The magic of the mic: demonstrating value whist making sense of the anecdote
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Community arts programs have become integral in providing a positive impact on the lives of young people living across the UK. In a report titled “Public Value and the Arts”, the Arts Council stated that the arts provide “a fundamental capacity for life”, enabling people to make sense of their worlds. The arts also offer “powerful applications” in health and wellbeing by providing an outlet for emotions and expression. Additionally enriching the “experience of life”, through an engagement with aesthetics, the arts provide a source of escape and solace.

Reprezent is a South London-based social enterprise that uses radio – 107.3FM, as a creative engagement tool to support and up-skill young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. It is exemplary of a program that aims to transform the lives of young people through auditory aesthetics. This project, which amplifies young voices across London’s airwaves, approached the Centre for Community Engagement Research at Goldsmiths University of London to demonstrate the project’s value. Drawing upon the collaborative project titled Becoming Radio Ready: valuing youth radio training, this paper seeks to explore methods of evaluation and the modes of value that are rooted within arts projects. It asks which modes of measurement give justice to the project? The paper brings forward some of the strengths and weaknesses of community project evaluation and brings into question the contention and significance of anecdotal data collection.

References: