# COMMON CAUSE

Instruments India:

Intercultural Creativity in Electroacoustic Music. Integrating Indian music cultural sound emblems into new works

A collaboration between Milapfest and Liverpool Hope University
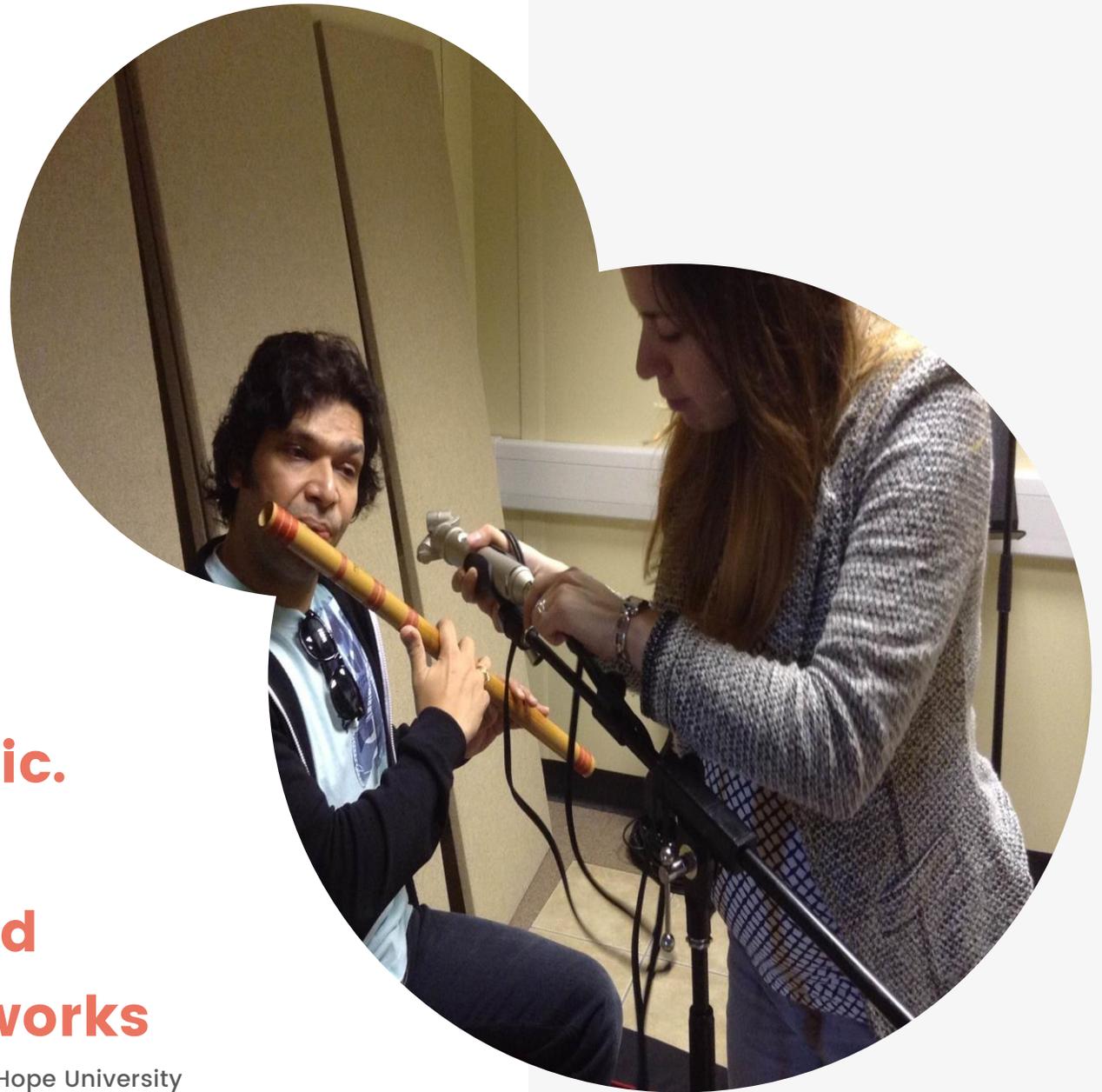
Instruments India: Intercultural Creativity in Electroacoustic Music. Integrating Indian music cultural sound emblems into new works

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Common Cause Research

This case study was produced in 2018 as part of the Common Cause Research project.

Common Cause aimed to document and explore existing collaborative research between universities and Black and Minority Ethnic community organisations. The project was funded under the AHRC Connected Communities Programme and included partners from University of Bristol, University of Liverpool, Xtend, University of Nottingham and Runnymede Trust.

We hope that these case studies will provide inspiration to those thinking of engaging in collaborative research, as well as insight into the challenges and benefits of such partnerships. Our intention in these case studies is to document the relationship between the partners from the academic institution and the community organisation. We have not evaluated the projects or engaged with the project participants. However, by capturing the perspectives of the partners, we hope to understand the structural and practical support needed to initiate and run projects involving universities and Black and Minority Ethnic organisations.

You can find more case studies, resources and information about Common Cause Research at www.commoncauseresearch.com.

At A Glance

<u>Title</u>
Instruments India: Intercultural Creativity in Electroacoustic Music. Integrating Indian music cultural sound emblems into new works

<u>Key Partners</u>
Milapfest
https://www.milapfest.com/

Liverpool Hope University

<u>Funder</u>
Arts and Humanities Research Council

<u>Dates</u>
September 2012 – June 2013

<u>Website</u>
<u>https://www.milapfest.com/instruments-india/</u>

Selected outputs
- **Instruments India app**
- **Project presentation slides**
- **Research blog**
- **Publications**
- **New Shruti composition on vimeo**
- **Javaari and New Shruti compositions published on Emprientes DIGITALes label**
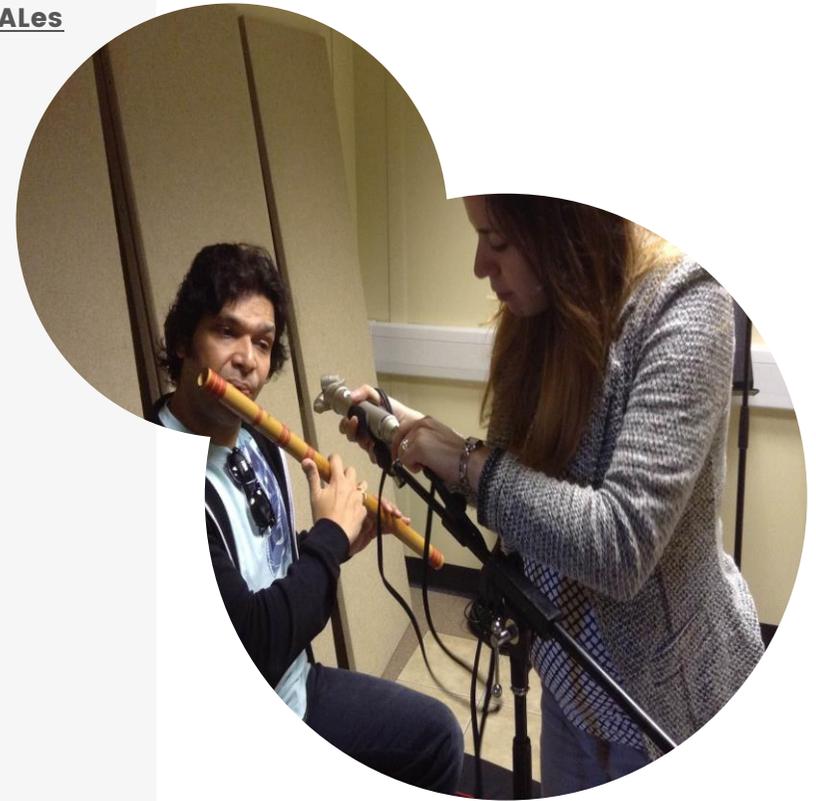
Bansuri recording session with Rakesh Chaurasia
Image: Intruments India Project

