



Summary Report:

Evaluation of Cultureshock, Commonwealth Games North West Cultural Programme

External Assessment

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Executive summary

The research for this report has been undertaken by commission of the Cultureshock team in response to the 'Cultureshock Research Brief' received on 2 August 2002 and formally agreed on 17 September 2002.

The report must be considered in combination with Nadine Andrews' report¹. Whilst this report looks at Cultureshock's main challenges and potentials in a longitudinal sense (see list below), Nadine Andrews' report focuses on the study of the programme's main aims and objectives and its impact on participant organisations, audiences and on Manchester and the region at large. The main aims/research areas of this report have been defined as follows:

1. suitability of the programme's rationale (agendas, vision, design)
2. effectiveness of the programme's management and promotional structures
3. effectiveness of the programme to promote and secure social inclusion
4. effectiveness of the programme in defining and portraying cultural diversity
5. impact of presenting a major arts programme alongside an international sporting event
6. ability of the programme to change youth perceptions of the Commonwealth
7. value and sustainability of the programme's international partnerships
8. other potential legacies in the short, medium and/or long term

To address these aims, the research team has gathered relevant data through a combination of literature and documentation reviews, personal interviews with senior representatives of the organisation team and key stakeholders, a consultation meeting with experts, a media content analysis and two focus groups with young event participants.

The research key findings and main points of discussion can be summarised as follows

- The definition of a **vision and mission** for a North West cultural programme evolved from early informal discussions in 1997 up to the time of delivery of the programme in March 2002. This evolution was not consistent throughout the process, partly due to a conflict of agendas between key partners and funders. As a result, most of the programme's core concepts were ambiguously defined, without performance indicators or clear targets. In addition, key challenges in the programme design were its length, geographical spread and its position as cultural strand of the Spirit of Friendship (SoFF). These challenges brought both opportunities and constraints for the attainment of goals.
- The programme was **effectively delivered** considering the adverse circumstances in terms of time and funding but faced a series of key limitations. However, there was not a proper board in place to guarantee the accountability and consistency of decisions. This limited the effectiveness of communication among team members and key partners. Other challenges derived from the decision to create a separate identity and branding from that of SoFF. This allowed Cultureshock to remain true to its core ambition as an innovative and distinctive arts festival, but also brought general confusion about its role and prevented it from being linked to the rest of Games celebrations.
- Cultureshock was able to deliver a **culturally diverse programme** and offered a **good frame for social inclusion**. However, in line with the generic limitations of the programme rationale, these concepts were not clearly defined. The issue of diversity was treated more consistently than that of inclusion. This led to remarkable achievements in terms of the number of diverse groups applying and being granted funding to take part in Cultureshock. Despite the limitations and challenges, representatives from both diverse and socially inclusive organisations have emphasised their satisfaction with their relationship with the Cultureshock team and assure that, with their support, a legacy of confidence in their work has been established.

¹ See Andrews, Nadine (2003) Cultureshock Evaluation Report - Impact on organisations, audiences and the city.

- The cultural programme offered a **worthy complement to the Games experience** and has been defined as the most innovative and arguably successful components of SoFF. The challenge was to secure an association with these events. Among other factors, the presence of activities linking arts and sport was minimal, an issue common to many cultural festivals surrounding sporting events. This tends to further deteriorate the opportunities for linkage with the main event programme and diminishes the chances to attract main event audiences and by extension, mainstream event media and sponsors.
- Despite Cultureshock's success in incorporating young -people in the programme, it is unclear whether it contributed explicitly to change their **perceptions of the Commonwealth**. Most of the younger generation do not seem to have a preconceived notion of what the Commonwealth stands for as an institution and identify it directly with the Games and sport competition in particular. In this regard, their impressions are mostly positive and vibrant. Remarkably, youngsters in Manchester have greatly appreciated the chance to be part of cultural activities during the time of the Games and admit that this has made them realise that cultural exchange is one of the most valuable aspects of the Games experience. As such, it can be argued that Cultureshock made a relevant, though indirect, contribution towards their current Commonwealth perceptions.
- The establishment of **international partnerships** was one of the most successful aspects of the Cultureshock experience. Most partners have indicated their satisfaction with the treatment received and the support offered by both their UK host organisations and the Cultureshock team. They have also emphasised that they are already working towards a continuation of their relationship and look forward the establishment of further points of contact in the UK and the North West in particular.
- Cultureshock has brought many **opportunities for legacy**. In addition to the maintenance of international partnerships, many local organisations have also established relations for the first time that they aim to pursue. Further legacies are an improved cultural and artistic confidence in Manchester and the North West, an improved image both nationally and internationally, and a broad range of lessons, that if appropriately studied, could develop into the establishment of a permanent cultural festival in the city and/or region.

In conclusion, the efforts made in designing and producing a major cultural and arts programme in the lead up to the Commonwealth Games have resulted in remarkable cultural and arts achievements in Manchester and the North West. Despite the many challenges and limitations, it can be asserted that Cultureshock was a worthwhile endeavour from which valuable lessons can be extracted to inform the creation of a model for cultural events in the area.

The following pages present a summary of key aspects of this research, including a more detailed conclusion and a list of key recommendations for further action.

Discussion and conclusions

This report offers evidence that designing and producing a cultural and arts programme alongside the 2002 Commonwealth Games was a worthy endeavour. The programme has been clearly beneficial for most local organisations and artists involved in terms of professional development and, most importantly, in supporting social inclusion and the celebration of diversity; it has contributed to enhancing the image of Manchester and the North West as an innovative city and region capable of presenting high quality events, and, remarkably, the experience has also allowed the development of international partnerships that are likely to continue in the short to medium term and show a great potential for sustainability in the long term.

1. Suitability of Cultureshock's vision and design rationale

Cultureshock was designed as an ambitious cultural and arts festival of Manchester and the North West. Nadine Andrews' report offers a detailed review of the programme's evolution of visions and core objectives and points out the ambiguities in their definition. The current report has explored the main issues and potentials deriving from this situation.

The somewhat broad definition of Cultureshock' rationale was a product of the diversity of agendas and ambitions of Steering Group members and key funders. An associated problem was the evolution from an agenda created according to pre-defined ambitions to an agenda very much shaped by practical needs, such as the nature of applications received for RALP funding. This evolution was the result of insecurities regarding core funding and time constraints to define the final programme. But it brought some biases within the selection criteria that have been seen by some as a limitation to Cultureshock aspirations towards social inclusion and cultural diversity.

The decision to present the programme in Manchester and the North West over four months was a matter of concern for some partners that would have preferred more focus. The geographical span of activities allowed the establishment of relevant collaborations within the region. However, it also dispersed the programme to the extent of it losing the feel of being a 'festival'. The time span could have contributed to create a sense of celebration and build-up towards the Games. However, this combined with limited financial resources and the lack of 'media appealing' personalities within the programme diminished its potential to have a real impact.

The programme vision was greatly appreciated by most participants but questioned by some due to the lack of performance indicators designed to guarantee a consistency of selection criteria to deliver it. The benefits and limitations of Cultureshock' approach to cultural diversity, social inclusion and the Commonwealth theme are discussed in following sections. An additional challenge was that of the programme's core ambition: presenting an innovative, thoughtful and challenging festival that avoided the most populist dimensions of the Games celebration. While this ambition allowed exploration of new areas of artistic expression and gave Cultureshock a unique status in the context of the Games more conventional approach, it also diminished the programme's popular appeal and its ability to be truly accessible to the community at large. This links to the issue of audience development, an area discussed in Nadine Andrews' report.

Regardless of the challenges, Cultureshock's ambitions were relevant to Manchester and the North West and offered an opportunity for the arts community to gain confidence and raise the bar in terms of professional activity and aspirations for the future, including the ambition of organising events of a national and international resonance. This is particularly important considering that the programme was located outside London.

The table below summarises the most relevant potentials and challenges of Cultureshock's rationale. Key programme features are presented using a SWOT analysis (study of each feature strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats).²

Table V: SWOT analysis of Cultureshock's rationale (vision, objectives, design)

Internal features	Strengths	Weaknesses
Broad mission	Flexibility, inclusiveness, many dimensions	Ambiguous definitions, no clear targets
Geographic spread	Celebration of the North West, extensive collaborations throughout the region	Lack of focus - lack of impact Difficulties in accessibility to some events
Time spread	Variety of product in lead up to Games	Lack of focus – lack of impact Increases costs
Edgy vision	Contemporary, innovative, challenging	Not entertaining nor popular enough
Independent from SoFF	Secure integrity of the programme Clear arts focus	Lack of links to the Games and to the most popular/accessible strands of SoFF

Contextual features	Opportunities	Threats
Cultural programme of Commonwealth Games	Create a cultural legacy for the NW beyond the Games Demonstrate that Manchester and the NW are capable of presenting a national and international cultural festival	Outside of London – danger of not being considered of national or international relevance by central government
Jubilee year	Popular cultural celebrations throughout country Commonwealth theme	Confusion of themes and ambitions Lack of focus

2. Effectiveness of Cultureshock's management and promotional structures

The programme was delivered effectively in extremely adverse circumstances. An important factor in this achievement was the fact that Cultureshock senior team members were well known and had credibility among funders and venues in the NW. The trust factor was crucial in a time of limited resources and very late confirmations for funding. However, the absence of a formal advisory board and general manager resulted in limited managerial accountability and poor lines of communication between team members and key partners. This led to an undesirable ambiguity of visions and objectives and lack of operational targets, further accentuated by a conflict of agendas between Cultureshock main stakeholders.

A key issue deriving from the situation was the lack of established operational targets to guide activity and allow a performance assessment. Without these targets, it is difficult to offer a real evaluation of successes and failures.

In terms of promotion, the main challenge was the decision to create a separate identity and brand for Cultureshock. The distinctive name, logo, website and promotional materials gave a desirable autonomy to the programme considering the many differences in ambitions and scope between Cultureshock and SoFF. They also maximised the integrity of its vision, contents and image. However, in the context of high levels of communication by the Commonwealth Games Office and SoFF itself, the separate identity was also a cause of major confusion among audiences, programme participants, funders, sponsors and media alike. This further diminished the chances of the programme to have a promotional impact.

²SWOT analysis is a managerial technique involving the study of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats implied in or surrounding a specific issue. In this research, 'strengths' and 'weaknesses' are interpreted as inputs resulting from internal decisions within the Cultureshock team and/or the Steering Group specifically. 'opportunities' and 'threats' are interpreted as external inputs derived from the surrounding environment, including the preparations for the Commonwealth Games, SoFF, the Queen's Golden Jubilee and the interests of key Games stakeholders.

Despite the challenges and limitations, Cultureshock managerial and promotional structures had also important strengths. The placement of the team in the offices of Marketing Manchester was beneficial for developing regular contact with marketing and tourism bodies. This was further enhanced by the creation of a tourism liaison post within the team. Other benefits derived from the team's small size, which allowed great flexibility and speed of decisions in a context of almost permanent contingency and change.

These and other critical factors can be summarised in the following table:

Table VI: SWOT analysis of Cultureshock's delivery mechanisms

Features	Strengths	Weaknesses
Management		
Located at MM	Link to tourism and marketing bodies	Marginal to the Games Office
Small team	Daily interaction, quick decisions	No clear hierarchies
No general manager	Flexibility direct communications between all team members	No funding decisions, no overall vision of team activities, lack of clear targets
Steering Group	Strategic advice avoiding total control	Lack of direction, lack of legal support and accountability
Links to SoFF	Collaborations, link to Games Office	Conflict of agendas
Image and promotions		
Cultureshock brand	Strong, distinctive, representative	Confusing, in competition with SoFF
Generic marketing	Good use of resources, less time consuming, guaranteeing a balance	Does not respond to needs of individual projects, insufficient to cover the requirements of major projects (e.g. beacon events)

Features	Opportunities	Threats
Funding & sponsorship		
Sponsorship deals	Attracting top tier Games sponsors	Games feeling of competition Insecurities regarding core funding for main event (Sept 11, foot and mouth crisis)
Public funding	DCMS support for Games NW bodies aim for a role, contribution to Games celebration	Sport is the top priority Conflict of agendas with Games organisers
Promotions, image		
Media coverage	Major attention in the North West – Games	Games media focused in sport. No space for culture
Tourism	Massive tourism arrival in NW	Average Games tourist not interested in / no time for cultural activity

3-4. Cultureshock's ability to support cultural diversity and social inclusion

Cultureshock was able to deliver a culturally diverse and socially inclusive programme. However, in line with the generic limitations of the programme rationale, these concepts were not clearly defined. As a result, at times, both concepts were used interchangeably, creating frustration both within grassroots organisations and professional art institutions of a culturally diverse background.

The social inclusion aspect was particularly ambiguous. The only strands clearly emphasised in the reviewed documentation were those of disability and youth. It would have needed a bit more clarity and definition of priorities to create a real feel that this issue was important within the programme.

In any case, the Cultureshock team was able to establish good relationships with local institutions dealing with inclusion. The team had a senior staff member fully dedicated to work with communities. This allowed the creation of good opportunities for professional development and the exploration of new working options, including the establishment of first-time local collaborations. All social inclusion interviewees have emphasised that their relationship with Cultureshock was excellent and that they appreciated the efforts made to support them. They were only disappointed at the feeling that their contribution was not core to the Cultureshock experience and did not stand out in the programme. This feeling is partly confirmed by the analysis of press coverage on Cultureshock. Press references to inclusion as either an aspiration or achievement of Cultureshock are practically non-existent.

The issue of cultural diversity had a much more central position in the programme rationale and delivery strategies, although there was a degree of confusion between the meaning of 'diversity', 'black led-organisations' and 'Commonwealth originating communities'. The documentation review reveals that diversity was a core concept from the very early stages of planning to the extent of it appearing as the most important selection criteria. This led to a remarkable achievement in terms of number of applications from diverse organisations to be part of the programme. Furthermore, the North West Arts Board has asserted that the amount of funding made available for diversity groups was also far greater than on any other prior occasion in the region.

It can be argued that Cultureshock offered excellent incentives towards the development of culturally diverse arts audiences. However, the evidence gathered in this report indicates that the greatest beneficiaries were artists, curators and institutions of a culturally diverse background rather than the wider public. (See Nadine Andrews' report for some reflections on audience impacts).

Furthermore, questions can be raised with regard to the lack of targets for the treatment of diversity. This meant that although the programme allowed the incorporation of a wide and diverse scope of local artists and artists from around the Commonwealth, the final figures were not totally balanced nor representative of the ethnic composition of Manchester and the North West. As an example, according to Nadine Andrews' research, the number of Asian productions out-numbered five times the number of Afro Caribbean works.

Regardless of the limitations, key black-led organisations in the city and region and most public officers in charge of surveying the treatment of diversity have agreed that the benefits of the experience were far superior to the limitations. The experience has brought a legacy of confidence in the potentials of culturally diverse work in the area that, without the intervention of Cultureshock, would have probably taken years to build.

5. Potential impact of cultural programming alongside a major sporting event

Research on the experience of designing and presenting cultural and arts programmes in parallel to major sporting events such as the Commonwealth Games and the Olympic Games reveals that there is a tradition of unfulfilled ambitions and expectations. A major limitation is the difficulty to associate arts activity with the main event sporting competitions and core spectacular components such as opening and closing ceremonies. This is accentuated by a lack of awareness and/or interest in the possibilities for collaboration between the main event organisers and the organisers of parallel activities. The result tends to be a feeling of competition for support and attention in key areas such as sponsorship raising, media coverage and tourism attraction.

Any attempt to create a future model for a potentially successful cultural programme in the context of a major event should consider and extract lessons from the specific design and delivery characteristics of Cultureshock. However, it must also consider the many discarded alternatives. To assist in the identification of alternatives, the following pages present an analysis of options for a cultural programme's design and operative components. This method of analysis should assist in the selection of a preferred option according to the programme's specific context of delivery. The elements incorporated in this analysis have been identified throughout the findings section of the main report.³

Options analysis for the design of a major event cultural programme

- What should be the scope of the programme?
- Which themes should be given priority?
- How should audiences be approached?
- Where and for how long should the programme be presented?

Programme scope

Local

- Advantages: strong sense of ownership by the local community, easier to achieve consistency and unity, potentially more economical
- Disadvantages: narrow approach, potentially closed to external advice and participation

National

- Advantages: national representation, potential to develop a national discourse alternative to the tourist stereotypes, potential collaboration across geographical areas: more resources and diversity
- Disadvantages: potentially biased towards the most influential regions (difficult to offer an equilibrated view of the country), danger of perpetuating stereotypes

International

- Advantages: potential to select from among the best world artists, more variety, greater scale
- Disadvantages: less host nation distinctiveness, fewer employment opportunities for the host nation artists

³ The structure of this 'Options analysis' is based on a more extensive report analysing the managerial structure of the official cultural programme of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games: García, Beatriz (1999) Organisational politics of the Sydney Olympic Arts Festivals (1997-2000). (Interim report for the Sydney Organising Committee of the Olympic Games)

Themes

Traditional and folk

- Advantages: easier to expand a sense of ownership and identification among the presenting community, attractive and (theoretically) reliable source of information on heritage for external audiences, potential to re-visit and modify cultural stereotypes
- Disadvantages: potential tokenism, conservatism and chauvinism, exclusion of alternative new manifestations, exclusion of current cultural controversies

Contemporary

- Advantages: allowing for cultural hybrids and mixture of artforms, manifesting and stimulating artistic vitality and creativity,
- Disadvantages: potentially confrontational and controversial, difficult to select participants and works in a representative way (permanent evolution - artistic consolidation underway)

Sport and/or main event related artwork

- Advantages: cohesion within the main event discourse, distinctive from other artforms, potential to attract more sponsorship support and increase visibility in the main event related promotions
- Disadvantages: may not address arts audience expectations, may exclude cultural manifestations relevant to the host city, difficult to determine what is 'main event related' and what is not

Approach

Popular, grassroots and celebratory arts

- Advantages: encourages participation of all socio-economic groups, emphasis on accessibility and social inclusion
- Disadvantages: may not fully address average arts audiences' expectations, potential trend towards commercialism - superficial contents

'High arts', elite arts

- Advantages: secures the inclusion of the most consolidated and appreciated artistic product, builds a sense of excitement around the events and pride for the host organisers' ability to gather them
- Disadvantages: less affordable/accessible for the general public, potentially less appealing for the average main event audience (i.e. driven by sport, party feeling), less inclusive

