

Please provide us with a summary of your PEARL Grant project, how it went and what the impact was using the framework below as well as adding / attaching any additional information or outputs you feel relevant.

Activity Title:	Groundings (Exhibition)
Grant-holder name:	Conan Lawrence

- 1) Please provide a summary describing the final project as it was delivered. Include details of when and where the activity took place, and any changes made to the original proposal alongside why these took place.

Groundings was the second iteration of a Fine Art practice-based research project based in the School of Fine and Performing Arts in collaboration with Addaction, a national charity assisting its service users to recover from alcohol and substance misuse. The project explored the links between creativity and Recovery, in particular between Art Therapy, participatory arts and the holistic approaches these fields offer to improve service users' wellbeing and social connections through a public exhibition of their work. The Fine Art Module *Public Project 1* also enabled its students to gain valuable professional experience of mentoring vulnerable service users, and furthering their aspirations to work in art therapy or participatory arts fields.

The engagement activity for which funds were granted was a public exhibition (and associated Opening Event and Catalogue) of the artwork developed during the process, which was held at a vacant retail unit in Lincoln's St Marks Shopping Centre from the 2nd – 8th May, 2019.

Funds for venue hire were not utilised as the exhibition venue was obtained free of charge. £100 of these funds were diverted to assist with further exhibition materials costs, and were gratefully received.

- 2) Assess the outcomes of the activity and its impact on people who engaged with it. Please include details of;
 - a. What was successful?
 - b. What did not go so well?
 - c. What would you do differently next time?
 - d. What was the impact? Please include a summary of how many people have engaged with the activity (face-face, online, via social media etc.). Include any qualitative or quantitative evaluation data and comments.

The exhibition was successful and allowed visitors to engage with artists and artworks in a safe space, and:

- Showcased Addaction service users' artworks to the public, attended by 160 visitors, including 75 on its opening night.



PEARL Activity Grants – Final Report

Public Engagement for All with Research at Lincoln

- Provided 8 service users and 6 students with a meaningful connection to a public cultural event celebrating their creativity
- Attracted BBC TV for a Look North piece on the exhibition and the impact of the process of service users' self-esteem, recovery and creative abilities
- Publicly highlighted the links between creativity and recovery (through opening speeches, Catalogue and interactive artwork)
- Generated dialogue between the public, service users, students, healthcare professionals and potential future partners for the University
- Celebrated the University's public engagement with a range of communities and partners
- Engaged the public with creative responses to addiction in a central Lincoln venue
- Attempted to reduce public stigma and stereotyping attached to drug and alcohol misuse.

A summary of qualitative and quantitative data from evaluation is attached.

- 3) How has your public engagement activity had an impact on research? This could include new data, new questions generated by the public, how the engagement has changed or shaped your research etc.

The activity has further refined the presentation of the exhibition for future years. Having found an ideal venue, future exhibitions will need to focus more on attracting visitors for the week following its opening, and will therefore need more (and earlier) targeted marketing to generate more online and social media engagement.

- 4) Are you hoping to repeat, continue or carry out further activity following on from your PEARL grant? If so, please provide details.

The Fine Art Module *Public Project 1* (within which the research is embedded) will continue to be delivered in collaboration with Addaction in 2019/20, and will aim to replicate the format developed this year. Funding will be needed to deliver the same level of professional delivery of Exhibition (catalogue and refreshments) in future years, as academic budgets are no longer able to fund resource-heavy events like this one.

- 5) Please describe any outputs from your project you could provide to support future PEARL and public engagement activities at the University such as;
 - a. Photographs / films
 - b. Evaluation data
 - c. Methodologies
 - d. Contacts



Addaction contacts are:

- Fern Hemsley (Contracts Manager, Addaction): Fern.Hemsley@addaction.org.uk
- Karen Ratcliffe (Lincolnshire Operations Manager, Addaction): Karen.Ratcliff@addaction.org.uk

Addaction's report (with images) on the exhibition can be found here and an evaluation summary is available on request:

<https://www.addaction.org.uk/news/art-exhibition-%E2%80%98groundings%E2%80%99-brings-community-together>

6) Are there any further comments, ideas, suggestions or other you would like to share?

PEARL's funding for this year's Exhibition enabled it to be delivered to a very high standard indeed, and on behalf of project partners and students I would like to extend our thanks for your generous funding.

The possibility of applying for longer-term funding (two to three years) for projects of this nature would allow partnerships a greater measure of stability to strategise, develop and deliver valuable work like this which has a direct and measurable impact on its participants' wellbeing.