on, adapting and evolving to continue their tireless hard work and Young at Art's Board of Directors is indebted to their dedication and resourcefulness.

About Young at Art

Young at Art is Northern Ireland's leading children's arts provider. Established in 1998 we have grown both the **Belfast Children's Festival (BCF)** and our year-round engagement programmes significantly. In 2019/20 the organisation and its wholly-owned subsidiaries (Young at Art Events, and Fighting Words Belfast) reached **41,815 children and adults**, delivering performances, events, creative sessions, workshops, exhibitions and special projects, all tailored to the needs of our audience and participants.

The Belfast Children's Festival, which celebrated its 22nd edition this year, is recognised as the highlight of the family cultural calendar, as high-quality, risk-taking and ambitious. It is internationally focused and multi-artform with a long history of positive collaborations with other sectors and organisations. Our artistic programme ranges from high quality international contemporary performances to specialist long-term engagement projects, working with schools and groups in areas of high deprivation on a range of artforms, and supporting emerging individual artists and practitioners to develop their own work for young people.

In 2019/20, YAA rolled out our new strategic framework

Young at Art is core funded by Arts Council of Northern Ireland (Principal Funder), Belfast City Council and Education Authority.

YAA's Strategic Framework

What do we do?

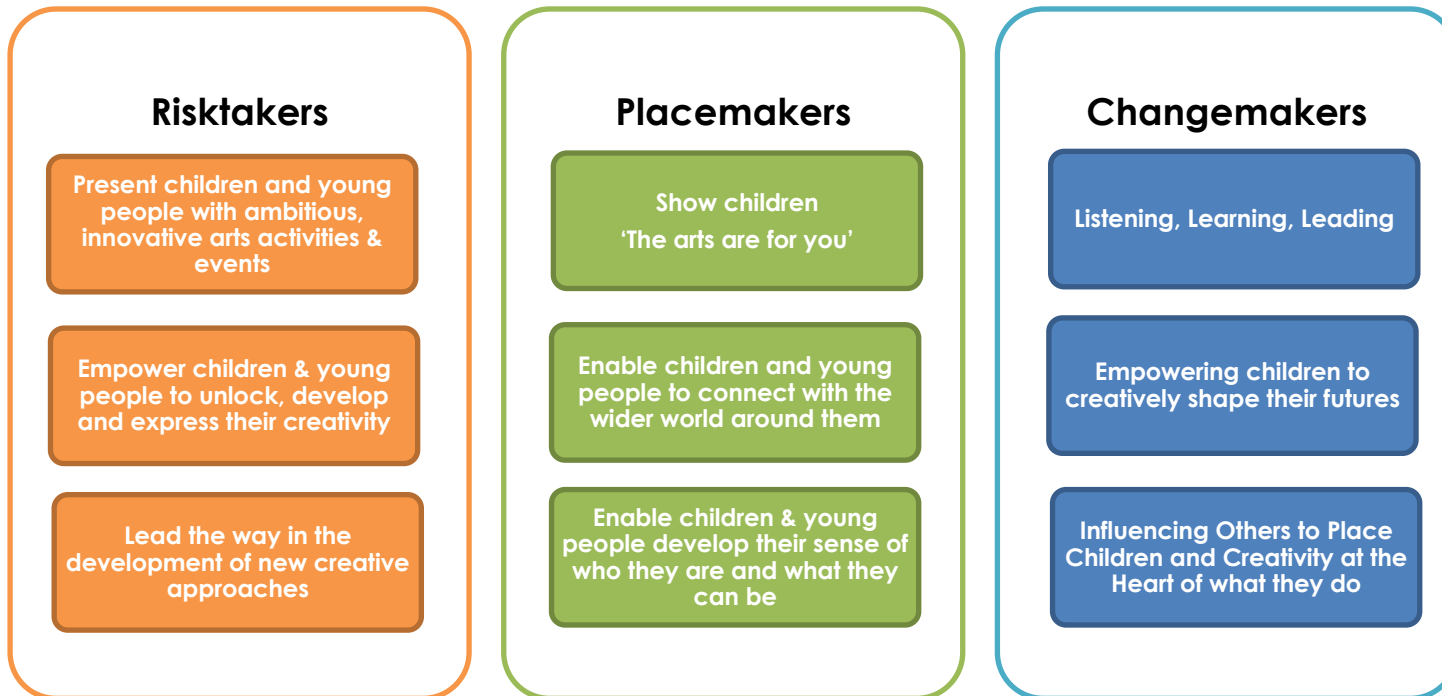
Create and curate exceptional and innovative arts experiences for all children and young people

Why do we do it?

The world needs creative people

How do we do it?

By being:



Underpinned at all times by our Values
Child Led, Quality & Excellence, Accessibility, Innovation, Respect

Summary of 2019/20 Activity

2019/20 was an important year for Young at Art as we delivered our 22nd Belfast Children's Festival (BCF20).

Despite on-going economic challenges and significant cuts to public sector arts funding, we successfully delivered a significant year-round programme of activity. Across the year Young at Art, our agency Young at Art Events, and our creative writing centre Fighting Words Belfast, delivered, **454 events** attended by **41,9815 children and adults** from all **11 local authority areas**. We also provided employment for a permanent staff team of 11 (3 full-time, 8 part-time). We also engaged 205 freelance artists, facilitators and event managers and 99 volunteers.

Our artistic programme offered in dance, theatre, visual arts, literature, music, film and comedy and a range of cross-art form and immersive events.

Key impacts in the year:

- BCF20: over 6 days from 6-11 March 2020, the festival:
 - Presented 118 events, including the TYANI Showcase of performance work for young audiences made in NI.
 - Was attended by **22,246 children and adults**
 - Was attended by 20 international delegates (producers, programmers)
 - Presented in 17 performance venues across the city
 - Programmed 4 international, 2 UK, 1 RoI and 9 local productions/performance
 - Included 'Access All Areas' our programme supported special a Schools and families with children with disabilities and complex needs, and a Community Transport scheme.
 - In addition to permanent YAA staff members, supported a 6-month marketing assistant and 3 university industry work placements.
 - Included participation by 48 schools with subsidised tickets and classroom resources.
 - 45% of audiences came from outside Belfast, including 6% from outside NI
 - 38% of audiences came from the top 100 most deprived super output areas
- Our agency and trading arm, Young at Art Events, engaged with a further **15,255 adults and children** throughout NI.
- Our creative writing centre, Fighting Words Belfast engaged with a further **1,691 children and young people**.

2020 Belfast Children's Festival

"I always look forward to the festival - there is very little like it throughout the year"
BCF20 Audience Feedback comment

With BCF20 we celebrated our 22nd annual Belfast Children's Festival. For 6 days, from 6-11 March 2020, 22,246 children and adults attended 118 events in 17 performance spaces across the city of Belfast, and experienced one of the largest and diverse programmes of arts and creativity for children in the UK and Ireland.

The festival is supported by Young at Art's year-round education and engagement programmes, engaging with schools and groups from areas of high deprivation.

Strategic partnerships with festival sponsor Destination CQ BID plus media partnerships with Ni4kids and Q Radio greatly improved the reach across NI. And the MAC once again was the 'festival hub'.

In terms of demographic and socio-economic data:

- 94% of festival bookers came from Northern Ireland, 55% of that audience coming from the Belfast and Greater Belfast area, 39% from rest of NI. The remaining 6% Out-of-State comprised 4% from ROI, 1% from GB, and 1% International Visitors. And this was in spite of the festival taking place at the start of the Covid-19 outbreak.
- 55% of survey respondents were in the 35-44 age group, followed by 20% in the 26 -34 age group, 17% were 45-54 age group and 7% were in the 55+ age group.
- For those who attended with children, the breakdown of age-groups was as follows: 38% were aged 0-4 yrs. old, 30% were aged 5-7, 18% were 8-10, 13% were aged 11-14 and 2% were aged 15-18.
- 38% of Belfast audience came from the top 100 most deprived super output areas (NI Multiple Deprivation Measure 2017). This represents a growth of 5% from BCF19.
- Our audience spread across Belfast was 12% from North, 13% from West, 34% from East, 37% from South and 4% from City Centre
(See Appendix 6 Audience and Survey Analysis p62)

Post-event evaluation was extremely positive:

- 93% of survey respondents rated their experience as Excellent (73%) or Good (20%);
- 100% of teachers surveyed stated that they would attend Belfast Children's Festival again; and
- 86% of TYANI (Theatre for Young Audiences NI) showcase delegates said they would attend the showcase again and recommend it to others.

"Thoroughly enjoyed it. I am ashamed to say it is my first visit but I will definitely recommend."

BCF20 Audience Feedback comment

For many children and their families, Belfast Children's Festival is their first real experience of live professional arts. 76% of festival visitors attended or participated free of charge.

In terms of first-time visitors to BCF19, 59% were new and 41% had been before. This shows that the festival is reaching new audiences every year. When asked if attending BCF had changed perceptions or encouraged more interest and interaction, 41% were keen to attend more arts

and cultural events, 34% replied that it had led to discussion of themes raised in the show/event attended, and 24% replied to say that their child is more excited about the arts.

“Wonderful, thought provoking show. Really special and important work where art enlightens us to other experiences.”

BCF20 Audience Feedback comment

When asked what they would be doing if not at BCF, 40% stated they would be at home, 60% other leisure activity or would be at work and 5%, demonstrating the power of the festival in getting people out of their homes, engaging them with top quality arts & culture, and bringing them into venues and public spaces across Belfast, not to mention the additional spend that accompanies a day out at local hospitality businesses (23% estimated they had spent between £10-£20; 24% spent £20-£30; 14% spent £30-£40; and 11% spent £60+).

In terms of marketing and communications, digital was important with 28% stating that they found out about BCF20 through social media, 21% stating YAA website and YAA e-news, 21% via the Festival Brochure, 19% Word of Mouth, and 9% from other websites and/or Outdoor Advertising.

The satisfaction ratings were extremely positive:

- Quality of events: 93% rated as Excellent or Good;
- Information about events: 93% rated as Excellent or Good;
- Value for money: 91% rated as Excellent or Good (5% increase on BCF19); and
- Venue: 100% rated as Excellent or Good (5% increase on BCF19).

The festival is multi-artform and had a number of distinct elements, all delivered to an internationally recognised high standard:

The Schools Programme was successful, despite the current financial constraints that schools face. We welcomed 61 individual classes from 46 schools (nursery, primary and secondary) to the schools programme (15 x Creative Child schools; 7 x Access All Areas/Special Access Programme, 8 x COLOUR OF SOUND schools; 1 x Journeys and Stories Engagement Programme, 5 x Irish Language Authors Programme, 3 x Children's Books Ireland 'Book of the Year' Shortlist Event; and 7 other schools. Although it did impress on us the importance of supporting schools with transport subsidies.

100% of teacher respondents would attend Belfast Children's Festival again.

A key part of the Belfast Children's Festival is our special focus on home-grown talent. This Theatre for Young Audiences NI (TYANI) Showcase profiles NI artist and companies creating work for young audiences here in Northern Ireland, and included presentations from Replay Theatre Company, the Belfast Ensemble, Helen Hall, *Baby Rave @ The MAC* from Young at Art Events, *Acoustic Picnic* by Oh Yeah Music Centre; and a Work-in-Progress *Feileacán agus an Rí* by Clara Kerr and Máire Zepf; a *ScratchWorks* platform of four NI independent artists (Keely Lane, Caitlin Magnall-Kearns, Suzannah McCreight, Sharon Dempsey); a series of industry talks and panel discussions.

The showcase also hosts an International Delegate programme to connect international producers and programmers to this local work as well as a range of networking opportunities and a delegate dinner. The delegate programme was very popular this year, welcoming 20

delegates, of whom 85% were Out-of-State visitors (30% ROI; 25% UK, and 30% International. These producers and programmers work in USA, Canada, Turkey, Chile, Germany, ROI, Scotland, England and NI. This demonstrates BCF's growing reputation for top quality programming and a 'go to' destination for international programmers booking and buying performance work. It also profiles Belfast as a key cultural destination, driving more overseas visitors to the festival. 86% said they would attend the showcase again and 100% saying they would recommend it to others.

BCF20 also hosted three visual art exhibitions: Mark Garry's *Songs and the Soil* at the MAC, its 'little sister' exhibition *Colour of Sound* by Young at Art, and *Virtually Theatre* by Kid's Own Publishing Partnership.

For further information see:

Appendix 3: Event by Event Breakdown on page 58

and Appendix 6: Audience and Survey Analysis on page 63

BCF20 International Programme

BCF20 welcomed artists from the Netherlands, Sweden/Serbia, Scotland and England.

For the first time in the festival's history we particularly highlighted the work from one nation, with a special 'Dutch Focus' supported by the Dutch Performing Arts Fund and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Hermit (Simone de Jong, the Netherlands)



Hermit (Simone de Jong Company)

This highly imaginative and creative non-verbal production from Simone de Jong Company brought us the story of a mini house and its shy inhabitant. Celebrating the joy of discovery, this

gentle, funny and moving performance for 2-6 yr. olds explored being alone and coming home in Upstairs at the MAC (9-11 March)

“Really lovely to see audience participation and engagement encouraged in a really sweet way. It came as a bit of a surprise, especially in the midst of the Coronavirus outbreak, so the audience were hesitant at first but it made the experience all the more special when children were willing to get involved and go on stage.”

“My 5-year-old loved it. Very cute and intimate feel good show for the little ones”.

“Absolutely loved it. Daughter totally enthralled and completely engaged. Brilliant interaction at the end.”

“This was very beautiful and moving and funny and the kids loved it.”

BCF20 audience feedback comments

Jabberbabble (Theatre group Kwatta, the Netherlands)

Theatre group Kwatta brought as Jabberbabble, a show about four birds and one nest, and what happens when birds of different feathers flock together.



Jabberbabble (Theatre group Kwatta)

Nobody understands the jibber jabber lingo at first but in time they find ways to communicate, even if they don't speak the same language, before long, they aren't strangers anymore and find a way to make room for one another. A clever and effective introduction to the migrant crisis for ages 6yrs+ this charming piece was entirely sung (as it should be with birds!) and performed in the Brian Friel Theatre at QUB in from 10-11 March.

“Fantastic production. We have a lot of non-English speaking children who were able to access it. Felt like we were all on the same page. Children were intrigued throughout and actors were fab. Thank you!”

“Really enjoyable. Children loved the story and were able to understand theme.”

“Thank you. Very interesting and unusual. Lots of different interpretations from the children!”

Teacher feedback comments

“Really enjoyable Very unusual and the children were captivated by the performance.”

“Completely beautiful and joyous. Loved it”.

“That show was fantastic. Lovely creation, a very beautiful mixing between theatre and music, manages to thrill and teach us about things like relationships, respect, love, and nature. It is a lovely travel to simplicity, and the actors and musician are so fantastic. Congratulations!”

BCF20 audience feedback comments

Tetris (Arch8, the Netherlands)

BCF21 closed with the joyous Tetris from Dutch physical dance company Arch8. Choreographed by the internationally renowned Erik Kaiel, *Tetris* is inspired by the video game of the same name.



Tetris (Arch8)

This extremely physical dance quartet explored how we connect with each other and how we belong to a community. Its ‘social architecture’ investigates how we build private language to communicate and then gently invited us to enter into their world. For kids that can’t sit still and for those ones that like to climb walls, this infectious production for ages 5yrs+ performed in Downstairs at the MAC from 10-11 March

The final performance was followed by the festival's closing reception, attended by Head of Dutch Performing Arts Fund Aad Hogervorst and hosted by the London Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, during which the Embassy's Head of Culture, Education and Communication, Roel van de Ven, addressed guests.

"So needed, so clever, excellent - well done YAA."

"Fabulous piece, fun, creative, highly physical, excellent performers and inventive participation with audience."

"We loved this - best show ever."

"Great experience for the whole family together."

"Bloomin' marvelous."

"Awesome - we love YAA!"

"Best day of my life." (from Joey, aged 7)

BCF20 audience feedback comments

The Garden of Spirited Minds (Dalija Acin Thelander, Sweden/Sweden)

Part performance, part installation, the Garden of Spirited Minds is a multi-sensorial experience for babies aged 1-12 months and their parents/carers. Created and performed by Stockholm-based choreographer Dalija Acin Thelander in collaboration with Noah Hellwig, babies were invited to move freely and enjoy the multiple perspectives, explore, be active and simply relax and chill!



The Garden of Spirited Minds (Dalija Acin Thelander)

The performance was durational, with no fixed start or finish, instead the tiny audience members were invited to come and go as the baby pleased within the performance session.

“Beautiful. We need to show audiences more work like this. It is so important and could make a big impact on many lives. Thank you”

“Great sensory experience, sound, visual, textures were all there. Baby was content the entire time.”

“Brought 6-month old son, expected to last about 10 mins as it was nap time. He was enthralled for at least 80 mins!! Gorgeous sensory experience for mama and baby alike. Thank you.”

“I thought this was a great experience for my daughter. She loved all the lights, sounds and the dancers did an amazing job.”

“Cara had an amazing time- like nothing she has ever seen before. Thanks so much, would recommend 10/10.”

“I found out about the festival from friends and social media. This show was beautifully done for babies- lots of sensory stimulation but in a lovely gentle way.”

“Wonderful adventure into world of touch for babies. Sequins was a big hit for our 3 months old. Thank you we enjoyed our time, so relaxing and the music was great.”

“Baby Ada was totally engaged during this performance. It was really wonderful- a space for her to gently explore and be stimulated by different sensory stimuli.”

BCF20 audience feedback comments

The performance resided in the Brian Friel Theatre in association with Queens University Belfast and Dalija, a world leader in the field of choreographic practice for babies, delivered a lecture on her practice and repertoire for students.

(For more information on our Industry Programme for Professionals see page 31)

Stick by Me (Andy Manley and Red Bridge Arts, Scotland)

Stick be Me from Andy Manley and Red Bridge Arts was a joyful and quirky non-verbal show for age 3-6yrs, about friendship, invention, play and the importance of treasuring the little things in life.



Stick By Me (Andy Manley/Red Bridge Arts)

Together two friends (a man, and a stick!) explore the limits of friendship and boundaries with hilarious, and sometimes moving, consequences in a beautifully crafted physical performance that delighted young and old alike in the MAC Upstairs (6-8 March).

“Loved it. My daughter’s face was split open with joy for almost the entire performance - there are a couple of sad moments which she completely emphasised with. She treasures her new stick and is still talking about the man and his sticks”.

“It was very good. At times you were laughing at other times you were crying.”

“Light but smart, something of a toy story with lollipop sticks. Andy Manley is a comic, physical delight.”

“Excellent show. Our first non-verbal and it was awesome.”

“Inspirational and talented show.”

BCF20 audience feedback comments

0AR (AØE, UK)

Enter 0AR, an immersive Augmented Reality (AR) from AØE for all the family. This drop-in immersive interactive experience merged contemporary dance and technology and take over the atrium of Ulster University's Belfast Campus from 7- 8 March.



0AR (AØE)

A collection of short dance works, participants explored and connected with the works using tablets and were invited to move and interact with the performance, where their actions had a unique influence on the piece

"I loved it. I felt like I was in a different world."

"Absolutely fantastic and immersive experience."

"Really fun and quirky and great activity."

"It was kind of weird at some points and scary but we really enjoyed it."

"Great immersive experience."

"Fab. Bring back again."

BCF20 audience feedback comments

Work-in-Progress: Priming the Canon (Abbey Theatre, Ireland)

The Abbey Theatre's *Priming the Canon* is a series of commissioned plays for young people which brings classic Irish characters into the heart of the classroom.



Priming the Canon (Abbey Theatre)

Following the successful of *Me Mollser* (introducing children to O'Casey's *The Plough and the Stars*), *Me, Michael* (Friel's *Dancing at Lughnasa*) and *Me, Sarah* (Synge's *Playboy of the Western World*), we were treated to a work-in-progress performance of the latest in the series exploring J.B. Keane's *Sive*.

Followed by a post-show discussion with the writer and director, the piece was performed in the Factory at the MAC on 7 March, and was recommended for 10yrs+.

BCF20 TYANI Showcase

Thanks to generous support from the National Lottery through the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, British Council and Culture Ireland we were delighted to once again host the **TYANI (Theatre for Young Audiences NI) Showcase**.

This 3-day showcase (6 –8 March) profiled some of the finest performance work for young audiences being created here in Northern Ireland, featuring fully-staged performances, a unique work-in-progress, a 'scratch' performance platform featuring four emerging individual artists, discussions and networking events.

The TYANI Showcase was also attended by 20 national and international delegates. Generous support from Arts Council NI, British Council and Culture Ireland allowed us to be able to target and support the travel and accommodation costs of 6 delegates from North America to travel to the showcase, allowing NI companies to pick up on and progress discussions started

following the 'Spotlight on Ireland' at the IPAY Showcase (Philadelphia, Jan 2020). 15% of delegates were from NI, 30% from ROI, 25% from UK (Scotland and England), and 30% from outside UK/Ireland including USA, Canada, Germany, Chile, and Turkey. 23% had never been to NI before.



Delegates attending the TYANI Showcase Opening Reception

Delegates surveyed rated the following at BCF20 as Excellent or Good:

- Quality of programme – 100%;
- Networking – 100%;
- Welcome – 100%; (92%, excellent)
- Ease of booking – 100%; (Excellent 85%)
- Accommodation – 91%;
- Value for money – 100%

“All the festival and venue support staff were excellent: professional, friendly and informed. The box office staff in particular did great work helping me with my booking on a very challenging opening day.”

“It was a well-organized festival!”

“Thank you for the incredible festival experience. Truly enjoyed being able to connect with such skilled international artists and curators who make an impact on our field every day. Loved being there in a well-organized festival and such a welcoming atmosphere.”

“I thought the schedule was well planned and allowed for a great connection the other artists while also leaving a balanced amount of time for work beyond the festival. Thank you. The packet was informative and incredibly useful.”

“I have very limited travel so thanks so much for this trip. I got great learning and opportunities to connect and learn more about NI artists and creators”

“Please keep doing what you do as it is invaluable to artists and audiences getting a chance to see so many shows in that space of time on their doorsteps.”

“Keep up the great work, this is a fantastic event!”

2020 TYANI Showcase Delegate Feedback comments

The Untold Truth of Captain Hook (Replay Theatre Company, NI)

Replay Theatre Company opened the showcase with a newly commissioned relook at the classic family literary favourite Peter Pan.



Untold Truth of Captain Hook (Replay Theatre Co)

Replay shows us that even a villain can be the hero of his own tale. Lost boys, shipwrecks, mermaids, crocodiles and pirates all featured in this awfully big adventure through the time before Neverland for ages 7yrs+ at the Naughton Studio, Lyric Theatre (6-11 March). Full of 'swashbuckle' and charm, the show had a delightful and clever twist that will leave all audience members thinking a little differently about the classic story.

“Smart and funny retelling, with a humane slant, tied to a masterfully detailed set. Performances strong. Tone just right. Great Start to festival.”

“Such a lovely spin. Everyone will read the book again with different eyes. Lovely set, text, performance, direction. Kudos!”

“I thought it was excellent. The acting was brill and what a great twist to the story.”

“Excellent play - great to bring the kids and introduce them to theatre.”

“Enjoyable extension of a well-loved tale.”

“Boys (and mum) loved it - a great imaginative performance. Lovely accessible real theatre at a manageable cost!!”

“The show was amazing and very good prequel to captain hook.”

BCF20 Audience Feedback comments

Inside the Speaker (Helen Hall, NI)

Inside the Speaker invited us to step into the world of partially sighted choreographer and dancer Helen Hall to experience dance differently.



Inside the Speaker (Helen Hall)

Through light, sound and movement *Inside the Speaker* took us on a journey of the senses and challenged how we experience the world around us. The piece for ages 10+ celebrated the idea of difference and how that difference actually makes the world around us a very interesting place.

Inside the Speaker performed in the Crescent Arts Centre from 6-8 March.

“Wonderful, thought provoking show. Really special and important work where art enlightens us to other experiences.”

“A very enjoyable performance which made you think about how others react to different situations.”

“It was a good performance and really helped me step into her shoes.”

“Beautiful, emotive, sensory, thought provoking.”

“Really interesting. Great use of sound, nice to close your eyes and get taken somewhere else.”

“Brilliant moving. Wonderful combination of dance movement, spoken word, music, lighting and use of space. Really excellent. “

“Absolutely brilliant performance! Loved it in every way. It connected and took beyond all the differences to the core of the experience! Thank you!”

BCF20 audience Feedback comments

“A really wonderful experience, I enjoyed watching the pupils’ reactions and putting ourselves in the dancer’s shoes. Helen was brilliant very unique and interesting - Thanks again.”

“Really inspiring show and really moving performance for the girls to see. They moved from feeling unsettled and unsure to being inspired. Fantastic experience in empathy. Good luck for the future.”

Teacher Feedback comments

Kindermusik Project (The Belfast Ensemble, NI)

Kindermusik Project was a new chamber music commission for tiny ears aged 6yrs+. Written for narrator, chamber ensemble and toy instruments by composer Conor Mitchell *Kindermusik* used nursery rhymes and nonsense songs to explore what a tune /means', how we hear it, and perhaps how we will play it ourselves someday.



Kindermusik Project (The Belfast Ensemble)

Kindermusik was performed in one of the city's hidden gems, St. Martin's Church on the lower Newtownards Road from 7-8 March, and was a must for anyone who values the power of music in a child's life.

"This is a very beautiful idea in a beautiful building. The music transports adults and kids to a dream with the lovely text. I think it is perfect for music education, to develop new perspectives and form to approach the music. Congratulations. I loved it."

"Loved it - classic, inclusive, brilliant."

"That was absolutely gorgeous. Thank you so much."

"A great experience explaining music to children. It took you on an exciting journey - kids loved it."

"Beautiful. Stunning setting, loved the story and the narration was so animated."

"I really loved it." (from Cormac, aged 6)

"Magnificent." (from Elliot, aged 6)

BCF20 audience feedback comments

Baby Rave @ the MAC (Young at Art Events, NI)

It wouldn't be a BCF without *Baby Rave*. The original and the best. Babies and their families got down to the beat for fun-filled raves designed for the under 4s in the accessible, child-friendly surrounds of our festival hub, the MAC (7-8 March).



Baby Rave (Young at Art Events)

The venue was kitted out with themed hangings, colorful visuals and sensory toys, and our team of friendly and energetic dance leaders encouraged babies and their parents/carers to dance and explore rhythm and music to the sounds of our resident DJ Bounce Culture.

“Great - Brilliant music and enthusiasm from everyone.”

“Inclusive show, right length of time, good mix of audio-visuals.”

“Good fun, and not too loud for babies or husband!”

“Was absolutely fantastic - enjoyed raving and reliving my youth and introducing my 2 y/o to it - Great fun!!”

“Brilliant music and great staff who interacted with the children- great family fun.”

“We had two very happy babies during the rave. They were 10 months and 4 years - proving its tons of fun for littlest babies and bigger kids. The DJs, performers and instructors are so friendly and made us all so welcome.”

“Really well done on another excellent engaging and stimulating baby rave - the children loved it and we enjoyed the whole set up. Excellent event and a really engaging group of staff too.”

“Lovely experience and we were very impressed how baby and family friendly the facilities were (nappies available, ample changing space, buggy parking etc). Thanks.”

BCF20 audience feedback comments

Family Comedy Club (Paul Currie, NI)

Family Comedy Club returned with the self-professed king of surreal comedy, Paul Currie, in the Black Box (10 March). Paul unleashed his unique style, which fuses traditional stand-up with puppetry, clowning and sheer exuberance, in an especially created performance for ages 6yrs+.

Original and refreshing comedy performance for families that went straight to the funny bone.