Location

Main event venues and surroundings

- Advantages: specific focus, opportunities for international coverage / media exposure; interaction with main events (securing association with them); potential to develop new arts infrastructure
- Disadvantages: prevents the showcase of the host city artistic heritage and puts local culture out of its natural environment; requires higher investment (arts installations) or a dependence on sporting installations that could affect the quality of the performances

Host city main cultural attractions in the city centre

- Advantages: maximises the use of the city's most attractive/recognised areas; can rely on the expertise and artistic networks of consolidated institutions
- Disadvantages: prevents the development of new arts infrastructures, risks to miss the main event association, reduces the feeling of ownership by surrounding neighbourhoods

Host city centre and suburban neighbourhoods

- Advantages: in addition to the points noted above, it allows wider community participation; potential to broaden the city cultural networks and develop new arts infrastructures; allows for more diversity and encourages cultural vitality in a wider area
- Disadvantages: disparity of shows and events, more investment required, will require the companies and arts administrators to interact in more sophisticated ways to ensure the highest possible quality of artistic product, potential conflict of interests, less time-effective work procedures

Regional and/or national basis

- Advantages: broader community participation and feeling of inclusion within the celebrations, higher potential for collaboration among institutions and artists, broader support from regional and/or state bodies
- Disadvantages: lack of focus: difficult to promote the complete picture and co-ordinate promotions, potential bias in selection procedures, impossibility of bringing performances to all cities or regions may lead to criticism/ conflict of interests, less time-effective work procedures

International basis

- Advantages: potential to increase awareness of the host city cultural product abroad; opportunities for collaboration between local and foreign artists; potentially higher support from national public bodies (interesting opportunities for tourism and foreign affairs departments); other countries may assist subsidising the work presented
- Disadvantages: lack of focus: difficult to co-ordinate promotions and expand awareness of all included events; potential bias in selection procedures (artists selected as well as countries where bringing them); much less time-effective work procedures; potential increase in costs if subsidies are not guaranteed

Length

Synchronic to the main event (normally up to 16 days)

- Advantages: accumulation of resources in a short period (maximising visibility and impacts at the lowest cost); facilitates association with the main event; benefit from international visitors and media exposure
- Disadvantages: direct competition with the sports events/other main event activities; crowd problems in transportation and accommodation; risk of simplifying cultural manifestations for short-term commercial, trade and tourism purposes

Months before the main event

- Advantages: time to build up expectations and maximise the potential for a comprehensive and representative arts festival; opportunities for artists and arts institutions to create specially commissioned works; potential for the establishment of new arts events or festivals to be sustained after the main event; increases reasons for visitors to come to the host city/region
- Disadvantages: high costs; difficult to secure association with the main event

Options analysis for the operational delivery of a major event cultural programme

Integrated component within the main event office

- **Advantages:** The programme benefits from the main event's general structure including marketing tools (publications, community and media relations strategies, ticketing campaigns, general advertising and promotions), sponsorship and funding arrangements, and the assistance of the event key functional areas such as security, accommodation, accreditation, volunteers, logistics, finance, legal and risk management, transport, medical services, brand protection etc.
- **Disadvantages:** The cultural programme may lose visibility and sense of identity, especially considering the traditional low profile of arts activity in the context of sporting events. This can be accentuated by event regulations and structures that do not consider the needs of art programming.

Independent team working outside the main event office

The location and supervision of the team in charge of the programme could be in the hands of public organisations, a private group or a mixture of both.

Public administration supervision:

- **Advantages:** It secures the involvement of experienced and influential public cultural institutions; potential creation of special grants and schemes to encourage new work. It accentuates the effort towards long lasting legacies. The direct support of the government can assist in liaising with other influential cultural organisations both nationally and internationally and add credibility to the work presented.
- **Disadvantages:** potentially slow, bureaucratic procedures, limited dynamism and limited ability to cope with an increasingly complex and extremely demanding environment.

Private / corporate supervision:

- **Advantages:** Ideological independence and dynamism; ability to spread out awareness through strong and effective promotion campaigns; potentially provides high economical benefits to stakeholders through an emphasis in box office returns and programme marketing
- **Disadvantages:** Risk of excessive commercialism; a mainly business oriented programme may not be representative of the host community; reduced opportunities for developing innovative work; priority to well established companies and artists rather than grassroots organisations; focus on success during or prior to the main event time - securing legacies may not be a priority

Mixed supervision:

- **Advantages:** a combination of the above: securing wide representation and legacies through government support and increasing funds, dynamism and effectiveness thanks to the corporate involvement
- **Disadvantages:** sophisticated strategic alliances required; potential multiplication of conflict of interests among stakeholders

