STREET

MUSEUM 2022

EVALUATION REPORT

AND FUTURE FRAMEWORK PLANNING

NOVEMBER 2022

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. **Street Museum was a project that took place in the village of Blackhall Colliery in east County Durham between 2021 and 2022.** The project, according to its funding application, aimed to "transform the streets of low engagement neighbourhoods into museums" by working with community members to co-curate exhibitions through the selection of use of 3D scanning and printing of museum objects and displaying them into volunteer homes and businesses as part of a villagewide exhibition.

2. **Street Museum was borne out of the successful Street Gallery project, a project that took place in the summer of 2020.** It was funded by East Durham Creates' Let's Create Covid-19 Response Fund and run by local artist Ellie Mathieson. Street Gallery was also supported by the Durham Summer in the City Festival (2020) and sponsored by Digitalab. In addition to local artists displaying their work, Durham University loaned out additional art from its museums' collections to display. Street Gallery's aim was to find volunteer households in Dawdon in County Durham to display local, national and international 2D visual art in their windows.

3. **Street Museum was funded by the Museums Association's Digital Innovation and Engagement funding call.** Durham University led on the funding application in collaboration with East Durham Creates. Funding was received in March 2021, project design began shortly thereafter, and delivery took place between October 2021 and April 2022.

4. **Street Museum was co-delivered by 3 project delivery partners: Blackhall Colliery Community Centre (BCCC), Durham University (DU), and East Durham Creates (EDC).** Ellie Mathieson, a Seaham-based artist, was commissioned to manage and deliver the project in collaboration with the delivery partners.

5. **The Street Museum project team designed and delivered certain core activities to deliver on its aims:** 1) recruiting local community members to co-curate the Street Museum exhibition, which took place in April 2022; 2) delivery of half-term/school holiday activities at the BCCC in October 2021, February 2022, and April 2022; and 3) a range of community-based engagement activities to promote cultural engagement and the Street Museum.

6. **Blackhall Colliery Community Centre** was the site for the majority of the Street Museum's activities and events, though other activities took place in nearby schools and at a local care home. In addition, the Street Museum (SM) exhibition took place in 18 volunteer homes, businesses, and venues across the village.

7. **East Durham Creates,** a community arts charity with a focus on the east of County Durham[1], provided guidance and oversight to the project and also facilitated an introduction to the Blackhall Colliery Community Centre as a suitable site for the Street Museum.

8. Within **Durham University** individuals from different departments were involved in the project: from the University Library and Collections division (for project direction, community

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[1] As of this writing, East Durham Creates' remit and funding has recently expanded to mean their work reaches across the entire County.

engagement activities, curation leadership and guidance, and funding oversight); the Department of Archaeology (for 3D printing guidance and support); and the Department of Management and Marketing (for the evaluation work).

9. **Evaluation took place between October 2021 and August 2022.** The Creative Fuse NE (CFNE) project team at Durham University was brought on board (at the funding application stage) to design and deliver an evaluation of the project's delivery and its impact on community and cultural engagement. The aim of the evaluation process was to explore the following:
    a. The nature of the cultural and community engagement work that took place during SM
    b. The impact of the project's delivery on the community and project partners
    c. The nature of the collaborative work between delivery partners
    d. Determining what lessons can be learned from this project to inform future projects like Street Museum.

10. **The evaluation process used a mixed methodology approach.** The evaluation team used a range of methods including participant observation, creative reflective methods, group and individual interviews, and also examined samples of additional data such as attendance numbers at events and comments submitted by participants over the course of the project.

11. **Key evaluation findings for this project are outlined below:**
    a. *The project on the whole was effectively delivered* and demonstrated that developing and exhibiting 3D printed objects from a museum in the windows of homes and businesses in a local community can enable it to engage with culture in an innovative way with digital tools and technology. An estimated 3000 people saw the street-based exhibition and over 250 community members took part in activities and events over the course of the project.
    b. *Collaboration* was key to the project's success. This project depended on innovative and effective collaboration between the delivery partners. The collaboration required focus and consistent communication, along with ensuring that the delivery partners were free to focus on bringing their specific areas of expertise to the project's delivery. The project was also effective at engaging and upskilling local co-curators to design, select, and oversee the artefacts and themes of the exhibition and hands-on history days.
    c. *Engagement with the local community* was central to this project being delivered. Blackhall Colliery benefits from an extremely active community centre with forward-thinking leadership that really got behind the project and facilitated the community participation that was integral to Street Museum. The community-based orientation of this project was its distinguishing feature.
    d. Nurturing and tapping into *partner expertise* was important to the success of this project, including local expertise within the community, with scope to develop this cross-partnership expertise further. An inclusive approach to expertise meant that a variety of individuals successfully impacted the delivery of the project.
    e. *Digital innovation* successfully took place during this project. The use of 3D printing technology and techniques were explored during this project and played a significant role in its impact, particularly during the co-curation process and the SM exhibition.

For the delivery and community partners, this provided an important learning opportunity and chance to explore what did and did not work when using 3D technology. It also demonstrated that the use of 3D technology can be potential route for museums to disperse and distribute access to cultural artefacts in communities.

12. **There have been learnings from the evaluation that should inform the development of future Street Museum projects and activities:**
    a. Projects like these allow for an exploration of what it means to undertake *community engagement,* particularly in relation to decision-making agency and appropriate levels of engagement. It also allowed an exploration of using innovative digital technologies to support this engagement.
    b. An *adaptive approach* to scheduling and timing was required to deliver the project. Going forward, projects should ensure there is sufficient time and scheduling across all partners for key deliverables.
    c. In some instances, while cross-partner expertise was well utilised, there were gaps in optimising *expertise* during the project. An evaluation of internal mechanisms of Durham University for the delivery of a project of this nature, however, identified that while project design, delivery, and community engagement were successful, internal processes and structures to support that delivery were at times inconsistent and not all well accessed. This included gaps in ensuring that the expertise of the wider curatorial team for the museums team at Durham University were approached and built into the work being delivered, particularly in relation to structural and organisational elements of the project.
    d. *Digital innovation* was a positive element of this project and can be an important part of cultural and community engagement projects, but their use and application benefits from an adaptive and flexible approach, particularly when considering the needs of the community and their direct input into what they want the project to accomplish.
    e. *Evaluation* itself is an effective method to explore and learn from projects like these, particularly if it relies on an embedded and participatory approach-that benefits from a mixed method approach—that draws insights from all of the partners and as many of the participants as possible.

13. **The impact of the project is already being seen in a cross-pollination of related activities and events that have emerged in the wake of Street Museum.** In the months since the conclusion of Street Museum, new projects are under development that take direct inspiration from Street Museum. One example is Street Cosmos, a project hosted by Blackhall Community Centre and delivered in collaboration with the Ogden Centre at Durham University to celebrate science and the cosmos in Blackhall Colliery on a day during the October 2022 half term.

14. **When considering a *future framework* for delivering a Street Museum-like project in other communities or with a different set of cultural engagement appears reliant on three key components for its success:** *community, collaboration,* and *expertise.* All elements appear necessary though the depth to which they are focused on will vary depending on a number of factors: the community's readiness to engage; the type of expertise (and/or skills) held by the project delivery partners, including those in the community; and the nature of the collaboration required to deliver the project. It is important to note that not all projects will enjoy

similar depth of ability across these three concepts. These projects should be flexible and allow for pivoting and adaptation, particularly once working with different communities with varying levels of engagement or when considering what project delivery partners are involved.

15. **Projects like these are important conduits toward widening access to culture across communities and should be a priority for cultural institutions.** These projects, when flexible and co-designed with communities, are showing important and positive early impacts on innovating cultural and community engagement. Funding bodies should continue to prioritise funding projects that support these types of collaborative working.

16. **When considering next steps,** the Street Museum's partnership should consider pursuing additional funding (including in-kind funding) to support its legacy going forward with exploring partnering with additional regional partners in the UK and internationally to widen the Street Museum model and framework; to ensure that Durham University's curatorial information management databases are updated to reflect the work completed on the project; and to consider expanding the work done in Blackhall Colliery to continue and expand the existing relationship going forward.

2. INTRODUCTION

Engaging with the arts and culture matters; it can be a conduit for community cohesion a benefit to the economy, and promote health and well-being. In its work looking at the global impact of the creative industries, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) noted that the "creative economy can catalyse change, and build more inclusive, connected and collaborative societies."[2] There has been a growing acknowledgement across wide-ranging sectors that the arts should not only be viewed as an elective pastime or entertainment for those with the means, time, and opportunity, but embraced and supported across society and business for its benefits that go beyond just entertainment alone; in essence: the arts are good for us, an important aspect of innovation and growth, and can facilitate our communities' cohesion and well-being. Coupled with this is the argument that a celebration of arts and culture should be happening at (and shaped by) grassroots levels and that collaborative work be undertaken to ensure that these experiences be made available to communities. It was in this spirit that Street Museum was designed and run: a co-curated project as a collaboration between a local community, community groups, and the nearby university focused on the curation of a temporary museum exhibition into the homes and businesses of a village.

Research into the impact of the creative and cultural sector on the economy, education, the environment, and on well-being has indicated its potential to contribute to stronger, healthier, and more resilient communities, even supporting the achievement of the UN's sustainable development goals[3,4,5]. In a 2019 Arts Council report, it was noted that in 2016 the arts and culture industry contributed £10.8bn in gross value added to the economy, generated 137,250 jobs, and provided £6.1bn in employee compensation.[6] Recent work exploring the use of creativity in education and skills training, such as that by the Durham Commission on Creativity and Education, argues that "teaching for creativity"[7] (Durham Commission, 2019: 74) should be embedded across all subjects in education and that "creative capacity and creative confidence should be an entitlement for all children and young people, regardless of their socio-economic or ethnic background, or the school their attend." (ibid: 74) And benefits to health and well-being through active engagement with the arts through activities such as social prescribing has also been promoted and researched across government and academic bodies[8]. Major funders—such

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[2] UNCTAD. 2018. "Creative Economy Outlook: Trends in international trade in creative industries, 2002-2015", p. 11. https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ditcted2018d3_en.pdf. Last accessed November 18, 2022.