“Funny, cutting edge, brave programming.”

“It was soooo funny.”

“I thought it was funny entertaining and a little bit crazy.”

“A great and wonderful night. The whole family had a great time.”

“Amazing show- the children really enjoyed it. It was warming to see them smile the whole time.”

“Hugely enjoyable, funny and madcap as ever. Wouldn't miss it!”

“Insanely bonkers and fantastic fun for all the family.”

“Went to this last year too, absolutely loved it - Paul Currie is some talent! Great to have an event whole family can enjoy, Black Box is one of our favourite venues as well.”

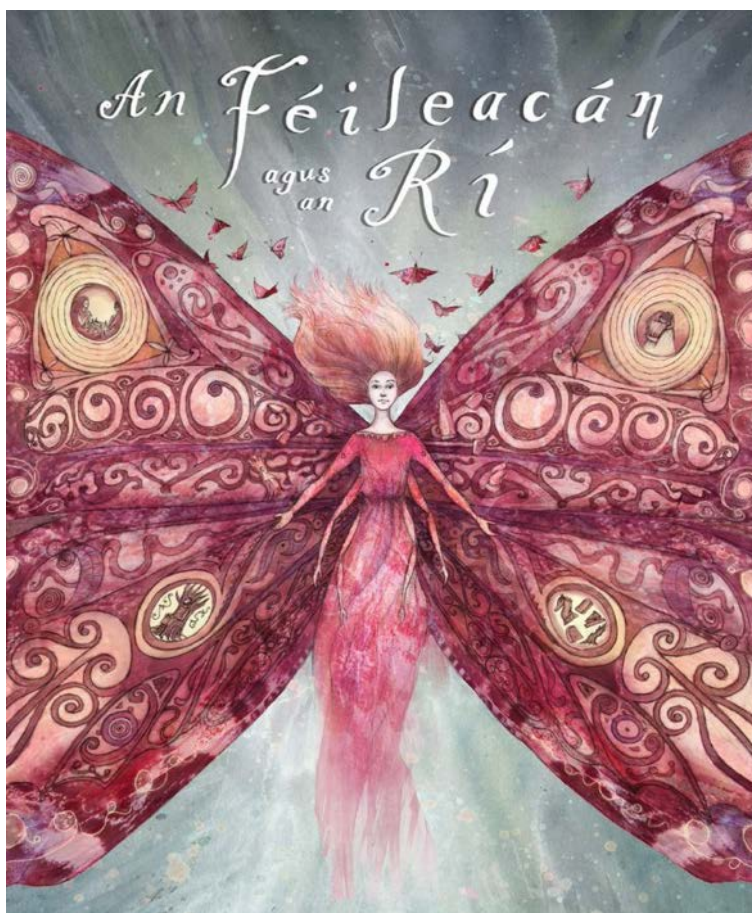
“Paul has the rare ability to be able to keep both children and adults thoroughly entertained throughout the entire performance.”

“The event was well organised and Paul was unique to say the least. A memorable play date with a funny 45-year-old.”

BCF20 audience Feedback comments

Work-in-Progress: An Féileacán agus an Rí (Clara Kerr & Máire Zepf, NI)

This work-in-progress performance was based on new retelling of the ancient Irish myth of Mídhir and Étaoin from acclaimed writer Máire Zepf in collaboration with emerging dancer and choreographer Clara Kerr with beautiful illustrations by Shona Shirley Macdonald.



An Féileacán agus an Rí (Clara Kerr/Máire Zepf)

The show was in association with Cultúrlann McAdam Ó Fiaich and Holywood Shared Town and was performed in Irish, with simultaneous English translation 7-8 March

“Fantastic performance.”

“One of the best shows I have seen in a long time, magical. Should tour the world.”

“The venue was great, lovely and welcoming. The show was also brilliant.”

“A festival highlight.”

BCF20 audience feedback comments

ScratchWorks (Individual Artists, NI)

The showcase's **Scratch works** platform offered audiences and international delegates a chance to see new and innovative performance works at the very first stages of development. This year the artists, selected by open call, included Caitlin Magnall-Kearns, Keeley Lane, Sharon Dempsey and Suzannah McCreight. The programme was mentored and curated by acclaimed director Richard Croxford and performed in The MAC's Factory (8 March).

The Scratch Works were also attended by the TYANI Showcase delegates, who had an opportunity to feedback and answer specific question that the artists wanted to address and which they felt would support the pieces' development.

Other Work presented by NI Artists

The showcase's programme was supplemented by work from other local companies, including:

- The Oh Yeah Music Centre, **Acoustic Picnic** (7 March) threw open the centre's doors to families offering a drop-in afternoon of live music, crafts, games and activities. The popular event attracted the largest audience so far in its history.
- The Black Box hosted their **Mini Moon Disco** (8 March). The event is specially created for children aged 0-7yrs with any kind of disability and their families, with understated music, coloured lights and moving visuals, soft cushions, sensory toys and lots of dancing. Conditions were perfect for everyone to enjoy themselves.
- **Mini Midweek Magic** (age 5yrs+) was the popular family edition of the 'grown up' version that has been packing the Black Box for years. Seedhead Arts wheeled around the Black Box Green Room some for the best magicians in NI with a series of close-up magic, stage magic, and even gave families a chance to learn a trick or two themselves. (11 March).
- **Ecology Today**, from NMNI, was an afternoon devoted to events, exhibitions, activities and discussions on ecology, the environment and climate change at the Ulster Museum (7 March). Families were encouraged to see our planet through the lenses of scientists and learn how ecologists are working to develop solutions to global problems.
- Young at Art, in partnership with Cultúrlann McAdam Ó Fiaich, delivered a special festival edition on 10 March of **Babaithe Cultúir (Culture Babies)**, a programme of creative sessions that encourage babies and their parents/carers to try new things and get as creative (and messy!) as they want, in a safe, fun, welcoming Irish language environment. All levels of Irish were welcome.
- The Strand Arts Centre hosted a special festival edition of their Saturday Minors Club on 7 March. Children were able to enjoy a special screening of **The Secret of Kells** (PG), the Irish

Oscar nominated animation directed by Tom Moore and Nora Twomey. The screening was followed by a Celtic Storytelling workshop.

BCF20 Visual Arts Programme

The festival continues to support children and young people's engagement and participation with the visual arts, and supporting their connection with the city's galleries.

We once again partnered with the MAC's Senior Curation Team to connect children to Garry's *Permanent Presence* and their new major exhibition of Mark Garry's work:

Songs and the Soil (Mark Garry, Ireland)

Garry transformed the MAC featuring an indoor meadow with hundreds of dried flowers accompanied by an eight-hour musical composition made of birdsong and sounds captured in field recordings close to where the artist lives. For the duration of BCF20 this soundscape was replaced by a special one created by local schoolchildren from our *Colour of Sound* project, see below.



Children enjoying *Songs and the Soil* (Mark Garry)

Songs and the Soil also included a new film entitled *An Lucht Siúil* (The Walking People) which explored the relationship between Irish Travellers and modernism. The exhibition also featured a new thread sculpture, responding to the architecture of the MAC's Tall Gallery, echoing the foyer's *Permanent Presence*.

COLOUR OF SOUND (Young at Art, NI)

Young at Art artists, Jane Butler and Duncan Ross, worked with children from eight local primary schools to have a creative conversation about Garry's *Songs and the Soil*. The children visited the MAC, met and chatted with artist Garry, and back in the classroom creatively responded to his work. The **COLOUR OF SOUND** exhibition was the result of that creative exchange.



THE COLOUR OF SOUND (Young at Art)

The children took field recordings of the sounds around their school and created their own sonic composition that 'took over' and transformed Garry's own composition for the duration of the festival. They also created their own exhibition of work, using textiles, sculpture and photography, that exhibited in the MAC's Common Room Gallery, alongside the work that inspired it.

(For further details of the Colour of Sound engagement programme please see page 37)

Virtually There (Kids Own Publishing Partnership, Ireland).

For 13 years **Virtually There** has delivered innovative in-depth art practice in schools in Northern Ireland. Teachers and artists collaborated with children to explore, engage and experiment with contemporary art, connecting classroom and studio through the interactive whiteboard.



Virtually There (Kid's Own Publishing Partnership)

The exhibition offered a glimpse of the rich and varied work that emerged through partnerships in nine schools in the Ulster University's Belfast Campus (6-11 March)

BCF20 Literature Programme

Literary events remain a key element of the festival's programme, developing a love of creative writing, books and storytelling in children and young people.

The Right Twig Showcase (Fighting Words Belfast/Lyric Theatre, NI)

The Right Twig Showcase (ages 14+) showcased rehearsed readings created by young playwrights' programme (14-18 years old) developed in a series of in-depth workshops and brought to the stage with professional directors and performers by Fighting Words Belfast and the Lyric Theatre, and performed in the Lyric's Naughton Studio (9 March).

Book Clinic (Children's Books Ireland, Ireland)

If you were feeling uninspired by your bookshelves and looking for a new series to delve into, we had the answer. The **Book Clinic** returned to BCF, the ever-popular pop-along 'clinic' where young readers could grab an appointment with the book doctor and get a prescription for an exciting new read. The clinic was open across the festival weekend, in the Ulster Museum on 7 March and Ulster University on 8 March.



Book Clinic (Children's Books Ireland)

Children's Book of the Year, Shortlist Announcement (Children's Books Ireland, Ireland)

BCF hosted the shortlist announcement of Children's Books Ireland's **Children's Book of the Year** for the fourth year running. The event took place in the MAC on 9 March, attended by secondary schools from across Belfast. As well as hearing about the books that had been shortlisted, the pupils enjoyed an 'In Conversation' with authors Sheena Wilkinson and Kelly McCaughrain, and a chance to ask the authors questions about how they approach their writing and their creative process. Thanks to sponsorship from KPMG, each school took copies of all shortlist books back to their school libraries.

BCF20 Your PLACE, Family Day Out

The flagship event of BCF20 Belfast was the Family Day Out, bursting with exciting activities across the Cathedral Quarter.

Thanks to support from CQ BID (the area's business improvement district) match funded by Arts and Business NI, we were able to whet visitors' appetites in advance offering a taster of activities during the half-term break on Sunday 16 February, giving the festival a valuable profile and sales push three weeks before the main event. Cando Academy delivered 'Lego Animation' workshops in the MAC, and Strand Arts Centre delivered a 'pop-up' cinema screening of *Zootropolis* in Ramada by Wynham with an accompanying themed creative workshop.

Then during the BCF20 weekend, on Sunday 8 March children and their families were encouraged to come down to CQ and discover that it's not just an area for the night-time economy, but a family-friendly destination that is **Your PLACE** with lots to do and see.

Businesses across the area opened their doors to families with a range of festival discount deals and offers, including Craft NI, Yardbird, the Cloth Ear, Coppi, Belfast Cathedral, the MAC, Ramada by Wyndham, Phoenix Law and Unique in Ulster University, with many hosting festivals events and activities.

As well as the wide range festival performances and events running in the MAC and the Black Box, we had a jam-packed afternoon of free activities for all the family across the Cathedral Quarter.

The Cathedral Quarter area buzzed with stilt-walkers, street performers, musicians and magicians. The **ArtCart** took up residence in St Anne's Square with VR workshops. Established Café and the MAC hosted sessions of **Dragtime Stories** with Cherrie Ontop, one of Belfast's best loved drag queens.



Dragtime Stories (Cherrie Ontop)

Ramada by Wyndham hosted a **Pop-Up Cinema** from Strand Arts Centre in the hotel with a themed workshop and screening of *Kiki's Delivery Service*. And the offices of architects Feilden Clegg Bradley became the location for **Cardboard Cities** in which families reimaged the city with recycled materials, supported by architects from the Feilden Clegg Bradley team.



Cardboard Cities (Young at Art Events, Feilden Clegg Bradley)

The Ulster University was a hive of activity. In addition to the ***Virtually There*** exhibition on display and the immersive augmented reality piece ***OAR***, families enjoyed a wide range of workshops and activities including ***Lego Digital Animation Workshops*** from Cando Academy, ***The Longest Story Ever Told*** from Fighting Words Belfast, the ***Book Clinic*** from Children's Books Ireland, a **range of art workshops** including 'Bees & Butterflies', 'Family Paperchains', 'My Place, My House' and a 'Wishing Tree', face painters and much more. All to the wonderful soundtrack of ***Trad Tracks*** from An Droichead.



Visitors attending Your PLACE

Age-specific itineraries were featured in our Festival Special 'wraparound' cover of the February edition of *NI4Kids* magazine and available to download online with a map of activity locations and a 'Passport to CQ' encouraged families to navigate around all events and make

a day of it. Your PLACE attracted **2,045 visitors** to the Cathedral Quarter, in addition to the festival 1,000 ticket holders who were already coming down for the afternoon for their festival fix, and the whole event was covered by **QRadio** team who broadcast live from the event.

“Lovely simple craft activities that took the perfect amount of time for my two kids.”

“Absolutely fantastic, complete family fun day- we LOVED it - thanks so much.”

“Great family day out- lots to see and do.”

“Really good activities and lots to do.”

“Please run it again next year.”

Your PLACE visitor feedback comments

BCF20 Industry Programme

Interrogating topics in the field, exploring key trends and sharing best and emerging practice across a range of artforms is key to ensuring that we, and the sector as a whole (artists, practitioners, educationalists and researchers) remain at the leading edge of youth arts practice. Our industry programme hosted 6 talks/discussion/symposium events for industry professionals and educationalists working in related fields of youth, education and research.

Choreographic Practice for Babies (Dalija Acin Thelander, Sweden/Serbia)

Dalija Acin Thelander is a world-leader in choreographic practice for babies. Creator of *Baby Space*, *Sensescapes* (which performed at BCF18), *Sixth Day of the Moon*, *Myriads of Worlds*, and the *Garden of Spirited Minds* which performed in the Brian Friel theatre this year in BCF20, Dalija's work is a synergy of choreography and installation art. In this special lecture for QUB she shared her latest developmental scientific research on infants, and gave us an overview of her choreographic methods, encouraging us to rethink and challenge the concepts and aesthetics of performing arts for babies.

The 'R' Word (Young at Art/Theatre NI)

Resilience is a word we are hearing more and more in conjunction with the arts sector. Reductions in public subsidy in a time of economic restraint means we need to become more resilient. But how do we build resilience? What does resilience look like, and feel like, in practice in the arts sector? In association with Theatre NI, this panel discussion heard from a range of cultural leaders who all faced very challenging circumstances and talked about their individual challenges, what they learned about themselves and their companies, and how it felt for them, their staff and their Boards.



Delegates pictures at the 'R' Word, part of Belfast Children's Festival 2020 industry programme

Virtually There Symposium (Kid's Own Publishing Partnership)

As part of the *Virtually There* exhibition in Ulster University Kid's Own Publishing Partnership hosted an event for artists, teachers, and anyone interested in arts education to examine what collaboration really means. Attendees were introduced to the long-running and pioneering *Virtually There* project that linked artists in their studios to children in their classrooms. The event comprised of the launch of a report comprising two year's research, and a panel discussion with participating artists and teachers.

Stone Soup (Young at Art/Theatre NI)

Stone Soup is a folk tale which tells of hungry strangers visiting a town convince townspeople to share a small amount of their food in order to make a meal that nourishes everyone, and that's what this event did by inviting the audience members to bring the topics for discussion. There was one rule: the 'F' word is not allowed ('F' = Funding). Hosted by Catherine Wheels (Scotland) Artistic Director, Gill Roberston the topics included 'innocence', can you be a 'reckless' programmer, and age guidance for performance work for young audiences.

Physical Performance and Modern Mime Workshop (Simone de Jong, the Netherlands)

Simone de Jong, director of *Hermit* presenting at this year's BCF20, is a Dutch performer, director and teacher specialising in modern mime and music theatre. In this practical workshop for theatre professionals, she explored how the difference between an actor and a physical performer is their starting point. The first starts with the text or a problem, the second starts from the body. This 2.5hr session experimented with the different ways to perform and explored sensitivity, movement qualities and physical awareness.

Creating Work for Young Audiences (Young at Art)

We all know when we've seen a great piece of performance work for young audiences, we can 'feel' it. But it's not 'child's play' to create a great piece. A truly memorable work is a carefully crafted entity. This panel discussion asked what makes a great performance work for young audiences 'great'? Are there key elements and if so, what are they? Or is it just simply just alchemy? Tom Maguire (Ulster University), Josee Hussarts (Theatre group Kwatta) and Simone de Jong (Simone de Jong Company) joined the panel discussion chaired by Jen White (the MAC).

2019/20 Education & Engagement Programmes

Our year-round education and engagement programmes deliver a range of engagement initiatives, supported by our dedicated Education Officer, to connect children and young people to the creative arts.

In 2019/20 we engaged with a total of **1,239 children and young people from 36 schools**, in addition to the 12 schools that booked to attend BCF20.

Creative Child

Creative Child is our flagship programme working with **569 children in 22 classes in 15 nursery schools** in some of Belfast's most economically and socially deprived communities. The project aims to increase children's confidence, imagination and critical thinking skills through direct contact creative experiences using arts-based engagement.

The project overcomes the barriers to access – economic, educational, social and physical – exploring communication, opinion, literacy and creativity. The programme works with nursery schools in the North, West and East of Belfast, including 2 Irish medium schools:

Ballysillan Nursery School	Naiscoil Bheann Mhadagain
Blackmountain Nursery School	Naiscoil Mhic Reachtain
Cliftonville Nursery School	Nettlefield Nursery School
Edenderry Nursery School	Seaview Nursery School
Glenbank Nursery School	Shaftesbury Nursery School
Hobby Horse Playgroup	St Matthew's Nursery School
Hope Nursery School	Tudor Lodge Nursery School
Knocknagoney Nursery School	

The child-led and process-based methodology delivers direct contact experiences using arts-based engagement to explore communication, opinion, literacy and creativity with the children aged between 3-5 yrs.

Each child in the project is intended to receive 7 creative experiences, including pre- and post-festival performance workshops in two mediums (drama or dance and visual art) delivered by specially-trained professional artist facilitators and support workers, a visit to a BCF20 performance, a parent/child workshop, and an extended experience drama workshop at either the Strand Arts Centre or Cultúrlann McAdam Ó Fiaich.



Children enjoying a Creative Child session

However, due to the outbreak of Covid-19 in March 2020 we were unable to deliver the majority of the post-festival activity. Only 4 schools were able to receive their post-festival visual art and drama workshop, and unfortunately none of the parent/child workshops or extended experience workshops were able to happen. We were also unable to deliver our prop boxes, which were to be provided to every class after their festival visit to encourage continued play and engagement in the free-play area of their nursery.

Despite this forced project suspension due to the Covid-19 outbreak, Creative Child was very successful in promoting creativity in the participating children, and the adults in their lives (teachers, parents/carers). It connected participating children to a diverse range of artforms (drama, dance, visual arts) and engaged them with arts and creativity to multiple ways: practically as active participants in creative workshop sessions; as audience members at a live performance; and intellectually arming them with the capacity to express their experience both verbally and figuratively using our unique child-led approach to creativity.

We are indebted to the Foyle Foundation, the ARN Foundation and the Lightbody Foundation for their generous support for the project, and for their understanding in allowing us to honour all artist contracts in full, despite session cancellations.

Selection of Teacher Feedback Comments:

“The relationship you build with the children is amazing, even meeting them before theatre visit makes such a difference, that consistency is a big thing because they don’t have that in other parts of their lives.”

Seaview Nursery School

“The majority of our children had never attended the theatre before so this was a very memorable experience for them.”

Naiscoil Bheann Mhadagáin

“Some would have never been to a theatre, first time they ever went into a space and sat in the dark. They were so enthralled with the show, weren’t bored at all.”

Seaview Nursery School

“The arts and creativity are vitally important, as unfortunately in school too much weight is attributed to ‘core subjects. The Arts gives all children a chance to shine and use their imagination. It gives children who can be shy the space to express themselves in their own way.”

Glenbank Nursery School

“We now use lot of drama to pretend and use our imaginations and use it as a way for children to express themselves non- verbally. This is especially successful with the children with speech difficulties or the ones who do not have English as a first language.”

Nettlefield Nursery School

“The arts are incredibly important in developing confidence, imagination, and thinking skills, in particular with younger children. The Creative Child project allows our children to engage with the arts in new ways they will not have experienced in the nursery environment.”

Naiscoil Bheann Mhadagáin

COLOUR OF SOUND

In partnership with the MAC, the **COLOUR OF SOUND** was a unique visual arts engagement programme linking with Mark Garry's exhibition *Songs and the Soil* at the MAC.

Working with **244 pupils from eight primary schools** in West, East and North Belfast:

Ballysillan Primary School
Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagain
Bunscoil Mhic Reachtain
Cliftonville Integrated Primary School
Gaelscoil na bhFál
Our Lady's Girls Primary School
Nettlefield Primary School
Seaview Primary School

Project artists Jane Butler and Duncan Ross facilitated a creative conversation and exploration of colour and sound through the eyes and ears of children, using various visual and sonic art mediums.

The participating children visited the MAC to visit the *Songs and the Soil* exhibition to meet Mark Garry. Garry explained his artistic approach and the multi-disciplinary techniques used. Back in the classroom the children used this as a launchpad to both creatively respond to reflect on/respond to their urban landscape and Garry's work by adding their voice directly into it, and in turn create/curate their own separate installation/exhibition in response.

Ross & Butler facilitated the children to create their own sonic installation 'takeover' of Garry's own compositional installation in his exhibition in the Upper Gallery in the MAC, running on loop for the duration of the Belfast Children's Festival (6-11 March). This approach was a first for both YAA and the MAC. We strongly believe is a ground-breaking concept.

Then the children worked with Ross & Butler to create their own pieces, using textile painting, sculpture and photography. The resulting exhibition, entitled 'Colour of Sound' was displayed in the Common Room Gallery at the MAC for the duration of the Belfast Children's Festival (6-11 March). The exhibition spilled out into the foyer area between the Common Room and Tall Galleries, creating a 'creative pathway' to connect the two 'sister' exhibitions.

All classes involved in the project were then invited back to the MAC to visit their very own exhibition. We had another special treat in store during their visit, with all children also enjoying a BCF20 performance of *Tetris*.



The COLOUR OF SOUND

A child-friendly 'exhibition toolkit' was developed to assist the classes visiting, as well as children, young people and their families who visited during BCF20 to engage with both exhibitions. The tool-kit explained the link between the exhibitions and also prompted questions to help encourage family conversations about the art. Artists Jane Butler and Duncan Ross were also on hand at the exhibition over the festival weekend to answer questions. Over the six days of BCF20, the exhibitions were attended by **1,672 visitors**.

Selection of Teacher Feedback Comments:

“The girls are so excited for the second visit to the MAC, this has been such a wonderful learning opportunity for them”

Our Lady's Girls Primary School

“Visiting the MAC Arts Centre to see Mark Garry’s exhibition, ‘Songs & the Soil’, and have a tour guided by the artist himself, along with Jane and Duncan was an amazing experience for the children and we are so looking forward to our return visit in March”

Ballysillan Primary School

“It was amazing to for the children to see their own artwork, created in school on display as part of Mark Garry’s exhibition. And what a great opportunity to watch the brilliant performance called Tetris and get to be part of the performance at the end.”

Ballysillan Primary School

“This project has really allowed the children to freely express themselves using art in a way they wouldn’t normally get to. Jane and Duncan have been fantastic, and getting to visit the MAC and have their own work up in the gallery is just incredible, lots of these children wouldn’t get to visit a place like this without Young at Art.”

Cliftonville Primary School

“This has been such a wonderful project to be a part of – the workshops in school were so well done and really gave the children so much freedom and new ideas about how art can be done, and visiting the MAC was such a wonderful opportunity for them as well.”

Seaview Primary School

JOURNEYS AND STORIES

Journeys and Stories is a new schools engagement programme exploring the challenges faced by newcomers to Belfast, generously supported by Education Authority's Intercultural Education Service, Belfast City Council's Good Relations Unit, the Austin and Hope Pilkington Trust, and the Belfast Cathedral Sit-Out Fund. The project was developed in partnership with Fane Street Primary School, and was to be piloted in 8 other schools (4 primary, 4 secondary) in Spring 2020.

During the development stage at Fane Street Primary School the project directly engaged with 47 pupils in 2 Primary 6 classes, through 3 travel-themed drama-based workshops delivered to each class. Each creative workshop used drama and artistic exercises to explore ideas around pre-existing attitudes to newcomers/ refugees/asylum seekers arriving in and settling in Belfast. The drama-based workshops allowed the children to express their own stories as newcomers, as well as their attitudes toward newcomer children in a safe, creative, open conversation (and non-verbal expression) led by an experienced facilitator, something that is difficult to achieve in a traditional classroom setting.

The workshops encouraged discussion and discovery as to why people might become displaced and/or need to flee their home countries, and gave space for individual stories to be explored in a safe environment. The project celebrated the diversity of people's backgrounds, journeys and stories, while exploring techniques of how we can act as individuals/community to make people feel welcome.



Participants enjoying Journeys and Stories

The impact of the project on pupils was assessed using several methods, one of which was an in-workshop evaluation questionnaire designed to assess attitudes towards those who are in a 'different' group from themselves. As Fane Street Primary is a school that has a more diverse school population than average (80% newcomer children across the 2 classes we worked with) the attitudes at the start were already relatively positive, nevertheless based on the evaluation, as well as stories from the workshops, there was a marked improvement:

- The evaluation question "I would like to spend more time with children from a different group"
 - Beginning of Workshop 1: 40% of children responding positively
 - End of Workshop 3: to same question response had risen to 78%
- Similarly, the question "I care about the experiences or problems children from another group may have":
 - Beginning of Workshop 1: 50% of children responding positively
 - End of Workshop 3: to same question response had risen to 100%.

Allowing a safe space for newcomer children to share their experience without pressure or fear is a major element of the project and builds empathy among classmates. In one activity, 'Story Mapping', the children are encouraged to map their own story, whatever is important to them, on the floor using a variety of open-ended materials. Through this exercise the children are able to express their own life story, whether it be their family's journey to a new home in Belfast or the holiday they took last summer. This activity allows for freedom of expression without words, which can be a large barrier for newcomer children, and a safe way outlet as they are only invited to share with each other if they so choose.

During this exercise in Fane St. one boy was able to tell the story of his own journey moving to Belfast from Poland with his Mum, leaving his birth father behind and coming to know his step-father in Belfast. He was able to express the complicated story of emigration and a blended family through the use of open-ended materials and felt proud to share his work and his story with classmates when he was finished.

Due to the Covid-19 outbreak in March 2020 the project was halted after the development stage. It was so disappointing that the project had to halt prematurely. Our initial findings in Fane St (outlined above) showed the potential of this project and how valuable a pilot it in more schools in a greater variety of age ranges would be. The need for this project is clear, particularly as more schools across Belfast are welcoming an increasing number of newcomer pupils.

Feedback from Fane Street Primary School's Vice Principal:

"The project was very well run, all the children enjoyed it and felt comfortable right from the beginning. It was a great project and we would be keen to do it again. It was excellent to express thoughts, worries, feelings through art."

Access All Areas

Access All Areas is an access and engagement programme for children and young people with special needs, learning disabilities, including those with neurodiverse and/or autistic spectrum conditions and other sensory or communication needs that ran during BCF20, supported by the D'Oyly Carte Trust, the Enkalon Foundation, the Blackburn Trust and, thanks to Replay Theatre Company's support, the Arts Council NI's Pilot Premium Payments Programme

Access All Areas delivered the provision of 'relaxed performances', offering a more informal performance experience suitable for neurodiverse children and young people or those with autistic spectrum conditions (ASC) and/or physical or learning disabilities with adjusted lighting and sound levels and anxiety aids (including stress balls/ear defenders).