Project Summary

This collaboration between Milapfest and Liverpool Hope University was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and undertaken between September 2012 and June 2013. Intercultural Creativity in Electroacoustic Music (Intercultural Creativity) aimed to examine the process of collecting and incorporating Indian cultural sounds originating from Indian musical instruments into new electroacoustic music compositions. A key focus for Intercultural Creativity was practice-led research whereby world-renowned Indian musicians were recorded and the sounds used to make two new electroacoustic music compositions. Studio and field recordings of musicians based in the UK and India informed the new electroacoustic compositions and a publicly accessible archive of Indian instruments has been created.

Milapfest is a registered charity based in Liverpool founded in1985 when a group of like-minded friends held an 'to enable the sharing of Indian arts between South Asian people and the wider community in Liverpool. This event evolved into an annual week-long festival and subsequently became a year-round programme. Milap Festival Trust was established as a charity in 1993 with the aim of creating a programme that promotes arts and cultural activities in Merseyside and beyond. Milapfest is now a leading national Indian Arts Development Trust, producing world class performances and provides education and professional development opportunities for professional and aspiring artists. Since October 2014 Milapfest has been based at Liverpool Hope University in their Creative Campus which offers a range of creative and performing arts facilities.

Liverpool Hope University traces its origins to 1844 when The Church of England's Warrington Training College for women was established. Several other colleges were established and subsequently merged to form the Liverpool Institute of Higher Education and in 1995 became a single unified ecumenical College with a new

Premiere of New Shruit for sarod and electronics with Rajeeb Chakraborty
Image: Instruments India Project

name, Liverpool Hope and University status was granted in 2005. The University had over 5000 students in 2017.

Intercultural Creativity examined the process of transition and translation of sounds originating from Indian musical instruments to experimental electroacoustic sounds.

Approximately 30 Indian musicians from UK and India participated in the recording of music from their instruments; interaction with musicians and project partners aimed to establish an understanding of the processes of musical exchange across cultural boundaries. Milapfest collaborated in the development of the project with the academic partner, facilitated access to musicians to provide a link between them and the research and played a key role in developing an online archive of Indian musical instruments and their sounds. The partners have collaborated on presentation and dissemination of the project. A number of outputs have been produced including: two new compositions, Javaari and New Shruti; a journal article; a conference paper presented in Lisbon; a research blog; and an online sound archive and educational resource, 'Instruments India', hosted on the Milapfest website. Follow on funding has enabled the development of a downloadable app for tablet and mobile phone devices, it has different content to the website and includes games and interactive applications. Live performances of the musical compositions have been presented in the UK and internationally.

How the collaboration came about

The location of Milapfest at the Creative Campus of Liverpool Hope University is described as key to facilitating the collaboration on Intercultural Creativity. The connection between Milapfest and the University goes back to 2008 when Liverpool was the European Capital of Culture and as part of this, a University pro-vice-chancellor organised a Global Youth Congress, called 'The Big Hope' (NB, Big Hope 2 is in June 2018). Two conference strands and several special events were produced by Milapfest, including the conference series and seminar: 'How Arts Can Save the World. As part of this, and in a special stand alone event, Milapfest invited former President of India A P J Abdul Kalam (President from 2002-2007) as a keynote speaker and presented a programme on Indian arts.

> We contributed, to the conference and so we got to know Hope University at that time. The Vice-Chancellor was looking to focus on one of the great world music traditions at the University and felt that we could provide expertise and support in delivering that.
>
> (Community partner)

The Vice Chancellor at the University was also interested in embedding Indian arts on campus and when the Creative Campus was built, Milapfest were invited to be based on site; one of several organisations with whom staff at the University were encouraged to work with in partnership.

> From my perspective Milapfest is one of a number of collaborating partners and opportunities that have been placed in this new building. The European Opera Centre is also another partnership we have – while they're not in the Capstone building, they are another organisation that we were encouraged to work with

within the department. We also have the connection with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, which again we were encouraged to work with... while they're not on this site, they are still our partners. And we also have a resource, which is the Steinway status awarded to the Music department. Again these things in my opinion were placed here specifically for the staff to engage with, because they were on site to use as starting points for collaboration and community engagement, so Milapfest is one of those that were placed specifically here for potential research collaboration.

(Academic partner)

The interest and support of the pro and vice chancellors is described as key to Milapfest's location on campus. This location also facilitates Milapfest to draw people into the University environment and contribute to the Widening Participation agenda and has facilitated the Intercultural Creativity project to flourish.

I think the Milapfest goals with working with Hope University and the Vice Chancellor's goals in working with Milapfest have provided the environment and the encouragement for our project, Intercultural Creativity, to flourish. in general terms there was a positive encouragement along the lines of: 'You should try and work with Milapfest', or at Milapfest we thought 'Let's try and explore what we can do with all the academics here'. So in one way we could obviously draw people into the University in the way the Widening Participation type programmes would do ... we're doing that kind of work as well. So there are many aspects of our programme which we simply host at Hope University and by hosting it here we're bringing people in to a campus and fulfilling that role, where universities want to encourage people to just come in to a campus.

(Community partner)

Milapfest feel empowered and supported to work with people across the University while also retaining independence to operate their own programmes, Milapfest provides a useful resource to the University.

Indian classical arts work was the idea, to try and bring that into the University's offer. So that was why we were invited to come into this building when it was built. We operate our independent programme, but we also operate like a department of the University as well in a way because we do things within the University which are cutting across all of the University's life, so we have public events, we do corporate events here, we engage with the academics. We have a library and a major digital archive of Indian music and dance as well. And we've been empowered to have relations directly with different departments so we can go and approach anybody in the University and say we are Milapfest at the Creative Campus and just try and make something happen. Going back to the Vice Chancellor's role in this - we're not party to all of the management or the communications from him, but we have been to Heads of Department meetings or Faculty meetings and we do see that he encourages people to work with us. (Community partner)

The academic partner describes how Milapfest's location on campus made it easier to approach them than if they had been located off-site, to talk about her idea for a project.