Evaluating options: short term versus long term impacts

To select among the wide range of alternatives in terms of content programming and operational structures, there are two additional perspectives to consider:

- A preference for short- term impacts, which could be defined as a 'value for money approach'. This generally implies a business oriented point of view, giving priority to immediate and clearly measurable returns
- A preference for long-term impacts, or 'legacy approach'. This tends to imply a priority for revitalising the local and national artistic environment in the medium and long term

Short term impacts / value for money approach

- In terms of design, a value for money approach would probably prefer to concentrate funds on limited but 'spectacular', highly recognisable events (e.g. internationally recognised artists and groups, media appealing artists). This would ensure a box office 'success', provide good press review opportunities, satisfy the 'high expectations' of the connoisseurs, offer a good background for private functions and corporate exchange, maximise opportunities to promote a 'sophisticated' image of the host, etc.
- In terms of operational delivery, an independent body privately run would probably appear as the most lucrative alternative.

Long-term impact / legacy approach

- An emphasis on the value of legacies would prefer the programme design to prioritise the use of funds on more diverse and numerous grassroots, local events (e.g. young and new artists, community groups, culturally diverse organisations). This would maximise community participation, give more cultural choice to spectators, ensure a more personal and representative tone to the work presented, offer better opportunities to spread cultural manifestations throughout the city/region and surroundings, and maximise opportunities to surprise visitors and change stereotypes about the place.
- An independent public led institution is the most likely to concentrate efforts on long lasting cultural legacies for the host city/region and could offer major benefits for local artists.

In general, the option to emphasise value for money may imply that cultural manifestations are used as a marketing tool to attract external visitors and promote the city/region as a tourist and trade destination. The priority here is to secure international acceptance and box-office success of the work presented. The benefits of this option should then be measured in terms of tourism attraction and corporate deal arrangements.

The option to prioritise legacy tends to be more committed to satisfying community needs and assisting in the development of new artistic work. In this case, the exciting environment of the major event is used as an excuse to encourage local creativity and the benefits should be measured in terms of local participation and the long term sustainability of the experience.

NOTE: The indications included throughout this section should be considered as a stimulus towards appreciating the many alternatives available for defining a major event cultural programme. It should not be understood as an exhaustive list of all possibilities but rather as a point of departure in their exploration.

6. Cultureshock's ability to influence youth perceptions of the Commonwealth

The Cultureshock programme included a range of events addressed at youth in particular and, at this stage, it can be argued that most of them achieved a degree of success in involving young people, developing their personal skills and confidence, their awareness about other cultures and their interest in learning more about them. These events included 'Contacting the World' by Contact Theatre, 'Loud and Visible' by Youth Arts Showcase, 'On Track' by Serious and 'Tales of Power' by the Manchester Arts Educational Festival. All of them allowed youngsters from Manchester and the NW to link at different level with other countries of the Commonwealth. However, the ability of these events to bring youngsters to reflect on the realities and potentials of the contemporary Commonwealth seems questionable.

The two focus groups developed in the frame of this research reveal that regardless of the youngsters' enjoyment and feeling of achievement within events such as 'Tales of Power', the linkage between this experience and Cultureshock, SoFF, the Games or the Commonwealth at large were unclear. Furthermore, specific questions about what the Commonwealth meant to them would mostly find confused responses and a continuous identification of the Commonwealth with the Games exclusively and sporting competition as the clearest manifestation of it all.

The students expressed satisfaction with having learnt about another country such as Nigeria and mentioned their concerns about inequalities between countries and the need to further relationships between the UK and poorer countries. After extensive discussions, they seemed to appreciate that the Commonwealth could provide a basis for this sort of relationships. However, this feeling was mostly associated with the opportunities for celebration brought by the Games and sporting competition in particular.

In general, at this stage, it is difficult to assert whether Cultureshock made direct contributions towards a change of youth perceptions of the Commonwealth. This is partly because the youngsters involved in this research did not seem to clearly understand what the Commonwealth stands for and had not any preconceived impression of it. The fact that, when encouraged, youngsters were capable of identifying and celebrating most of the key values embedded in the current definition of a contemporary Commonwealth offers a positive light and indicates that, possibly, most of the image problems of this institution are exclusive to older generations.

Clearly, the popularity of the Games is a key factor for the positive perception that students revealed in the focus groups. But the relevance of incorporating a cultural programme cannot be underestimated. After all, the students' celebration of notions such as 'tolerance', 'understanding', 'music and dance' etc. was mostly a direct result of their experience within one of Cultureshock' arts events.

During the course of the focus group, students presented a vision of the Commonwealth that differed from the expectations that the research team had built after reading recent reports about the institution.