'Relaxed performances' were offered to both special schools and the general public and included a total of 6 performances (4 performances for special schools and 2 public performances) of **Stick by Me** by Red Bridge Arts (Scotland) suitable for 3-6yrs and **The Untold Truth of Captain Hook** by Replay Theatre Company (NI) suitable for 7yrs+.

A specially-developed 'visual story' pack was distributed in advance of the theatre visit and detailed the experience of arriving at the venue and what to expect at the performance to reduce visit anxiety. Special schools also received a Teacher Resource Pack (one for each production) tailored to each show with pre- and post-visit activities to prepare for and unpack the experience of the show to reduce the potential anxiety and stress on children, teachers and support staff was provided.

Specialist training was provided for event and venue staff. Anxiety aids and ear plugs were available all 'relaxed performances, and a 'chill out' zone was located adjacent to the auditorium so children experiencing anxiety can leave and re-enter the performance as needed. These measures remove 'unknowns' and reduce the children's anxieties both prior to and during their visit to the festival. This in turn reduces the stress on parents, siblings, carers and teachers and makes for a more enjoyable experience for all.

8 special schools benefited in total (190 children and 59 teacher/carers) with each school received fully subsidised tickets to the 'relaxed' performances and fully-subsidised specialised transport to the venue:

Ceara Special School (Lurgan)
Donard Specila School (Banbridge)
Glenveagh Special School (Belfast)
Harberton Special School (Belfast)
Hill Croft Special School (Glengormley)
Knockevin Special School (Dundrum)
Riverside Special School (Antrim)
Tor Bank Special School (Dundonald)

The BCF20 brochure and website listings also included accessibility icons (wheelchair accessible, guide dog friendly, induction loop, relaxed performances) for parents and families to better inform their choices and support their needs.

IRISH LANGUAGE AUTHOR PROGRAMME

Our Irish Language Author Programme, curated by Máire Zepf, was delivered in partnership with Cultúrlann McAdam Ó'Fiaich and generously supported by Foras na Gaeilge. The programme consisted of six schools' events with three authors/illustrators writing for children in the Irish language, and each event was delivered in Irish in An Cultúrlann.

The programme consisted of two sessions with author Muireann Ní Chíobháin with creative workshops based on her first book, **Scunc agus Smúirín** for ages 4 -6 yrs. (6 March); two sessions with author Gemma Breathnach and illustrator Tarsila Kruse with workshop, drawing and a little bit of self-discovery based on their book **Percy Péacóg**, for ages 9-11 yrs (9 March); and two sessions with author Máire Zepf, with dressing up and ninja games as she introduced Rita's latest adventure in **Rita agus an Ninja**, for ages 6- 8yrs (10 March).

In total 6 schools' sessions were run attended by 158 local schoolchildren from five Irish Medium schools:

Scoil an Droichead
Ionad Uibh Eachach
Buncsoil Bheann Mhadagain
Gaelscoil na bhFál
Gaelscoil Éann

Selection of Teacher Feedback Comments:

"Absolutely fantastic"

"It was an incredible experience for the kids, thoroughly enjoyed it, An exciting and engaging workshop."

"Loved how active it was"

"We will use the characters the children have designed for their own stories for Irish stories competition."

"Would love to come back for more"

"GRMA bhain muid an-sult (Thank you, we enjoyed it very much)"

Selection of Author Feedback Comments:

"I was thrilled to facilitate two workshops as part of Young at Art's Irish Language Author Programme. The team were warm, efficient and passionate and organised a great venue and good audiences for the events. The children really engaged with the book and we had a lot of fun crafting. The team were very forgiving of the glitter I left behind! It's a wonderful scheme and I would love to work further with Young at Art on more exciting and innovative workshops and events for children."

Muireann Ní Chíobháin

"An absolute joy to attend Young at Art both as an audience member and as a facilitator. Meeting young Gaeilgeoirí and their múinteoirí who attended my workshop with Tarsila Kruse was a joy. Would return in a heartbeat."

Gemma Breathnach

“The Irish Language Programme was a wonderful experience, the perfect place to celebrate the varieties in the Irish language as well as bring the opportunity for school children to discover the creative process through Irish and to create using it as well. The classes that attended were keen, curious, creative and with flourishing ideas, a true delight.”

Tarsila Kruse

James Mayhew Workshop

In association with BookTrust, children's author **James Mayhew** visited the festival and delivered two workshops in a primary school. Schools were able to apply for the workshop, and we particularly welcomed applications from schools in disadvantaged areas. In the two workshops at Donegall Road Primary School, James gave a brief introduction to his work and then delivered a fun workshop to inspire the children to be creative and produce their own art.

YAA's Subsidiaries

Young at Art Events

In 2019/20, Young at Art Events, our social enterprise agency, produced and delivered a variety of seasonal arts and creative activity for a range of clients across Northern Ireland including local government, business development groups, retail and private clients. Through this activity, we interacted with over 15,000 children and adults.

Particular highlights included:

- Sold-out performances of **Baby Rave** in Smock Alley, Dublin, as part of the Ark's *Right Here, Right Now* festival (16 June); and 8 special **Baby Rave @ the MAC** performances during BCF20 (7-8 March);
- Arts activities for babies delivered through the medium of Irish were included in the programme for the Lord Mayor's Day at Belfast City Hall;
- The **ISLAND Arts Centre's Children's Arts Festival** was once again delivered in the summer for Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council. Running from 22 July – 20 August, this large project included 3 week-long art summer camps with one week working with young people on a permanent piece of street art near the centre, a week-long performing arts summer camp including a special finale performance, 4 Saturday morning art sessions for babies and a number of community outreach workshops. The children's art work from the festival was exhibited throughout the arts centre galleries;
- Golf-themed workshops for the Riverside Theatre, Coleraine to coincide with the 2019 Open Championship on at Portrush; and
- A range of arts activities for Belfast's first-ever Culture Day including activity for the Cathedral Quarter Trust in the Masonic Hall in Rosemary Street; at the Oh Yeah Music Centre; and at City Hall for Belfast City Council.

Despite these creative successes, 2019/20 proved to be a very challenging year for Young at Art Events. A staffing restructure resulted in staff turnovers which had an impact on business generation in Quarter 3, and the outbreak of Covid-19 had a devastating impact on the agency's business in Quarter 4 and beyond, with a mass cancellation of contracted activity and emptying order books overnight. This unprecedented adverse situation for the Events' company will have a long-term impact on its future.

Fighting Words Belfast

Our creative writing centre, Fighting Words Belfast, delivered creative writing workshops and activities to 1,691 children and young people aged 6-18, and provided over 300 volunteering opportunities to members of the public they recruited and trained. School groups travelled to their creative writing centre at Skainos in East Belfast to take part in regular Fighting Words Belfast schools workshop sessions, and the Write Club after-schools sessions continued running year-round at the Duncairn Centre for Culture and Arts in North Belfast.

Key developments throughout the year included:

- Fighting Words Belfast's first published anthology was launched in November 2019 as part of the CS Lewis Festival. It featured writing by young people from the previous year's

Friends & Monsters cross-border, cross-community creative writing project. The anthology was curated by Maire Zepf;

- Delivery of the **Good Yarn** project saw the training of older people to act as volunteers in storytelling sessions at 5 South Belfast Schools;
- In partnership with the Lyric Theatre, the **Right Twig** project was successfully delivered for a second year. Young playwrights were mentored to produce short scripts that were debuted as staged readings during the Belfast Children's Festival 2020;
- In partnership with Riverside Theatre, Coleraine, a cohort of local volunteers were trained to deliver workshops locally with young people. An exhibition of stories and illustrations from the previous year's workshops were on display in the theatre in May 2019;
- A Schools Open Day in Derry Londonderry, including taster workshops for local schools, was planned for mid-March at The Playhouse. Although it was cancelled due to lockdown, this newest collaboration will continue making Fighting Words' writing activities accessible to more young people across NI;
- A new weekly Write Club was established at Hub Games in South Belfast from December 2019; and
- **Longest Story Ever Told** was showcased at Belfast Pride, Culture Day Belfast and Belfast Children's Festival 2020.

At the end of March 2020, Fighting Words Belfast officially went independent of its former parent, Young at Art, and has moved full time to Skainos. The coming year will provide a host of opportunities for the company to consolidate its financial independence and expand its programme of activities.

Professional Development Programmes

CPD and DEP Training

Our CPD (Continuing Professional Development) Programme for Teachers and Educational and Professionals and DEP (Degree Enhancement Programme) for Trainee Teachers are tailored to support schools and to develop teacher skills in critical appraisal of performance and engaging with children through the creative arts including:

- CPD Training for teachers in Drama;
- Degree Enhancement Training for student teachers;
- CPD training for artist facilitators in child-led practice;
- Dedicated schools and community groups pre-booking service for festival events;
- Significant ticket subsidies for schools and community groups;
- Special festival events tailored specifically for school groups; and
- Free Teacher Resource Packs for all schools attending festival performances.

In 2019/20 we delivered 3 CPD training days to **34 teachers**; a bespoke CPD training for Belfast City Council staff in Story-telling and 3 CPD artists facilitation training days in child-led practice, strengthening the arts facilitation skills of **18 artists and facilitators** within the NI Creative Sector. We also delivered a DEP training in Story-telling to 25 teaching students at Stranmillis University College.

CPD & DEP Training participant feedback comments

“Enjoyable and very practical for early years in particular but can be adapted for all ages”

“Really helped my confidence and thoroughly enjoyed it”

“We got to step out of our comfort zone. As practitioners we should use different types of teaching”

Intern, Placement & Volunteer Programmes

Young at Art continues to lead the way when it comes to developing and investing in future cultural leaders. As part of our Intern and Placement Programme in 2019/20 we hosted 3 professional work placement students: Paige Bailie through the Santander Open University Scheme, Flavia Erhan through Intern Europe and Shiyu Wu through Queen's University Belfast's Arts Management Masters Programme.

Young at Art continues to resource, develop and value the vital contribution volunteers make to all areas of the Young at Art family, while working to build and increase the volunteers' skills base.

Key to this is volunteer-led Fighting Words Belfast, which in 2019/20 recruited and trained 60 volunteers in the mentoring and support of children within the creative writing centre.

BCF20 welcomed 29 volunteers from Ulster University's International Hospitality Management Degree Course who assisted with the delivery of our 'Your Place' family day.

Marketing, PR and Communications

The 22nd Belfast Children's Festival marketing campaign spanned a seven-month period from September 2019 to March 2020 using a combination of traditional and online marketing channels to attract our target audiences of families, schools, and arts/education professionals and industry delegates.

Print Collateral, Distribution & Advertising

We worked again with designers, PaperJam, to create eye-catching marketing materials.

The first piece of marketing collateral developed for BCF20 was the digital Schools & Youth Group Programme brochure, downloadable from the YAA website from September 2019. It contained the full school's performance programme and booking information, as well as signposting teachers and youth leaders to our CPD training, the services of the Young at Art Events agency, and Fighting Words Belfast creative writing sessions and Write Club.

In November we published and distributed 15k highlights brochures with details of three early release shows (*The Untold Truth of Captain Hook*, *Hermit* and *Tetris*) positioned as an idea for early Christmas presents.

The 36-page Festival Brochure officially launched on 8 January 2020, the 'hero' image (the Tetris 'pile up' image) featured on all festival collateral, which also appeared on Adshel Live, billboards, festival flags and online. We engaged a trusted distribution agent to distribute 7.5k festival brochures across Greater Belfast, Holywood, Bangor and Lisburn and delivered to Libraries NI HQ, who in turn distributed the brochure across their branches in Northern Ireland.

In addition, the MAC supported the festival with in-kind support/sponsorship on its printed programmes.



BCF20 Festival Brochure

A 'exhibition' toolkit flyer was also produced to accompany the *COLOUR OF SOUND* and *Songs and the Soil* exhibitions and engage visitors during BCF with both exhibitions, suggesting ways in which families can approach, engage with and discuss the work.



Exhibition Toolkit for COLOUR OF SOUND and Songs and the Soil exhibitions

Outdoor advertising sites on major arterial routes across Belfast comprised 5 x 48 sheet billboards (2 of these ran for 2 cycles), 21 Adshel Live sites (and the Adshel live site in the MAC), 4 outdoor flags at City Hall (part of Belfast City Council's Festivals Forum initiative). Posters were prominently displayed during festival week in performance venues.



BCF20 Billboard

(For full details, see Appendix 8: Print and Promotional Collateral, page 68)

Digital

In terms of digital communications, we promoted the festival across our company website, social media, and through e-newsletters. From 12 November 2019 to 13 March 2020 (a total of 17 weeks), the Young at Art website received 56,207-page views, a decrease on same period in BCF19 also reflected in reduced numbers of advance bookers for BCF20 (59%), versus BCF19 advance sales of 73%. We will adjust our approach for BCF21 with a more front-loaded e-mailing and social media, and awareness building activity from early Nov 20 onwards.

In terms of acquisition of users, 48% arrived via Organic Search, 28% arrived Direct (similar to BCF19), 16% arrived via Social Media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram), and 6.36% arrived via Referral (the top 3 referral sites were Mumsnet, NI4kids and whatsOnNI).

Building on activity from last year's CQ BID partnership, we again secured and built the festival family food and retail discount deals with local businesses and created a customer information flyer highlighting these deals which was publicised on the YAA Website, CQ BID website and both organisations' social media platforms.

The BCF20 highlights preview video, which went live at the launch, allowed viewers to see extracts from BCF20 performances, and a recap video from the official launch showed snippets of the launch performances, speeches and general excitement from the event. Post-festival we released a highlights edit of BCF20, presenting a flavour and overview of the highlights. We released this on our social media channels and sent it directly to our mailing list after the festival as a 'thank you' for booking and attending. All YAA video content is posted to the YAA YouTube account and the channel offers great potential for audience/subscriber growth.

YAA Website visitors can sign up to three different interest group mailing lists on the website depending on their interests, be it family/community, schools/education, and artist/industry. Those booking tickets through Ticketsolve can opt-in to join the family/community list. All Children's Festival survey respondents are asked whether they would like to be added to the mailing list.

These sign-ups (over 8k subscribers total) link to our external Mailchimp e-marketing system, where a regular schedule of e-newsletters is formatted to communicate targeted and relevant news to these audiences and stakeholders. E-newsletters are sent monthly from April to December and fortnightly from January to March each year.

Social media again proved an extremely successful way of promoting BCF20 and engaging new audiences. There was a 2% growth in followers across our main social media platforms with Facebook now at 7,093 followers and Twitter at 5,013 followers. The YAA Instagram account which was resurrected for BCF19, after a break of 5 years, and continues to perform well and currently has 1,047 followers, a 30% increase on 2019.

From Jan 2019-March 2020, we achieved 111,000 impressions on Twitter, a decrease compared to the same period in 2019. We invested in advertising spend on Facebook for 5 shows, resulting in an extra reach of 397,970 to audiences all over the island of Ireland.

The festival and festival events were listed on numerous 'What's On' listings, arts, community and lifestyle websites and partner/funder websites and communications. In addition, the MAC supported the festival with in-kind support/sponsorship on its social media.

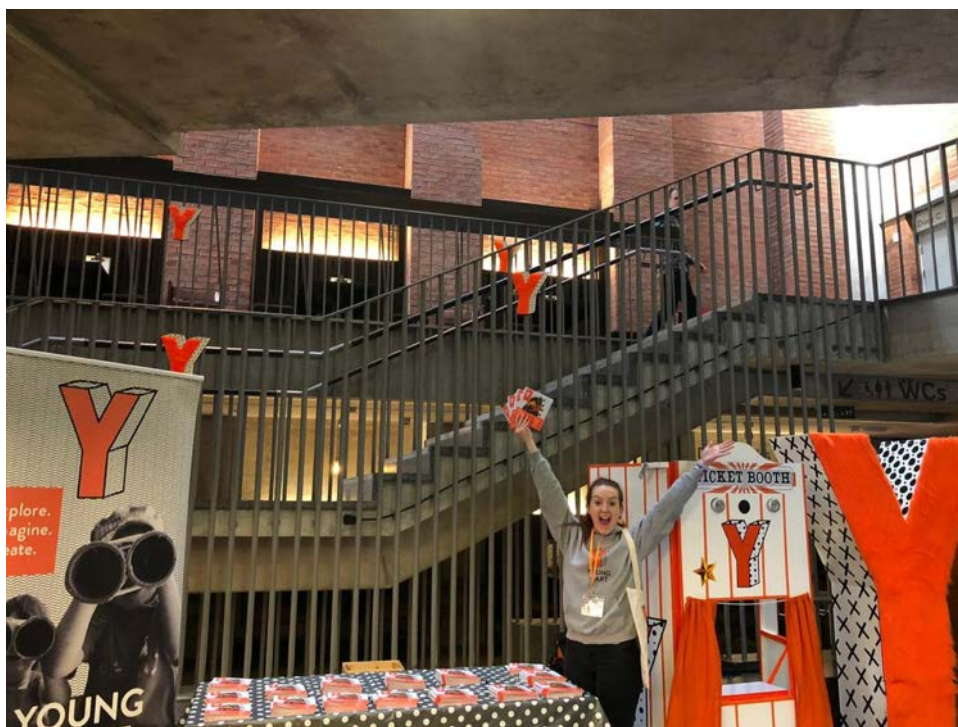
In post-event evaluation surveys, when asked how they found out about the festival, audiences stated digital was important with 28% stating that it was through social media, 21% stating the Festival Programme as their information source and 21% stating YAA website and YAA e-news. This was followed by 19% Word of Mouth and 9% referring to other websites and Outdoor Advertising. The BCF20 figures represent a 4% increase on BCF19 in the number of customers claiming social media as their information source, so continued investment in social media platforms is a key takeaway from BCF20.

(For more details see Appendix 6: BCF19 Audience and Survey Analysis, page 63)

Branding

As the official festival hub, the MAC's foyer and stairwell was dressed with specially commissioned 3-D branded orange Ys. These greatly added to the fun family-friendly festival atmosphere and clearly distinguished the activity as being part of YAA's BCF Festival takeover of the MAC. The festival highlights video was played on loop behind the ticket desk in the weeks leading up to the festival; the BCF adshel animation was on the MAC's adshel site from early February, and an A3 Festival poster was displayed on the MAC's poster site for the duration of the festival.

The visitor welcome was improved and enhanced at participating venues and to clearly reinforce that these events and activities were part of the Belfast Children's Festival. A team of festival hosts were briefed and trained by Young at Art Events and Lauren Cudden, Young at Art resident artist, creatively interpreted the brand into colourful eye-catching costumes and accessories, which the hosts brought to life.



BCF20 Branding at the MAC

Two specially commissioned branded mini ticket booths provided a focal point for the second year in the foyers of The MAC and The Lyric and were a big favourite among festival goers for selfies and social media posts.

Media Partnerships

Ongoing partnerships with NI4Kids (75k distribution per issue, 160,000 readership) and QRadio (299k weekly listenership RAJAR Q1 2020) involved a mix of paid for and in-kind additional activity encompassing advertising, editorial, interviews, competitions, and social media activity.

In addition to the takeover of the NI4kids February 20 edition, the in-kind support included increased editorial coverage in Winter, January, February and Spring editions, advertising on NI4Kids website, and inclusion in their e-newsletter and posts on social media. NI4Kids has significant digital presence - Facebook 65K+ local followers, Twitter 5k, Ezine subscribers 21k, Instagram 5k and Average Website unique visitors 29K per month means this partnership enables Young at Art to greatly extend its reach directly to the family market in NI.

A featured competition, with prize of BCF20 show tickets plus an overnight stay for family of four at accommodation partner Ramada by Wyndham, received 857 entries. The 4-page BCF20 takeover of NI4Kids February 2020 edition (75k circulation, 160k readership) provided an attractive branding opportunity, and raised awareness of the Your PLACE Family Day Out, featuring iconic Cathedral Quarter landmarks and festival venues, such as St Anne's Cathedral, Albert Clock and The MAC. It included a map of the Cathedral Quarter including information on location of Your PLACE events and BCF venues clearly highlighted.

As part of a media partnership with QRadio, we had: a 3-day FB competition in late February with a reach of 50,362 and engagement rate of 7.4%; 63x 30 sec ads across Q107, Q Belfast and Q100.5 (24 February-1 March); 70 x 30 sec ads across all frequencies promoting the Your PLACE Outside Broadcast and Connor Brennan hosted a roadshow live on 8 March at the Your Place Family Day Out in CQ 8th March 2pm-6pm, interviewing the festival team and members of the public. QRadio broadcast and online reach combined 212,482.

PR

The 22nd Belfast Children's Festival programme was officially launched by the Lord Mayor of Belfast, Councillor Daniel Baker in the MAC on 8 January 2020.

The Lord Mayor was joined by the Head of Community Arts and Education at Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Gilly Campbell. The calibre of hosts demonstrates the esteem BCF holds as firm favourite in our cultural and civic calendar of events and recognises YAA's contribution to the quality artistic programming of NI's only international children's arts festival.



BCF20 launch at The MAC

We engaged a PR specialist, Mackle Communications, to help drive and maximise coverage and awareness of the 22nd Belfast Children's Festival. BCF20 was particularly successful with regards to media coverage, resulting in 69 local, national and ROI print features, 142 broadcast items on radio and TV, and 77 online articles, representing an AVE (advertising value equivalent) for print and commercial broadcast media at £232,996, a significant uplift from 2019 (£153k). We engaged NIMMS, a media-monitoring agency, from January to March 2020, who calculated the equivalent advertising value for print and commercial broadcast and reach (Opportunities to See/Hear BCF20 messages) of 9.5 million.

Of note was significant support from the Irish News, with seven online and print articles secured between festival launch and festival date. An extensive piece by Jayne Coyle was also published in the Irish Times 2nd March 2020 highlighting the Festival and featuring *An Féileacán agus an Rí*. The Festival also speared number 1 in the top things to do in Ireland that week on the RTE.ie lifestyle and living section. This highlights a growth in interest from ROI and potential to explore a campaign to encourage family day trips and weekend breaks in BCF21 (coronavirus permitting). We secured additional coverage in the Irish News, Belfast Telegraph, Newsletter and sister publications. (regional papers and Sunday Life)

Our BCF20 Highlights video featured on UTV Life 'What's On' section on 5th March 2020.

Radio interviews also increased with placements secured on BBC Radio Ulster *the Ticket*, U105 's *Frank Mitchell Show*, BBC Radio Ulster's *Culture Café*, Belfast 89FM and media partner QRadio. Media partnerships with NI4Kids (75k distribution per issue, 160k readership) and QRadio (broadcast and online reach combined 212,482).

In addition, in July 2020, we attracted media coverage of our significant Paul Hamlyn Foundation award for our Creative Teacher project which will launch in September 2020.

We proactively connected with the Marketing and PR teams at Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Belfast City Council, Visit Belfast, Tourism NI, CQ BID and many other funders, trusts and supporters to ensure reciprocal sharing of information and digital content.

BCF20 Sales

Advance sales were definitely down for BCF20. 30% of tickets sold were in the period from 20 November 2019 to 7 February 2020 (down from 57% in same time last year, our most lucrative sales period in BCF19). However sales in the period from 7 February 2020 were much more robust than BCF19, 29% in period 7 February – 28 February 2020 (compared to 16% in same period last year), and in the 2 weeks leading up to and during the festival (29 February – 11 March) BCF20 sales were at their highest 41%, compared to 27% in BCF19.

Overall average of 56% occupancy for ticketed events, a dip compared to pre-festival projections of 65% which has been put down to the effect of the timing of the festival coinciding with the early stages of the Covid-19 outbreak. 94% of festival bookers came from Northern Ireland, 55% of that audience coming from the Belfast and Greater Belfast area, 39% from rest of NI, which is similar to BCF19. The remaining 6% Out-of-State comprised 4% from ROI, 1% from GB, and 1% International Visitors. This represented a return to 2018 levels of out-of-state visitors, which is attributable to the beginning of travel restrictions being implemented due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Awards

Young at Art continues to receive high-profile recognition of its contribution to the NI Creative Sector

In April 2019 as a fun recognition of YAA Branding our mini BCF ticket booth was named 'Cutest Box Office' in the Thrive Audience Delight awards.

In June 2019 YAA Director Eibhlín de Barra was recognised for her Contribution to the Arts & Culture at the NI Women's Awards.

YAA received a nomination in the 2020 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards for its new sponsorship with Destination CQ

Funders, Supporters and Partners

Thanks to our Funders, Supports and Partners without whom, we could not deliver such an extensive and high-quality programme of activity. With this support, we continue to achieve great things, enabling children and young people to enjoy and explore the arts and fulfil their creative potential.

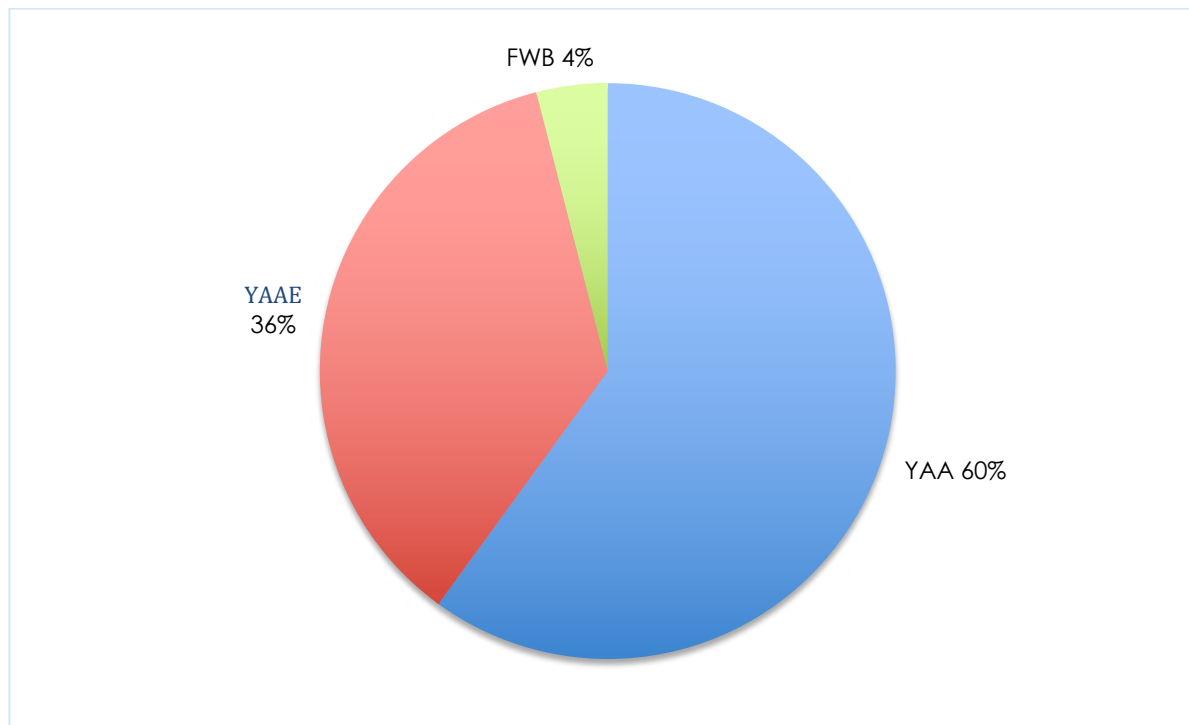


APPENDIX 1: Analysis of Audience & Participation Figures

A summary of the figures gathered across all annual activity (Young at Art, Young at Art Events and Fighting Words Belfast). These were gathered via Ticket solve, documented numbers and simple head count appraisals. Exhibition and larger public realm event figures were provided by beam-breaking footfall counters.