There's accepted knowledge that there's a value to them being here. And because they're in the building, you know where their offices are, it feels like they are colleagues so it's like there's no difference or territorial boundary. I think that goes back to that point when I talked in the workshop that those inhibitions about knocking on someone's door if it was external partner – that's gone, because they are part of my place of work, and I've not got that fear of starting a

new partnership from scratch. And if I think back that feeling wasn't there. I think the close proximity of working spaces took away that fear.

(Academic partner)

The connection between the academic partner and Milapfest began when the academic partner started attending the monthly concert series that Milapfest were running. The concerts inspired the academic partner to recognise that this was a potential sound source for her work and there was potential to develop a project.

I just got fascinated by this music that I had no real prior knowledge of, and I realised that there was some potential for a project. Because the work that I do, in a nutshell, I collect sound recordings and use them as the basis for new musical compositions ... the sounds I collect could be anything. And usually it's from sounds around me, sounds at home, sounds in the environment ... so this was a potential sound source ... and I realised how big the potential was when I started listening to the Milapfest concerts held here at Liverpool Hope University. When I realised that Milapfest were in the same building as my own office, I thought this was excellent, and immediately saw the potential of what I wanted to record. I had no concept of what I could record because I had no knowledge of how vast that sound source could be. After this initial concept, contact with Milapfest took place over an email – I just emailed (community partner), and said 'Hi, this is me, can we meet?' And I think that email exchange went back and forth a few times, because we couldn't get a time to meet, but then we did have that meeting and then it just took off from there.

(Academic partner)

The focus for a potential collaboration for the academic partner was the sound source and for Milapfest it was the potential benefit to Indian arts and to reach a new audience. Neither partner viewed this as a 'Black and Minority Ethnic community project'. However, recording musicians, not objects, made the academic

partner realise that a collaborative project such as this would require more discussion, understanding and planning than was initially envisaged.

It was a sound source. It was for me of a very personal gain, I just wanted sounds – that's all I wanted for my creative work. I just want to collect them. But then when the project started to evolve and I realised this recording process was not so straightforward. I remember thinking I've got to record these musicians, and these musicians come from India, and all over the UK, then it expanded and then I thought 'Right this is quite a bigger project here than I thought' – it's not the same as recording kitchen utensils or some other inanimate object, it's actually a bit different here. So then it wasn't as straightforward as getting the field recorder out and capturing, because it didn't work like that … instead we had to meet more and actually discuss this in more detail.
(Academic partner)

Well we always look into collaboration to see if there's something that can benefit Indian arts. So in this case: 'What would it do for Indian music? It was clear that it was going to a different audience. Whenever we do cross cultural or cross genre collaborations it's usually related to whether it can go to a new audience or whether it can create some new work, an innovation. Or whether it can reach out to different musicians and artists. So in that sense it was what it was doing. We were also trying to work out that what we could do with research projects, in getting Indian music into university or into … other academics' research projects. In one way having Indian music sounds recorded for electroacoustic composition was similar to say doing an Indo jazz fusion or doing an Indo western classical fusion – on one level, because you're just taking Indian music and fusing it.
(Community partner)

Both partners had previous experience of collaborating in the arts and staff at Milapfest had run workshops or given lectures in University. However, this was the

first time for both partners to work on a university-community collaborative research project.

The location of Milapfest at the University with backing and support from senior leaders is described as important to encouraging university-community collaboration. Indeed, the academic partner reflects that Milapfest's presence on campus made it easier to initiate contact, this would have been more difficult if the organisation was not part of the University environment. A further benefit of this particular shared space is the access to University facilities for performing and visual arts; Milapfest is able to provide training and hold performances on campus which brings people from the wider community into the University environment, thereby contributing to the Widening Participation agenda. In relation to the Intercultural Creativity project, after the academic partner initiated contact both partners spent significant time discussing possibilities for a potential collaboration and what the respective benefits might be before agreeing to proceed on developing a project.

Mandolin recording session with Snehashish Mozumder
Image: Instruments India Project

Developing collaborative research

The idea to record Indian sounds for electroacoustic compositions came from the academic partner and was further developed collaboratively with Milapfest. Both partners describe a lack of familiarity with each other's musical fields and that it took some time to understand how the idea could be developed in to a mutually beneficial project and be taken forward collaboratively. The academic partner describes how her work can be unfamiliar to many people and that it was the funding application, in particular the part on Pathways to Impact, that made her think in a 'non-academic' way and helped shape the project.

I remember that it took a long time to fully describe and reveal to Milapfest what exactly I was doing with my research. It's something obscure, for someone not intiated with electroacoustic music, not everyone knows about this style of composition and it's not obvious. So that took a long time and it wasn't even until the project was in motion, until that actually got across. And then it was also talking about how Milapfest could gain and benefit from the project, because I'm gaining through sound collection. The AHRC had a number of forms you have to write as part of the funding application … one of them is Pathways to Impact and this is a space for you to include details about how other people might benefit, and how others academics might gain something from the project. I think that's when this project came into its own as we had to consider audiences for Milapfest, how would they gain through developing education projects associated with our collaboration. I think this area was particularly significant since one of Milapfest's aims is to reach out and promote Indian music education, and collaborating in this way would tick that box since we realised together that a freely available resource that would document all the instruments played on stage in their concerts didn't currently exist and this could be something we

could make together to support Milapfest audiences. At this point it started expanding and expanding. The Pathways to Impact document solidified our partnership because it forced me to think about non-academic beneficiaries and in turn led to our plans for an online educational resource, while collecting my sound recordings. It was easy to envision that I would make this music and conduct my own research, which would tick boxes required for funding, but I believe the significance of the application was talking about the benefits to the community, and who the beneficiaries were. I could see that this wasn't just a small isolated activity collecting sounds, it became a much more involved, multi-dimensional project.
(Academic partner)

The idea to produce a sound archive of instruments was a clear potential benefit for Milapfest's audience and would provide an important educational resource. The community partner recounts having to learn about each other's art form and being clear about how Milapfest would benefit; furthermore, they could broker access to world renowned musicians with whom they had established significant trust and needed to ensure the project would be benefit to the wider community.

I had to learn about electroacoustic music. I think in a good partnership and collaboration like this, it has to have selfish gains of course, but also what was important, is that we were trying to think about each other's projects as well. I can think of loads of examples of organisations who take advantage of organisations like ours, just because you get something out of it. So in this case you know that wouldn't have worked. During the project (academic partner) would be trying to think about what's the benefit for Milapfest and vice versa. Looking after our own interests, to also think about their partner's interests made this collaboration work better. So we had to learn about each other's art form and learn to respect it. We had artists who are some of the leading artists of the world. You know in some cases they're the top of the field in their instrument, but they

I think in a good partnership and collaboration like this, it has to have selfish gains of course, but also what was important, is that we were trying to think about each other's projects as well.

were giving time for free to record. So in some cases they didn't really care to understand the project, they just did it because we were asking them to do it, and they understood that it was something for education or for research and they didn't really care, they just said they didn't mind that they weren't getting paid, as long as they were contributing to students or audiences. Over time I learned to describe the project to artists and in some cases I felt confident that I could have stepped in for (Academic Partner) as a PI of the project – we eventually reached a level of cooperation and understanding that meant we could interchange our roles."