[3] UNCTAD. 2019. https://unctad.org/webflyer/creative-economy-outlook-trends-international-trade-creative-industries. Last accessed November 18, 2022.

[4] Icarus. 2019. "Creative People and Places: National Evidence Review and Evaluation Report". https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-09/CPP%20Evidence%20Review%20and%20Evaluation%20Report%20year%204-6_0.pdf. Last accessed November 18, 2022.

[5] Crossick, G. and Kaszynska, P. 2016. "Understanding the value of arts & culture: The AHRC Cultural Value Project"(AHRC). https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/AHRC-291121-UnderstandingTheValueOfArts-CulturalValueProjectReport.pdf Last accessed November 18, 2022.

[6] Cebr. 2019. *Contribution of the arts and culture industry in the UK economy: Report for Arts Council England.* April 2019.

[7] Durham University and Arts Council England. 2019. *Durham Commission on Creativity and Education.*

[8] All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing. 2017. *Inquiry Report: Creative Health.*

as Arts Council England—have long established funding schemes focused specifically on policies that advocate for using the arts to support and empower local communities, such as its Creative People and Places scheme[9]. The Street Museum fits well within these policy strategies.

Street Museum was an innovative project—funded by the Museums Association—aimed at exploring how best to democratise access to the arts and culture through community-based work. Durham University—with its libraries, museums and collections—received funding to work with a local community and arts charity to co-curate artefacts that would be 3D printed and then displayed in the windows of participating local businesses and residents' homes. A series of community building, participatory activities take place over a 7-month period at the local community centre and visits and collaborative activities took place between the local community and the university's museums. In total, hundreds of the community took part in the community-building activities, hosting the 3D printed artefacts, and thousands visited or saw the Street Museum route across the village.

This was far from straightforward to execute, however. It required the involvement of multiple individuals, community groups, organisations, and institutions to achieve the set outcomes. It also relied on the willing collaboration of these groups and individuals across community interests, varied academic disciplines, and professional expertise and skills to achieve results.

2.1 Evaluating Street Museum

One specific outcome of this project was a commitment to evaluate the project from its outset. This intention was written into the funding application. As a result, evaluation was embedded into the design and delivery of the project across its lifecourse, and this holistic, participatory approach to evaluation has provided the insights that are included within this report.

2.2 Aim of this Report

The aim of this report is to provide the following insights based on the evaluation process itself:

1. **Outline the activities** of Street Museum and if the work met the expected outcomes of the project (as outlined in the funding application)
2. Understand and articulate—within the short term, at least—the **impact that Street Museum had on the Blackhall Colliery community**, particularly for those who attended the key events leading to the exhibition
3. Reflect on **the nature and reality of the collaboration** (and its effectiveness) between the key partners delivering the Street Museum: what went well, what did not go so well, and what lessons have been learned

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[9] Arts Council England. https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/creativepeopleandplaces. Last accessed November 18, 2022.

4. Articulate a ***guiding framework*** for working going forward for other communities, groups, and organisations interested in delivering a Street Museum model in their own communities

2.3 What's Included in this Report

In addition to the Executive Summary (Section 1) and Introduction (Section 2), this report also includes the following sections:

- **Background and context** (Section 3), which outlines the context for both the site of the Street Museum, but also outlines the rationale for the project and the nature of the collaboration between the partners.
- **Evaluation approach and methodology** (Section 4), which describes the evaluation activity for the Street Museum but also the methodology and ethical considerations for the work undertaken.
- **Highlighted Activities** (Section 5), with a focus on four specific activities or events that too k place between October 2021 and April 2022.
- **Evaluation Findings** (Section 6) provides the data and key findings for the project that took place through the evaluation process.
- **Key Learnings from Evaluation Findings** (Section 7) highlights lessons learned from Street Museum.
- **Impact and follow-on from the Street Museum** (Section 8), highlights new opportunities, activities and collaborations that have emerged since May 2022 as a direct result of the Street Museum project
- **Toward a Street Museums Guiding Framework** (Section 9), which proposes guiding principles to inform future Street Museums in other locations.
- A **Conclusion** (Section 10), **Bibliography** (Section 11), and **Appendices** (Section 12) are also included in this report.

3. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

3.1 About Street Museum

Street Museum was a project which ran from late spring 2021 until summer 2022. Its core delivery period was between October 2021 and April 2022, with planning taking place between spring 2021 and October 2021, evaluation and reflection taking place between April and August 2022, and the report written between September and November 2022. The aim of the project was to

> 'transform the streets of low engagement neighbourhoods into museums…. Cocurating exhibitions with impoverished communities, 3D scanning/printing objects for them to exhibit, using AR gamification for the whole neighbourhood to learn from! Building cohesion through shared heritage.' (from the original funding application, 2021)

Street Museum was funded by a UKRI-AHRC funded **Museums Association** Digital Innovation and Engagement grant[10] and supported and delivered by **Blackhall Colliery Community Centre, East Durham Creates, Durham University,** and **Creative Fuse North East.** Overall project direction was provided by Ged Matthews, Cultural Engagement Manager, at Durham University, and Ellie Mathieson, an independent creative practitioner and producer located in Seaham, County Durham, was the project manager. (Mathieson also project-managed the Street Gallery project which preceded Street Museum, *see below*.) East Durham Creates the funding application as project partner, provided project guidance and also facilitated the introduction between the university and project manager to the selected community, Blackhall Colliery, which is one of their designated Culture Hubs where they co-deliver arts-based activities for the community. Alison Paterson, Blackhall Colliery Community Centre's manager, oversaw local delivery and activities for the Street Museum along with participating as one of the project's local curators and local lead on the project.

Street Museum took place between October 2021 and April 2022, with planning beginning in the summer of 2021 and evaluation work completed by early September 2022. The original funding bid did plan to deliver Street Museum in the summer of 2021, but continuing Covid-19 restrictions prompted the project delivery team to delay the start of the project until the latter part of 2021. While a range of project delivery partners were involved in the Street Museum, community participants were also recruited to take part in the project and co-designed key aspects of the project itself.

The project itself took on several stages in delivery, with the bulk of activities taking place during the school year and half-term breaks; the activities allowed time to prepare the outputs required for the final big launch (in April 2022) and to embed community participation into the project.

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[10] See https://www.museumsassociation.org/funding/digital-innovation-and-engagement-fund/#

Once the project was funded and a project manager was recruited, EDC approached Blackhall Colliery Community Centre (BCCC) to ascertain their interest in joining as project hosts and the local site of delivery. Through this relationship, seven local community members were brought on board to became curators on the project and the BCCC's staff became actively involved in delivering the activities as well. In addition, staff from Blackhall Library (run by Durham County Council) became involved in planning and hosting activities.

Overall project direction and oversight was delivered through the university, and delivery was provided by members of the university's Collections Outreach Learning and Engagement team. The process also benefited from some input from the university's curatorial team. The team also secured the involvement of the Archaeology department's 3D printing expertise.

3.2 About the project delivery partners and their involvement in Street Museum

The following table outlines the key delivery partners on Street Museum and their roles on the project.

Partner	About	Role on Project
Blackhall Colliery Community Centre (BCCC)	BCCC serves the village of Blackhall Colliery, located in County Durham, is managed by Alison Paterson, and regularly hosts and funds activities, events, and opportunities to benefit the local community. (https://www.face-book.com/groups/blackhallcom-munitycentre/)	*BCCC was the site and local host of the Street Museum activities and events between October 2021 and April 2022. They had direct input into the overall project delivery planning and directly responsible for the*
East Durham Creates (EDC)	East Durham Creates (EDC) is a programme, led by its director Jess Hunt, focused on collaborating with and supporting local communities to enable people to choose, create and take part in art and culture in their place of residence and through their established Culture Hubs dotted across east County Durham (http://eastdurhamcre-ates.co.uk/about/about-the-pro-ject/)	*EDC had input into the funding proposal and supported the project through identifying Blackhall Colliery, one of its Culture Hubs, as the ideal site for the Street Museum and then facilitated an introduction with the project manager and Durham University staff.*
Ellie Mathieson	**Ellie Mathieson** is an artist, creative strategist and creative arts project manager based in County Durham, who was also involved in developing and delivering the Street Gallery project in 2020.	*Ellie Mathieson was hired as the Street Museum project manager, having responsibility for managing the delivery of the project and interacting with all of the partners and stakeholders.*

Partner	About	Role on Project
Durham University	**Durham University** is a university based in Durham City. It has almost 20,000 students; world-renowned research and teaching into culture, heritage, and the arts; boasts four museums and a botanical garden; and is part of the UNESCO World Heritage site.	*DU provided overall project direction, managed the budget, included the following staff on the project: curating and engagement colleagues from DU's museums and libraries collections division; 3D printing expertise from the Anthropology department.*
Creative Fuse NE (CFNE)	The **Creative Fuse NE** team at Durham University is an action research project focused on supporting, mapping and working with the creative sector across County Durham. It has also delivered a range of evaluation work for other projects, such as Street Museum. It is part of the Northeast regionwide Creative Fuse NE project, which is a partnership of all five universities in the region.	*The Creative Fuse NE team at DU had input into the funding application in early 2021. A member of the Creative Fuse NE team, Ladan Cockshut, led and delivered on the evaluation of Street Museum, which began in October 2021 and ended September 2022.*