2019/20	Young at Art	Young at Art Events	Fighting Words Belfast
April	1236	1,527	82
May	-	919	97
June	-	2,310	110
July	-	834	18
August	-	2,165	37
September	-	769	66
October	12	3,940	246
November	105	575	526
December	32	925	69
January	511	925	141
February	1,304	366	144
March	22,669	-	155
TOTALS	24,869	15,255	1,691
19/20 TOTAL	41,815		

TABLE 1. Spread of activities across the three companies: Young at Art, Young at Art Events, Fighting Words Belfast



APPENDIX 2: Breakdown of Schools YAA Engaged in 2019/20

	SCHOOL	TOWN	POSTCODE	TOTAL NUMBERS
BCF LAUNCH (1)	Seaview Primary	Belfast	BT15 3NB	33
Creative Child (15)	Naiscoil Bheann Mhadagain	Belfast	BT14 6LB	29
	Naiscoil Mhic Reachtain	Belfast	BT14 6BP	14
	Seaview Nursery	Belfast	BT15 3NB	52
	Cliftonville Nursery	Belfast	BT14 6JQ	30
	Glenbank Nursery	Belfast	BT14 8BW	26
	Ballysillan Nursery	Belfast	BT14 8LT	28
	Hope Nursery	Belfast	BT13 1DN	52
	Tudor Lodge Nursery	Belfast	BT13 1LY	52
	Shaftesbury Nursery	Belfast	BT13 2HS	52
	Hobby Horse Playgroup	Belfast	BT13 2JF	28
	Edenderry Nursery	Belfast	BT13 3BD	52
	Black Mountain Nursery	Belfast	BT13 3TT	26
	Nettlefield Nursery	Belfast	BT6 8BG	52
	Knocknagoney Nursery	Belfast	BT4 2NR	26
St Matthew's Nursery	Belfast	BT5 4EW	50	
ACCESS ALL AREAS (8)	Riverside Special School	Antrim	BT41 4PB	21
	Harberton Special School	Belfast	BT9 6TX	21
	Glenveagh Special School	Belfast	BT9 6TX	44
	Ceara Special School	Lurgan	BT66 8NY	10
	Knockevin Special School	Downpatrick	BT30 6PU	15
	Tor Bank Special School	Belfast	BT16 1TT	15
	Hill Croft Special School	Newtownabbey	BT36 5UW	15
	Donard Special School	Banbridge	BT32 4XY	49
	Ballysillan Primary	Belfast	BT14 8LT	28

	SCHOOL	TOWN	POSTCODE	TOTAL NUMBERS
COLOUR OF SOUND (8)	Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagain	Belfast	BT14 6LA	28
	Bunscoil Mhic Reachtain	Belfast	BT15 1EZ	18
	Cliftonville Primary	Belfast	BT14 6JQ	27
	Gaelscoil na bhFal	Belfast	BT12 6AW	27
	Nettlefield Primary	Belfast	BT6 8BG	25
	Our Lady's Girls	Belfast	BT14 6NN	30
	Seaview Primary	Belfast	BT15 3NB	31
JOURNEYS AND STORIES (1)	Fane Street Primary	Belfast	BT14 6NN	125
SCHOOLS ATTENDING BCF20 (16)	Lowood Nursery	Belfast	BT15 4BL	52
	St. Clare's Primary School	Belfast	BT13 2SE	7
	Ashfield Girls High School	Belfast	BT4 1SG	30
	St. Dominic's Grammar School	Belfast	BT12 6EA	5
	Ashfield Boys High School	Belfast	BT4 2LY	62
	Victoria College	Belfast	BT9 6JA	8
	St. Vincent de Paul	Belfast	BT14 8DP	14
	St. Columa's College	Portaferry	BT22 1RB	14
	Inoad Uíbh Eachrach	Belfast	B12 6AW	18
	Kirkinriola Primary School	Ballymena	BT43 6TB	50
	St. Clare's Primary School	Belfast	BT13 2SE	72
	St. Vincent de Paul	Belfast	BT14 8DP	26
	Scoil an Droichid	Belfast	BT7 2EP	28
	Gaelscoil Eanna	Newtownabbey	BT36 7AU	27
	Gaelscoil na bhFal	Belfast	BT12 6AW	30
	Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagain	Belfast	BT14 6LA	30

TOTAL 49 classes

Total
1,604

APPENDIX 3: BCF20 Event by Event Breakdown

EVENT	ARTIST	COUNTRY	VENUE	AGE	NO. OF EVENTS	AUDIENCE/ VISITORS
BCF20 International Programme						
Tetris	Arch 8	The Netherlands	Downstairs at the MAC	5+	4	503
Jabberbabble	Kwatta	The Netherlands	Brian Friel Theatre, QUB	6+	3	206
Hermit	Simone de Jong	The Netherlands	Upstairs at the MAC	2-6 years	8	732
Stick by Me	Andy Manley	Scotland	Upstairs at the MAC	3-6 years	6	313
Work in Progress: Priming the Canon	Abbey Theatre	ROI	Factory at the MAC	10+	1	29
OAR	AØE	UK	Ulster University	all ages	4	184
The Garden of Spirited Minds	Dalija Acin Thelander	Serbia/Sweden	Brian Friel Theatre, QUB	0-12 months	10	63
NI Programme inc. TYANI Showcase						
Baby Rave	Young at Art Events	Northern Ireland	Downstairs at the MAC	under 4's	8	1912
Inside the Speaker	Helen Hall	Northern Ireland	Crescent Arts Centre	11+	3	98
The Untold Truth of Captain Hook	Replay Theatre Co	Northern Ireland	Naughton Studio, Lyric	7+	9	716
ScratchWorks	Selected Artists	Northern Ireland	Factory at the MAC	12+	1	53
Family Comedy Club	Paul Currie	Northern Ireland	Black Box	6+	1	113
Kindermusik Project	The Belfast Ensemble	Northern Ireland	St Martin's Centre	6+	3	87
Féileacán agus an Rí	Máire Zepf & Clara Kerr	Northern Ireland	Cultúrlann	8+yrs	2	232
Mini Midweek Magic	Seedhead Arts	Northern Ireland	Black Box	5+yrs	1	37
Acoustic Picnic	Oh Yeah Music Centre	Northern Ireland	Oh Yeah Music Centre	all ages	1	220
Babai the Cultuir	YAA/Cultúrlann	Northern Ireland	Cultúrlann	0-4 years	1	6
The Secret of Kells	Strand Arts Centre	Northern Ireland	Strand Arts Centre	7+yrs	1	72

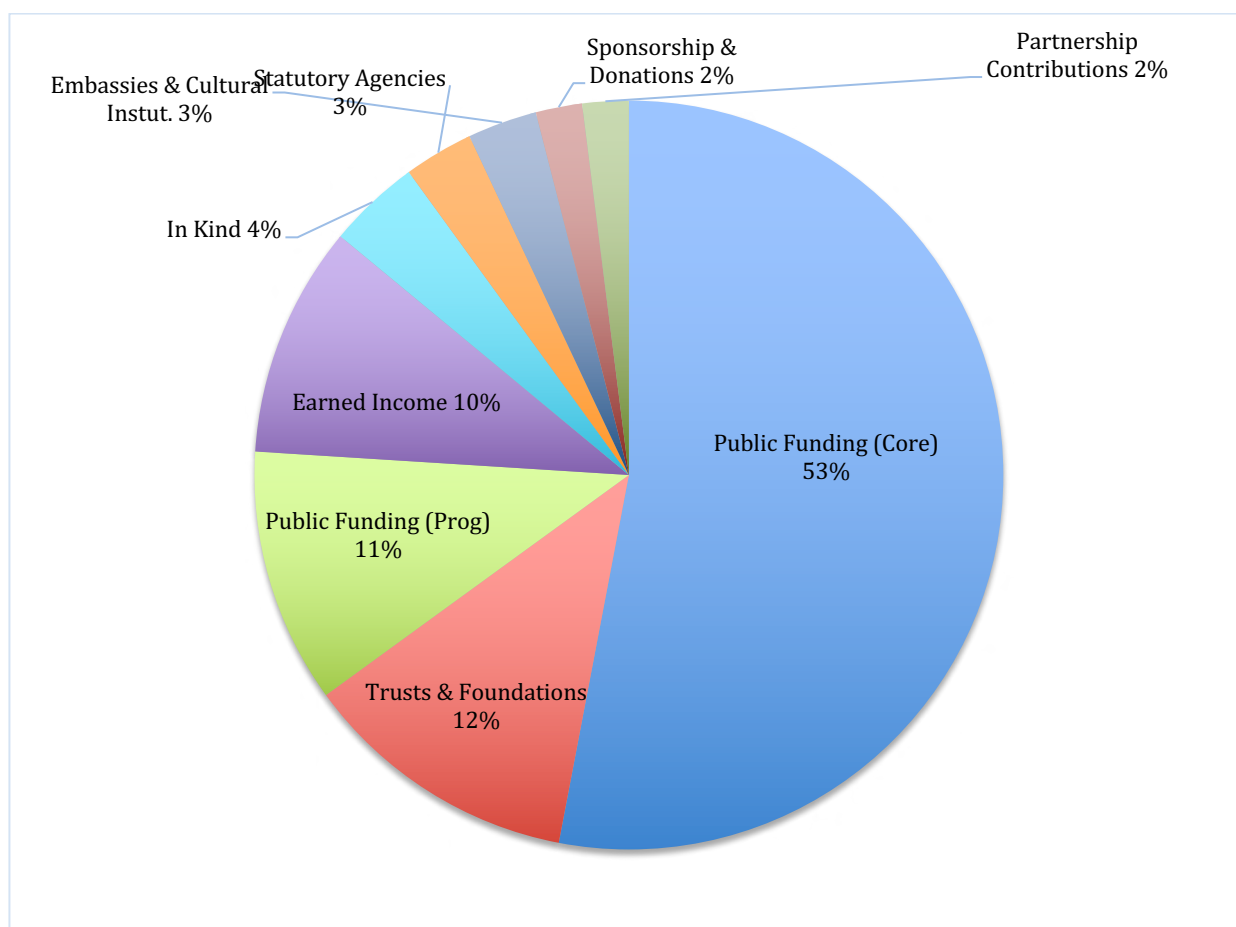
EVENT	ARTIST	COUNTRY	VENUE	AGE	NO. OF EVENTS	AUDIENCE/ VISITORS
Celtic Storytelling Workshop	Strand Arts Centre	Northern Ireland	Strand Arts Centre	7+yrs	1	10
Ecology Today	NMNI	Northern Ireland	Ulster Museum	all	1	1503
Your PLACE Family Day						
Cardboard Cities	Young at Art Events	Northern Ireland	Feilden Clegg Bradley	all ages	1	60
Face Painting	Young at Art Events	Northern Ireland	Ulster University	all ages	1	66
Wishing Tree Workshop	Young at Art Events	Northern Ireland	Ulster University	all ages	1	150
Sow & Grow Workshop	Young at Art Events	Northern Ireland	Ulster University	all ages	1	150
Bees & Butterflies Workshop	Young at Art Events	Northern Ireland	Ulster University	all ages	1	150
My Family Paper Chains Workshop	Young at Art Events	Northern Ireland	Ulster University	all ages	1	150
My House Workshop	Young at Art Events	Northern Ireland	Ulster University	all ages	1	150
BCF Passport Workshop	Young at Art Events	Northern Ireland	Ulster University	all ages	1	80
Art Cart	WheelWorks	Northern Ireland	St Anne's Square	all ages	1	170
Other Activities (Magician, stilt walkers etc.)	Young at Art Events	Northern Ireland	Ulster University	all ages	1	470
Pop-Up Cinema Workshop	Strand Arts Centre	Northern Ireland	Ramada by Wyndham	all ages	1	30
Pop-Up Cinema: Kiki's Delivery Service	Strand Arts Centre	Northern Ireland	Ramada by Wyndham	all ages	1	45
Lego Animation	Can Do Academy	Northern Ireland	Ulster University	all ages	1	150
Dragtime Stories	Cherrie OnTop	Northern Ireland	Established/The MAC	all ages	2	95
Mini Moon Disco	Black Box	Northern Ireland	Black Box	0-7 years	1	30

EVENT	ARTIST	COUNTRY	VENUE	AGE	NO. OF EVENTS	AUDIENCE/ VISITORS
BCF Visual Art Programme						
Songs and the Soil	Mark Garry	Northern Ireland	The MAC	all	6	1672
Virtually There	Kids Own Publishing	ROI	Ulster University	all	6	10143
Colour of Sound	Young at Art	Northern Ireland	The MAC	all	6	725
BCF Literature Programme						
The Right Twig Showcase	Fighting Words Belfast/Lyric	Northern Ireland	Naughton Studio, Lyric	14+	1	120
Irish Language Author's Prog	Young at Art	Northern Ireland	Cultúrlann	4-10 years	1	158
CBI Shorlist Event	Children's Books Ireland	ROI	Factory at the Mac	14-16yrs	1	82
Book Clinic	Children's Book Ireland	ROI	Ulster Museum	all ages	1	21
Book Clinic	Children's Book Ireland	ROI	Ulster University	all ages	1	32
Longest Story Ever Told	Fighting Words Belfast	Northern Ireland	Ulster University	all ages	1	67
James Mayhew Workshop	BookTrust	Northern Ireland	Donegall Rd Primary School	7-11yrs	2	42
BCF Industry Events						
TYA NI Delegates Programme	TYANI	Northern Ireland	Various	adults	1	20
Virtually There Symposium	Kids Own Publishing	Northern Ireland	Ulster University	adults	1	19
Stone Soup	YAA/ Theatre NI	Northern Ireland	Black Box	adults	1	22
The 'R' word	YAA/ Theatre NI	Northern Ireland	Lab at The MAC	adults	1	32
Choreographic Practice for Babies	Dalija Acin Thelander	Serbia/Sweden	QUB	adults	1	19
Physical Performance & Mime Workshop	Simone de Jong	The Netherlands	Lab at the MAC	adults	1	16
Creating Work for Young Audiences	Young at Art	Northern Ireland	Upstairs at the MAC	adults	1	21
TOTALS					118	22,246

APPENDIX 4: Organisational Income

The following Table illustrates a breakdown of the organisation's income, both core (our staff and overheads) and programming (our activities, including BCF and our Education & Engagement Programmes). In-kind support has only been included where there is a verifiable figure available but it is estimated the actual value of in-kind support is significantly greater. 64% of our funding comes from public bodies, and box office income (ticket sales) represents 10% of earned income.

TABLE 2: Breakdown of Organisational Income

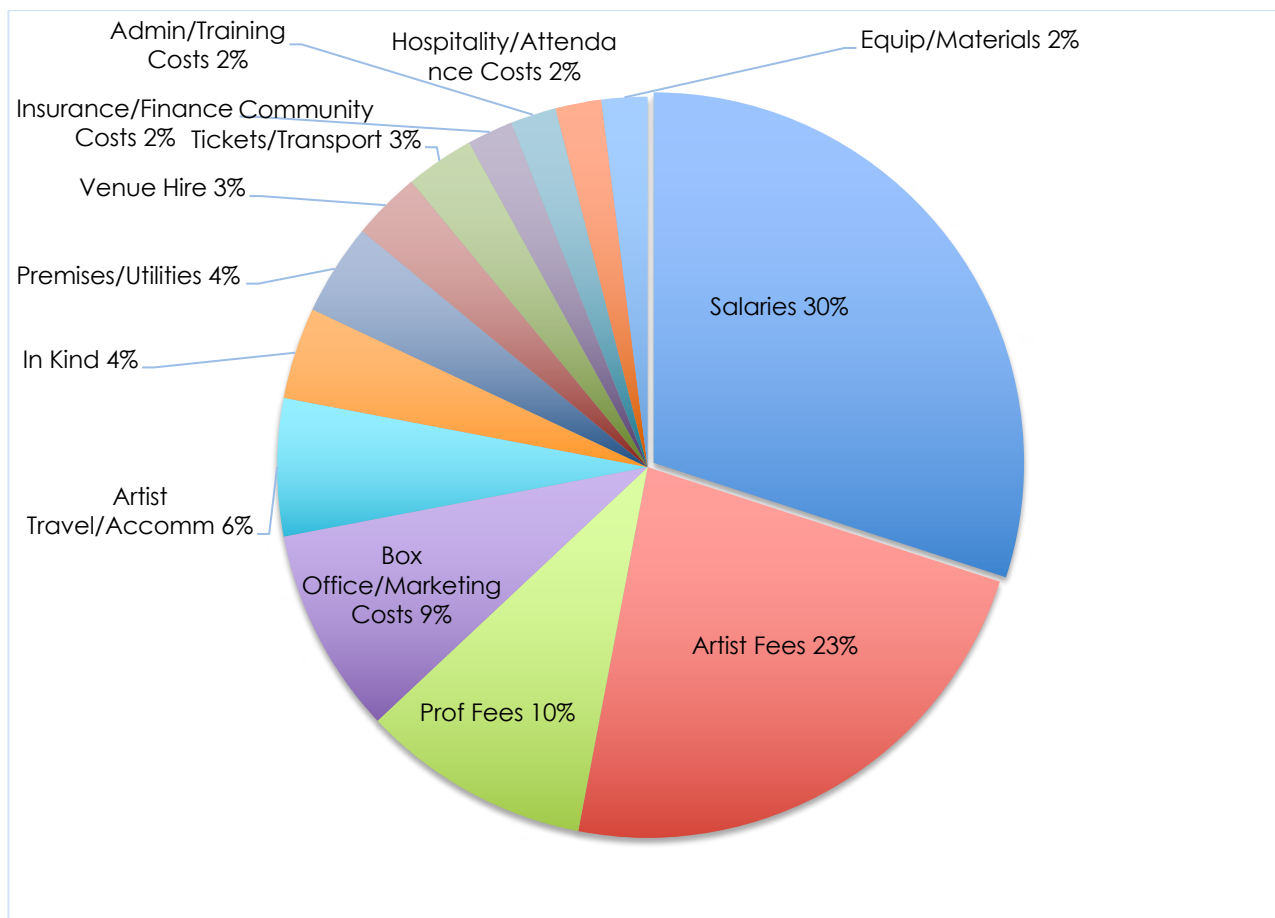


The levels of support achieved are broadly similar to 2018/19 except a significant increase in Trufts & Foundations support (increase of 140%) which can be attributed to the benefits following additional support from ACNI Resilience Programme for freelance Fundraising Support.

APPENDIX 5: Organisational Expenditure

The following Table illustrates a breakdown of the organisation's expenditure in 2019/20, both core (our staff and overheads) and programming (our activities, including BCF and our Education & Engagement Programmes). 40% of expenditure is on Staff Salaries and Professional Fees, including bookkeeping and fundraising support, and 23% is on Artist Fees.

TABLE 3. Breakdown of Organisational Expenditure

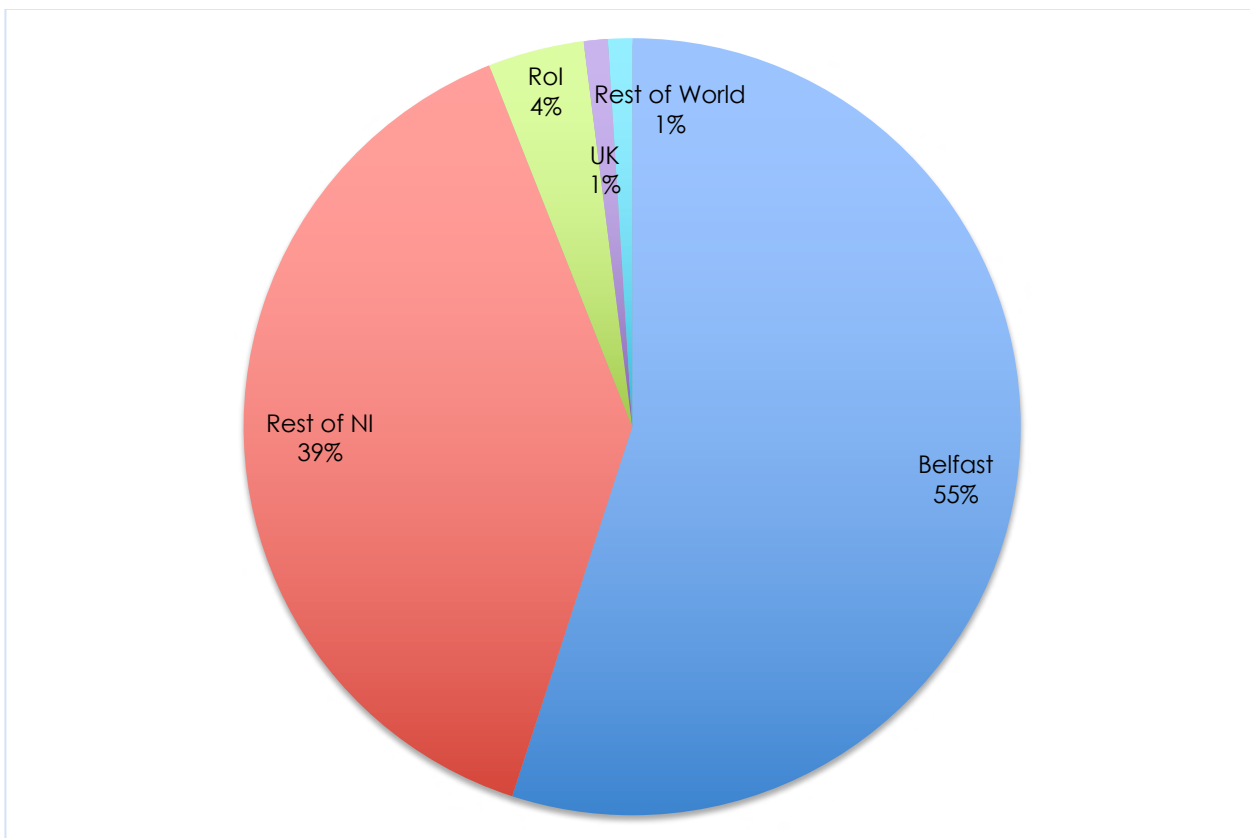


Organisational expenditure is broadly similar to 2018/19, except for a significant increase in Artists' Costs to 23% (18% in 2018/19) due to increase in programming costs as a result of increase in funding secured from Trusts & Foundations for Education and Engagement programmes.

APPENDIX 6: BCF20 Audience & Survey Analysis

Analysis for this year's festival has been taken from online analytics, Ticketsolve box office system, surveys, and effective data capture at many events. This has produced a coherent picture of where audiences are coming from.

TABLE 4: Overall Breakdown of Unique Customers



By manually interrogating the postcode data for Belfast and employing the NI Multiple Deprivation Measure 2017 per Super Output Area (NI Statistics & Research Agency), we can see how the festival is reaching areas of high deprivation. In terms of the top 100 most deprived areas, this accounted for 17% of Belfast unique bookers and 38% of Belfast audience (tickets), reflecting our work with schools in these areas. See figures 5 and 6

The Delegate Programme welcomed 20 delegates: 15% of delegates were from NI, 30% from ROI, 25% from UK, and 30% from outside UK/Ireland.

TABLE 5: Total Belfast Tickets Geo-Data Breakdown

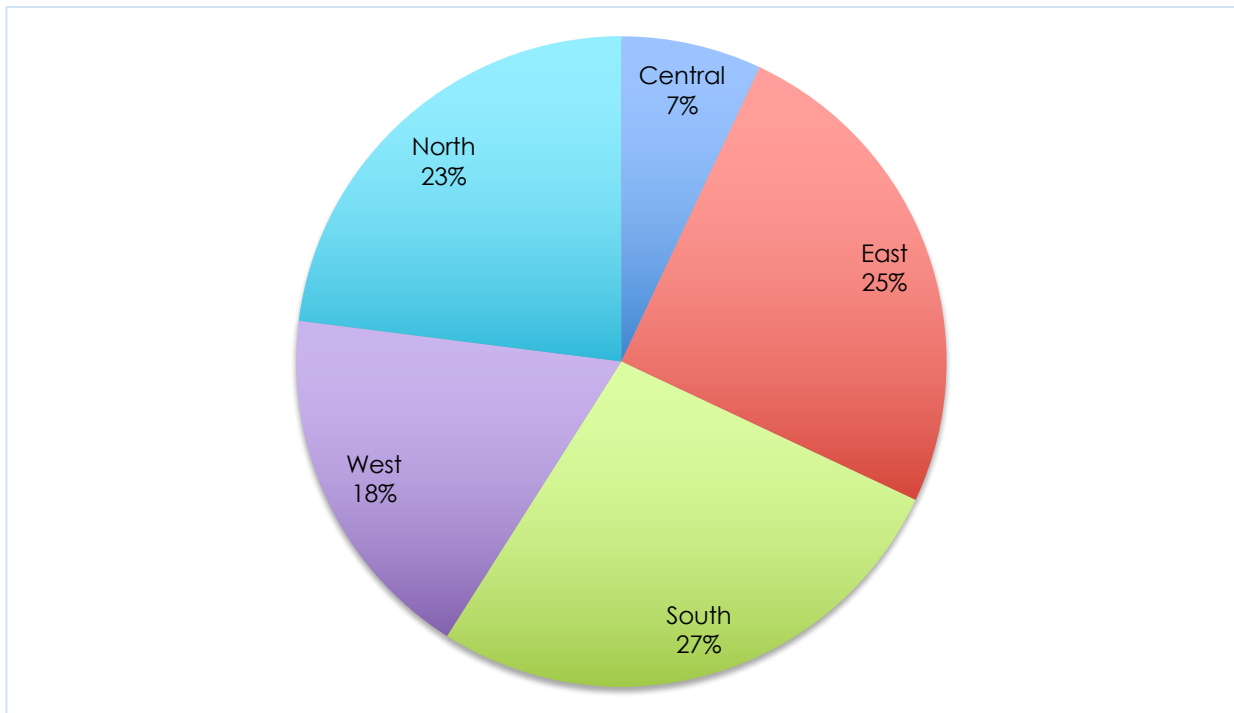
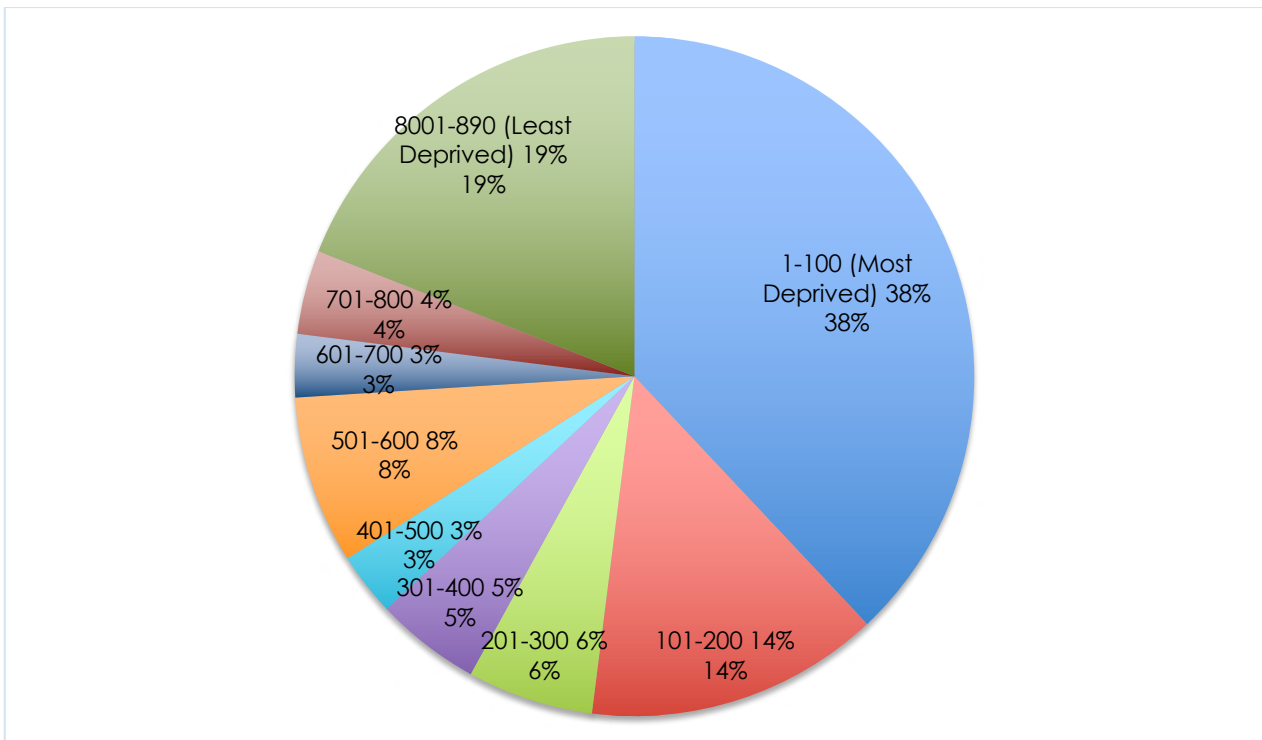


Table 6: Postcode Deprivation Scale breakdown for Belfast tickets (based on NI Multiple Deprivation Measure per Super Output Area, NI Statistics and Research Agency)



Within its planning for BCF21, Young at Art will continue to look at how to improve its capture of accurate and usable data to support evaluation and audience development/growth.