(Community partner)

The aim of Intercultural Creativity was to research Indian sounds and see what electroacoustic compositions could be produced. This initial aim is described as remaining the backbone of the project which expanded and incorporated unforeseen elements as the work got under way. Initial conversations enabled making the link between the proposed work and the community partner's interest in the type of Indian music being produced by musicians born and bred in the UK.

Because of our conversations, I learnt that (community partner) was interested in this area anyway. He has an interest in the British gharana (specialist schools or methods of classical dance or music), and whether that exists at all ... how we foster musicians born and bred here in the UK – and what type of Indian music are they producing, and whether it is different from that of India. These interests and curiosities came to the foreground through our conversations. So I could see (community partner's) interest in my project, and then that meant he was more invested in it. If he had been more interested in the business side or concerned solely with monetary gain, maybe these conversations of artistic endeavours would not have taken place – that would have been hard work I think. But this

was an encouraging partnership since he was curious about what was going on creatively.

(Academic partner)

Spending time to get to know each other's work, discuss what a potential collaborative project would look like and what the mutual benefits would be are described as key to developing Intercultural Creativity. Having to consider 'Pathways to Impact' as part of the funding application made a significant contribution to shaping the project from a non-academic perspective and considering how it could be beneficial to the wider public as well as other academics. It was also important for Milapfest to ensure that their expertise and networks would not be used for unfair advantage and there were clear benefits for the organisation, before agreeing to collaborate. As discussions took place, it was possible to link what initially appeared as an obscure idea to the interests of the community partner and Milapfest.

Funding

Intercultural Creativity was funded by the <u>Arts and Humanities Research Council</u> (AHRC) under their early career <u>Translating Cultures Fellowship Awards</u>, to undertake work between September 2012 and June 2013. The academic partner had previously tried to secure funding, before establishing contact with Milapfest, but was unsuccessful on that occasion; the AHRC notice for the fellowship grant is described as good timing and fit for the Intercultural Creativity project.

> If I go back a bit further, I applied for a British Academy grant at the time and that was unsuccessful, and that was much smaller project – that was looking at maybe recording one musician. I realised that the AHRC had put a highlight notice out for Translating Cultures, and that lined up perfectly. I realised this was a perfect fit, and what I had been looking for – the timing was perfect. I could see the crossover between what I was trying to do, and the funding call, and it clicked quite nicely. The application demanded quite a lot of detail, so then that's when I started to thinking bigger, and considered increasing the number of performers I wanted to record, and these might come from India or they might come from the UK, and I'll use Milapfest as the connection agency to put me in contact with these people.
>
> (Academic partner)

The academic partner led on developing and submitting the bid, by mutual agreement and with input from the community partner. Both partners looked at the application outline and decided to go forward with the project, Milapfest contributed to completing the relevant sections of the form.

> I showed them the outline of what it was, and (community partner) was like 'Okay, let's do this'. And then I think we just kept sending it back and forth or …

and they would highlight little bits saying 'Can you fill it'. We needed to explain … There was a whole bit on project partners and what they were all about, so I needed that information from them, such as the history of the project partners, and I didn't have that to hand. I found that you need to dream of it with them in a hypothetical sense and imagine 'That could work, I guess that could work' – so there was a bit of that going on I think between us. I was leading it, I could quite easily talk about what I wanted to do, but I did need some guidance and help from Milapfest to flesh it out. I also didn't know the performers I would potentially be recording – I'd need to name some of those people, I also needed to name like performances dates, and know opportunities that Milapfest might give me. So I did rely on them to help me complete the application.
(Academic partner)

The focus of the funding proposal on measuring impact is described as being of interest to both partners in their respective contexts.

I think one thing that suits us both is the measuring of impact. Because universities have to do that with all these funding applications, but we have to as well … or we want to because we need to generate audiences, profile or income. So in that case that's a match anyway.
(Community partner)

No particular challenges are highlighted other than fleshing out and making the project fit the funding application. The process of completing the application is described as a learning curve for the academic partner and a lengthy process, which benefitted from the support of a colleague.

I was a learning curve for me because I've never done such a lengthy funding application before. I luckily had input from one of my colleagues and she was more of an expert in AHRC funding, so she was wonderful. She supported me and

provided proof reading … so I had help, academic help, yeah and of course from (Community Partner).
(Academic Partner)

Both partners highlight key messages for consideration by funders regarding the funding of this kind of collaborative work:

- **Consider due recompense for community partners. The academic partner applied to the AHRC for Follow on funding to take forward further work emerging from Intercultural Creativity, but was unable to secure it; the feedback from the funder was that Milapfest were asking for too much of the funding. Furthermore, there is no documentation about what is a fair share of the funding for community partners who don't receive the money directly anyway, it is processed by the University and community partners can incur significant costs in relation to a collaborative project.**

I had to clearly list what I needed, such as a breakdown of costs, and on the one piece of feedback I did get it said the project partners look like they're taking more percentage of the actual funding. And there's no documentation anywhere about what's the fair share. It comes through the University and then I delegate … or direct where that money goes … and it made me think that maybe I had to temper what I was asking for. Anyway without that funding we have gone on to do those activities without funding from them. But in hindsight I thought well maybe there should be some formal documentation regarding 'project partners' and a suggestion of costs or what can and cannot be asked for. We were asking for money for Milapfest performers to give workshops in schools, just to pay for the one-off fee to showcase the app that we were going to create. And I think that was referring to that. If I was to do another application I would tread very

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carefully in this area. Or maybe ask them directly before I did it, is this acceptable?
(Academic partner)

Both partners reflected on what the alternative would be for community partners to engage in collaborative work without payment. Both partners undertook significant unpaid work.