3.3 Street Gallery: Predecessor to Street Museum

Street Museum was born out of the **2020 Street Gallery** project, a Covid-19 recovery project that took place in the summer of 2020. It was funded by East Durham Creates' Let's Create Covid-19 Response Fund and run by local artist Eleanor Matthews. Street Gallery was also supported by the Durham Summer in the City Festival (2020) and sponsored by Digitalab. In addition to local artists displaying their work, Durham University loaned out additional art from its museums' collections to display. Street Gallery's aim was to find volunteer households in Dawdon in County Durham to display local, national and international 2D visual art in their windows. According to the Street Gallery's report, as listed on East Durham Creates' Web site, the Gallery:

> transformed 30 ex-pit village living room windows into a large outdoor art gallery[11]

Street Gallery came at a critical time as the creative sector and struggling communities across County were grappling with the impact of the first Covid-19 pandemic lockdown in 2020 and households were under strict travel restrictions. Museums and creative venues remained closed; creative work and opportunities had either halted, been delayed or had to move online; and not all those working within the creative sector were eligible or able to access the furlough scheme or receive business support grants or funds made available during the pandemic. It was a time of great uncertainty. Meanwhile, communities were seeing a drastic rise in the need for support as many families were stuck at home, with some experiencing disrupted work, reduced services, and deepening health worries and impact. For most, this was understandably required, as an attempt

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[11] See http://eastdurhamcreates.co.uk/street-gallery/.

to control or limit the spread of Covid-19 while vaccines and effective treatments were in development. For many, leaving the home was restricted to essential travel such as shopping for food and the daily allowed exercise. Getting out and exploring their local environment by walking was one way that individuals and families could be mobile and leave their home during the first lockdowns or Covid-19 restrictions in 2020. This was coupled with significant loss of life and income by many across the country, including around deprived communities in County Durham. So Street Gallery was a project that suited the needs of its time of delivery when so many local residents were unable to move around as much as usual.

Street Gallery was designed mitigate the impacts that Covid-19 was having on the creative sector and local communities by using local funding to enable community engagement and to support local artists to create art that would then be displayed in the windows of local residents in the neighbourhood of Dawdon (in Seaham in the east of County Durham). The project was led and Testimonials from local participants speak to (http://eastdurhamcreates.co.uk/street-gallery/) its impact and popularity.

Based on the Gallery's success and inspired to explore how to bring more of the arts and culture (and museums) to even more communities in novel and innovative ways, Durham University and East Durham Creates began exploring further collaboration based on the Street Gallery project, which led the University to apply for the Museums Association fund.

While it is not the role of this evaluation team to explore the impact of Street Gallery, and as such no formal data has been collected about it, there is little doubt that the impact and work of Street Gallery contributed directly toward the evolution into what would become Street Museum. This evolution—from the concept of a Street Gallery into a Street Museum—was also touched upon by those involved in both projects during evaluation interviews for Street Museum (specifically Jess Hunt, Director, East Durham Creates; Ellie Mathieson, Project Manager, Street Gallery and Street Museum; and Ged Matthews, Street Museum Project Director, Durham University).

4. EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

Evaluation was embedded into the design and delivery of Street Museum (SM) from its inception. In February 2021, when the Creative Fuse NE project team at Durham University was approached about supporting the evaluation aspect of the project, the team proposed that the evaluation work would follow the project from its start through to its completion, effectively embedding an academic researcher with evaluation expertise into the process ('running throughout the project', as a Creative Fuse NE researcher recommended on 12/2/21). This was written into the bid itself. This would not only allow for a fuller understanding of the impact and activities of Street Museum itself, but also allow the team to experiment with longer-term participatory and mixed-methods approaches to draw together as many evaluation methods as possible. One academic researcher, Ladan Cockshut, was appointed to lead and conduct the evaluation work on behalf of the Creative Fuse NE project at Durham University, with input and support from Jess White and Ann Howard over the course of the project's delivery.

4.1 Evaluation aims

The aim of evaluation work was to evaluate along the following themes:

1. **The project:** Follow, observe, and document the project's activities throughout its duration to understand and capture its core components and trajectory
2. **Local community:** Understand the early-stage impact this project has had (in its immediate aftermath) on the local community and on the relationship between key project delivery partners
3. **Local community:** Explore the perception of concepts like 'culture' and 'museums' with local, othered spaces beyond the formal museum setting and to explore how this experience was perceived and experienced by those museum experts (curators, engagement staff, etc) taking their work into communities and how local community participants also now perceived and experienced this type of cultural engagement
4. **Project delivery partners:** Work with key delivery partners to explore and reflect on the project itself and what lessons were learned in the process, particularly around the experience of collaboration, project delivery, and expertise
5. **Future framework:** Propose a framework for guidelines (based on the evaluation) for a future delivery framework of the Street Museum model in different regions and communities, including considerations for future phases of the existing SM project (including pairing with an international partner for a global Street Museum exchange, as articulated in the funding application)

4.2 Evaluation methodology

The evaluation approach was, by design, inclusive, participatory, and mixed-methodologically situated as stated in the original application:

Creative Fuse NE will adopt an inclusive model of ethnography, drawing on participant observation, interviews and photo-documentary analysis to facilitate a multifaceted engagement and holistic exploration of the role and place of the micro-cultural events that place neighbourhoods and communities back into their own cultural narrative; being careful so as not appear to be 'outsiders' coming in telling local communities about their own culture or how they should feel about it[12]. (2021: 12)

Image 4.1: LEGO building activity from the reflective play session with project delivery participants, May 5, 2022

We undertook a range of approaches whilst gathering evaluation data and project delivery partners also provided additional data and insight to support the evaluation. The team felt this would allow the process to be both a participatory process—for both evaluator and participant—but also to develop trust and acceptance with the community and project delivery partners. 'Being evaluated' can feel distracting at best and invasive at worst, so the aim of the evaluation team was to become part of the whole process, to support delivery activities as and when needed and to ensure that participants felt the process of *co-learning about* (thus evaluating) the Street Museum's impact was as important as delivering the Street Museum.

The evaluation team was transparent in its presence and approach, always sharing with project delivery partners or community participants that the role of the evaluation team was to not only help with the project but also to learn about what was working (and not working) as the work got underway. To be involved whilst also being as unobtrusive as possible. From a reflective perspective, this approach can work well when an evaluation process desires to be embedded into a project from its very inception. Adding on evaluation after a project has completed can allow for a neutral, fresh perspective, but it may miss some of the crucial findings along the way and also potentially reinforce the sense of 'othering' the process itself. For the project delivery

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[12] Durham University. 2021. Excerpted from: *Second stage application to Museum Association Digital Innovation and Engagement fund.*

partners, this appeared to provide an opportunity for active engagement in the process, where all partners appeared happy to speak with the evaluation team—and offered useful insight and data—without even needing to be approached. There were a few instances of proactive evaluation and reflection by delivery partners, through the offering of data, personal observations, and reflections during the project itself, which we would argue would have been less likely without the visibility, transparency and accessibility of the team itself. This stresses the importance of evaluation to the learning modality of innovative projects such as SM.

The table below outlines the methods undertaken during the research phase.

Evaluation method	How applied	When used
Participatory observation	The evaluation team attended 7 events, participated in events (including supporting the delivery team), wrote fieldnotes and took photo-documentary evidence (with verbal consent or by taking images with no identifiable persons)	October 2021 December 2021 January 2022 February 2022 April 2022
Survey methods	East Durham Creates ran a survey after the October 2021 Hands-on History Day	November 2021
Walking method	The evaluation team walked the route of Street Museum and spoke with attendees while walking together, visited participating host homes, and spoke with and supported project delivery partners during the event. Data was captured after each interaction via recorded audio device and handwritten notes ; images were also taken with no identifiable people included.	April 2022
Photo- and visual method	Photographic data was gathered both as a journaling technique but also to capture the route and environment of the events and the Museum itself; this happened during both hands-on history days and during the Street Museum itself. It was also used to capture Lego builds during the play-based reflective evaluation session	October 2021 February 2022 April 2022 May 2022
Interview (individual and group)	The evaluation team conducted 4 interviews in total, 3 group interviews and 1 individual interview. They were semi-structured interviews and took place after the completion of Street Museum.	June 2022 July 2022
Play-based reflective evaluation session	This method allowed the evaluation team to use playful methods to support participants' reflection on their experience with Street Museum. This was done with the co-curators,	May 2022

Evaluation method	How applied	When used
	project delivery partners, and staff at BCCC. Playful methods included: independent and cooperative Lego building and drawing.	

4.3 The evaluation work and data collected

The evaluation was carried out primarily by Dr Ladan Cockshut, senior researcher with Creative Fuse North East (CFNE) at Durham University, with additional evaluation work and support carried out by Jess White and Ann Howard during specific events (White took observational notes during the February 2022 Hands on History Day and Howard took observational notes during the October 2021 Hands on History Day).

To support the evaluation work, the evaluation team attended a total of seven events (between October 2021 and April 2022) and participated in five digital meetings. The team also conducted 1 interactive play-based reflective session, 3 digital group interviews, and one individual in-person interview as part of the evaluation process after the completion of Street Museum:

- May 2022: In person play-based reflective session with 5 local co-curators, 2 project delivery partners, and 1 BCCC staff member
- June 2022: Digital interview with 4 project delivery partners
- June 2022: In person interview with BCCC staff member
- July 2022: Digital interview with 2 DU museum staff members
- July 2022: Digital interview with 3 DU museum staff members

All data from these interviews and session have been recorded and transcribed, and anonymised data has been safely stored on DU servers. Original, identifiable source data has been deleted. See Appendix 2 for a list of questions and themes explored during the evaluation events, interviews, or sessions.

Other Street Museum material collected by the evaluation team includes:

- Promotional material for the Street Museum and related events produced by project delivery partners and distributed (primarily the project manager, EDC, and BCCC) between October 2021 and April 2022.
- Street Museum exhibition guide which includes the museum map, annotated artefacts list, and puzzle, prepared for distribution between April 14 and 24, 2022

In addition, further data was collected by project partners and results shared with the evaluation team:

- a survey was conducted by project delivery partner East Durham Creates in relation to the first Hands-on History Day (Oct 2021) and the results (n. 24) shared with the evaluation team
- attendance data was documented by the Street Museum project manager and shared with the evaluation team (see Appendix 1)
- observational notes from a series of Bunting Workshops held with various community and school groups in March and April 2022

4.4 Ethical considerations

4.4.1 The challenges of anonymity in evaluating Street Museum

When it came to capturing general observations from attending or participating in an event, it was easy for the evaluation team to make non-specific notes that rendered anonymisation more feasible. When it came to more focused discussions, however—such as the reflective session or follow-on interviews—this became more of a challenge.

The delivery of this project required the focused attention of a specific group of individuals from all of the project partners, which can make it harder to effectively anonymise any data received. And while the evaluation team spoke with as many participants and project deliverers as possible, aside from the general participating public the roles and activities were specific enough that it could be possible to identify a respondent, even though the comments of respondents are anonymised within this report. This is due to individuals holding specific roles or the size of organisations. While all participants in the evaluation have been anonymised in their responses included in this report and every effort made to conceal their identities, the reality of this type of focused work and reflection does make it easier to identify participants based on the specificity of their roles on the project and in their partnership organisations. For example, whilst this report may refer to an interview participant only as a 'Durham University museum curator' or 'the Street Museum project manager' as these teams are so small in number (in the case of the Street Museum's project manager, only one person), it would be easier to identify one of those individuals as compared with describing a Street Museum participant or respondent as a 'Blackhall Colliery community member', which represents a far larger number.

Participants in the interviews and reflective session were all informed of these risks verbally at the outset of each session (this was captured through transcripts) and all were invited (and reminded again at the end of each session) to inform the interviewer (Cockshut) if they had any concerns over this or no longer wished to participate in the evaluation process. When approached, all participants were willing to provide feedback and no participants (as of this writing) have asked to have their data or input withheld. The willingness and openness of all participants to reflect on their experiences and perceptions of Street Museum, despite being made aware of the risks to their anonymity, suggests the importance they all placed on the nature of a collaboration like this and its learning modality. It also suggests that an embedded, long-term,

and participatory evaluation approach is an effective method to engage participants when reflecting on the impact of such projects.

5. STREET MUSEUM: HIGHLIGHTED ACTIVITIES

While the Street Museum had a range of activities, from a delivery and planning perspective, the evaluation team did not participate in every interaction. As a result, we cannot definitively evaluate or comment on the entirety of activities relating to Street Museum but will comment on the key events and activities that comprise Street Museum and which we were able to attend or gather data about. This following section will provide a descriptive overview—with visuals as available—of highlighted activities from Street Museum which took place between October 2021 and April 2022 with a focus on those activities where the evaluation team was able to observe or participate.

A note on the deviated timeframe of Street Museum

It should be noted here that the project itself experienced delays in delivery and was not delivered within its originally stated timeframe (by September 2021). This was partly due to Covid-19 restrictions still limiting what would have been possible with in-person activities over the summer of 2021 but also based on the feedback from the Blackhall Colliery Community Centre which preferred a delivery model that supported their activities during key points in the year such as the schools half-terms and other holidays. As a result, this meant a change to how Street Museum was scheduled and how its aims were achieved. A review of the original application suggested that most activity would take place between April and September 2021 and there was no mention of it following the school calendar either as the public-facing activities were planned for during the summer holidays. But this pivoted after the work began. While this did elongate the timeframe for the project, it suggests that the reworked schedule was designed around not only what the project partners were able to do in the time, but also that the process was mindful of the needs and ability of the local community centre to engage with the project itself. It appears that being willing to pivot the schedule served the community more effectively.

5.1 Activity 1: Hands-on History Days

In all there were two Hands-on History Days that took place at the BCCC, the first during the October 2021 half term (October 28, 2021) and the second during the February 2022 half term (February 24, 2022). While the February day extended some of the activities and learning from the October day, these were stand alone events. Learning from both Hands-on days, however, did inform the Street Museum exhibit.

Images 5.1 and 5.2: Fliers promoting October 2021 and February 2022 History Days

Geared primarily toward primary school aged children, these were free, hands-on activities meant to highlight history and drew from the DU museums collections to provide the content and learning. The days were composed of a range of history-themed activities (families were put into small groups and rotated around the BCCC to learn about and participate in all of the various activities) that ran from Ancient China or Egypt to the Tudors and even local history and geography (such as the shipwreck of the Kasko in 1920 on Blackhall Rocks).

All days included a meal and refreshments for participants and staff often dressed up to match the themes on the day (the first day staff dressed up as figures from history and the second day staff dressed up at pirates). Durham University brought selected items to share from its collections, with this activity led by the Collections Outreach Learning an d Engagement team.

5.2 Activity 2: Curators Sessions

In order to deliver on the Museum, the project needed the involvement of local community members to help shape and curate the artefacts and theme of the Museum. This was largely de-livered through the manager of BCCC with support from EDC and the Street Museum project manager. In all 7 co-curators were recruited, 5 women and two men. All either lived in Blackhall Colliery or had very close ties with the community. These meetings took place several times over the course of the project, starting in December 2021 and concluding in April 2022. These sessions included the following activities:

1. Exploring and articulating community identity and feelings and using those ideas to help shape themes for exhibition
2. Bringing in and sharing an important object that has significant personal meaning or value

3. Identifying objects from the DU museums collection to display in the SM
4. Visiting the DU museums' collections to understand more about artefacts and 3D printing
5. Finalising the artefacts and helping to choose or suggest the route and host homes or businesses for SM
6. Determining the best date for the SM launch and exhibition

Image 5.3 (top): List of initial objects chosen for SM Exhibition by community curators for 3D printing during curators session

Image 5.4 (bottom): Image word map asking residents to describe Blackhall Colliery.

5.3 Activity 3: Street Museum 'Objects Hand Out Day'

Once the artefacts had been selected and 3D printed at DU, the team had to gather to distribute the artefacts and posters to homes and businesses, along with verifying the route. This took place in the week before Easter weekend. One venue (a business) was closed, so the team had to find a new venue to house that item. The project delivery team, including the DU expert who facilitated the 3D printing, gathered at the BCCC to put up signage, help distribute items, and, in the case of the 3D printing expert, superglue some of the items back together which had broken in transit. Some items had to be displayed publicly (such as the artefact on display outside the

local library) erven before the launch of Street Museum as the 'hand out' day was before the 4-day Easter Bank Holiday weekend.

Image 5.5: Final preparation of 3D printed museum artefacts (3D copy of Minangkabau Model Village, West Sumatra, circa late 19th/early 20th century, bronze) before distribution to homes and businesses in Blackhall, April 14, 2022

5.4 Activity 4: Street Museum exhibition launch

SM launched on April 19th with another day of events and activities at BCCC on the first day and a distribution of the Street Museum Exhibition Guide to help participants visit the museum. Games and activities were on hand to celebrate the day and many of the attendees at the previous hands-on history days were in attendance. The delivery team went with the over 60 visitors on the first day to walk the route and view the objects in homes and businesses. The Guide included a map of the village with a general guide to where to find the objects, leading the visitor to 'discover' the artefacts while on the Exhibition trail. The exhibition guide also included a puzzle that participants could solve when they found the objects and then return to the BCCC to claim a prize. 500 guides were printed and distributed during this time. While the BCCC was not open throughout the weekend of the exhibition, guides were left outside the venue for participants to collect. SM's project manager estimates that approximately 3000 people viewed the exhibition through a combination of launch day attendees, those who picked up exhibition guides during the 5-day museum, general footfall and transportation past key sites (especially those artefacts on display in the businesses on High Street) (see Appendix 1). In all the sites were accessible on foot and it took the evaluation team about 90 minutes to walk to all of them. It became a positive process to explore and navigate the unfamiliar streets of the village, with most artefacts on display from front windows. A few (such as Images 5.6 and 5.7 below) were placed in windows, but it felt unclear if it was acceptable to get closer up as they were behind gates or walls.
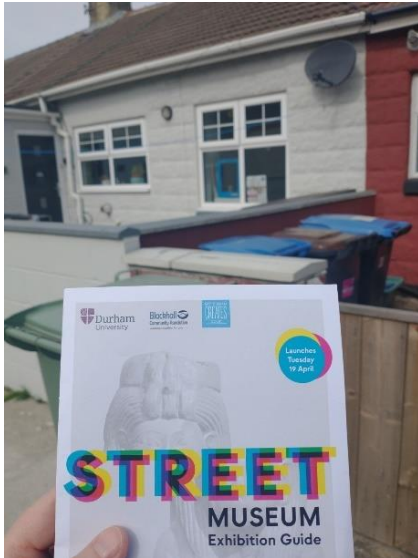
Image 5.6 (left): Home exhibiting object, SM Exhibition (April 2022)
Image 5.7 (right): Object (Japanese Dragon) exhibited in local business window, SM Exhibition (April 2022)

5.5 Other activities: Go and See Day, Community Activities

Between October 2021 and April 2022 the project delivered other additional activities, including arranged visits to Durham University's Oriental Museum (Go and See Day) coordinated by East Durham Creates and community activities in Blackhall Colliery such as the Bunting Workshops which took place in March and April 2022. Those workshops took place with different groups (e.g., Blackhall Women's and Men's Crees, Blackhall Coffee Morning group, Abbeyvale Care Home residents) and enabled the delivery team to reach a wider representation of the village who may not have chosen to attend the more family-oriented activities such as the Hands-on History Days.

6. REFLECTING ON STREET MUSEUM: EVALUATION AND KEY FINDINGS

There were several core evaluation aims in relation to the Street Museum project. We wanted to explore some key topics of reflection with the project delivery partners and with the co-curator participants in order to understand:

- *Community and cultural engagement:* What impact did Street Museum have on the community itself and those who participated in the project, including the co-curators? Did Street Museum enable a widening awareness of DU museums and their ability to bring culture into local communities? What was the experience of delivery community and cultural engagement?
- *Effectiveness of project delivery:* Was Street Museum effectively delivered? Did it meet its aims?
- *Partnership expertise, collaboration, and working:* What impact did Street Museum have on the project delivery partners and their practice, expertise or remit as individuals and/or organisations? What did the process of collaboration look like?
- *Reflections and feedback for future developments:* What lessons have been learned to inform future development?

The following questions were raised with participants during the formal evaluation activities which included play-based reflective sessions and follow-on group and individual interviews to explore these overarching themes:

- What their overall perspective was on Street Museum; how they would describe it to others
- What impact they feel the SM project had
- What role they played on SM
- What they felt worked well and what could have been improved on
- What else could have been included as part of SM
- *(For the co-curators)* What participating in the SM project has taught them about museums, culture, heritage and curating
- *(for the project delivery partners, particularly the cultural professionals)* What was your impression of SM from a professional perspective?
- What advice, learning or guidance might be considered for future Street Museums

Evaluating these themes took place across a range of activities, interactive sessions and interviews between October 2021 and July 2022 with the aim of exploring the aforementioned questions. The following sections highlight responses and findings from these events organised by the key themes as they were explored during the evaluation process:

- Community and cultural engagement
- Partnership expertise, collaboration, and working
- Effectiveness of project delivery

-   Reflections and feedback for future developments

> **Important note:** All of the phrases and words in quotes (e.g. "Having a theme") in this section are direct quotes from those who participated in the evaluation sessions and/or interviews. All quotes have been anonymised. There may be some instances where quotes may be ascribed to particular roles or project work, though the names of those quoted have not been included.

Section 6.1 Community and cultural engagement

For a project interested in democratising access to culture and widening access to conventional sites of cultural production or preservation (such as museums), its ability to engage on the community level has been critical. This evaluation process wanted to understand what impact on community and cultural engagement was felt through SM. On the whole, it appears that the SM project had a significant positive engagement impact on those community members who were directly involved in the project (i.e., community curators and volunteers) and to a lesser extent on the community of Blackhall Colliery itself. The former impact was felt through the range of hands-on activities delivery and content co-design that the community curators and volunteers got involved with while the wider community felt the impact through participation in events at the BCCC and in participating in the SM Exhibition walking tour in April 2022.

During the April 19, 2022 opening of the SM Exhibition, the evaluation team ran an informal survey of attendees to determine their motivation and interest in participating in the event. Respondents were asked to add a play coin to one of three jars to choose what part of SM they were most interested in ('Learning about history', 'The fun activities' or 'Finding the 3D objects'). There were 45 votes cast, with

-   11.1% (n.5) choosing 'Learning about history'
-   15.6% (n.7) choosing 'The fun activities'
-   73.3% (n. 33) choosing 'Finding the 3D objects'

This suggests that while attendees were interested in SM for a variety of reasons, by a significant amount the most popular choices were the 'fun activities' and 'finding the 3D objects' (88.9% in total). That combination of fun activities with the challenge of moving around the community to find the objects indicates that the cultural and community engagement became enmeshed and reliant on each other. The events of the SM themselves—the activities, the treasure hunt to find the 3D printed objects—became the means by which the participants became culturally engaged. The fact that learning about history in and of itself was the least popular choice does seem to indicate that communities are best positioned to engage with culture through the portal of community engagement rather than the act of culture itself being the conduit or educational mechanism toward community engagement.

The project evaluation process was also interested in understanding what, if any, shift in perception and familiarity with Durham University's museums' collection had taken place as a result of Street Museum. It should be noted that understanding a longer-term sustained

engagement with Durham University's museums and collections resulting from increased visits to Durham University's museums and collections from postcodes in Blackhall Colliery will be more measurable in subsequent years after an analysis of subsequent data sets of reported visits to DU's libraries and museums' collections is made available (note: visitors' postcodes are often requested [though not required] on admission to the museums as a metric of visitor origin and distance travelled).

During the playful reaction session, participants were asked to reflect on two key elements of engagement with culture through museums: understanding curation and their familiarity with existing institutions. Responses to the first question ("What do you understand about the process of curation now that you've been part of Street Museum?") highlighted participants' perception of the concept of a curator:

- "The title of 'curator' sounded 'fuddy duddy' until I became involved" (participant)
- "I actually learned what the word meant!"

but also the expressed an understanding of how a curator's role functions within the spectrum of the museum exhibition development process:

- "given the process therefore objects need to be universal and accessible to all"
- "personally, It was enlightening--choosing objects carefully to inspire, excite and interest people who would otherwise be unable to access these beautiful artefacts"
- "It's a process ----->   Curation can be very emotional. The things we include, the things we leave out--all the decisions we make. It [can] be a very inclusive process. It's a process--not a single act. It can be complex."
- "Gained knowledge about the process of choosing the objects and the best way to display them"
- "Having a theme"
- "Far more involved than I imagined"
- "choosing objects carefully to inspire, excite and interest people who would otherwise be unable to access these beautiful artefacts"

From this discussion it appeared that the co-curation participants came away with an appreciation for the complex ("it can be complex"), process-driven, knowledge-requiring aspects of the work of curation, particularly understanding the "process of choosing objects", while also identifying elements like 'emotion', 'universal', 'accessible' and 'inclusive' needed to be factored into the affective aspects of exhibition curation. Also highlighted was the role that a museum plays in giving the public access to 'beautiful artefacts'

On the whole, when participants were asked about their understanding of the university's museums and collections, the response was overwhelmingly very complimentary about the museums with some expressing an interest in engaging with them further:

- "Love, them, wow" (participant)
- "Amazing, loved it. Didn't know they were there, talk about them all of the time, each time I go to Durham I want to tell people to go to them, don't walk past them."

While exploring what, if any, knowledge of the DU museums was experienced by the public participants in the SM exhibition launch, participants were asked if they could name a DU museum on a Quiz Sheet during the April 19, 2022 Street Museum launch event. On the representative sample (no. 10) reviewed, all respondents named the Oriental Museum. This suggests that the promotional work and build-up of activities for Street Museum had positively impacted on familiarising participants with the Oriental Museum as the 3D printed artefacts and activities were predominantly drawn from the Oriental Museum. However, this could also be because the launch event Quiz was taken by active participants who had been part of previous events hosted through the project.

The positive impact of culture on community came through across a range of evaluation activities during this project. An early example is a survey conducted by EDC after the Hands-On History event in October 2021 where they wanted to understand participants' impression of the event and their wider views on participating in a cultural activity. The survey had 24 respondents in all (which though a small sample size, does represent almost a third (32%) of the total attendance (n.75) at the Hands-on History event) and found the following:

- 88% of participants rated the experience 'excellent'
- 44% of participants had not taken part in an arts event or activity in the previous 12 months, whilst 44% had
- A significant majority, 88%, stated their desire to 'definitely' attend or participate in future arts events
- When asked about the impact they felt (multiple choices) after participating in this activity,
    - 12.5% noted feeling 'less isolated'
    - 16.67% said they felt 'less lonely'
    - 75% felt 'more connected to community'
    - 16.67% had an increased 'sense of belonging' and
    - 41.67% felt their wellbeing increase as a result of participating

With even a modest response rate from this survey, there is a indication that while almost half of attendees had not engaged in an arts event or activity in the previous 12-month period, most now planned to attend one in the future. In addition, an improved connection to community (75%) and increased wellbeing (41.67%) were the most frequently cited benefits felt from participating in a SM activity. Other highlighted benefits included feeling 'less isolated', 'less lonely' and 'an increased sense of belonging', which all speak to improved connectedness and community cohesion.

A noteworthy aspect of participation with the SM project from the community level was its intergenerationality. Many of the children in attendance at events were accompanied by grandparents or older family member carers, not just their parents. This was observed by the evaluation team at both Hands-On History Days and during the launch event for the SM Exhibition. As was noted from the February History Day observation, the event was:

> "very intergenerational both in terms of the makeup of the BCCC staff and the partners present and in terms of participants. There were parents in attendance with their children and grandparents with their grandchildren."

For the participants, the project was seen to have had a positive impact, particularly when considering community and connectedness. During the play-based reflection session on May 5, 2022, with the co-curators, staff from the BCCC, and members of the project delivery team, participants were asked to use single words or short phrases to describe how they found the experience of participating in Street Museum:

wow	friendship	community
educational	memories	informative
inspirational	history	growth
excited	family	inclusive
amazed	welcome	thinking about museums in a new way (novel)
community-spirit	precious	career development
community	pride	success

The most frequent response was 'community' (n.3), with a range of other words hinting at positive experiences such as 'growth' and 'success' and 'inclusive'. Words such as 'precious', 'welcome', and inspirational' also captured the respondents' description of their experience of participating. Words and phrases such as 'thinking about museums in a new way' or 'history' and 'informative' seemed to suggest that participating in the project had given them a new or better sense of museums and their role in communities. For one project delivery partner—new to community engagement projects—the "community engagement aspect.. was a pleasant surprise."

Community engagement was widely recognised, by both community members and project delivery partners, as key to the project's success but also a positive outcome of the process:

> "...The important thing with engaging Blackhall households with the collections was the conversation. Like it had to be back and forth. It had to be like, you know, listening and transmitting and receiving, and all that stuff."

> "The Street Museum placed the village and community at the centre. It brought people together after a very difficult time. (Covid) Really uplifting."

> "The village became aware of another era, way of life and educated."

> "Hopefully made the museums more visible to the community."

The impactful intersection between culture and community in this project was well demonstrated through the SM Exhibition Guide, which introduced the objects and their general locations throughout the village. Over 500 copies were handed out during the course of the Exhibition in April 2022. With each object's image was a bespoke description, which brought together an

understanding of culture with an explanation for how its themes evoked qualities of Blackhall Colliery as a community (see images below).
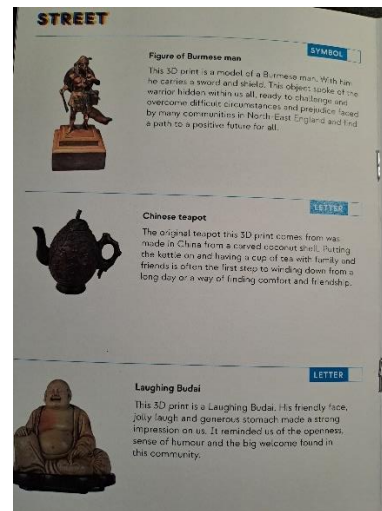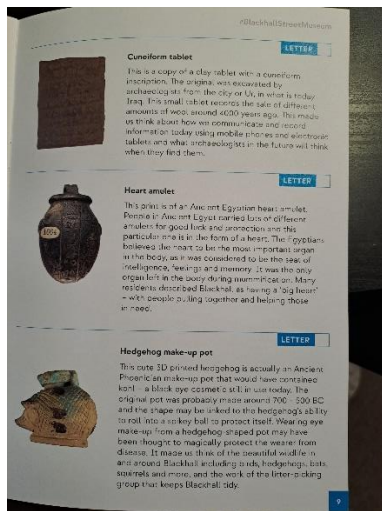
Images 6.1 (left) and 6.2 (right): Sample pages from the Street Museum Exhibition Guide

Each description introduced the item ("This 3D print is a Laughing Budai.") itself followed by an explanation for why the community curators selected it, "It reminded us of the openness, sense of humour and the big welcome found in this community."

And perhaps nothing captures the optimistic aim and importance of projects like these than the following comment from one of the community participants:

> "Community spirit creates happiness."

Section 6.2 Effectiveness of project delivery

This project was delivered effectively, though with a few small variations from the original funding proposal. As one project delivery partner put it, ""the end result was not far off what I had in my head." This can be evidenced when considering the aims of the project in the original funding proposal, which stated that Street Museum would:

> transform the streets of low engagement neighbourhoods into museums.... Cocurating exhibitions with impoverished communities, 3D scanning/printing objects for them to exhibit, using AR gamification for the whole neighbourhood to learn from! Building cohesion through shared heritage

The only element not delivered on was the AR gamification element, which project delivery partners explained they abandoned after the process of project activity co-design with the Blackhall Colliery Community Centre where they determined it would not benefit the local needs of Blackhall Colliery at the time of the project. This aligns with the delivery team's commitment to

pivot its delivery around the needs of the local community. As one project delivery partner noted, "so much of [the planning and delivery] needed to be driven by Blackhall."

In addition, the project itself was delivered outside of the original timeframe (originally the proposal planned to deliver the work in the summer of 2021), but after Blackhall Colliery Community Centre joined the project planning process (with East Durham Creates as the "conduit, the decision was made to approach Blackhall"), it became clear that the delivery activities should support the Centre's community engagement work, which often required family-friendly activities during the half term and holiday periods. That extended the timeframe for the project, but also meant that the project pivoted to the needs of the community.

One particularly effective aspect of the project was the SM Exhibition Guide, which provided information on every item and a guided trail to help participants navigate the village to find them on display in the windows of homes and businesses. The descriptions in the guide (see images on page 31) also explained the history of the object itself but also a justification for its selection by the community curation team.

Overwhelmingly all who participated in the reflection and interview sessions as curators or project delivery partners indicated their view of the project's effectiveness and an enthusiasm for doing more work in the future (or at least a desire to collaborate together again in the future). There was some constructive criticism as to how effective elements of this project were, however namely:

- **3D Objects.** Likely the most novel and innovative tangible output of this project, the use of 3D technology did deliver objects for display in the homes, though not without challenges. Observationally, I did note that at least one of the objects had issues in the printing process (some very delicate objects were selected that proved tricky to print, particularly if they had fabric-like features or were particularly intricate) and another broke in a few places. And as most objects were printed to scale, in order to see some of the printed objects, exhibition goers had to get pretty close to a home to see them (an example was the Hedgehog Make-up Pot, which was small enough to fit inside a palm). These challenges were echoed by the delivery partner:
  - "I thought the objects would be bigger or they might be just displayed outside on the street as opposed to what we ended up with what's sort of most of them are quite smallish… I didn't really understand the 3D process very well. And I didn't understand its limitations."
  - "it ended up being hard to find objects that could successfully be scanned"

  In addition, there were some delays in the internal departments at the University receiving data on the scanning process which included not getting copies of the 3D scans or the objects themselves in a timely manner. As one member of the university curatorial team explained, ""I have no record on our museum database of what objects were selected, what labels were published… anything about it… So if somebody goes to that object record on our database, they will have no idea of any of this work that's been done." This can create a legacy challenge for the project, as museums typically have a

robust curatorial information management process in place that ensures there are historical records of how, where, and when objects are exhibited. There is good reason for this, as one curator pointed out: "in 100 years we need to be able to look back and say that community thought this about this object at that time; it will become a piece of history in its own right."

- **The route.** Laying out a route for the SM met a core aim of the project (as one delivery parter notes, "It was pretty much like I thought it would be in terms of the actual street museum aspect, like walking around the town and then looking at where the things were"). This was integral to the project's delivery. Its layout did present some concerns, however. One of the partners—from Blackhall Colliery herself—did feel the route itself was perhaps too dispersed for most, "The route … was too long, too stretched." From an observational perspective, when I walked the route myself, as a non-resident of Blackhall I did find it a little confusing due to the street layouts in certain parts of the village. It meant I needed a few hours to walk the entire route itself. That would have been potentially problematic had there been inclement weather on the day. Also, for myself, I had moments of hesitancy to walk too close to a home's window to view an object as I did not want to disturb or startle the occupants.

- **Timing.** The timing of the project was seen on the one hand as effectively pivoting the schedule to meet the needs of the BCCC) but also seen as putting pressure on the delivery. For some the scheduling approach was seen as less effective as it appeared beholden to the school holidays calendar: "Everything got squished into the January to Easter period. And it ended up being a bit of a rush. Whereas if we'd have more time there would have been more finessing of the labels and the objects, that kind of thing." Given more time, one respondent felt that there could have been even more engagement with the community: "we could have had a bit more decision making and content making by the community. For example, we could have had a label writing workshop and they could have written the labels themselves."

- **Communication and promotion.** Two other areas highlighted with less effective delivery were communication ("There was a lack of communication") and promotion ("Publicity. Spread the word!"). The challenges with effective communication were predominantly highlighted in relation to the initial planning phase ("at the start I would have liked to have a big team meeting") and with how the Durham University partner organised its own internal communications processes as they got underway (as one of the university curators noted, "I kind of kept expecting to be contacted"). With promotion and publicity, some of the concern arose from a lack of time and team capacity to support these initiatives. Also this prompts a consideration about who a project like this was for—as it was geared toward the Blackhall community, there was little to no plan to draw in external visitors. This was also compounded by the fact that the weekend days of the exhibition (April 23+24)—when external visitors would have been most likely to attend—the BCCC had to be closed for a function, so visitors to Blackhall would have been unable to go into the centre to pick up a guide or ask questions (BCCC staff did leave Guides just outside the Centre for the public to pick up, however).

Overall, though, the comments below capture the generally positive feeling about Street Museum and its effective delivery:

"I hope we do it again" [about the project]

"I think it was an amazing project. It will forever live on it as the legacy in this place. And I think there's ultimately going to be some kind of legacy on the wall" [at the community centre]

"I would love to continue further."

Section 6.3 Partnership expertise, collaboration, and working

By far the opportunity for delivery partners to work and learn collaboratively to plan and deliver was a significant output of this project. The core delivery team experienced significant opportunities to collaborate, both across the partners, but also with the community curators and BCCC staff. Collaboration with the right partners was brought up repeatedly during the evaluation interviews and highlighted as a significant success of the project:

"The BCCC team were just really interested in collaborating."

"It was about identifying the right community partner, that would be as invested in this kind of abstract idea... So it was about ... curating that relationship. ... one of the things that was really successful was picking the right community to do it with"

"I think a lot about that [the project] was genuine collaboration."

"be really up for collaborating with them [the community], doing ideas with them and letting them kind of have their say in everything and how everything was shared was kind of vital to why it was so successful."

For one participant, the project itself became a means to facilitate collaboration and a 'good relationship', suggesting that the process of collaboration and the learning that can come from it was a significant output of this work:

"Street Museum was the tool to just build a good relationship. And lo and behold, in these places, they're all kind of human powered... it's all about the individuals working on it, it's not about the kind of strict processes and so building in flexibility that can respond to the individuals from all departments and organisations and ordinary people.. people within the community. And that worked just beautifully."

And for other respondents, the nature of 'partnership working' brought opportunities to draw on the expertise and working relationship of the partners and participants:

"it was a really strong relationship between the team... And it worked really well. I think we've got a good basis to build on now."