- Indifference and in some cases open aversion towards the role of the Queen, more so in the year of the Jubilee celebrations. This may be an issue that is particular to Manchester or the background of the children involved in this research. It is an issue that needs to be tested with further focus groups and public surveys.
- Questioning the value of the English language or being British as core to the Commonwealth. The students suggested that an emphasis on these factors would lead to a feeling of inequality
- Belief that it is not countries nor flags which matters, only the people. Students added that in their view all countries are the same, no matter if they are in or out of the Commonwealth
- Emphasis on the value of learning about other religions and beliefs to secure mutual understanding
- Emphasis on the need to support other countries: for medical and food supplies, to give money for transport. Students suggested that the main purpose of the Games should be to gather money from the wealthy and give it to the poor
- Strong feeling that tourism, trade, exchange and business in general is important for the Commonwealth to achieve its goals

7-8. Sustainability of Cultureshock's international partnerships and other potential legacies

Cultureshock has revealed a strong potential for legacy particularly through its success in supporting international partnerships. Many of these partnerships are to be sustained in the short to medium term and there is an ambition to maintain them in the long term. Local collaborations and new partnerships also appear sustainable in the short to medium term. Many of them have occurred in the context of culturally diverse organisations and community groups dedicated to social inclusion endeavours.

The model of Cultureshock as an umbrella organisation for an arts and cultural programme was appreciated by most programme participants, both local and international, grassroots and mainstream. In this respect, there is evidence that a critical mass exists in Manchester and the North West to support the creation of a permanent city and/or regional festival. Furthermore, the many successful examples of collaboration with international partners suggests that future Manchester-based events can attract the participation of a growing number of overseas art groups and establish a reputation for international presentations.

Furthermore, a key legacy is a regained confidence in what Manchester and the region is capable of. A reflection on the media coverage indicates that the Games at large, SoFF and Cultureshock in particular have created a success in terms of image. This is particularly relevant when considering that the 2000 and 2001 forecasts for the event were not very encouraging, fearing controversies similar to those of the Millennium funds and the effects of the tourism crisis following the foot and mouth outbreak.

In contrast, a challenge in terms of legacy is that of the main theme for the festival. The material collected in this report does not offer a basis to suggest that the Commonwealth theme could be sustained in Manchester and the North West region beyond the Games.

Recommendations

Programme rationale for a festival in Manchester / the North West

The format and scope of a cultural programme must be adapted to its particular context of delivery. One of the most relevant issues to clarify at the very outset is the geographical and time span of the programme and the sort of linkage it wants to establish with other existing or parallel events, in particular if they are major events with a strong and well-recognised rationale of their own.

It is difficult to make specific recommendations on this issue. Please consider the generic 'options analysis' presented within the discussion and conclusions chapter (section 5) as the most suitable point of departure.

Agendas / Mission statement

- Determine key agendas and establish a hierarchy of priorities: is the aim to create a national/international impact or to be accessible? Are the key audiences the local community or external visitors? Although it is possible to envisage a combination of both aspirations, a lack of prioritisation may lead to undesirable and uncontrolled biases
- Clarify key concepts: what is meant by innovation? Can it incorporate entertainment and/or a populist approach or does it exclude it? For what reason? What is meant by inclusion? How does it differ from other concepts such as diversity?
- Test the preconceptions of key partners and event organisers

Design

- Geographic and time span: a city focused event happening within a shorter time period is the best option to ensure greater impact. But it is positive to establish activity over a wider geographical area/region and longer period for the purposes of social inclusion. Determine which one is the main priority prior to choosing the best model
- Themes: positive to be distinguished from general entertainment but not to the extent of becoming marginal to the 'party' – an event/festival programme, regardless of innovative ambitions, must also entertain and be appealing to the general public. This has been proven to be successful in famous examples such as the Edinburgh Festival (combination of International and Fringe) and other festivals in countries such as Australia (Adelaide Festival, also combining main Festival with parallel fringe activities)
- Strands: if the vision is to be innovative, challenging, emphasise the critical strands through debate, workshops and seminars. These activities can also assist in audience development.

Programme delivery

Management

- Secure a general manager to gain greater control of the work and the ability to oversee all the programme's main requirements including: legal expertise, ability to manage financial plans and budgets, responsibility to liaise with board and external partners, secure a hierarchy within the team
- Establish a supervisory board with a clear advisory task, in charge of securing the accountability and consistency of decisions
- Consider the benefits of setting up the cultural programme as a limited company. Where time and financial constraints do not allow this, try to guarantee the two points above to compensate
- Set up clear operational targets: this will allow proper performance assessment and will ease the task to identify key challenges and limitations to achieve objectives
- Develop effective communication mechanisms both within the team and with partners and programme participants. Avoid disappointments and false expectations
- Define key programme tasks at an early date, be aware of its real capacities – and ensure they are clear for the programme participants (funder, producer, promoter...)