- **The value of community partners and their contributions to collaborative work should be better understood, community organisations undertake significant impact work and this should be recognised when allocating funding.**

    It would be better to understand more the value of partners, what funders are getting from the partners. Especially because arts organisations for example are working in practice with real people, and they're having an impact on people's lives all the time. So I think that's important that your partnership funding is getting that contribution, but it should be acknowledged.
    (Community partner)

- **Steps should be taken to avoid a tick box approach under the problematic label of 'BME community' whereby art forms themselves come to be seen as a 'minority or community art form', or the funding awarded goes to Minority Ethnic groups that tick funder boxes. The intention of funding beyond a tick box approach should be made clear.**

    The use of 'BME community' as a label is a bit problematic I think because you're immediately saying that it's a minority art form or it's a community art form which have a lot of nuances and meanings behind that. I would want to know exactly what the funders would be looking for in that because it sounds a little bit

like how it used to be in arts funding where you're kind of trying to spread funding out and say okay my proportion of funding is now going to these minority groups that tick that box. When you're looking at major art forms, you know what is the aim ... funding that works beyond ticking the box.
(Community partner)

- **Better co-ordination between academic and arts funding bodies to avoid very similar research projects being funded by different bodies. There should be a greater sharing of knowledge held by academic institutions and arts organisations.**

Arts Council started to do some seminars on the value of universities and arts organisations working together, but I don't think it developed very much ... it was related to the development of urban life or the development of cities and places, and how universities and arts organisations are uniquely placed to do that. Arts Council and AHRC, I don't know if there's a connection of what they're both doing. I think there's a lot of resources and knowledge and expertise which are not being shared ... this summer there was a major festival of the Beatles ... 50th anniversary of Sergeant Pepper's album by the Beatles ... and through that process we found that both this University and Liverpool University music departments had a treasure of research and archived material which nobody was seeing. And it still didn't come out in the festival because it was complicated for various reasons. But it's that kind of thing where universities have got the knowledge or the research, or the work is done, but then on another side of the table Arts Council are funding that same thing to be done by arts organisations.
(Community partner)

Development and submission of the funding bid was led by the academic partner with significant input from the community partner and some support from an academic colleague. There was a reliance on each other's expertise in this process to match the project to the funding application. A focus on measuring impact is

described as relevant to both academic and community partners; as previously noted this focus also helped the academic partner to think in a non-academic way to shape the project and look at what Milapfest and its beneficiaries would gain from the collaboration. Due financial recompense for community partners, due recognition of the expertise and value they bring to the table, avoiding a tick-box approach to funding work with Black and Minority Ethnic communities and better co-ordination between academic and arts funding bodies are highlighted for consideration by funders.

Undertaking the research

The research aspect of the work is described as being practice-led and focused on recording sounds from Indian classical music. The recordings were analysed by the academic partner and used to inform two new electroacoustic music compositions. The data collected was therefore the sound recordings and in doing so the interaction between researcher and musician also became important. Recordings were led by the academic partner, Milapfest facilitated access and introductions to the musicians to be recorded. Both partners had several planning meetings after funding was secured and before the project started. Milapfest's role in enabling access to musicians and coordinating schedules was key to the project. The grant enabled the academic partner to be freed up from other duties and was able to focus on the project, this enabled fitting in around the availability of musicians.

We had meetings, for example, preparation meetings and planning meetings. Because I had a research fellowship I was completely off timetable, with no teaching or administration obligations. This was a wonderful opportunity to dedicate my time solely to the research project. I didn't need to be fitting meetings into my teaching schedule - that was all taken away. We had many meetings during that year, because it was all about recording work and getting artists to come in and planning around a schedule that (community partner) had planned already for concerts. It was a matter of saying we'll have that person that day, that person … and so on. It was initially all about the sound capturing process. And then (community partner) introduced me to each guest performer, informing them about the project and if they wished to take part. That took quite a long time because the performers all had their own schedules.
(Academic partner)

Presenting a conference paper together at the Electroacoustic Music Studies Network Conference
Image: Instruments India Project

Musicians gave their time, knowledge and skills free of charge and could not always be expected to be available for recording straight after a concert. Other practical matters such as transport also led to delays or cancellations to agreed recording sessions, requiring sensitivity and care to accommodate.

> And because they were doing it for free you had to pitch it to them because they had to either make time or spend money to stay here longer. Or for whatever reason, you know … it wasn't always nice to just catch them at the end of a concert because you know if you've done a concert you don't want to then do a recording session straight away … but some people did that as well. It was just sometimes simple like the trains were cancelled or they've just done this mammoth concert and they're exhausted.
> (Community partner)

This way of working is described as a big learning curve for the academic partner and presented significant pressure in relation to meeting project deadlines, that were not suited to accommodating the pressures and schedules that musicians were working under.

> That was a big learning curve for me, because I thought I just want to go and record my sounds and then go home. But it was not that simple, particularly as they were giving time to the project for free. Sometimes plans changed at the last minute. After concerts some musicians had to rush off to catch a train. Sometimes I would turn up ready to record the musicians and then they would have an unavoidable change in plans or a new commitment on their tours … I found that frustrating, but that was just a personal frustration, it was something I had not considered before undertaking this type of research. Attempting to record many musicians for the project was ambitious, and the process of recording did not work the same for each musician. Each contributor required time and care for optimum results. I was often in the position where a time had been arranged with

a musician, and I would be left waiting and waiting because they would have been delayed in travel or at the end of a performance, for instance. Sometimes the recording sessions wouldn't happen, and that was just something I had to accommodate. In addition to this, there was a lot of pressure … because I had deadlines, I knew that all the recording had to be done by a certain time ready to upload to the website, and I would often feel the pressure that this is my one chance to get this recording of this musician.
(Academic partner)

Interacting with the musicians and unfamiliar instruments presented some initial challenges for the academic partner in relation to communication and how this then had an impact on the recording that emerged from that session.

Part of that data collection was instructing the musicians. We would meet, I'd tell them about the project, (community partner) would introduce me. And then I was left alone with them, for around 20 minutes plus sometimes. In that time it was all about instructing them on what to play. The musicians would often provide lengthy improvisations, when I would request brief snapshots of the instrument. The short sound idea or just the smallest unit or the notes of the instrument became an unexpected issue because this brevity doesn't really exist in (Indian) music making, it's normally about extended phrases, improvisation or passages of music. This was a huge stumbling block for me, but an interesting point for our collaboration … part of the project became about me instructing the musicians about what to play and how my communication then impacted upon what they gave me.
(Academic partner)

Some recording sessions worked out better than others and the community partner reflects that this was not necessarily about how generous or not the musicians were, but about the lack of familiarity that the academic partner and musician had

with each other's genres. If the community partner had sat in on the recording sessions this may have presented a different, more productive dynamic because the community partner's knowledge may have enabled a different conversation and ways of playing the musical instruments.

> The people who didn't do that, it didn't mean that they were less generous, it's just that they were not sure what was required ... say if they're teachers or if they're presenters of Indian music, they do it in a particular way which includes their improvisation, the range, the scale, the sounds ... but then this project did not ask for any of those things. And I think in this outsider status that (academic partner) had ... also would have been very different if I was sitting in, for instance, I'd have said 'No actually it (instrument) can also do this' or ... I mean because this is a bit like related to one of the new albums we've produced for our classical music band where we've asked voices and instruments and our musicians to do things which are not common in Indian classical music. But we're asking them to do it because we've got a purpose in mind or I'm putting my name to the album as a producer. But then in this case (academic partner) couldn't say 'No but I want you to do that [play or hit the instrument in a certain way because ...', whereas I could say 'No, hit the instrument like this because we want to produce the sound for an album' – that's different from the research project.
> (Community partner)

The academic partner's approach to be open to learning and be less instructive is described as probably working out well. Both partner's observed that asking different musicians to produce a sound on the same type of instrument, actually produced a number of different sounds and this could be an area for further research in the future.