> "What went really well was the partnership working and the ability for us to draw equal notes in our respective expertise"

> "I really felt a little bit of extra pressure to get things going. So I'm like, man, I really don't want to let these people down."

This positive experience and shared commitment to working together prompted one partner to note: "we're interested in continuing to be involved as one of the key partners for any further work that's going to happen."

And it was not just about the shared experience and benefit of collaboration that was seen through this project. Individual career development and expertise was also a highlight, as one delivery partner noted:

> "I got to work more on the object and curatorial side, and you know, reinterpreting collections. I might be getting a conference paper out of it. ... So from my own selfish career development point of view, it's actually been really nice."[13]

6.3.1 Missed opportunity for collaboration and expert input

While the core team of SM delivery partnership experienced positive and effective levels of collaboration, working, and expertise across the project, it's important to acknowledge, however, that this was not the case in all instances. This was most noted in my discussions with certain internal Durham University staff related to (or at least aligned from a subject matter perspective) the project, who felt at times that the internal systems that manage the structural and organisational elements of curation were not as well integrated into the wider work of the project as they could be. These may seem like lesser issues when considering the overwhelming success of the project in meeting its aim to improve cultural engagement in a community, but there are risks that must be considered when certain structural or organisational elements of curation are overlooked or missed. An example provided to me by the curatorial team to illustrate this was if a someone took one of the 3D printed objects and attempted to sell it as the original object. This type of fraud could cause reputational damage and financial loss and cast an unwelcome shadow on the project and institution. If the object had been flagged up clearly as a 'copy', however, and the internal databases had inputted information on how and when the copy was made, it might help track this item and avoid that particular issue.

One of the core SM project team members (from the university) acknowledged that while some curatorial colleagues did get involved in the project in different capacities along the way (with one member of the engagement team providing the bulk of the curatorial support and a few others providing guidance or line management support), it was a downside that more were not better

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[13] As an update to this quote, this individual did have a paper accepted for a museums conference and presented it in September 2022.

integrated 'on the journey' and they added that the core delivery team could have worked harder at "making sure they [the university curators] were more engaged with [the project]".

After Street Museum ended, I was asked to speak with the university's curatorial team to input into this project's evaluation. This team has responsibility across a range of the university's museum and collections portfolio. And as the project was reliant on engaging with the collections as a core part of the project, their input was critical to the learning of the project. Most of them did not have an active role on the SM project, though a few did input into the project at various phases along the way, including the funding application, guidance on 3D printing and objects access, and teaching and engagement. I found the discussions with the curatorial team forthright, open, and constructive, particularly when informing how these types of projects could be integrated into the university's wider work going forward. It's clear that the curatorial team is extremely supportive of projects like Street Museum, but they also felt that their expertise and insights were underutilised, particularly about critical elements of the 'behind the scenes' infrastructural processes that underpin most museums' curation activity. The primary gaps were identified as:

- **Communication.** Members of the curatorial team expressed a concern about being brought into the communication loop of the project: "I kind of kept expecting to be contacted", "There was a lack of communication", "I was expecting to have some kind of discussion beforehand, about which pool of objects they would be selecting from." This desire to be included in communication appeared particularly germane when considering the project planning perspective:
    - "We're multifaceted organisation that has multiple strands. And when a big project like this appears, we need to know exactly what is happening…. we're stretched, we're in an underfunded sector in an already stretched sector and we're trying to make things happen."
- **Health and safety and ethics.** "I'm responsible for a lot of the health and safety of visitors … we have to know all of this" [when we plan an exhibition]. One member of the team expressed concern about knowing how and when issues around health and safety were being factored into the project design (such as when visiting the museum or when delivering engagement activity in the community) and also there was concern around object curation and planning in relation to ethical issues: "when you're working with one community, we have to be aware of the feelings of all the other communities who are stakeholders. This comes up when people ask questions like *"can we scan the mummy?"[4]*
- **Information management and copyright.** As stated in Section 6.2, there were some gaps in information on the objects used and 3D scanning activity for SM being inputted into the curatorial team's databases at the university. This has meant that there was little to no formal knowledge saved on what objects were used and copied for use in the project. This also affected the copyrights process, as certain objects—even if 3D printed—need to be tracked and handled in a way that ensures they are clearly identifiable as copies and also

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[4] The Oriental Museum has an Egyptian Mummy in its collection.

that there is a process to ensure what, if any, permissions or copyright concerns needed to be addressed before objects were included in an exhibition.

A lack of inclusion in the process by members of the curatorial may explain this feeling expressed by one member of the curatorial team: "it felt like a one-sided partnership.. we are using the university collections yet I felt like we didn't really get much back for the collections".

Many of these issues speak to a missed opportunity to involve the expertise of the curatorial team, which has systems in place to ensure the structural issues of an exhibition are factored in (permissions, ethics, database management, forward planning). I have learned that the curatorial team has a periodic 'planning panel' session where the team comes together to coordinate their planning and oversee shared resources for upcoming exhibitions and events, though it did not appear that the Street Museum was fully built into that planning process. This could also be due to the timeframe for delivery that the funders (and delivery partners) expected (community) and mandated (funder), rendering a longer pre-planning process more problematic, however. This does appear to mean that these novel types of curatorially driven projects, like SM, are potentially more susceptible to challenges in delivery due to their inability to follow

But when involving an institutional partner in a project that is far bigger in size than the other partners, there can be downsides for ensuring all possible individuals or teams are part of delivering a project like this:

> "I think at the outset I thought maybe there'd be more staff on the museum side involved ... but now in hindsight I actually think the fact that not that many people were involved actually made it easier...it was just less people to introduce the community to and .. having the same faces made it easier for the community curators to get to know you."

Having less staff involved in direct delivery may benefit frontline community-building, but may not benefit the 'behind-the-scenes infrastructure' work, however. As a result, it does raise the question of how a large institution organises its own processes internally so that the necessary planning and collaborative work is taking place but *not to the detriment of the project itself and its delivery timescales*. After all, for the core partnership team this work was successful and was seen as highly collaborative, especially by the community itself. This particular challenge appears an issue for a university (or large sized partner on other similar projects) itself to reflect and consider going forward, particularly in light of the continued trend toward projects along the lines of Street Museum being funded and supported across the sector. And while much curatorial work does require sufficient time for planning ("involve [the curating experts] us early on and we can help as much as we can."), there may also need to be some flexibility built into internal processes to allow for the right expertise to be engaged in a timely manner as well.

More than anything, as one put it, the findings in this area speak to the "learning curve that we as an institution have to go through". There is no doubt that all those working on the project—or even those only familiar with the project—were hugely supportive of its aims and mission: to

democratise access to and engagement with culture across our less engaged communities. The opportunity now is for institutions like Durham University to learn and evolve to ensure that they can bring their resourceful expertise to benefit the planning of the 'behind-the-scenes' essentials of a project, while being mindful of the needs of a community and its engagement in the process as well.

Section 6.4 Reflections and feedback for future development

When asked what feedback for future development that delivery partners and community participants had, there were some practical suggestions along with strategies for other communities and projects hoping to achieve something akin to the SM project. First and foremost, the overall impression from the evaluation sessions was of a strong desire to either repeat this project or expand the scope of the work. ("I hope we do [the project] again", "I would love to continue further.") One key delivery partner was keen to continue "to be involved as one of the key partners for any further work that's going to happen." And as another noted, "I think we've got a good basis to build on now."

Reflecting further on the experience, there were some lessons learned shared by those interviewed:

- *Ensure there is a strong community presence and commitment to deliver the project.* As one participant stressed, "Make sure there is a driving force, someone with local knowledge, community minded and willing to give it all and work with many." Another stressed that 'bravery' was an important quality to ensuring success from the community standpoint.
- *Encourage diversity of input and voices into the project.* When asked what advice they had for another community planning a Street Museum, the majority of respondents noted the importance of getting people involved in the process: "listen to people", "Aim for plurality of voices".
- *Accept the experimental nature of projects like these.* One participant called this 'a bit of an experiment' and another recommended having a 'testing phase' to try out ideas for the project. Yet another advised "Don't be afraid of the experience". This also applied to the evaluation work of this project, which was experimental in its approach.
- *Launch the work with a 'big team meeting'.* As one core team member said, "at the beginning if we'd had a team meeting and known everybody's strengths, and known the equipment that everyone has in the background, then some [extra activities] could have been done probably within the budget."
- *Ensure the knowledge gained and relationships formed are propelled forward.* "Pick our brains", recommended one of the community curators. "We're experts, we've done this." Relationship building was also key: "keep in touch with families and that amazing relationship we had with Blackhall… keep the relationship going", was a comment from one of the project delivery partners.
- *"Make it huge—in terms of interest, but keep it small geographically".* This feedback recommends using a wide net to promote and draw interest for a project like this, but retain the local geographical focus. As was noted in Section 6.2, a promotional was noted as required to widen the reach of a project like this, but a lot of activity in the

community (such as the various BCCC events and the Bunting Workshops) can generate interest as well.

- *Give the process sufficient time.* While the Street Museum had some limitations on project delivery due to funding and budget requirements, there was a common desire amongst respondents to have had more time to plan and deliver it. As one said, it "felt like" [this project] "should have been developed over years, rather than the kind of months that we had"

7. KEY LEARNINGS FROM EVALUATION FINDINGS

1. *Street Museum improved access to and awareness of the Durham University museums and collections.* Overall, the key elements of this project were successfully delivered and anecdotally those who participated expressed an increased or improved understanding of the DU museums' offer and some even noted a desire to visit in the future. The 3D printing of eighteen artefacts and providing access to them was clearly achieved and enabled the DU museum experience to be brought to a local community. *Key learning:* Projects like Street Museum can enable museums to create an exhibition in local communities and widen awareness and interest in them.

