

Community Arts Research Opportunity

Expression of Interest Form

Community Group / Organisation Name:	South Tyneside Youth Service (and partners)
Address:	Simonside Outdoor Adventure, St Simon Street, South Shields, NE34 9SD
Contact Name and role within the group/organisation:	Gayle Marr- Senior Youth Worker
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What is your research question?

This can be a challenge, question or theme that you would like to explore with your community group and an artist. This could relate to your organisation, participants, local area, lived experiences or wider social themes.

Our initial research question is: *“What does peer pressure mean to young people in South Tyneside, and how does it shape their choices, identity and sense of belonging?”*

This question has been identified directly by young people and reflects their lived experiences. We anticipate that this will evolve through the co-creation process, with young people and the artist working together to expand or refine the question as new themes emerge.

While peer pressure is currently the highest priority, young people have also highlighted related concerns such as school environment and substance use. We see this project as an opportunity to explore these interconnected themes in a flexible, youth-led way.

Why are you interested in taking part in this project?

Please tell us why this opportunity feels important, relevant or meaningful to your organisation/group/community and what you hope taking part could offer. We'd also like to hear why this research question feels important to explore.

This opportunity feels highly relevant and timely for our organisation and the young people we work with.

In May 2026, young people from across South Tyneside came together as part of the *Amplify Youth Voice Residential*, where the 'Youth Voice Collective' (Youth Voice Group) co-designed and facilitated a youth consultation. This process placed young people in leadership roles, actively shaping conversations about their lives, communities and future.

Through this work, young people identified 'peer pressure' as their top priority, alongside concerns around school environment and substance use.

As a group, they are now at a point where they want to deepen their understanding of these issues and explore how they can respond in meaningful ways.

This opportunity aligns strongly with those next steps. It offers the time, space and support to move beyond consultation into a collaborative, exploratory process, where young people can work alongside an artist to: explore their experiences in more depth, engage a wider group of young people across South Tyneside and begin to shape responses that are grounded in their own voices and ideas

Importantly, this feels like an opportunity to shift from "being consulted" to being co-creators and decision-makers, supporting young people to take ownership of both the process and its direction.

What do you hope working with an artist could bring to your organisation, group or community?

We'd love to hear why you feel a creative and collaborative process with an artist would be valuable in exploring your chosen question, challenge, or theme.

Working with an artist offers a valuable opportunity to approach this research question in

creative, open and participatory ways that may not be possible through traditional youth work methods alone.

We are particularly interested in how an artist can support a co-creative process, where young people and artist work together as equals—sharing ideas, experimenting, and shaping the direction of the project collectively.

An artist could bring; new creative approaches to exploring complex issues such as peer pressure, space for reflection, expression and storytelling in ways that feel accessible and meaningful to young people, fresh perspectives that challenge and expand thinking.

Rather than working towards a predetermined outcome, we see this as an opportunity to build relationships, test ideas and explore different ways of working together.

Ultimately, we hope this process will support young people to; express their experiences and perspectives with confidence, influence how the project develops and feel a genuine sense of ownership and agency within the work

This project will involve working collaboratively with an artist and The Cultural Spring. Can you tell us about any previous experience your organisation has of partnership working or co-delivering projects, events, or activities?

Please could you also detail how you support positive, safe and inclusive experiences for participants, staff, volunteers and collaborators.

We have strong experience of partnership working and collaborative delivery, including ongoing work with The Cultural Spring and a range of local organisations.

A key example is our involvement in the South Tyneside *Local Youth Partnership*, which brings together organisations to support a coordinated and inclusive approach to youth engagement. Through this network, we recruited a diverse group of young people to take part in the Amplify Youth Voice Residential, ensuring representation from across different communities, backgrounds and experiences.

This partnership approach will continue within this project, enabling us to reach a broad cross-section of young people—particularly those who may not typically engage in arts activity.

Creating safe, inclusive and supportive environments is central to our practice. We prioritise relationship-building and trust with young people, ensure activities are accessible, inclusive and responsive to individual needs, follow robust safeguarding policies and procedures and support young people to participate at their own pace and in ways that feel comfortable to them

We also place a strong emphasis on shared decision-making and respect, ensuring that young people, staff, partners and artists all feel valued, heard, and able to contribute equally.

Do you have the capacity to commit to this project?

Please tell us about the time, space and support you can offer to the project and whether there are any potential barriers or challenges that might affect your involvement such as other project commitments, staffing capacity or cultural and community events.

We have the capacity and commitment to fully engage with this project. Our team includes three full-time youth workers, alongside additional sessional staff and young volunteers, who can offer flexibility to meet the needs of the project across both daytime and evening sessions.

We can provide dedicated staff time to support the co-creation process, plus access to established youth groups and trusted relationships with young people and safe and accessible spaces for ongoing activity and engagement

Our existing youth programmes provide a strong foundation for this work, allowing us to integrate the project organically into our delivery while maintaining the flexibility needed for an exploratory, participant-led approach.

We do not anticipate significant barriers to involvement, and we are committed to working closely with The Cultural Spring and the appointed artist to shape a realistic and

manageable approach to delivery.
<p>Please tell us about any costs you think may need to be covered as part of the project, and any support your organisation may be able to offer. <i>This could include estimated costs such as travel or room hire, as well as support in kind such as staff or volunteer time, equipment, or use of space.</i></p>
<p>We can provide in-kind youth worker time, plus room space.</p> <p>Other costs associated with the project would be determined by the artist and piece of work that is agreed.</p>
<p>Who would be the main contact for this project? <i>Please provide the name, role, and contact details of the person who would act as the lead contact for your organisation throughout the project.</i></p>
<p>Gayle Marr (Senior Youth Worker) 01914240118 Gayle.Marr@Southtyneside.gov.uk</p>
<p>If you are invited to the next stage 'Pitch and Pizza' session to tell us about your idea in more detail, which time of day would work for you to attend the pitching event?</p>
<p>Any</p>

Please return your Expression of Interest by **12noon on Tuesday 16th June** via email to emma.biggins@theculturalspring.org.uk You can return this either as a written response or a video sent via WeTransfer or a Dropbox link and should be no longer than 5 minutes in length, including the reference: *Community Arts Research Opportunity* in your email.