APPENDIX 7: Media & Online Analysis

The 22nd Belfast Children's Festival, BCF20 was a particularly successful year with regards to media coverage, resulting in 69 local, national and ROI print features, 142 broadcast items on radio and TV, and 77 online articles, representing an AVE (advertising value equivalent) for print and commercial broadcast media at £232,996, a significant uplift from 2019 (£153k) and a reach (Opportunities to See/Hear BCF20 messages) of 9.4 million.

Of note was significant support from the *Irish News*, with seven online and print articles secured between festival launch and festival date. An extensive piece by Jayne Coyle on *An Féileacán agus an Rí* was published in the Irish Times highlighting the Festival. The Festival also appeared number 1 in the top things to do in Ireland that week, on the RTE.ie lifestyle and living section.

This highlights a growth in interest from ROI and potential to explore a campaign to encourage family day trips and weekend breaks in 2021 (coronavirus permitting). We secured additional coverage in the Irish News, Belfast Telegraph, Newsletter and sister publications. (regional papers and Sunday Life) Our BCF20 Highlights video featured on UTV Life's 'What's On' section on 5th March 2020.



The Irish Times, 31/07/2020

Radio interviews also increased with placements secured on BBC Radio Ulster's *The Ticket*, U105's Frank Mitchell Show, BBC Radio Ulster Culture Café, Belfast 89FM and media partner, QRadio.

Media partnerships with NI4Kids (75k distribution per issue, 160k readership) and QRadio (broadcast and online reach combined 212,482) involved a mix of paid for and in-kind additional activity encompassing online advertising, editorial, interviews, competitions, an outside broadcast and social media activity.

As part of the media partnership with QRadio, we had a 3 day FB competition in late February with a reach of 50,362 and engagement rate of 7.4% ; 63x 30 second ads across Q107, QBelfast and Q100.5 (24 February-1 March); 70 x 30 second ads across all frequencies promoting the

Outside Broadcast (6 March-7 March) and Connor Brennan hosted a roadshow live at the Your Place Family Day out in CQ 8th March, 2-6pm interviewing festival team and members of the public.

We proactively connected with the Marketing and PR teams at Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Belfast City Council, Visit Belfast, Tourism NI, CQ BID and many other funders, trusts and supporters to ensure reciprocal sharing of information and digital content.

Publicity

Strategic partnerships, in-kind marketing support, and partnership investment from Arts & Business NI allowed Young at Art to further its advertising spend and reach in 2019/20.

- CQ BID provided marketing and publicity in-kind support comprising a press release to business press announcing the partnership, various blog articles, inclusion in social media channels, engagement with CQ BID Members for joint promotional activity and space at CQ BID'S island at Visit Belfast for the duration of the festival.
- Marketing in-kind support from festival hub, the MAC, comprising print brochure, ezine and social media support valued at £2k.
- The BCF20 received an estimated £6k in-kind support from media partner NI4Kids, including Homepage takeover of NI4Kids website, online adverts, editorial features, competitions, and bespoke e-zine to 21k subscribers.
- BCF20 received £6.5k in-kind support from media partner, Q Radio, including additional adverts, a week-long competition on Q Breakfast, studio interview, outdoor broadcast including street team promotion, and social media.
- We maintained a healthy share of 'Rest of NI' bookers at 35%. Out-of-State bookers returned to 2018 levels, at 6% however we attribute this to the early caution about coronavirus and travel deemed 'unnecessary'.

Online Analysis

- In the period Apr 19- Mar 20, the Young at Art website had visits from 23,541 users, totalling 93,338 pageviews. From 3 December 2019 to 13 March 2020 (i.e. from the early release shows going live on 13 Nov to the end of the Festival), the website received 52,349-page views.
- Acquisition of users; 48% arrived via Organic Search, 28% arrived Direct (similar to 2019), 16% arrived via Social Media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram), and 6.36% arrived via Referral.
The top 3 referral sites were
Mumsnet,
NI4kids and
whatsOnNI.

- Increased followers by 2% on Facebook, 2% on Twitter, and 30% on Instagram versus 2019.
- Invested in advertising spend on Facebook, resulting in an extra reach of 397,970 to audiences all over the island of Ireland.
- From Jan 2020-March 2020, we achieved 111,000 impressions on Twitter

APPENDIX 8: Print & Promotional Collateral

PRINT

- 10,000 Highlights Flyers, distributed around Belfast from December 2019
- 15,000 Programme brochures (Distributed to family friendly venues, retail outlets, cafes, visitor attractions, libraries, leisure and community centres, cafes, restaurants and hotels across Belfast City Centre and the Greater Belfast surrounding suburbs. Plus, NI wide distribution to all Libraries NI branches)
- 200 x Launch Invites issued via Mailchimp
- 75,000 print run takeover of February 2020 edition of NI4Kids (Distribution province-wide in family friendly venues and in school bags. 160 k readership)
- 4 x Festivals Forum Flags
- 4 x teardrop flags
- 1x A0 Poster (Lyric)
- 10 x A2 Posters (Other BCF20 Venues)
- 1 x A3 posters (MAC)
- 6 x A1 sandwich board posters YOUR Place Family Day schedule (UU & CQ)
- 500 x A4 folded to A5 Colour of Sound exhibition toolkit
- 2000 x A6 Feedback Postcards
- 4 x Pop up stands
- 70 x T-shirts (for Event Managers & Volunteers)
- 130 x Stamped YAA Tote Bags for artists and delegates
- 2000 YAA Stickers
- 33 x branded Launch Goody Bags for Seaview Primary Guests

Outdoor Advertising

21 Adshel Live sites: Cycle 4 & Cycle 5

Panel	Plan	Address	City	County	Type	Direction	Orientation	Format
24012	3	Antrim Rd o/s Tesco	Belfast	Antrim	Digital	Inbound	Head on	Adshel Live
24014	3	Botanic Ave opp 86	Belfast	Antrim	Digital	Outbound	Head on	Adshel Live
24018	3	Castle Place o/s Donegall Arcade	Belfast	Antrim	Digital	City Centre	Head on	Adshel Live
24021	3	Crumlin Rd o/s The Mater Hospital	Belfast	Antrim	Digital	Inbound	Head on	Adshel Live
24237	3	Divis St - Millfield COB	Belfast	Antrim	Digital	Outbound	Head on	Adshel Live
24022	3	Donegall Rd o/s City Hospital	Belfast	Antrim	Digital	Outbound	Head on	Adshel Live
24024	3	East Bridge St opp Lanyon Place Station	Belfast	Antrim	Digital	Outbound	Head on	Adshel Live
24238	3	Falls Road - Children's Hospital CIB	Belfast	Antrim	Digital	Inbound	Head on	Adshel Live
24026	3	Great Victoria St o/s Gt Northern Mall	Belfast	Antrim	Digital	Inbound	Head on	Adshel Live
24323	3	High St o/s Inn Shops	Belfast	Antrim	Digital	Inbound	Head On	Adshel Live
24028	3	Howard Street o/s Lesley Buildings	Belfast	Antrim	Digital	City Centre	Head on	Adshel Live
24029	3	Lisburn Rd o/s 249	Belfast	Antrim	Digital	Inbound	Head on	Adshel Live
24275	3	Malone Rd nr Windsor Ave	Belfast	Antrim	Digital	Inbound	Head on	Adshel Live
2056	7	Millfield opp Castle Court heading to city centre	Belfast	Antrim	Standard	City Centre	Parallel	CCB
24031	3	N'Ards Rd o/s Iceland	Belfast	Antrim	Digital	Outbound	Head on	Adshel Live
24314	3	Ormeau Rd adj 278	Belfast	Antrim	Digital	Outbound	Head on	Adshel Live
24033	3	Queen Street o/s Craftworld	Belfast	Antrim	Digital	Inbound	Head on	Adshel Live
24034	3	Ravenhill Rd nr Albertbridge Rd	Belfast	Antrim	Digital	Outbound	Head on	Adshel Live
24035	3	Royal Ave adj Library	Belfast	Antrim	Digital	Outbound	Head on	Adshel Live
24036	3	Shankill Rd o/s Ulster Bank	Belfast	Antrim	Digital	Inbound	Head on	Adshel Live
24039	3	Wellington Place o/s 7	Belfast	Antrim	Digital	Inbound	Head on	Adshel Live
		Belfast Count	21					
		Grand Count	21					

4 x Outdoor Flags

(part of Belfast City Council's Festivals Forum Initiative)

4 x Belfast City Hall

Billboards: 5 x 48 sheets at key arterial routes in Belfast

Type	Site Address	Cycle 4	Cycle 5
Bill board (48 sheets)	Cromac Street	X	
Bill board (48 sheets)	Lisburn Road		X
Bill board (48 sheets)	Millfield	X	X
Bill board (48 sheets)	Grosvenor Road	X	X
Bill board (48 sheets)	Bridge End		X

BROADCAST

QRadio:

63x 30 second ads across Q107, Q Belfast and Q100.5 (24 February-1 March); 70 x 30 second ads across all frequencies promoting the Outside Broadcast (6 March-7 March)

3-day FB competition in late February with a reach of 50,362 and engagement rate of 7.4%;

ONLINE

Regular e-newsletter sent monthly from April to December and fortnightly from January to March to over 7,000 subscribers through Mailchimp

Digital Schools Brochure: - Online from September 2019 <https://bit.ly/3CHZeRu>

Festival Highlights Brochure: - Online from November 2019

Digital Festival Brochure: - Online from January 2020 <https://bit.ly/375W9d1>

2 x Promotional Videos

Highlights: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FDMkO6Ep4g4>

Launch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=17NzfcPtyuQ>

Digital Download (Special Offers for YOUR Place Family Day)

<https://bit.ly/3dHRXmf>

YOUR Place Family Day Out Schedule

<https://bit.ly/37asDmn>

MPU banner advert on QRadio website

Ni4Kids News articles on Ni4kids.com, All events listed individually online at ni4kids.com/whatson events guide, Facebook Posts, Twitter posts, Instagram stories every day during Festival – reach 5K+ views

Facebook Advertising for the following shows, resulting in an extra reach of 397,970 to audiences all over the island of Ireland.

- Captain Hook
- Garden of Spirited Minds
- Kindermusik
- Mini Midweek Magic
- Stick by Me

APPENDIX 9: BCF20 Post Event Survey Results

Public Post-Event Survey

The post festival survey was sent to all Ticketsolve bookers who had opted in to be emailed, was a top feature in our e-newsletters (over 7,500 subscribers), and was sent to those who had filled in a postcard requesting audience feedback at events. We received a total of 115 responses. (The following does not include Schools or Delegate feedback). Please note, not all delegates responded to all questions so the graphs are based on those who provided responses.

Table 7: How would you rate your festival experience?

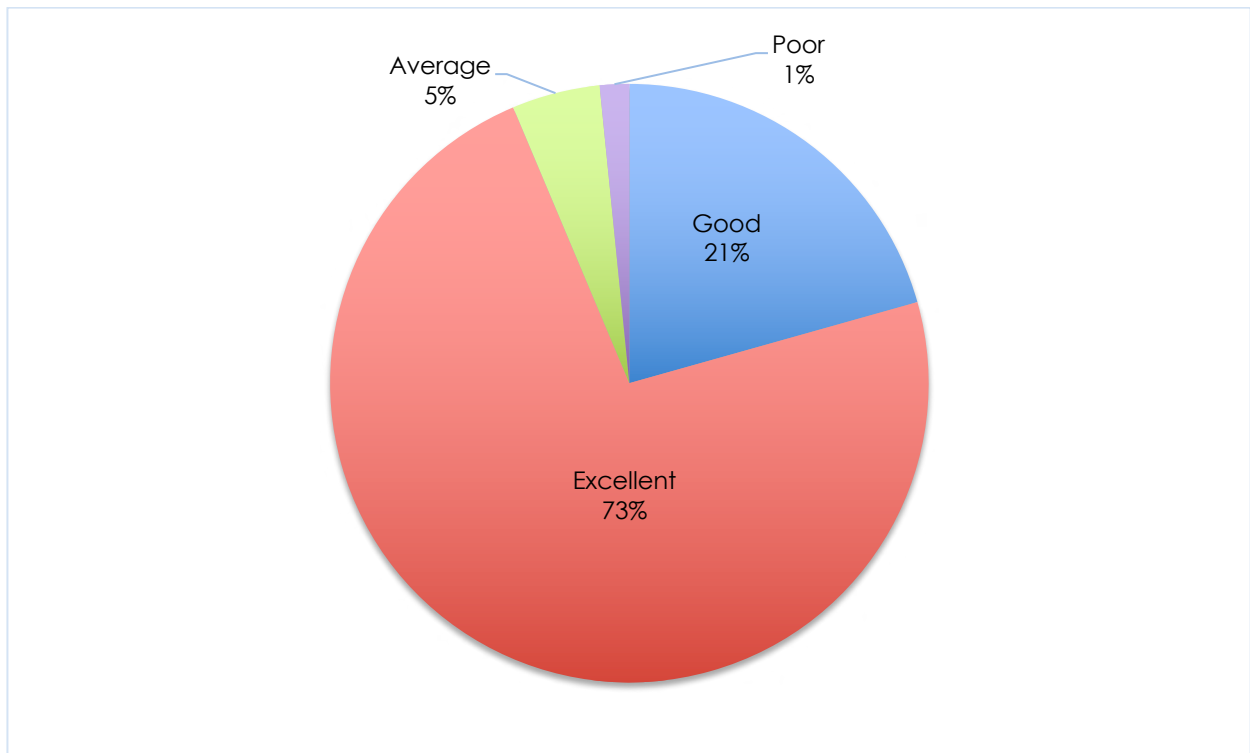


Table 8: To which age group do you belong?

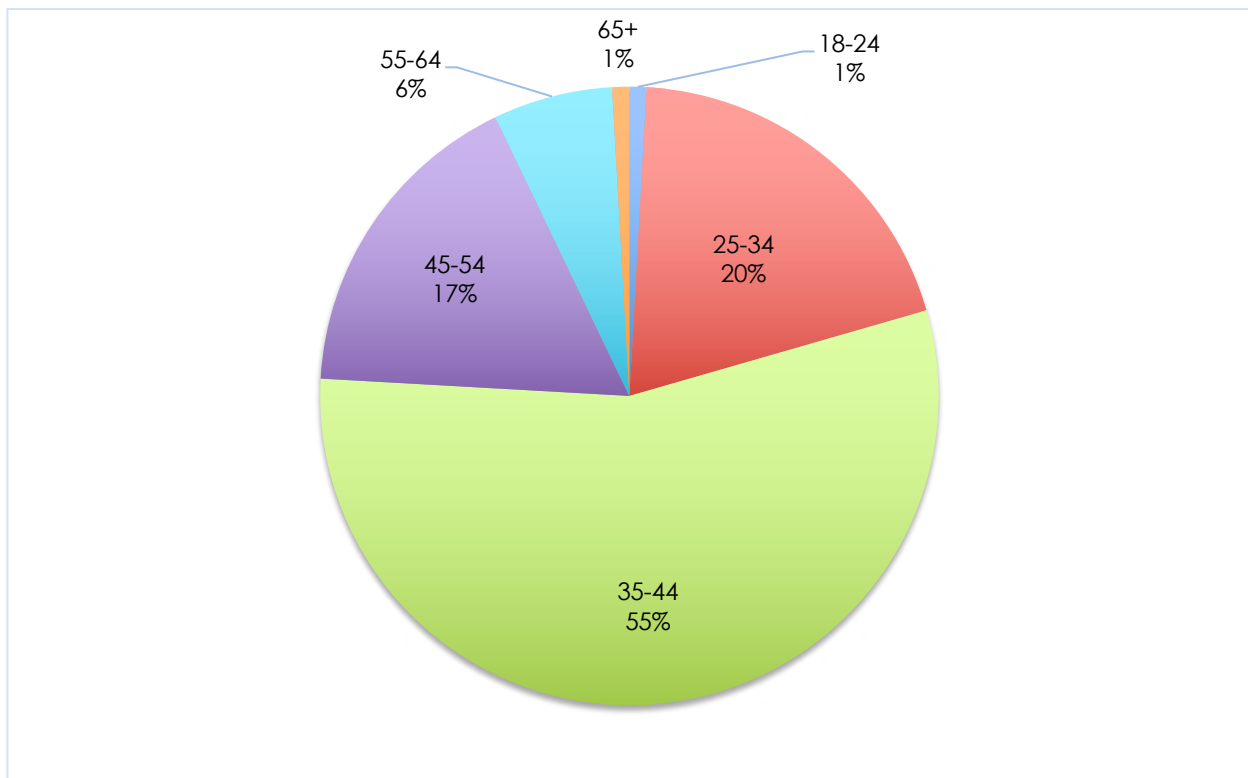


Table 9: If you attended with children, what age group are they?

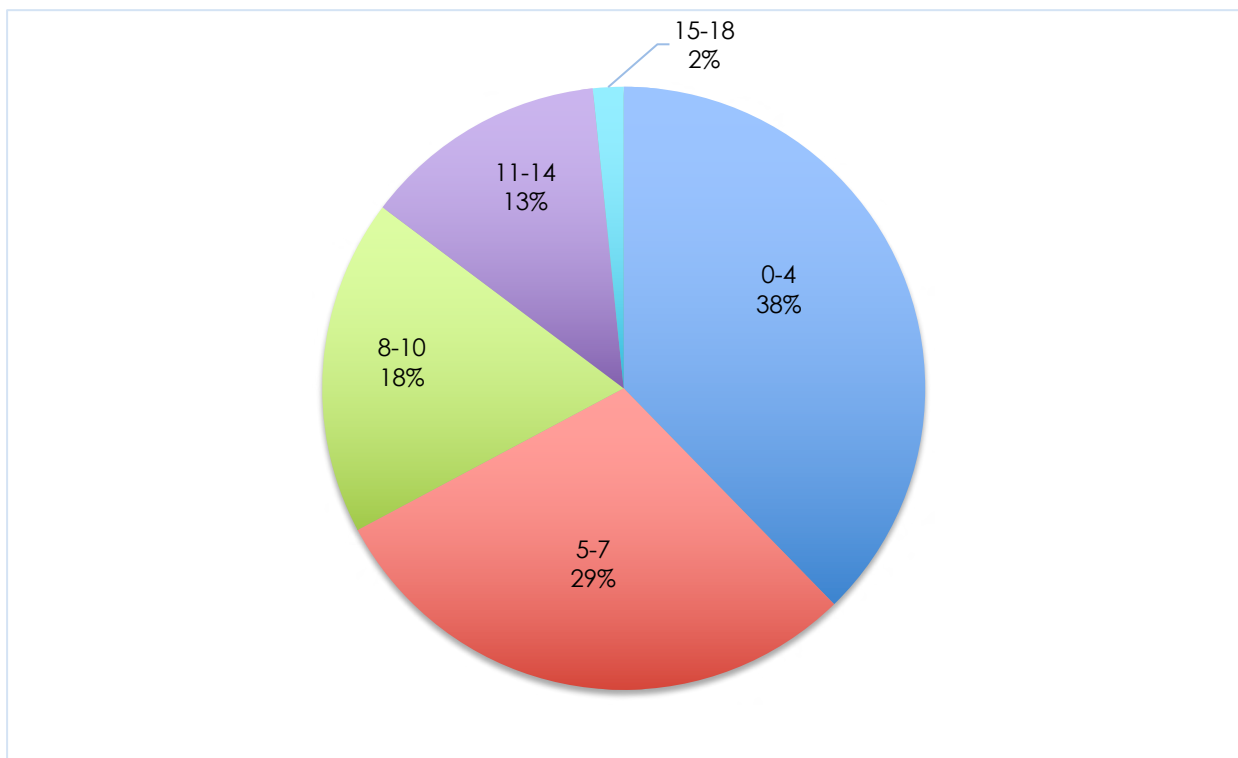


Table 10: What is your gender?

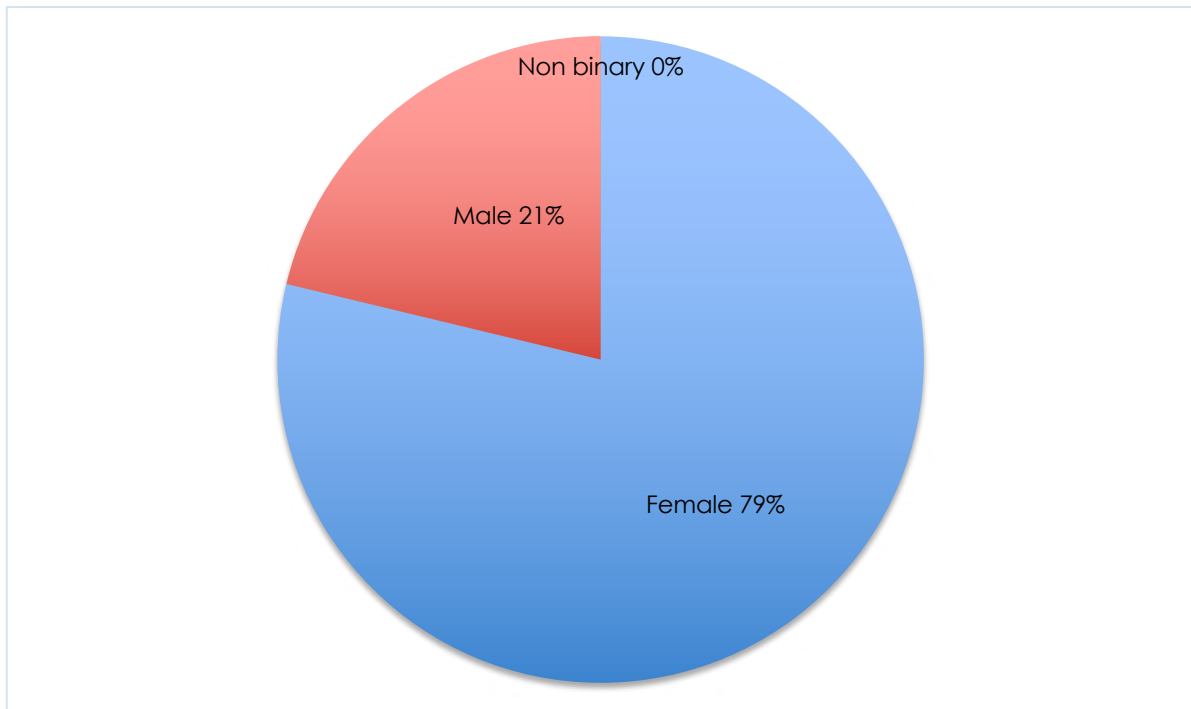


Table 11: How many shows/events did you attend?

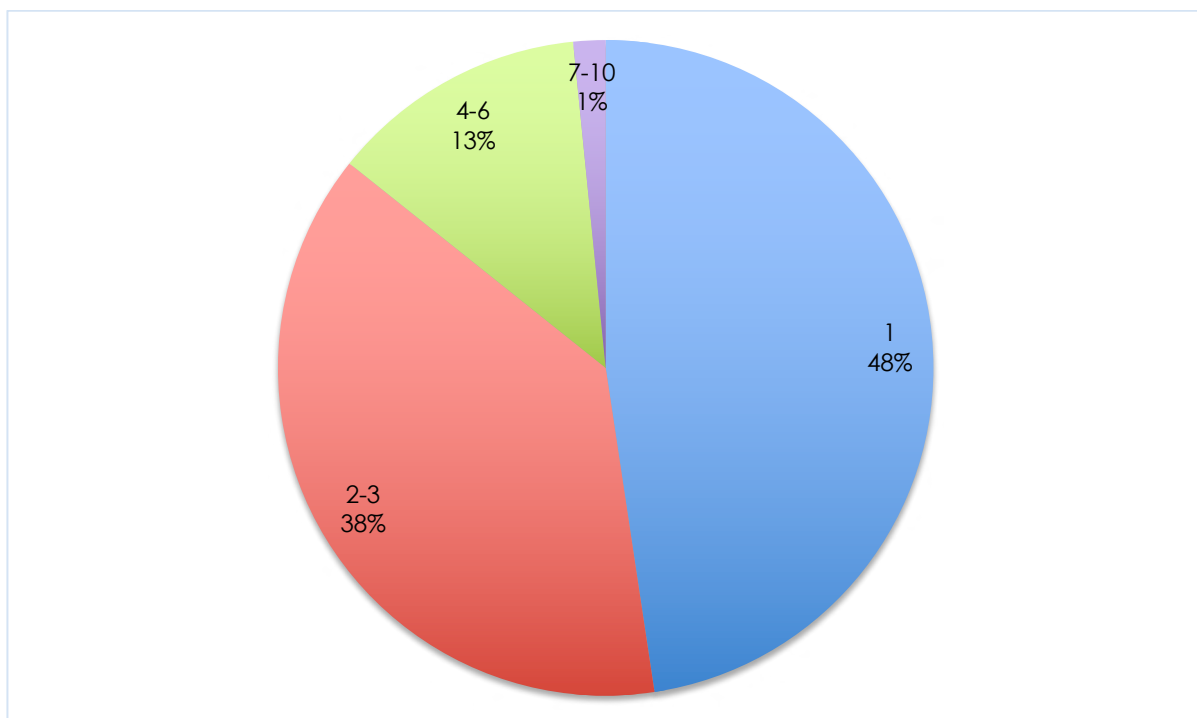


Table 12: Was this your first time visiting the Belfast Children's Festival?