> We would often talk about the hypothetical example of if I was an ethnomusicologist who was a specialist in Indian music, and how that would

have changed our work together. My approach may have been different and I might demand particular playing styles or gestures, and then they might have felt intimidated and not so giving. Perhaps I got the best results from the musicians because I was unfamiliar with Indian classical music in the first instance and open to what the musicians could provide in the recording sessions. I didn't think there was any restrictions or particular boundaries on what they were doing. When we did the sitar recordings I was lucky enough to have three different performers for this instrument, and that's when we gathered very different playing styles, with many of different results.
(Academic partner)

Taking one particular instrument, if we'd have recorded ten players of the same instrument, or if we do that in the future, we might get something different. In all Indian classical arts it's pretty clear that people … one common instruction from teachers is you learn the basics and then if you want to innovate and stretch the boundaries you can do it after, as long as you've got your grounding.
(Community partner)

The academic partner led the data collection and analysis of sounds from Indian instruments. Both partners have made joint presentations and acknowledge each other when making individual presentations.

Travelling to India together enabled a friendship to be established, partly as a result of the academic partner being in an unfamiliar environment and the community partner being supportive with resolving practical issues. Milapfest's role was central to the academic partner gaining access to the musicians in the UK and India, because the organisation was respected and held in high regard by the musicians.

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> I was in a foreign situation (in India) with a problem with a hotel booking. And then (community partner) said 'You can stay with my grandma, its fine, you're going to be okay'. I think all professional boundaries were replaced with more of a friendship relationship because I was in a situation where I needed that help. Often in the recording sessions the musician would say to me that 'Milapfest asked me and I'll do anything for Milapfest' it's because of that relationship. They valued the relationship with Milapfest because they had received support and help to advance their performance careers in a number of cases, and they'd helped guide their careers of some of the young performers ... so there was a discernable level of respect for Milapfest. I often wondered ... I would not have got these results if it was just me going in with my microphone, without Milapfest's involvement – I am certain that would not have happened, I wouldn't have had the access to the musicians I recorded. Some of the musicians were session musicians, and some had performed for Oscar nominated films. I didn't know this before my interactions with them ... and I think it's quite good that I didn't know.
>
> **(Academic partner)**

The partners discussed whether the use of Indian music in an electronic context was a form of appropriation and took steps to minimise this. Some musicians did not sign up to participate because they thought the approach was unfair, others took time to ask questions and build trust before agreeing to participate. The community partner highlights that this caution is often informed by the fact that artists can be taken advantage of, they agree to be recorded and then find their recording has been used to make money. Those who agreed to participate in Intercultural Creativity did so voluntarily after receiving information about how their contributions would be used and what they would gain from participating. This project is described as different to previous work the academic partner had undertaken because it required interaction with people, not just the recording of sound.

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It's very interesting from my perspective as a composer incorporating foreign cultural elements. I had a performance in New York of New Shruti and Javaari – a reviewer posted a comment on his blog stating that he was a little bit disappointed with the use of Indian sound symbols within an electronic music context. My work does touch upon this ongoing debate regarding cultural appropriation … so I had to tread really carefully, I felt that I was in this territory of 'Oh have I done something wrong?' by making use of these sounds from Indian instruments, but then we've talked about it a lot, whether or not this is appropriation, what are the respectful boundaries and … it was a big departure for me personally because prior to this research project my work had borrowed cultural elements, but they're very much on more a surface level. I went to Japan and recorded some instruments there, went home, made a piece … and that was a very different approach, because I had no contact, dialogue or interfacing with the performers. It was like 'capture and go' situation. I refer to these types of sounds as 'sonic souvenirs' because it was very much a souvenir type collection activity. Its an acquisition without full consideration of the source, history, context and significance. But this project was different, I was having face-to-face contact, I was having conversations with each performer, I was making sure that they knew what they were contributing to and I was being led by their knowledge and contribution. We went through a process of asking them if they wanted to contribute. And then if they did, what would they gain – they would gain publicity on the website, they would encourage ongoing interest and education about their instrument and they were doing events simultaneously through Milapfest with payment. There was official respect on those lines … and they could always say no, and some did say no to me. And some gave little, some gave more.
(Academic partner)

The recording of music took much longer than anticipated and the work on compositions took place around the work of recording as many musicians as

possible. The recordings became the key focus and whether the sound units identity could be captured in a few seconds or needed a longer duration.

> It took so much longer than I had factored in, it took most of the funding period to record all the instruments. Because Milapfest had this stream of musicians coming through and I wanted to capture as much as I could … and that didn't just take place in one month, it took many months. So it ate up all the time and the composition work took place around that really. So … the focus became the recording or the capturing stage and what was important in that situation. I often refer to the sound recordings as 'emblems' or 'cultural sound units', because the sound recording clearly expresses its identity. I spent some time looking at the duration of these emblems and whether you would capture it in a second, or did you need a whole musical phrase. It was about communicating Indian classical music identity.
> (Academic partner)

Information for the archive and website on Indian instruments was collated by both partners working on collating information such as sound recordings, photos, information about the instruments and photos. Milapfest led on development of the website, in particular through their Director of Marketing and an external company was appointed to work with the team.

Early discussions and planning meetings enabled clarity about how to take the project forward, Milapfest's role in facilitating and enabling access to musicians is described as vital because there was an established trust between them. A flexible approach was necessary to accommodate musicians giving their input for free and who had other commitments, or were unable to attend at the agreed recording time due to practical issues such as delays or cancellations with transport; this put pressure on meeting project deadlines. The academic partner describes the experience of working on the project as a learning curve in which flexibility and

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interacting with musicians from a different genre were important, because this influenced the recording that emerged. Community partner brokerage in explaining the electroacoustic genre, the context of Intercultural Creativity and introducing the community partner were important to enabling understanding about the project and engagement in recording. Issues regarding cultural appropriation were discussed by the partners, musicians were provided with information about the purpose of the project and how their music would be used; those who felt the process was unfair could and did decline participation. Data collection and analysis of sounds is a specialist area and the academic partner undertook this work, both partners presented papers collaboratively and acknowledged each other in independent presentations. The challenges highlighted relate to practicalities of scheduling and recording musicians, the academic partner learning about recording sounds that involved interaction with people and balancing deadlines with the reality of timescales needed to make recordings with musicians who are giving their time for free.

Roles and responsibilities

Both partners had clearly defined roles and responsibilities that are described as emerging organically based on the knowledge, expertise and contacts each partner brought to the table. The academic partner, as Principal Investigator, had overall responsibility for delivery of the project. Each partner led on their specific area of expertise and worked collaboratively when appropriate; for example, to plan the project, development of the website and coordination of musicians for recording. Data collection, analysis and development of two new musical compositions was undertaken by the academic partner and Milapfest led on contacting, scheduling and introducing musicians to the academic partner before recording commenced.