Funding and sponsorship

- Beyond the obvious need to raise funding at an earlier stage,
- Secure the funding of national bodies- make them understand the relevance of the event
- Negotiate an sponsorship agreement with Games or any other major event organiser at an early stage – any major sponsor must consider the cultural dimensions of an event in parallel to any other more popular dimensions such as sport or entertainment activities

Marketing, image, promotions

- The emphasis on generic marketing is preferable when resources are scarce. But findings reveal that extra support for 'beacon' or flagship projects is beneficial when there is an expectation of having an impact, attracting mass media attention
- Ensure participants understand what is provided within the umbrella brand from an early stage
- Ensure the branding options are consistent with the programme's core vision: a programme intending to have a major media and economic impact should be clearly linked with major event; a programme envisaging a focus on artistic innovation can benefit from a separate identity
- Sustain the effort towards linking with tourism bodies / establishing a post for tourism liaison within the cultural programme team

Dealing with social inclusion and diversity

- Define clear agenda at the outset: why diversity? Why inclusion? With what main aim? How it differs from other programmes?
- Distinguish diversity from social inclusion: clarify points of contact, but avoid ambiguities and avoid allocating them interchangeable definitions
- Test key concepts: e.g. black led organisations vs. culturally diverse background; social inclusion vs. cultural diversity; grassroots vs. professional
- Negotiate definitions and agendas with the broader community
- Ensure the participation of these communities not only in final programming, but also in decision making. For instance create a culturally diverse advisory board, secure that the team members in charge of delivering the event have a diverse background

Securing the impact of arts and cultural programming within major events

The key findings and analysis in this report and the outcomes of prior research on related issues indicates that any attempt to incorporate cultural and arts programming within a major event must take the following points into consideration:

- Establish clear links with the main event, and to accomplish that:
- Lobby for the incorporation of cultural experts into the main event office
- Offer evidence/statistics of the benefits and potential of cultural programming alongside past major events (i.e. the case of the Barcelona '92 Olympics)
- Liaise with Games marketing and communications staff in particular
- Negotiate sponsorship and branding issues far ahead in time, to ensure mutual benefits
- Negotiate the possible benefits of joint activities within key event areas such as opening and closing ceremonies, baton relays, street celebrations
- Negotiate the inclusion of arts/cultural activities within main event spaces or in parallel to main events (sporting or of other nature)

Many of the recommendations applicable to Cultureshock and other future attempts to establish a cultural programme alongside a major sporting event are identical to those for the cultural programme of the Olympic

Games. Please refer to the Special Report 'Recommendations for the programming, management and promotions of an Olympic cultural programme'.

Changing perceptions of the Commonwealth

This report has offered evidence of the many challenges that must be faced to influence youth perceptions of the Commonwealth via a cultural programme. To maximise the potential, a series of factors must be considered:

- Complement cultural and arts activities with youth workshops exploring definitions and perceptions of the Commonwealth explicitly
- Establish collaborations between arts groups, festival organisers and key Commonwealth institutions such as the Commonwealth Youth Forum and others; use the combination of materials and expertise to direct action
- Develop further focus groups with youngsters to identify their key concerns and aspirations and adapt future messages to these aspirations

Securing the sustainability of international partnerships

This research corroborates the impression that one of Cultureshock's great successes has been the establishment of international partnerships with Manchester and North West cultural organisations. Some patterns are emerging that seem to indicate their sustainability.

- Sustain the initiative of early grants for research and development and encourage their use as tools for exploring the potential of new international collaborations
- Support the development of joint city/region databases incorporating all new international contacts
- Work towards facilities that allow the accessibility of the database and sharing this information within Manchester / the NW / other UK regions (e.g. creation of intranets between arts organisations, creation of contact resources websites)
- Encourage local organisations to keep in touch with international counterparts. This factor is becoming very accessible thanks to the development of new technologies
- Support the development of programmes to visit the countries of origin of partners. Exchange programmes tend to be a rewarding option

Maximising the legacy

- Plan ahead an event model that can be sustained in the medium to long term: work towards the follow up of event activities, interactions, partnerships
- Invest in research and development at an early stage
- Encourage the publication of material on the experience: catalogues, proceedings, videos, webs.
- Fund evaluation schemes from an early date: ensure the compilation of evidence starts early to allow for comparisons between planning and delivery etc.
- Fund evaluation schemes after the event has happened: in particular, fund public surveys to assess the public perceptions of the experience
- Encourage the practice of individual project self-evaluation and the sharing of this information
- Lobby for the inclusion of references to the experience of the cultural programming within the final reports of the main event: make sure the know-how is retained and made accessible