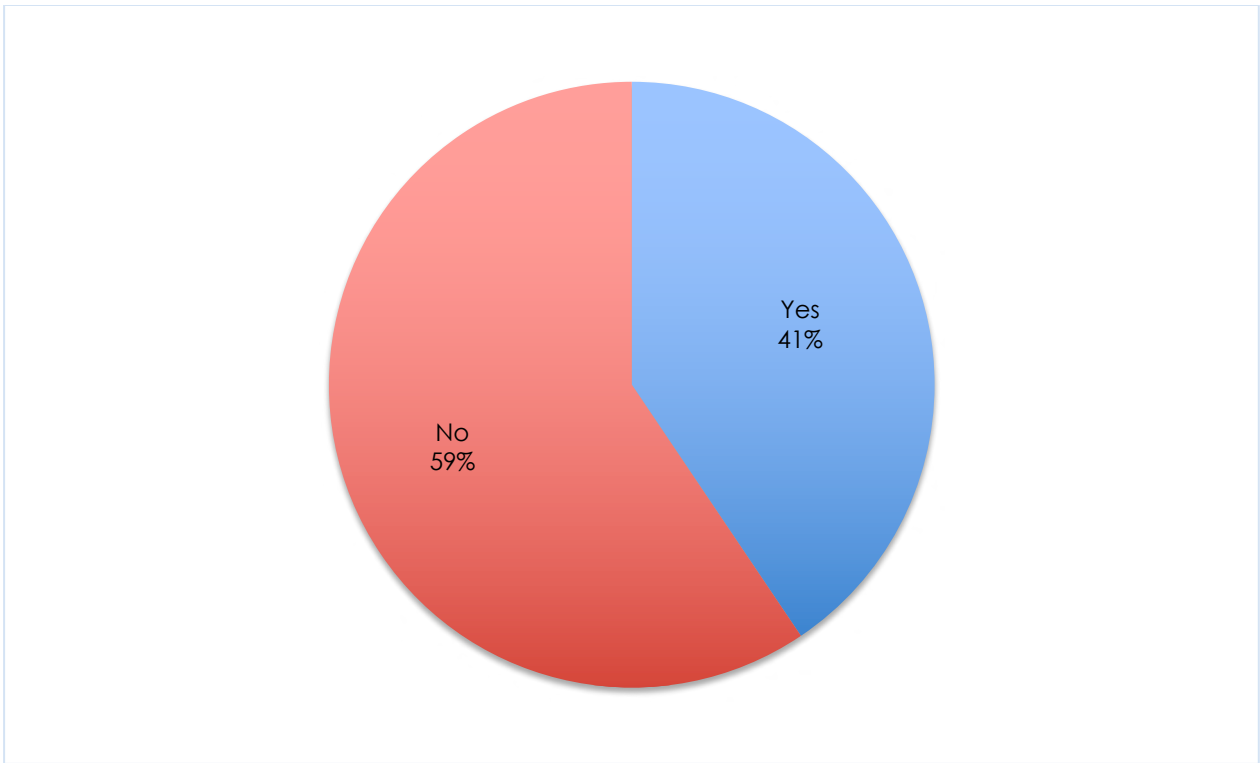


Table 13: How would you have spent your time if you had not attended the Belfast Children's Festival today?

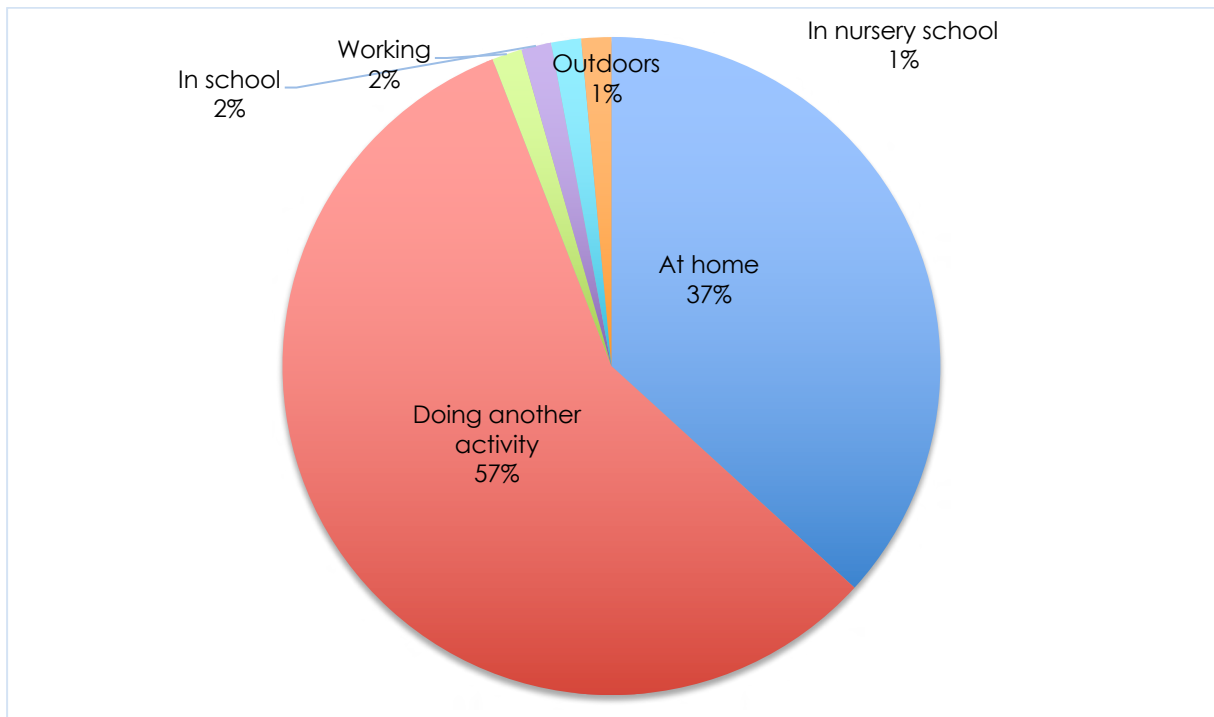


Table 14: Have any of the following happened as a result of your trip to the festival?

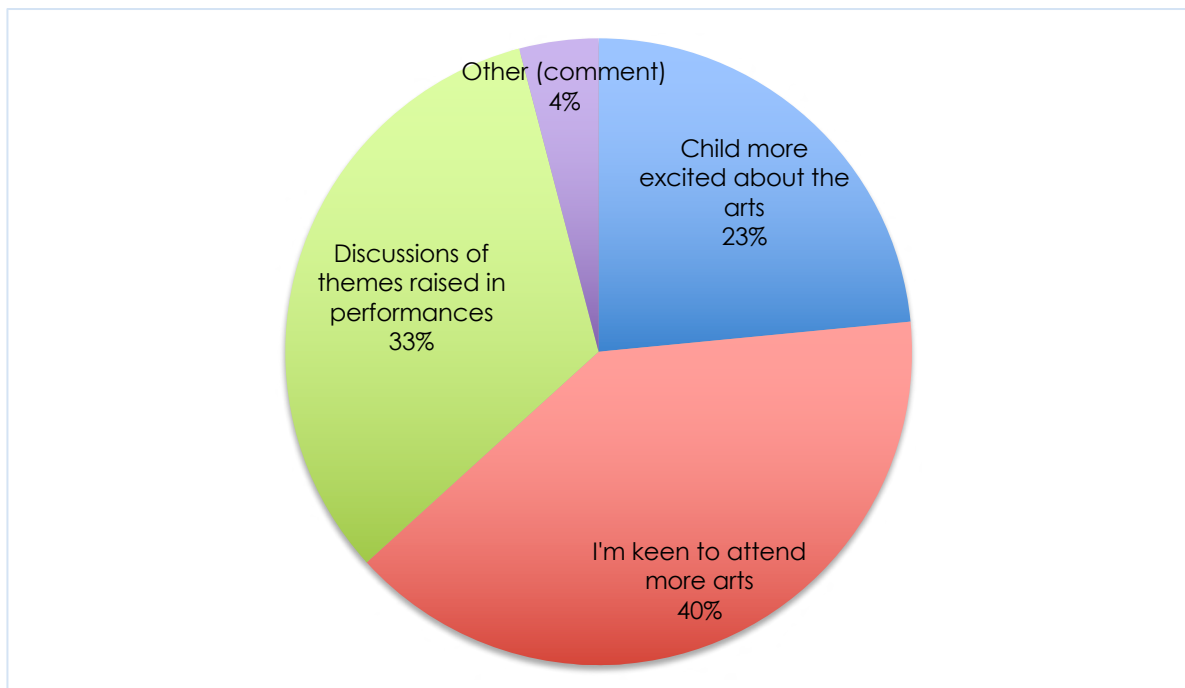


Table 15: How did you find out about the festival?

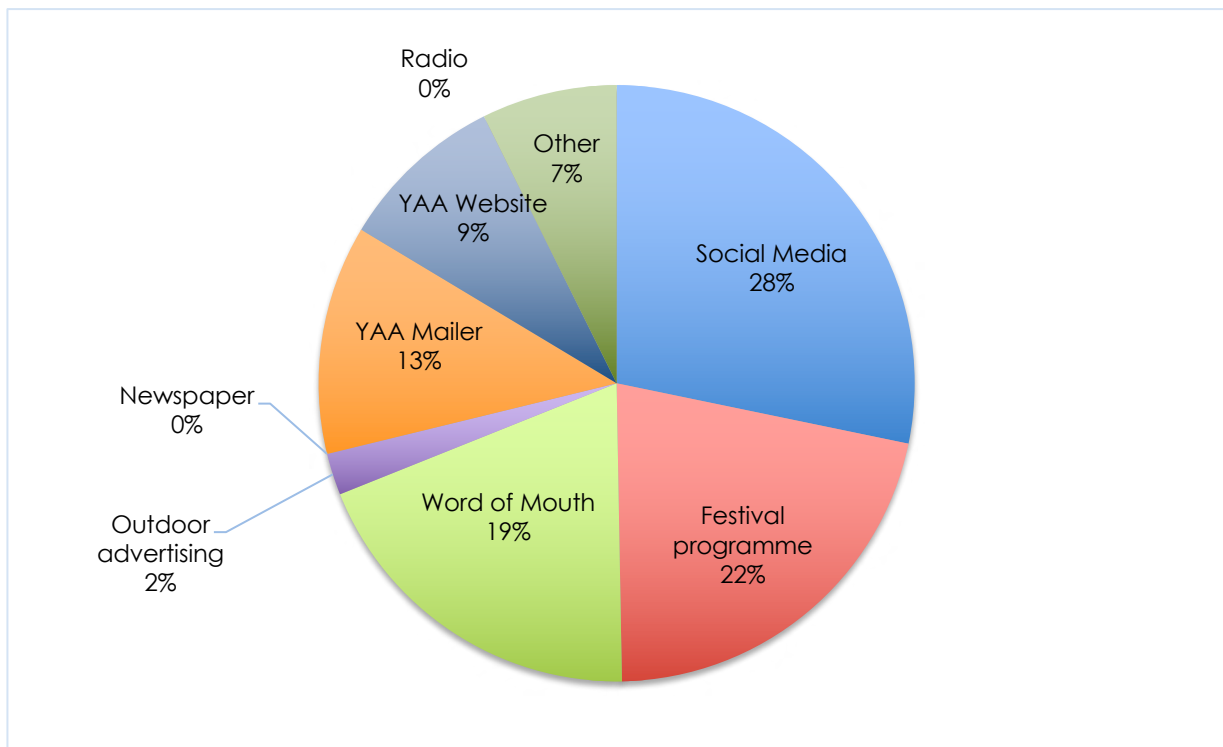
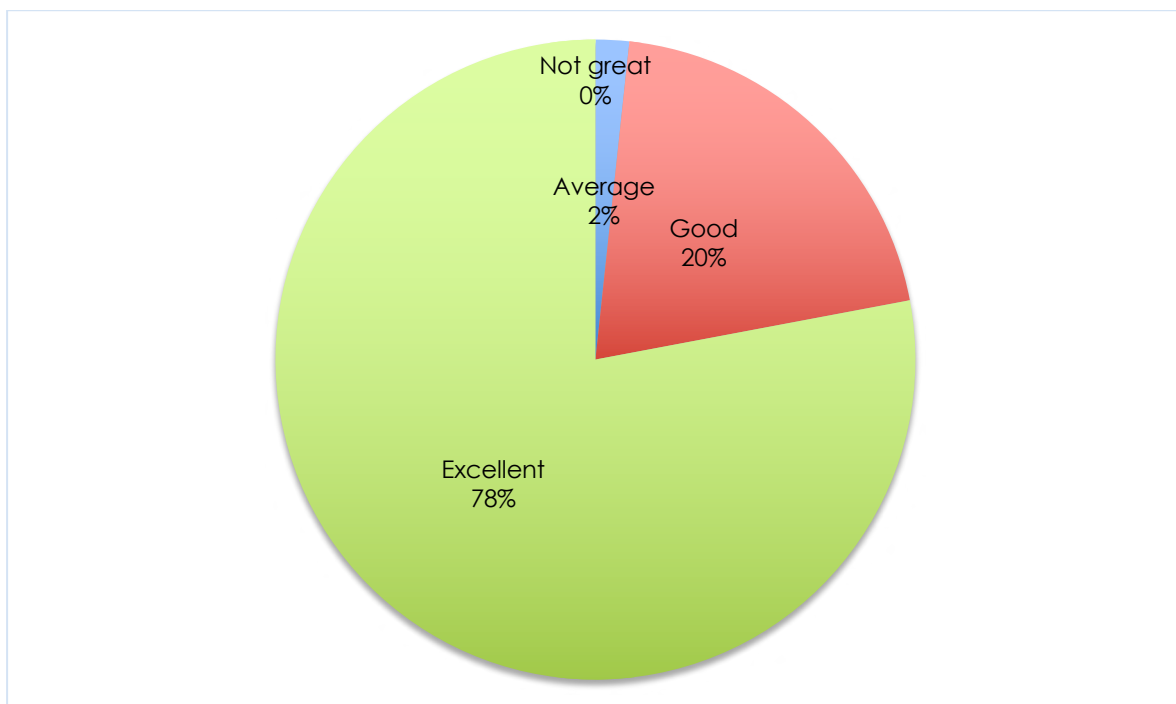
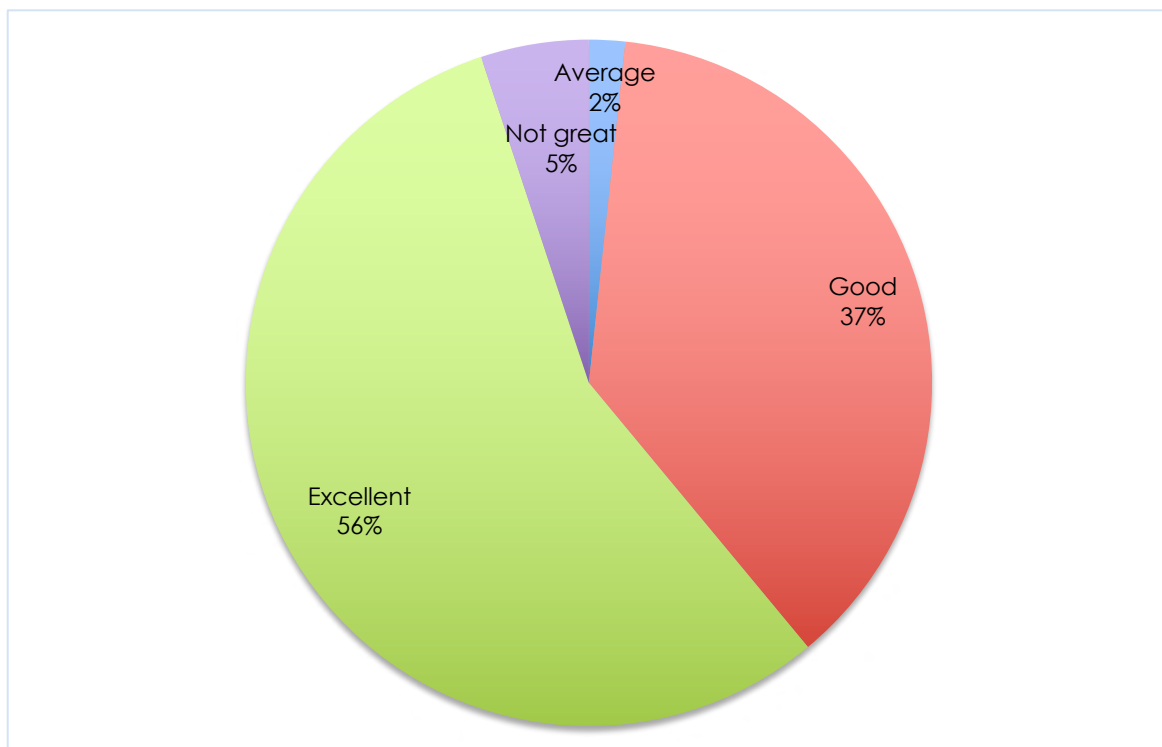


Table 16: How would you rate the following?

a. Quality of events:



b. Information about shows/events:



c. Value for money:

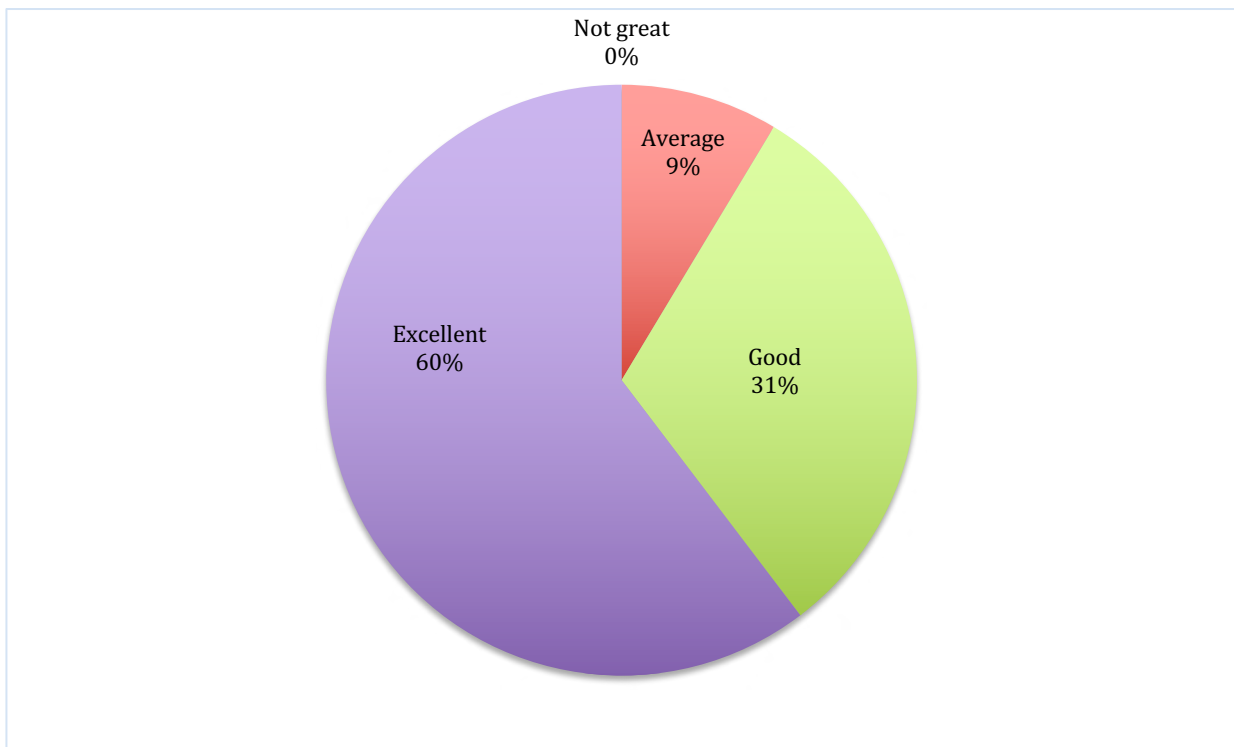
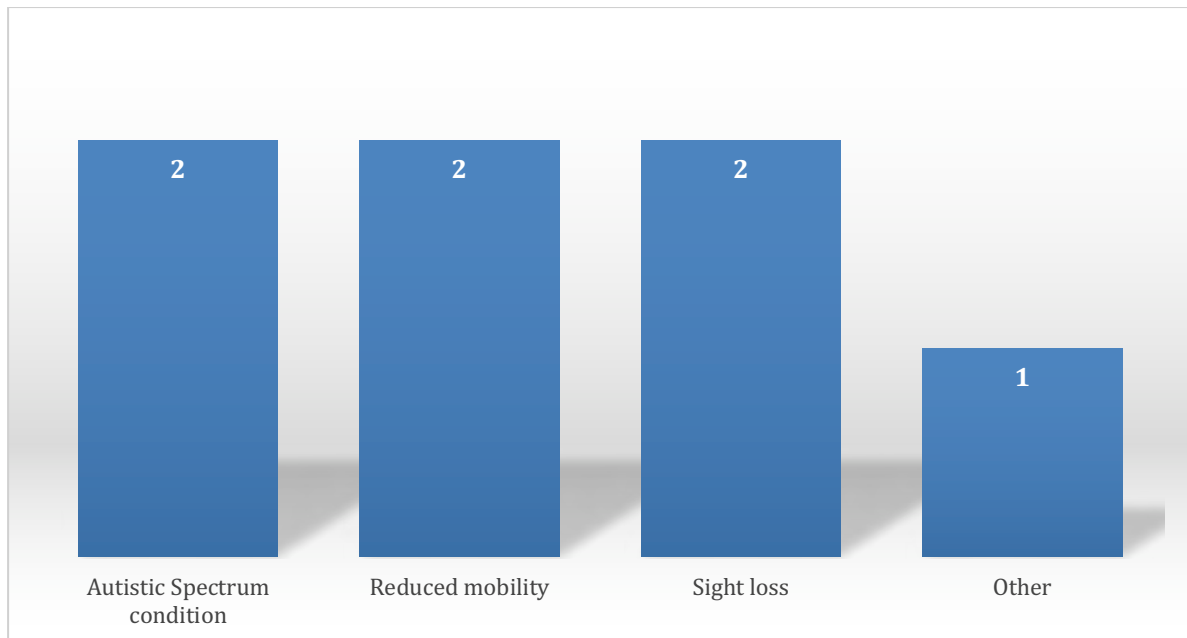
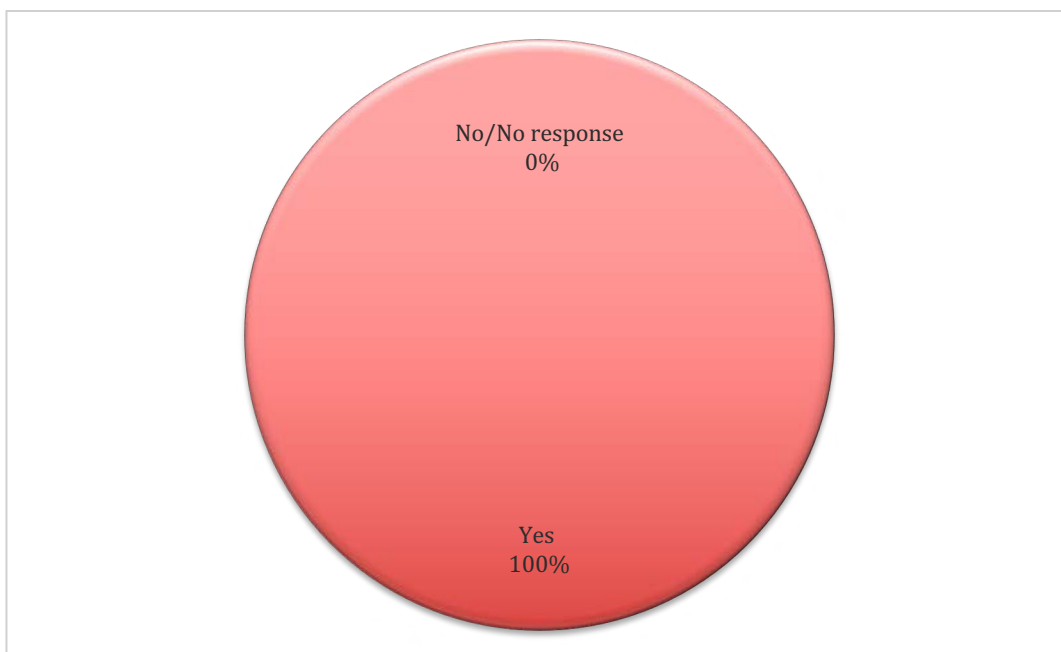


Table 17:

a. Did you or anyone in your group have specific accessibility needs?
8% of survey respondents replied to this question



b. Did you feel that your accessibility needs were met?



Comments:

A respondent made the following comment but did not indicate that their needs weren't met:

"Not all theatres had access for people with reduced mobility, for example at Brian Field Theatre there was no ramp. Very small access for people in wheelchairs."

Other comments included:

"Excellent set up - the quiet room was fantastic".

"Didn't even need to make staff aware as always find children's festival events to be well organised and calm with easy access in and out of venues and quiet areas if needed."

Table 18: Do you attend other Young at Art events throughout the year?

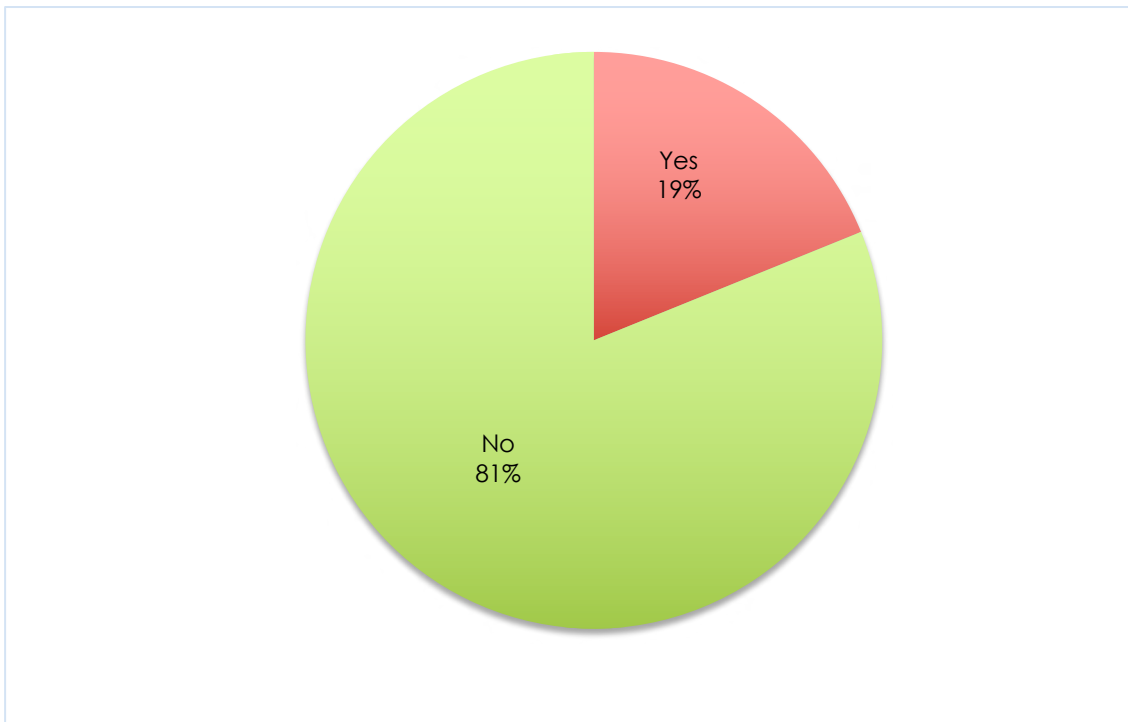


Table 19: In general, what type of events or activities do you attend?

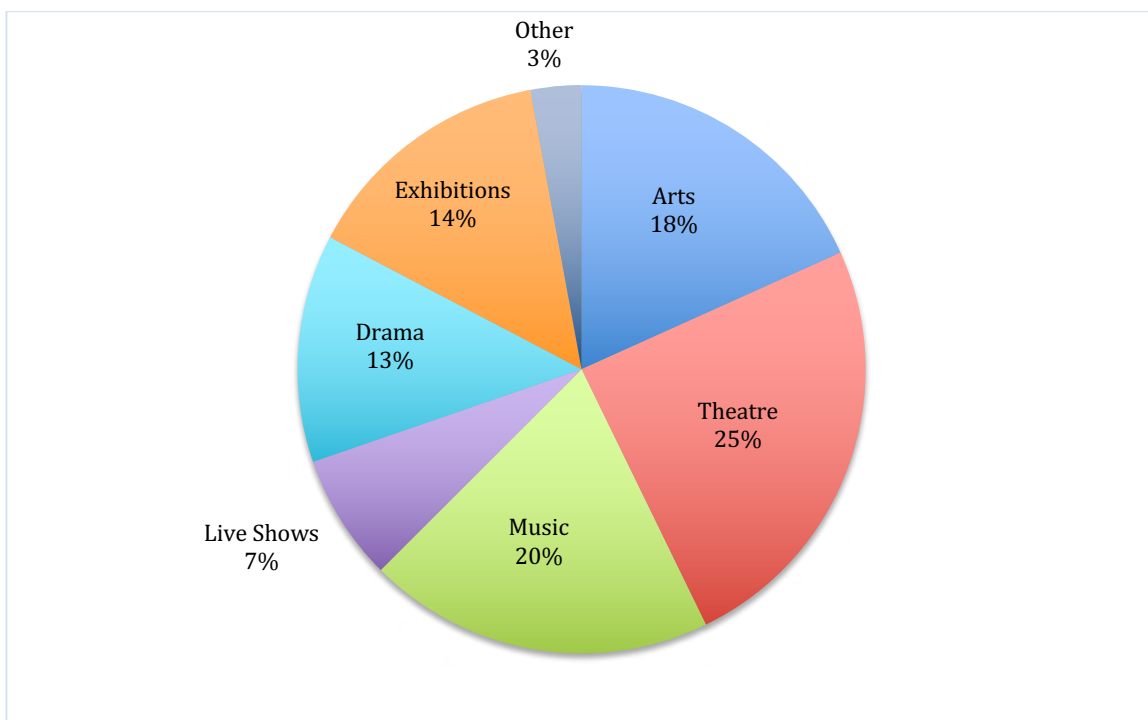


Table 20: When did you book your tickets for the Belfast Children's Festival?

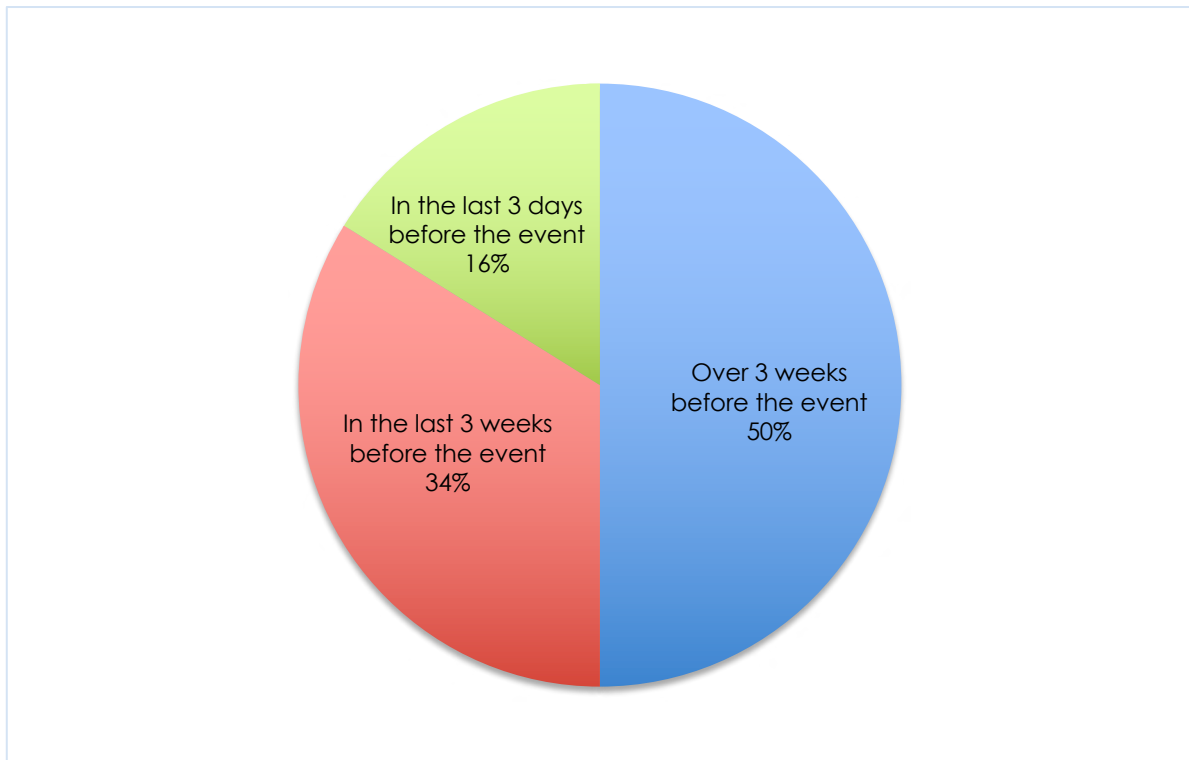


Table 21: Why did you decide to attend Belfast Children's Festival?

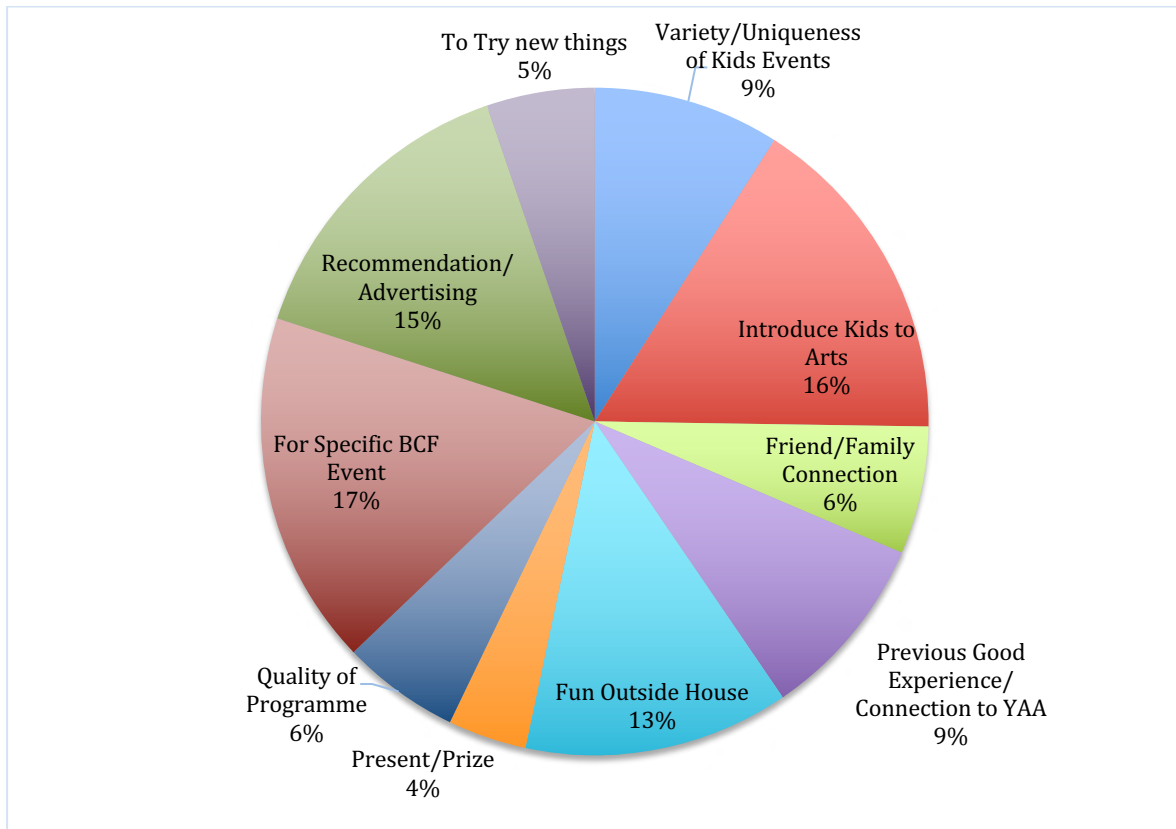
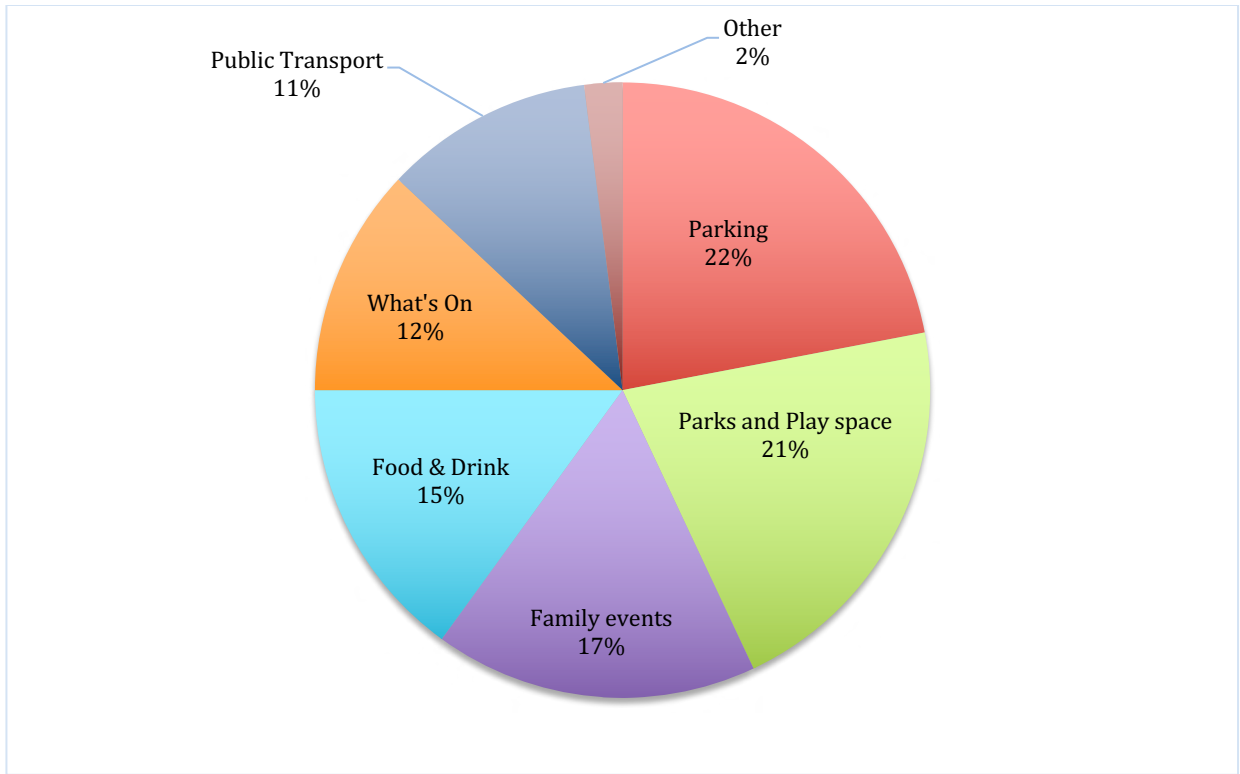
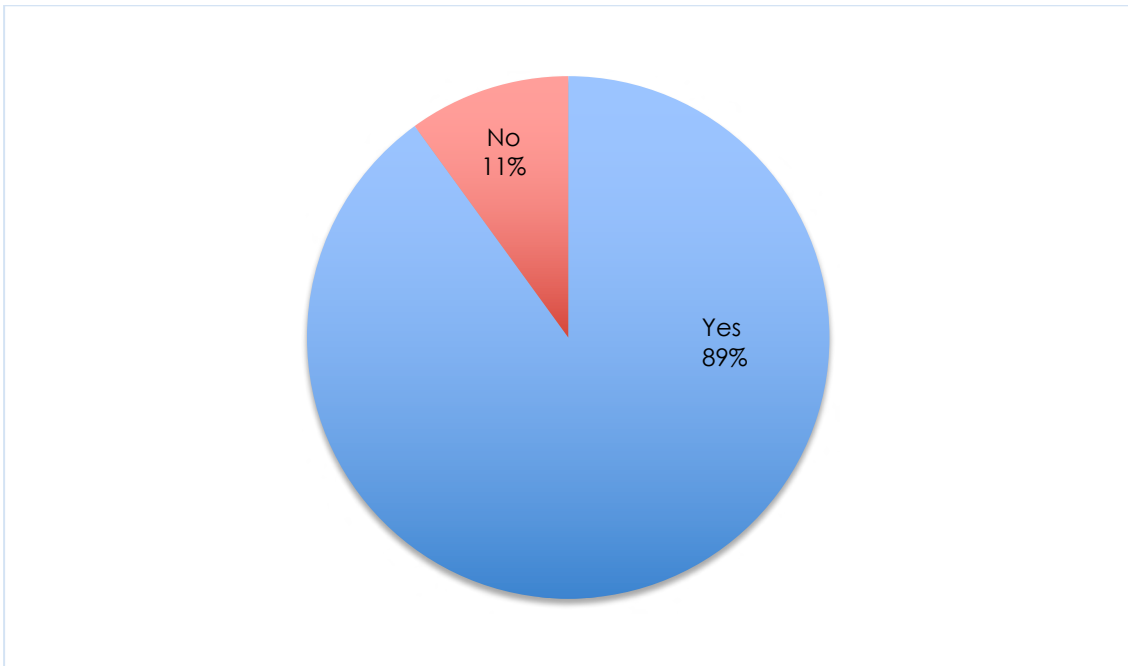


Table 22: What would improve your experience in Belfast's Cathedral Quarter?



Schools Feedback

Table 23: Have you used the Educational Resources made available to you in preparation for today?



This was a very significant increase on last year (BCF19 71% teachers replied 'No')

Table 24: Do you think you will develop additional activities/discussions in the classroom linked to what you saw today?

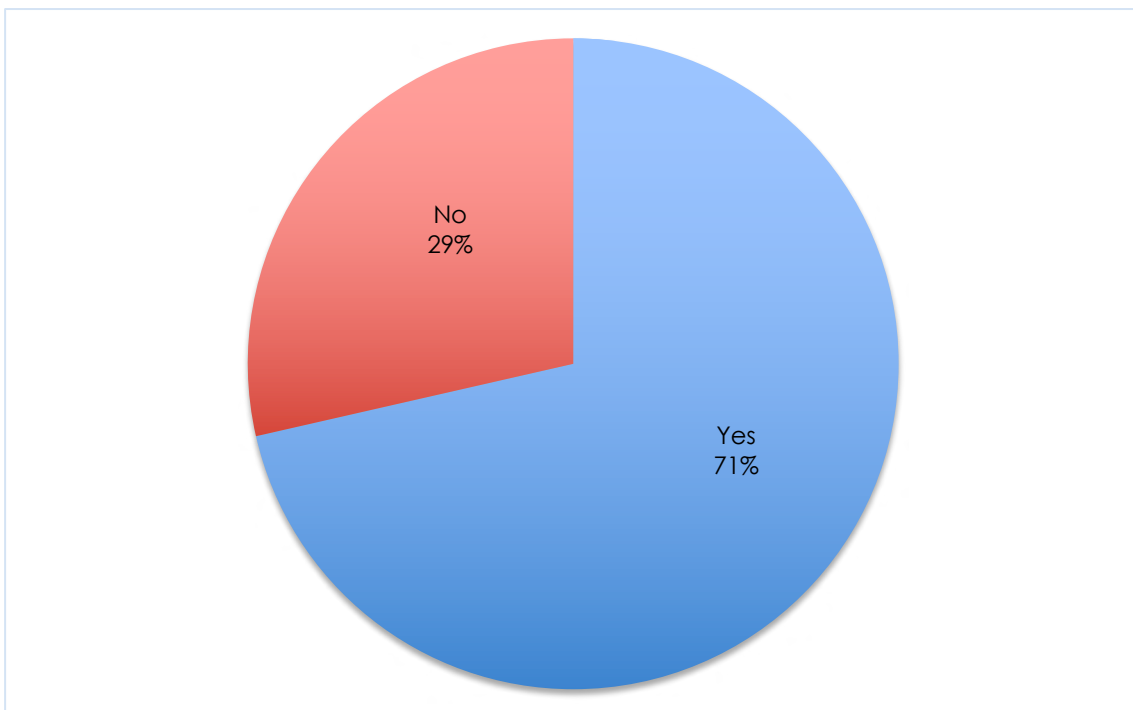
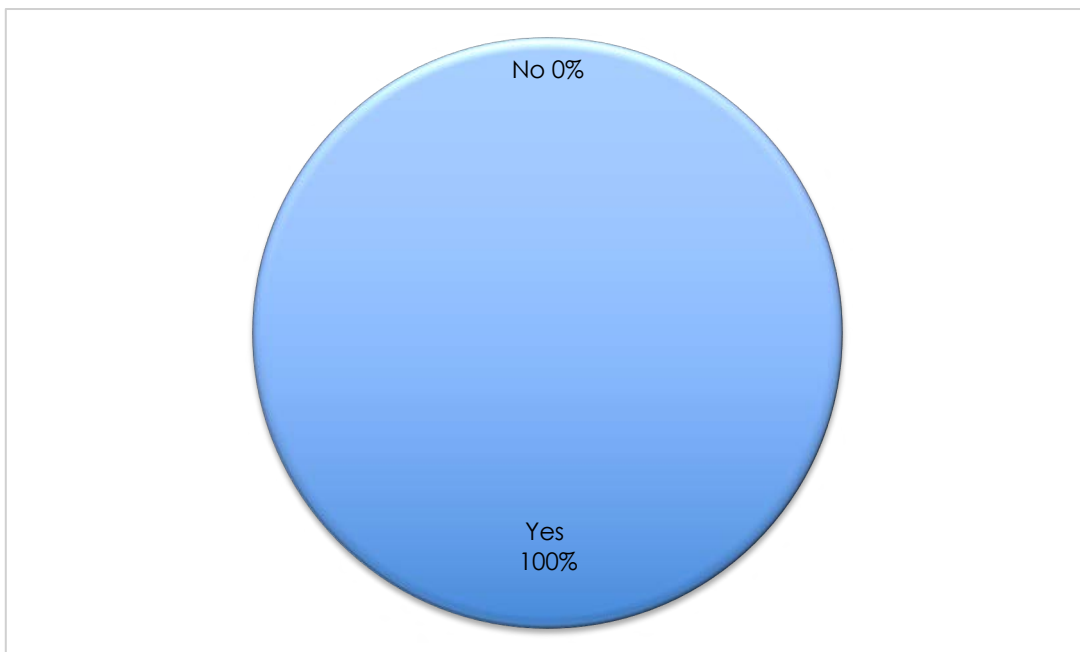
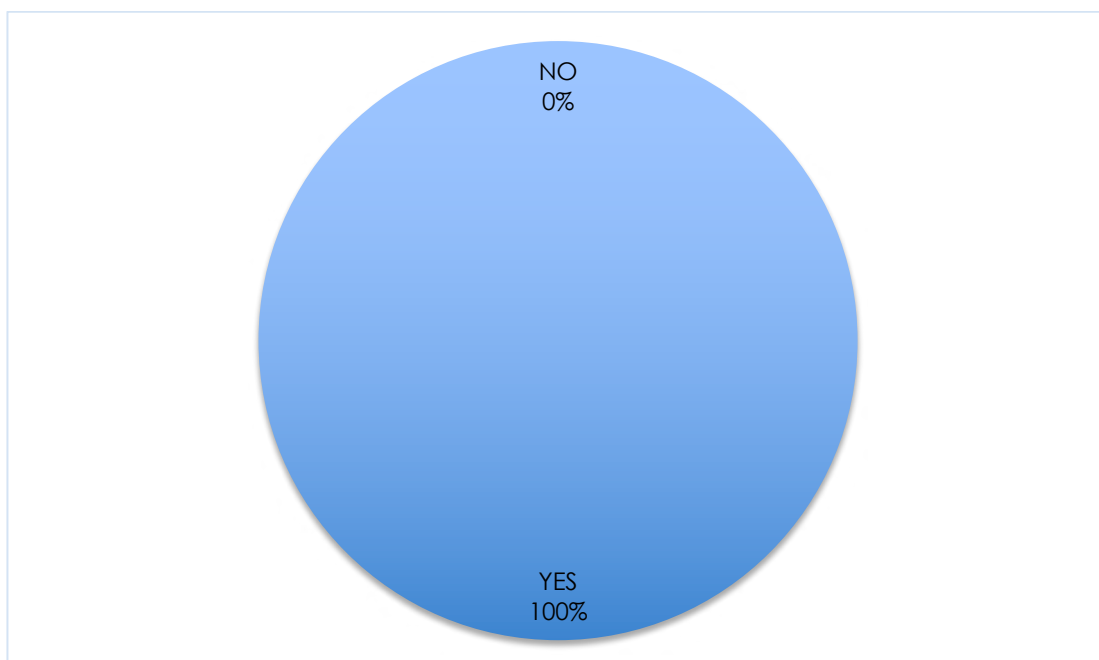


Table 25: Would you recommend this festival/show to your colleagues?



Again, a significant increase on last year (BCF19 6% teachers replied 'No')

Table 26: Would you attend Belfast Children's Festival again in the future with your class?



Schools Feedback Comments:

"It was a perfect opportunity to connect with the Year 10 focus on empathy."

Ashfield Girls School (Inside the Speaker)

"It was very enjoyable and the children were transfixed, I was surprised at how much they understood and were able to explain the plot."

Fane Street Primary (Jabberbabble)

"The children found the performance very funny and loved that the man lived in a box. We had plenty of conversations afterwards about whether or not we could live in a box."

Glenbank Nursery (Hermit)

"The whole experience, they loved the noises in the show, and seeing his legs sticking out of the box. But they enjoyed the whole day, the trip there and they really got a lot from the show".

Seaview Nursery (Hermit)

"Excellent workshops/facilitators. Many of the children's only experience of the theatre."

Black Mountain Nursery (Hermit)

"Seeing the pupil reactions to an unusual scenario. I was concerned by the fear and giggling at the beginning of the performance but it was brilliant to see how this changed and progressed during the performance. Clearly, Helen's aims were accomplished!"

Ashfield Girls' School (Inside the Speaker)

"I loved going to the theatre - our first visit there. It was amazing to hear the children's understanding of the show and how they picked up on the plot and the meaning behind the words and actions."

Fane Street Primary (Jabberbabble)

"Always well organised and enjoyable for the children and staff. I loved the show and the multi-sensory aspect of it for the children. I loved the forest effect."

Nettlefield Nursery (Hermit)

TYANI Delegate Feedback

Table 27: If you are from outside NI, have you visited NI before?

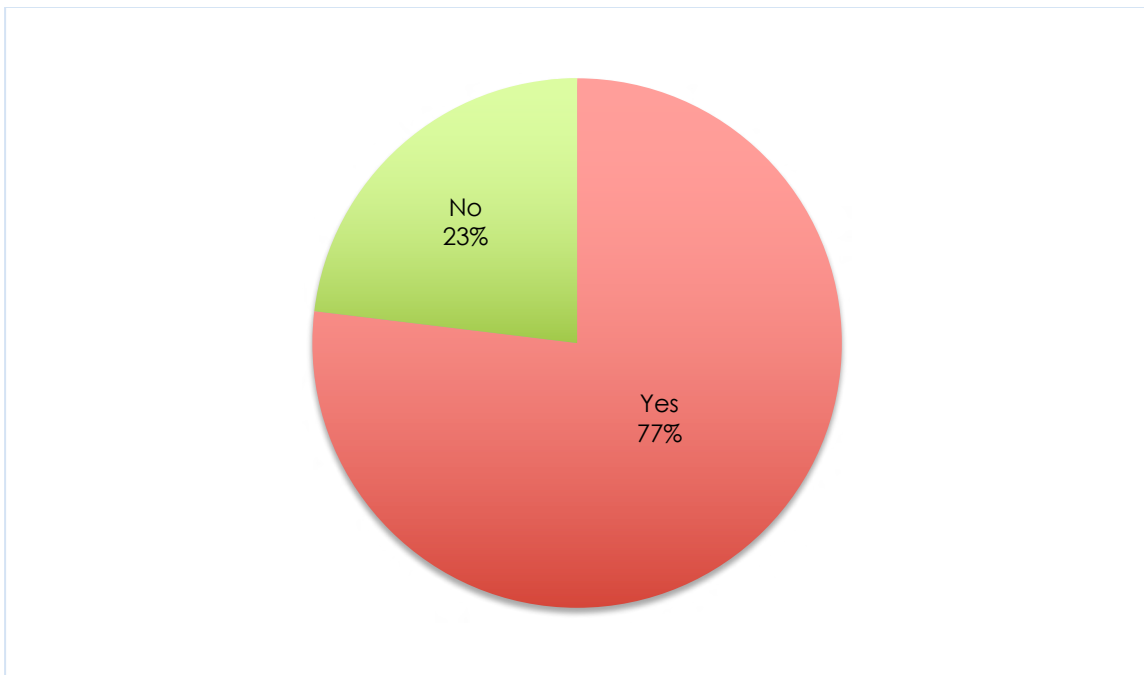


Table 28: Have you attended a TYA NI showcase or BCF before?

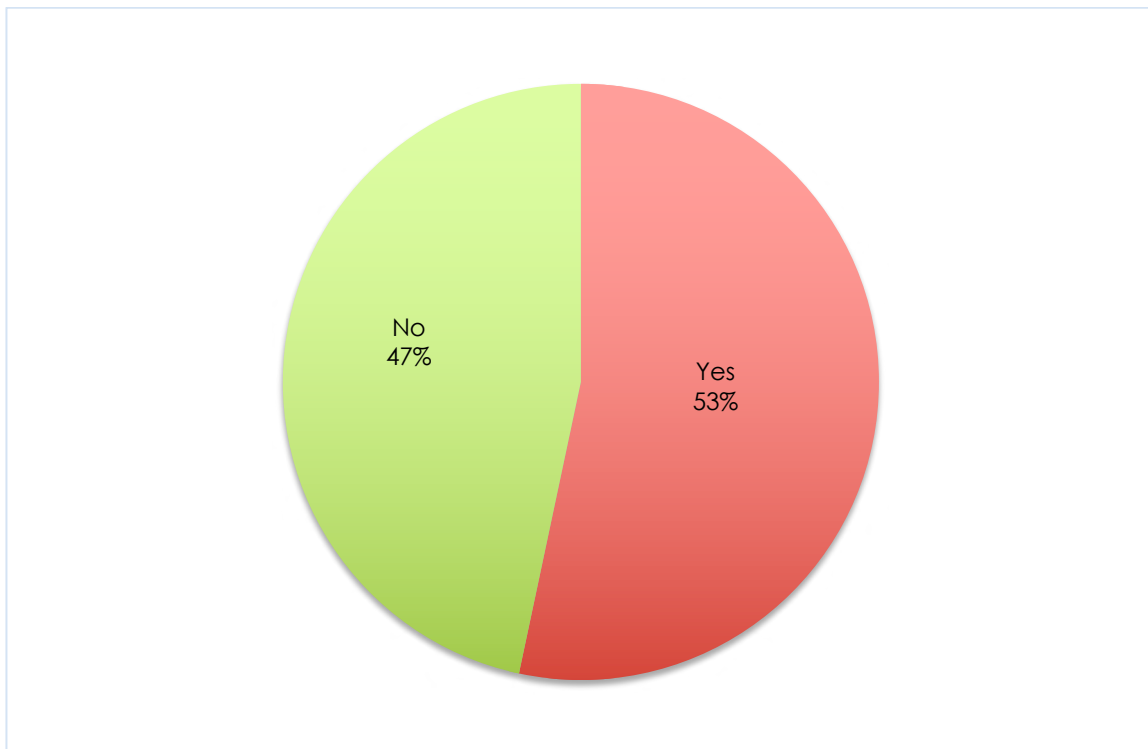


Table 29: What were your main reasons for visiting the Belfast Children's Festival?