I just think that because I was listed as the PI (Principal Investigator), I felt responsible for the project, I felt like it was my responsibility to deliver on those deadlines. And because Milapfest were aware of those deadlines we shared that workload really. I felt like it wasn't just me asking 'Have you done it yet?' – It was not like that because they knew that they were getting something out of it.
(Academic partner)

The academic partner being able to take research leave to focus on the project and Milapfest building the project into their programme of work, was supportive to each partner carrying out their agreed roles.

And it worked out because (academic partner) had research leave, because we couldn't take time out to do the project. So it helped that she was driving the project and then we fit into the key deadlines. And our roles were obvious in a way, so we didn't have to formalise that because it was clear that our colleague (at Milapfest) was anyway running our website, so she did the website development with (academic partner). I was anyway working with all the

So it helped that she was driving the project and then we fit into the key deadlines. And our roles were obvious in a way, so we didn't have to formalise that.

musicians, so I looked after that. we didn't have time to sort of keep up with the deadlines so she was doing that side for the project.
(Community partner)

A shared sense of responsibility was achieved on the tasks that partners shared, otherwise each partner took responsibility for their individual roles and related tasks.

We just had different roles, because my research is compositional based, once I'd recorded the instruments I then went and composed. Milapfest had no part in that process, since it's an individual activity, I went off and made new music from the recordings. In this aspect the roles were clearly separate – they had their roles … and I had my role, and that didn't spill over here. When it came to the website we both were very much a part of it, I wanted to see it work and they wanted to see it work too, so it was a shared project. We had a company that worked with us, an external company who did the web design. We went to meetings together with them to create our vision of what it would look like. The biggest aspect of this creation was collating all the relevant information, such as images, sound recording clips, performer information, performer photo … we had an extensive spreadsheet about all these separate components. It was a huge collection of data there that needed to be catalogued and organised. That was time consuming and I remember (community partner) … digging out little clips of videos from past performance and saying 'Right this is a sitar, this is how it's played' … we all wanted to represent the instruments in the best light possible. (Community Partner) was also responsible in part for writing content for the website. So Milapfest had that ability but it was just collating it which was so time consuming.
(Academic partner)

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Clarity about individual and collective roles and responsibilities supported coordination and delivery of the project. The roles are described as emerging on the basis of individual expertise and matching this to the agreed and emerging tasks; some areas were the sole responsibility of either the academic partner or Milapfest and other areas of work were undertaken collaboratively. The academic partner having research leave and Milapfest being able to build the project into their programme of work are described as essential to giving necessary focus to the project.

Accountability

The academic partner was ultimately accountable to the funders for delivery of the project. Both partners describe that they had a mutual interest in making the project a success and therefore took their accountabilities to each other and the project seriously.

> I felt very responsible for the project because it was my name on grant award, and I'd never done this before. It was uncharted territory for me … I wanted it to work, but Milapfest wanted it to work as well, so we both felt this level of investment.
>
> (Academic partner)

The community partner reflects that the accountabilities were not informal and there was clarity between the partners regarding what they had to deliver. The musicians were not paid for their contributions, but once they signed up there was a commitment to delivering the work they had agreed to do, informed by the respect and ongoing relationship they had established with Milapfest. Accountabilities are described as being equally shared between the partners.

> I think it's equal because we're putting the Milapfest brand on it afterwards and then we've asked players to contribute … so at the end they've got to see that it's delivered. (Accountability) wasn't informal, it was clear to us.
>
> (Community partner)

Mutual trust between the academic and community partner and the time spent at the start of the project to get to know each other, are described as supportive to adopting a flexible but focused approach to ensuring the work got done.

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> I think that the mutual trust between us and … we didn't work well right from the start, you know like (academic partner) said, it took us a while to get going with the project, because we didn't really understand what to do together. You know like we said, there were times where we couldn't get the instrument players, the musicians, at the right time. But once we developed that trust that's why we didn't need to worry about that part of who does what, because it just became natural. And I think definitely friendship helped, mutual trust helped. And then like I have done other collaborations in other organisations, I didn't have to worry that she was taking advantage of us.
>
> (Community partner)

Trust and friendship are highlighted as key to ensuring formal and informal accountabilities were respected and everyone delivered on what they had agreed to do. No challenges are highlighted in relation to accountabilities for delivering Intercultural Creativity.

Outputs and legacy

Several outputs have been produced, some with follow on funding from different sources after the AHRC funded work on Intercultural Creativity was completed. There is some clarity regarding the ownership of tangible outputs but future developments in particular may need revisiting regarding ownership and maintenance. Tangible outputs and their ownership/maintenance are as follows:

- A sound archive <u>website</u> providing a free, accessible educational resource about Indian instruments. This sits within and belongs to Milapfest's own website and is maintained by an external web-design company.
- Instruments India interactive <u>app</u> featuring specially recorded sounds, images, games. This was developed with follow funding from a different funder after the Intercultural Creativity project was completed. The app is owned by the University and is maintained by their IT services, the app generates income which currently goes to the University but this may be revised in future to look at possibilities for Milapfest to receive some of the financial return from the app.

- Two electroacoustic musical compositions, <u>Javaari</u> and <u>Shruti</u> which are owned and maintained by the academic partner. The original sound material belongs to the musicians who created it and they gave permission for it to be used to create the two new compositions.
- A <u>conference paper</u> presented at the <u>Electronic Music Studies Network Conference</u> in Lisbon by both partners.
- A <u>journal article</u> 'Instruments INDIA: A sound archive for educational and compositional use' documenting the evolution of the archive and is owned by the

Recording work in Chennai, India
Image: Instruments India Project

academic partner and is published by *Organised Sound*, Cambridge University Press.

- A research <u>blog</u> which is seen as an informal way of communicating by the academic partner and there is no formal agreed ownership.

- Commissioned compositions enabled by follow on funding from a different source. A call for proposals was put out for other composers, to use the archive of sounds to produce new compositions, three composers were successful and their compositions were completed and performed in January 2017. One of the composers was inspired to create a new electronic instrument which had some interest in the United States at the time of this case study interview.

- A <u>CD</u> produced by the academic partner includes the two compositions created for the Intercultural Creativity project and was due to be launched at the time of interview.

Non-tangible outcomes include the learning for both partners about an innovative approach to creating music, working collaboratively on a research project of this nature and development of the sound archive website. The community partner highlights that this collaboration has inspired Milapfest to look at other research collaborations and he has, himself, been inspired do a PhD.

> We're looking at more research collaborations. So this is the best model of a research collaboration for us, that we can look to when we kind of compare it to this if we have others. And the other thing is that after this I was looking to do a PhD. So I actually had it on hold for several years, but then I started just after this … so the work with (academic partner) encouraged me to get started with it, but also gave me ideas of how to work on my own research.
> (Community partner)

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Legacies of the project include the archive website, interactive app and compositions created from Indian music sounds which can be accessed by anyone interested in these outputs. Further legacies are likely as the partners are looking to develop other educational resources and both feel they have an equal share of the legacies. One of the compositions by the academic partner called Javaari has received an award in Australia.