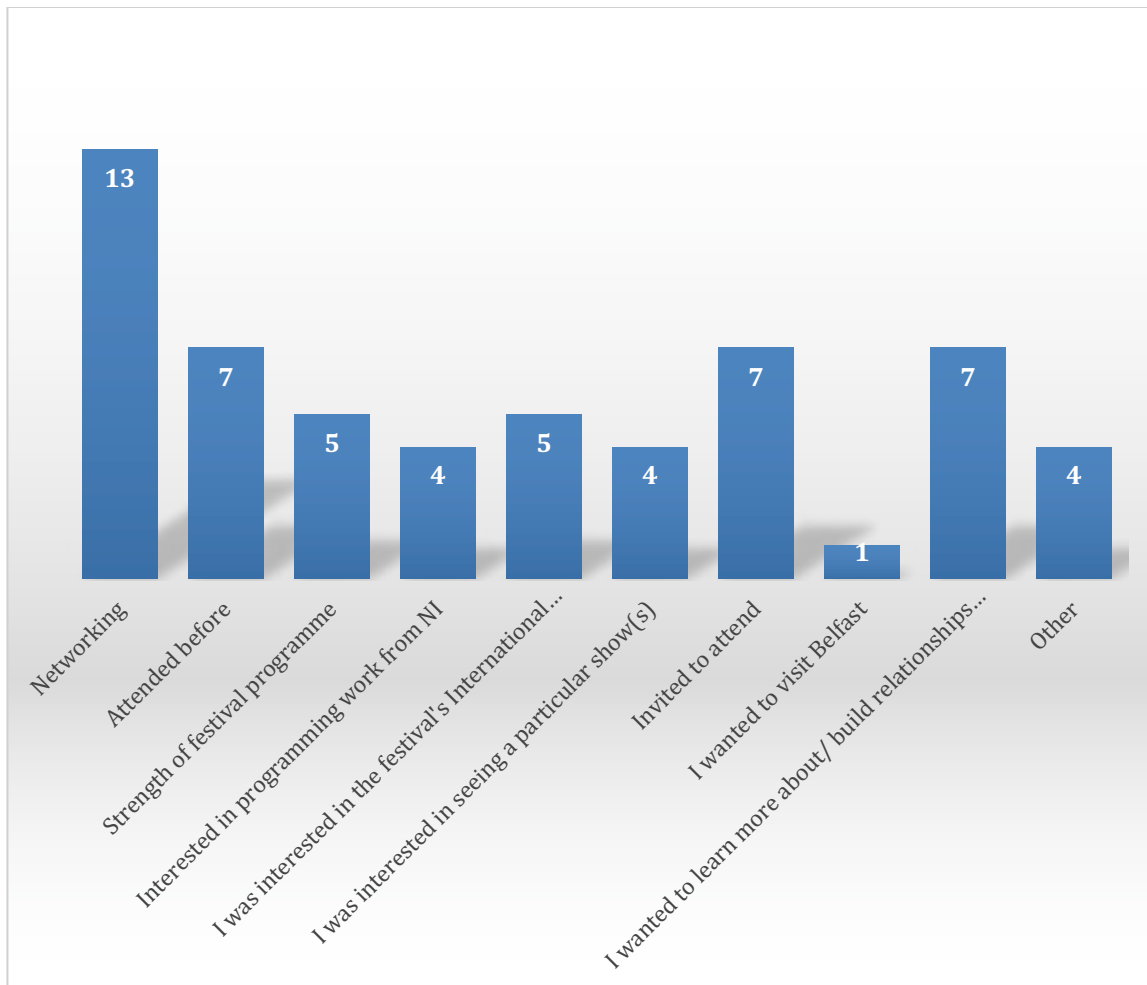
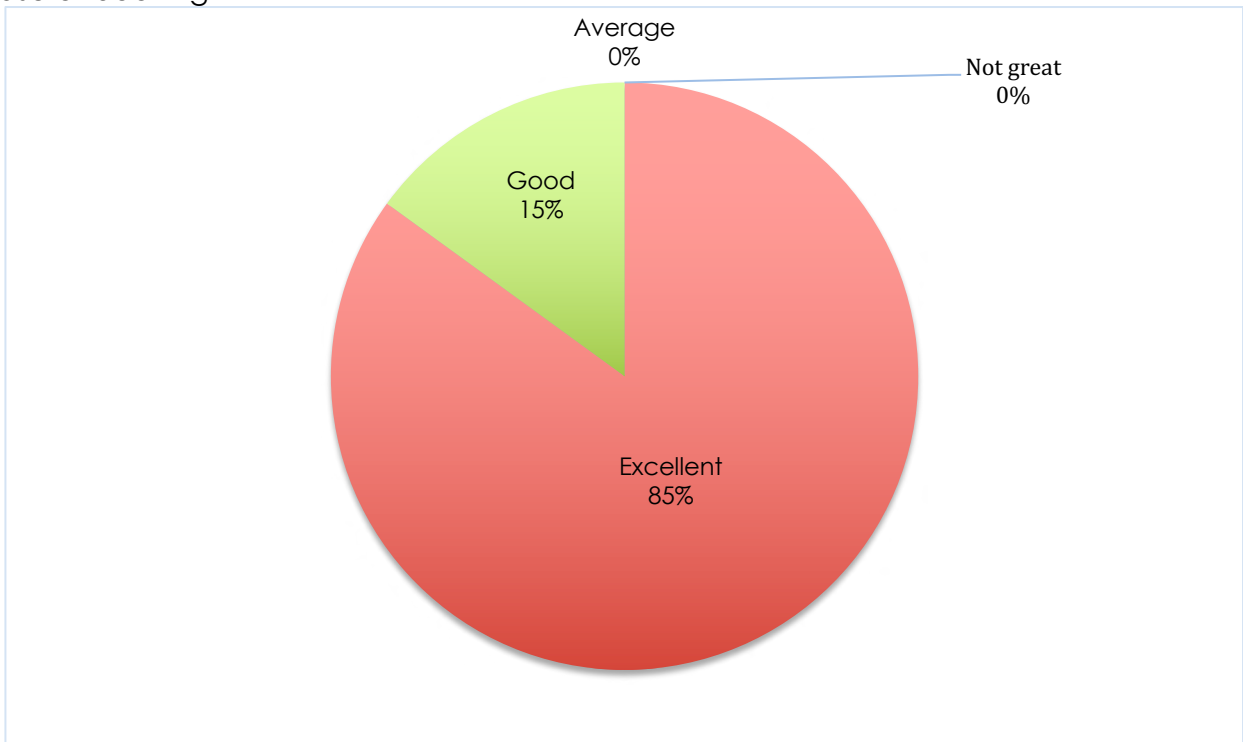
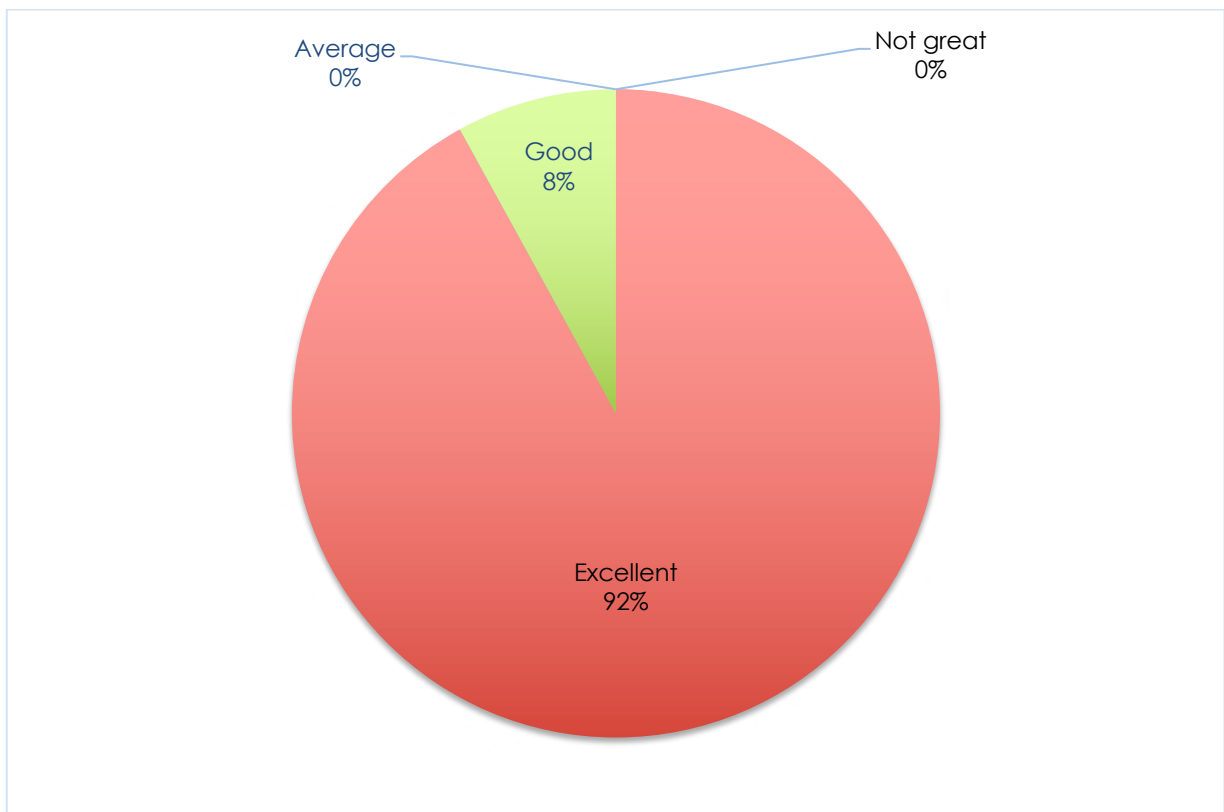


Table 30: How would you rate the following aspects of the TYA NI Showcase?

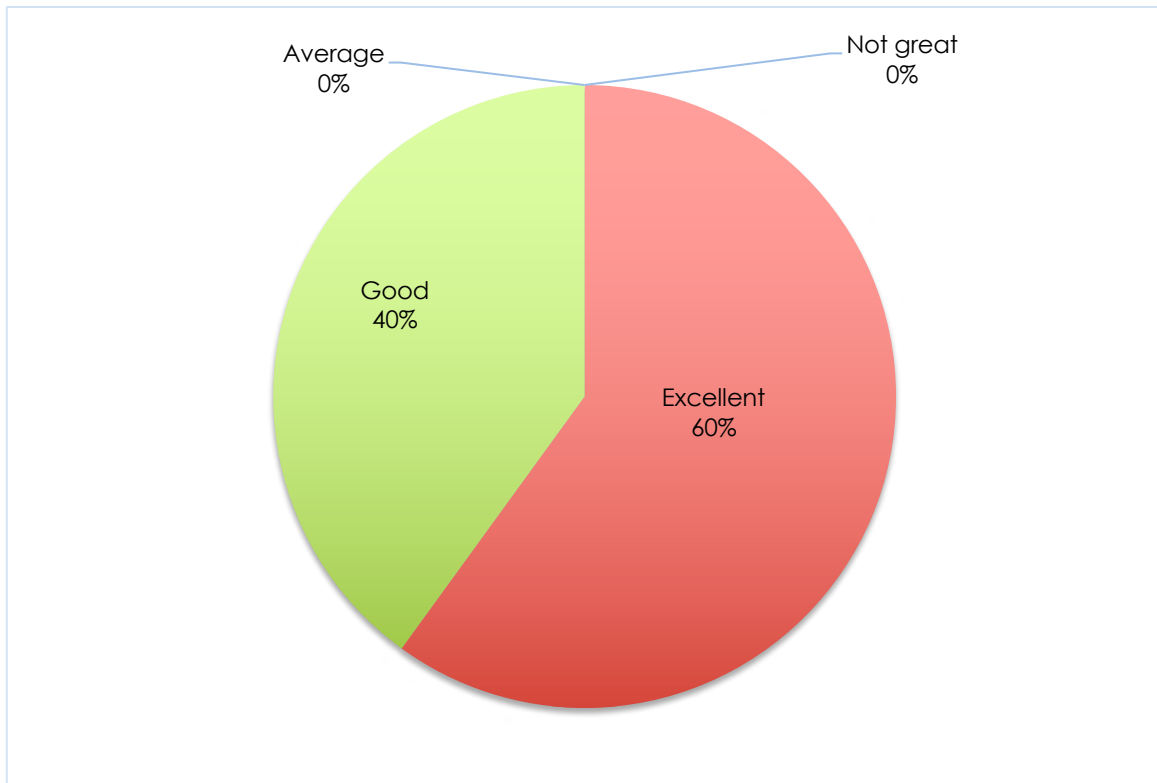
a. Ease of booking



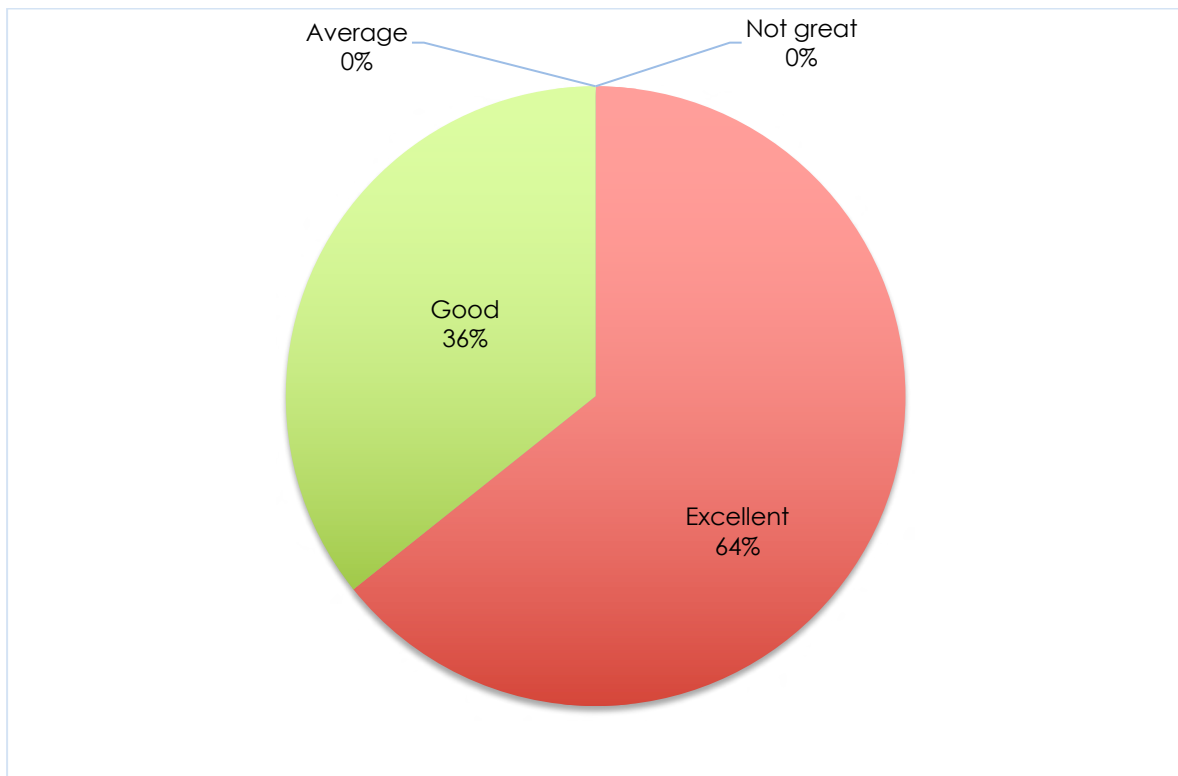
b. Welcome



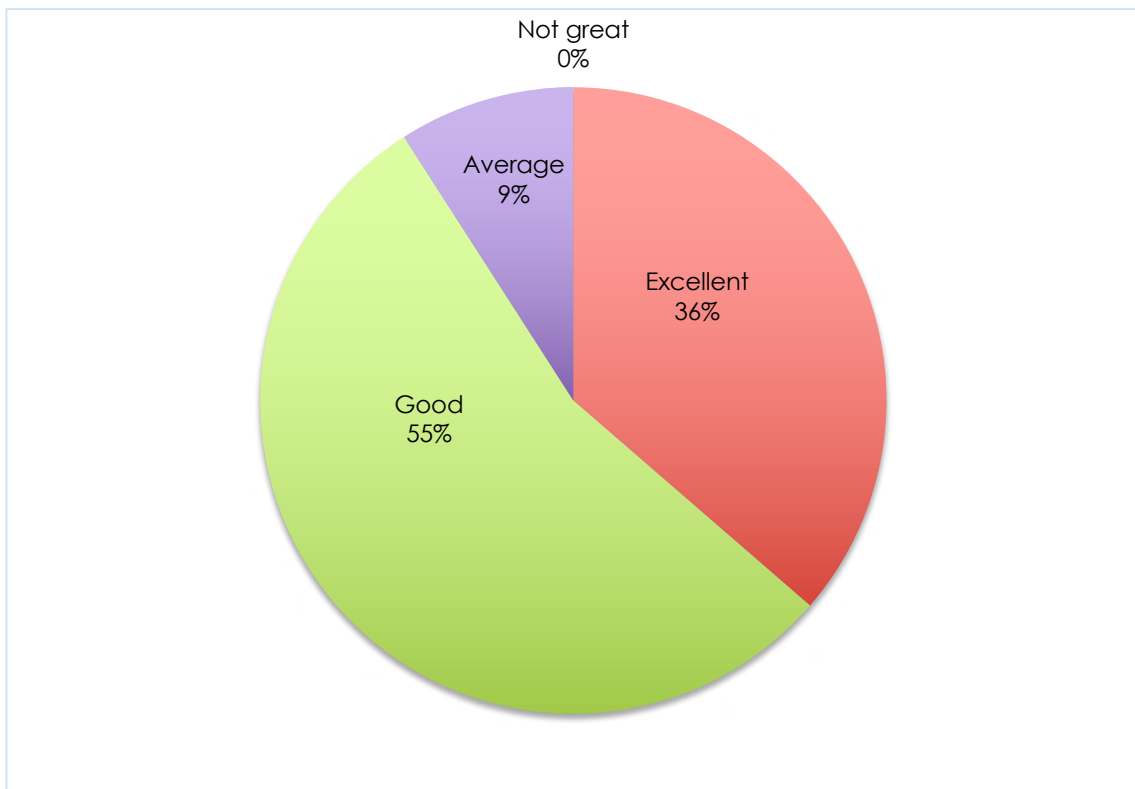
c. Programming



d. Networking/Discussion Events



e. Accommodation



f. Value for money

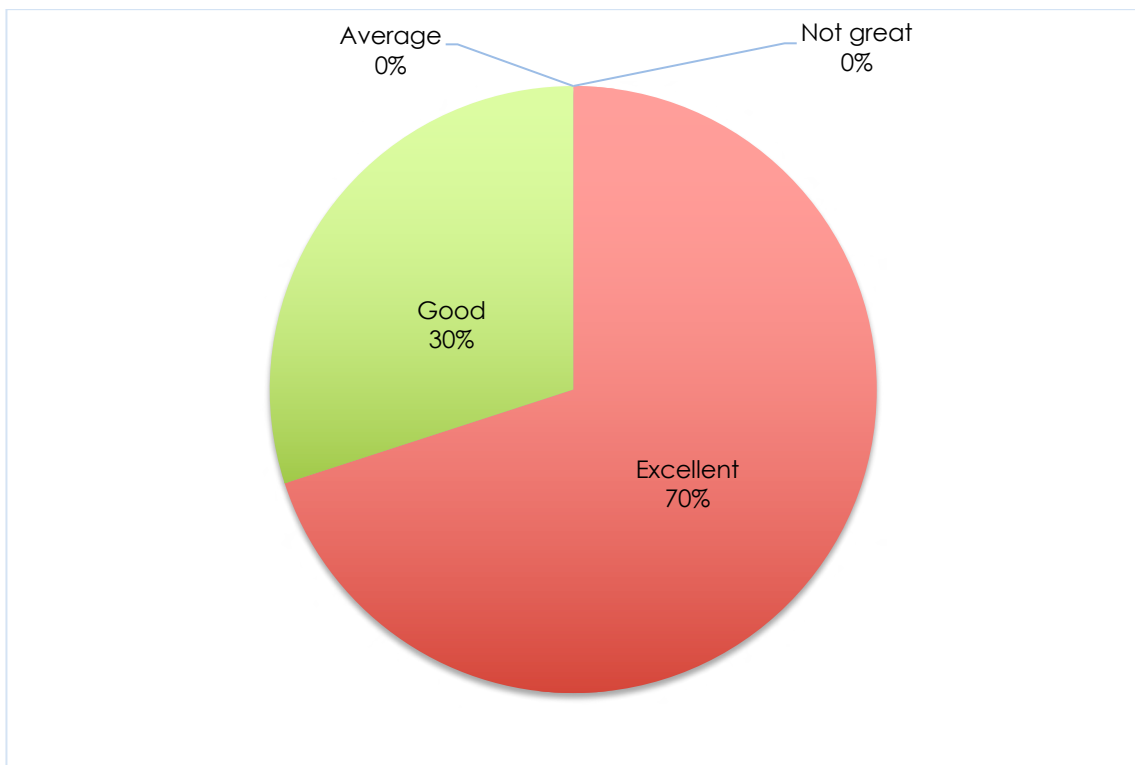


Table 31: Would you attend the TYA NI Showcase again?

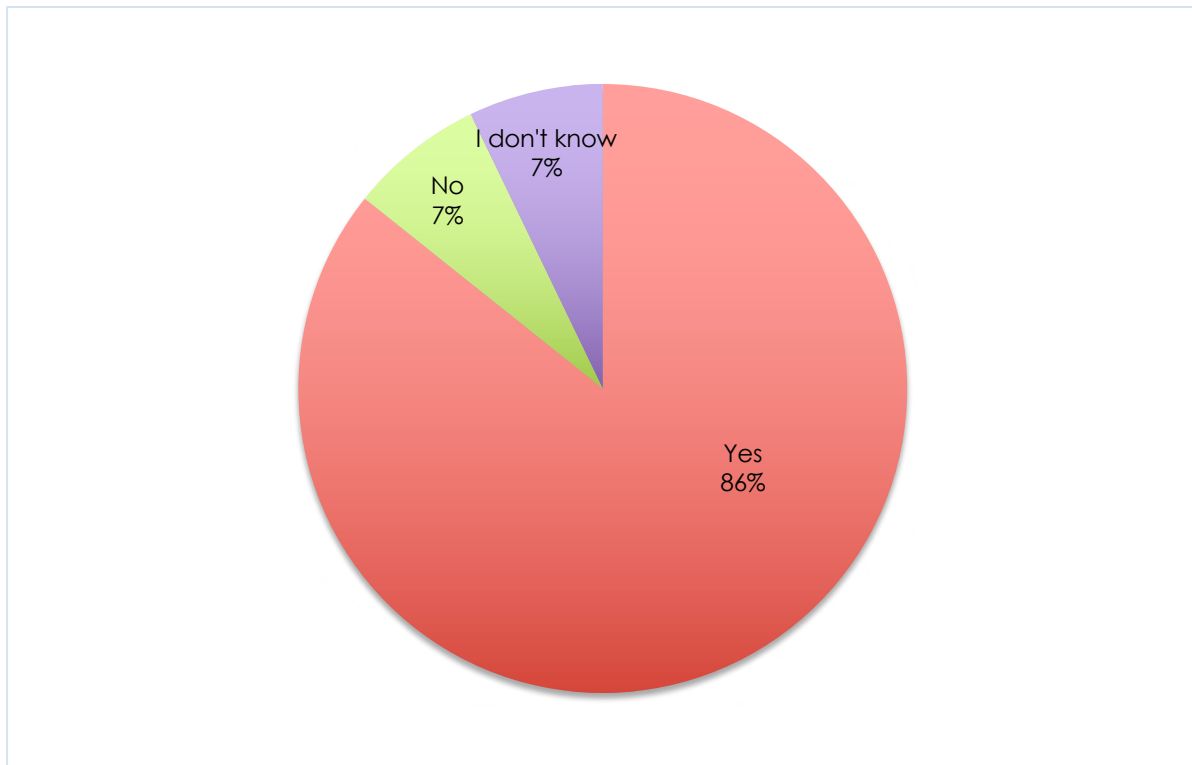
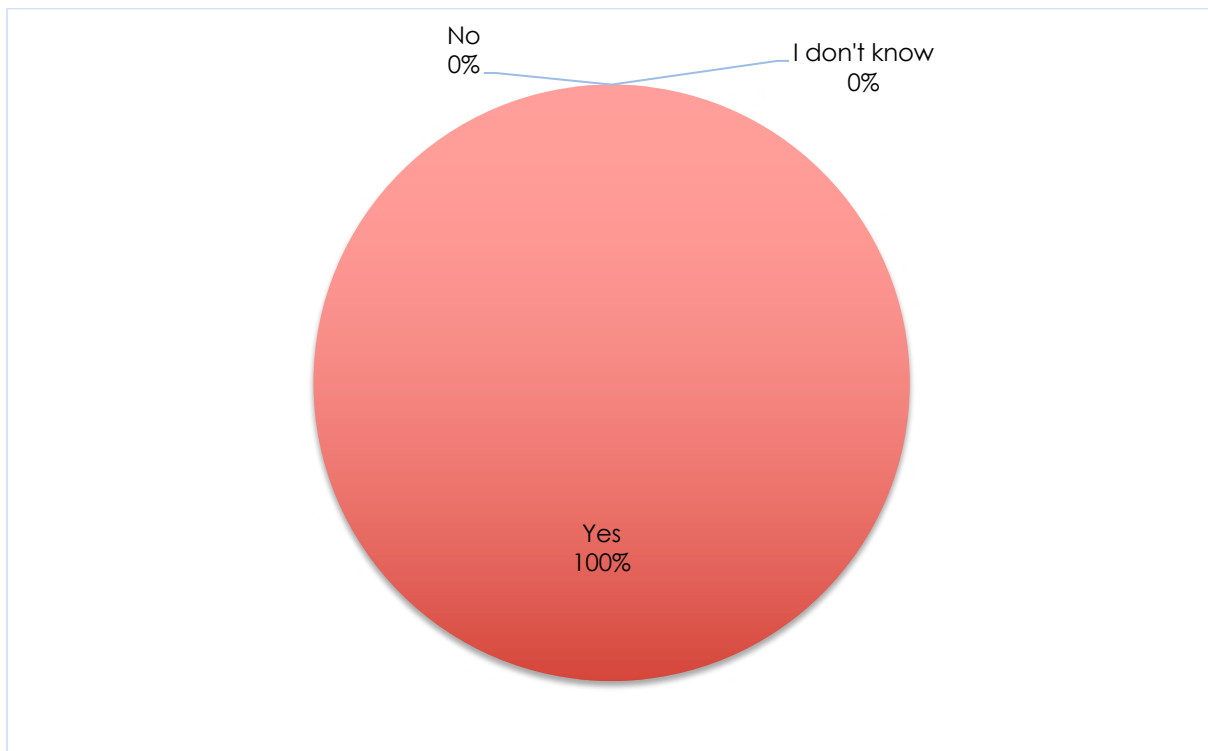


Table 32: Would you recommend the TYA NI Showcase and the BCF to others?



APPENDIX 10: YAA Staffing Structure (as of 31 March 2020)