Structural inequalities

The academic and community partner had different views regarding structural inequalities, which led to some discussion and reflection during the case study interview. The academic partner wondered if Milapfest felt obliged to participate because the project would bring in resources and exposure through the collaboration, both for Milapfest's wider work as well as the Intercultural Creativity project.

> I don't really know how to respond to that (question about structural inequalities). But I wonder on reflection, when you (interviewer) put it that way, I just wonder … maybe Milapfest didn't feel like they could turn this down because the idea was coming from a Liverpool Hope staff member. But you also might feel directed or led into certain projects because if you get the majority of your funding from the Arts Council, as Milapfest do, your agenda may already be set and this leaves little other time for more experimental research projects like ours. Milapfest could have responded by saying 'we haven't really got the time to be spending on this type of work' … if you're a smaller organisation with less people, less time, then you might feel differently about interacting with a university partner because you may think 'that's not where the money's coming from so I can't devote any of my time to this.
> **(Academic partner)**

The community partner was clear that unless Milapfest saw a clear outcome for them they would not have collaborated and acknowledged that some organisations may indeed feel obliged to collaborate to bring in resources, or gain better profile, not necessarily because they would gain from the actual collaboration itself.

If you're a smaller organisation with less people, less time, then you might feel differently about interacting with a university partner because you may think 'that's not where the money's coming from so I can't devote any of my time to this.

No I think if there wasn't an outcome for it then it wouldn't have worked for us either. But that's an interesting point too, because some arts organisations might feel like that, that they have to collaborate.
(Community partner)

Further conversation and reflection from the academic partner focused on potential impact of the requirement of some funding bodies to have an academic partner on board and/or apply for the funding.

I've never ever thought about it in those terms, I always thought the AHRC was aimed at the academic. I never saw it any other way round. You can apply to their schemes without a project partner. I always thought of AHRC being for the academic to support their research goals, I've just viewed it in those terms. I don't see why it shouldn't it be from the perspective of the project partner and particular research ideas they want to explore … just say if we did it again, maybe Milapfest would write a bigger part of it, or they might be driving it and involving me. The AHRC funding application demanded information about project partners and their contribution to the proposal with regards to finances. You had to put a value in for their time, their resources and in-kind contributions. I think we came to some abstract value of office time, like staff time or resources and we had to put a value on it. We had to say 'Right, Milapfest is actually contributing x amount of money to the project', making me quantify this time without really knowing how this would be in reality. So it was really interesting to see the distribution of workload as the project progressed – and relatively speaking, we were only asking for a tiny bit of money for them (from the AHRC).

The feedback on structural inequalities illustrates how this concept and its implications are not necessarily issues that partners have cause to reflect on, or indeed the time and space to do so. The focus is on the collaboration and delivery of the project within what can be tight timescales and deadlines. The conversation

during this case study interview also illustrates that given the time and space, reflections can and do start on what structural inequalities might mean in the context of particular university-community collaborations and whether or not they have relevance, or impact on, collaborative research. Two issues are highlighted in the feedback: the lack of resources or profile available to community organisations, which can be informed by structural inequalities, may lead organisations to collaborate even if there are no other sufficient gains for them; and, it is accepted that academic funding bodies aim their funding at academics but should this be the case in relation to university-community collaborations which could potentially be led by community partners and not academics? The reflections also begin to touch on the efficacy of having to justify to funders, the payments to community partners for their participation in the collaboration.

Representing communities

The focus of Intercultural Creativity was on sounds from musical genres and creating an archive of Indian instruments, the project did not set out to represent any specific communities. The project is viewed by both partners from a global perspective and one that supports innovation in a cross-cultural context. The tangible outputs can be accessed by anyone looking to learn more about the project, Indian instruments or their sounds.
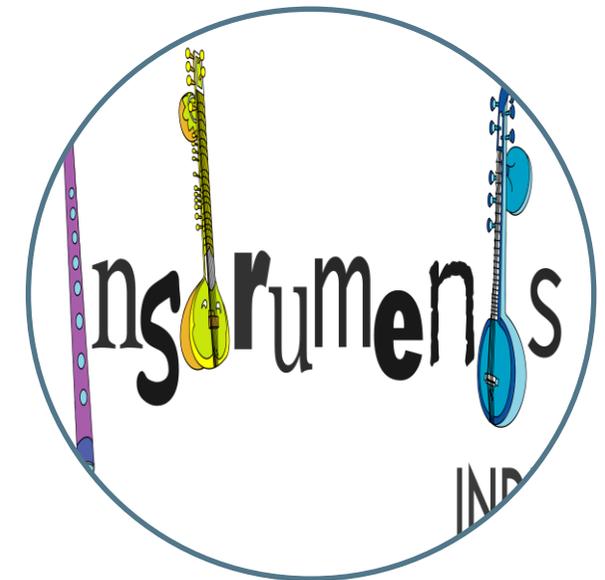
Instruments INDIA website and app logo
Image: Instruments India Project

University-Black and Minority Ethnic community collaborations

The collaboration on Intercultural Creativity is not viewed by the partners in the context of a university Black and Minority Ethnic community collaboration. The community partner highlights that more generally in these kinds of collaboration it is important to ensure mutual understanding and benefit before agreeing to go ahead with a collaborative project.

> We must make sure that there's mutual benefit for all the collaborators, that there's respect and understanding for each other's work and workload and position. For instance I had to see what was (academic partner) trying to do, where she was in the University and in academia in general for example. It was important to really understand each other.
> (Community partner)

Mutual respect and benefit, understanding about each other's work and getting to know the professional background of collaborators are highlighted as important features to consider.

We must make sure that there's mutual benefit for all the collaborators, that there's respect and understanding for each other's work and workload and position.

The future

Both partners intend to continue collaborating to follow up opportunities emerging from Intercultural Creativity as well as new projects, they would also consider collaborating with other partners from different organisations. More work could be done on adding further Indian instruments to the Instruments India archive website.

The academic partner is looking to submit the project as an impact case study for the Research Excellence Framework (REF), the University is therefore willing to look at funding follow on work to create or demonstrate impact from Intercultural Creativity.

> I mean it's just all connected though, because I want to use it as a REF impact case study for 2020-2021. So the University is aware of this and they are willing to provide internal funding for future work to strengthen the impact … well within reason … to create impact and to collect evidence of the impact. So I think we were going to talk about this more, about things that we can do on the back of what is already in motion, whether it be a workshop or following our activity of using the app or exposing the app with a bit more public engagement.
> (Academic partner)

The collaboration on Intercultural Creativity has provided opportunities for both partners to learn about university-community collaborations in a cross-cultural context. The location of Milapfest in a university is considered to be beneficial to inspiring and encouraging these kinds of collaborations.