2. *The active involvement by Blackhall Colliery Community Centre was integral to the success of Street Museum.* This project succeeded by being deeply embedded into local community life, particularly through the active involvement by the Blackhall Colliery Community Centre. Their commitment to Street Museum, particularly the co-direction, input and efforts of the BCCC's manager Alison Patterson, ensured that the project had local participants and co-curators. And in return, the activities of the project supported BCCC's community support activities through half-term events among others.

3. *Improved cultural and community engagement go hand in hand.* The project had a positive impact on cultural engagement and also supported pathways toward community engagement. It can be argued that for the most part strong community engagement facilitates improved cultural engagement, though improving cultural engagement was also shown to improve community engagement (or spirit) through this project.

4. *Impactful community work benefits from a committed and well-established local partner.* When the initial delivery partners (Durham University, East Durham Creates) identified the site of the project, the site became a key delivery partner. They not only hosted the museum project, but also shaped the project and promoted its success from the moment they got involved. This contributed to Street Museum's successful delivery. Having an active and engaged community centre was integral to the delivery of Street Museum. Local community members should have a delivery partnering role as well as being participants in the project.

5. *Digital innovation can and should be explored through projects such as these.* 3D printing and technology usage were the predominant forms of innovation in Street Museum. Exploring their application and use was beneficial through this project. Participants enjoyed learning about 3D technology and were interested in learning more. For project delivery partners understanding the complexity of 3D printing museum artefacts has proven a useful learning curve and prompts a consideration of their use in dispersed museum work going forward.

6. *The project's success partly lay in its ability to pivot to the needs of the local community.* Related to the previous two findings, the project was originally planned as a summer activity, but on consultation with local community members, particularly staff at BCCC, it became evident that the community (particularly its community centre) needed the events and activities to take place at a time that suited its delivery needs rather than following the originally outlined schedule as included in the original project proposal. Pivoting the schedule to support the Centre's needs meant that the project was still completed effectively but in a way that was mindful to the community and what it wanted. Another example of the project pivoting was its decision to not pursue the AR aspect of the original project plan based on the feedback from the community, In this way, the ability to pivot was key to SM's success as a community engagement project.

7. ***The approach to the schedule was mixed across the project partners, however.*** On the one hand the fact that the project partners pivoted the schedule to adapt to the needs and expectations of the community involved ensured that Street Museum was effectively delivered and also guaranteed buy-in from key members of the community who would deliver the work. On the other, the schedule and planning may not have taken advantage of what worked with Durham University's own processes as far as ensuring the right expertise and resources were available in sync with the SM's delivery schedule. From speaking with the university's curators, I have learned that the curatorial team uses a 'planning panel' model where they meet at regular intervals to discuss and plan ahead to ensure that all organisational and logistical elements are appropriately resourced; running a project like SM across this panel would have helped in the overall planning and scheduling. Projects that use historically significant cultural artefacts (such as those held in museum collections), benefit from a consideration of and planning for specific factors such as ethics, health and safety, permissions and copyright, and database/information management, which can impact a schedule but benefit greatly from due consideration and regard.

8. ***It's not lockdown anymore.*** This project emerged from Street Gallery, which was developed and delivered during a period of heightened UK Government Covid-19 restrictions. With no clear idea as to when Covid restrictions would be lifted, SM was perhaps conceptualised with similar restrictions still being in place. When the Street Museum was actually ready to launch, however, there were no legal restrictions in place aside from using personal discretion and common sense. In the original bidding document, the project envisioned having the Street Museum up and running for weeks. Once the co-curators gathered to firm up the dates for the Museum over the Easter holidays, however, it became clear that some homes would not have occupants for the entirety of the time and those hosts were not comfortable with people visiting their homes if no one was there. As a result, the museum reduced in length from over 2 weeks to 5 days. This suggests that some elements of SM needed to consider the suitability of the event not only from the perspective of the community but also from

9. ***Intergenerationality was important to Street Museum's success.*** During the public engagement events, especially those during the half term or Easter holidays, many children were accompanied by grandparents, grandmothers in particular. This suggests that participation in cultural or creative activities are an intergenerational activity and grandparents—or essentially those family members who may provide childcare support during half term breaks are essential to engage in the process of community-led activities, especially for children.

10. ***This project's success depended on collaboration and benefited from a mix of expertise and commitment from a range of delivery partners.*** This project benefited from the input and delivery of different partners, all bringing their own expertise and strengths to the project. Collaboration directly contributed to the success of the project; this was demonstrated through regular lines of communication between the partners and each partner feeling like they had their own roles and expertise to deliver the project.

11. ***There were moments of missed opportunities for collaboration, however.*** This evaluation notes that there are *two* key missed opportunities from the project. First, from the earliest planning stages, the project could have benefited from consulting with and building in feed-back from the full curatorial team at Durham University to ensure all aspects of curation were

factored in (especially its behind-the-scenes work). During reflection interviews with the DU curatorial team about their perception and understanding of the Street Museum project, they identified some gaps in its effective delivery when compared to a conventional museum-based project. These gaps were identified as: copyright and permissions work, 3D printing, database and information management, institutional legacy, health and safety issues, ethical issues, and a better alignment of and the involvement of the wider team. While these internal challenges did not impact the overall success of the project itself, they did mean that the dedicated DU curatorial team felt they were not involved in the project at the key planning stages (including when funding was pursued) to ensure enough time and resource is given to all aspects of a project like this. Opportunities to tap into existing expertise of project delivery partners should be factored in from project design through to delivery. The other missed opportunity relates to how the work was promoted and communicated within the community and beyond. Both the community curators and project delivery partners expressed a desire to ensure that more members of the community (including local businesses) and beyond had been made aware of the SM project and had an opportunity to get involved.

12. *These findings allow for some learning for each partner.* In the case of Durham University and its museums and collections, for example, there is an opportunity to reflect on how its curatorial processes can be supported and enabled to co-deliver such projects in the most effective way possible.

13. *Delivery partners need to be mindful of their own processes and expertise in order to most effectively deliver on projects such as these.* Planning does benefit from each partner contributing their own expertise but also effectively tapping into the specific experience and knowledge that each partner brings while ensuring those doing the on-the-ground delivery work are well supported and resourced. In the case of SM, while the project itself was very effective from a delivery point of view, certain gaps in planning posed a risk to its delivery, particularly when considering certain ethical, copyright, and information management elements.

14. *Participation in much of the Street Museum's activities was dependent on intergenerational engagement and support.* Observational data on the project indicated that the majority of carers accompanying children and young people at the events of Street Museum were grandparents (mostly grandmothers). This was partly due to the events taking place during half-term or Easter holidays, when children and young people's This suggests that

15. *Measuring the long-term impact of cultural engagement on communities will take time to collect.* While early evaluation work across the duration of the project enabled important insight into the immediate success of the project and its initial impact on the community and the delivery partners—which informs this report—it will take time to measure longer-term impacts such as whether there is evidence of a sustained uptake of local community members visiting Durham University museums as a result of the Street Museum project and other similar community engagement endeavours or if nurturing collaborative projects across a range of partners and stakeholders can new, effective forms of long term, sustainable resilience, growth, and cultural awareness in communities. The next step beyond a report like this is to map future community and cultural engagement work in the community served by SM and capture key metrics such as visitor data and cultural engagement over a multiple-year period.

8. FOLLOW-ON OR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES FROM STREET MUSEUM

These are a list of activities, opportunities, or collaborations that have developed (or are developing) as a direct result of the Street Museum project thus far:

- **Street Museum won a NE Culture Award for the Best Arts and Partnership Category.** Originally this Awards event was scheduled for September 8, 2022 but was cancelled due to the Queen's passing. After attending the rescheduled awards on November 15, 2022 the team found out they won: https://necultureawards.com/2022/en/page/finalists
- **Don't Look Away.** This is a project in development, between Blackhall Colliery Community Centre and Changing Relations—with partnership involvement from East Durham Creates, Durham University, Gaunless Gateway, and The Auckland Project. The project is aimed at developing a 'Street Museum-inspired' project across the communities of Blackhall Colliery and Bishop Auckland (in SW County Durham) around the themes of domestic abuse awareness and reduction within communities. Project leaders Alison Patterson and Lisa Davis credit the Street Museum project—and an introduction after both being invited to present at an event on funding hosted by Creative Fuse NE—as facilitating their introduction and exploration of potential collaborative projects going forward. A steering group has met, seedcorn development meetings are currently underway, and funding avenues are currently being explored. The aim is to launch the project in late 2023 with delivery anticipated in 2024.
- **Paper presented at GEM Conference 2022.** One of the delivery partners was able to present a paper about the Street Museum at a libraries conference in September 2022, GEM Conference 2022, held at the Museum of Making with the theme of "Thinking Outwards: A Way Forward for Museum Learning".
- **Paper presented at Creative Fuse NE 2022 Conference.** The evaluation team presented a paper at the Creative Fuse NE conference in September 2022 where they highlighted evaluation methods used in the Street Museum project.
- A **scoping study** was completed by Arwa Badran in September 2022 to explore the feasibility of running a Street Museum project in Jordan. It recommended delivering the SM model in Jordan noting that the framework was, "a great way to bring objects and their stories out of museums and into the public domain, to engage in a process of co-curating and enhance access to collections and knowledge."
- **Street Cosmos "Space Explorers Day".** A spin-off of the Street Museum project, Street Cosmos "Street Explorers' Day" took place during the October 2022 half-term and was a collaboration between Durham University's Physics department, the university's museums collection, and Blackhall Colliery Community Centre to celebrate space and the cosmos in Blackhall.

9. TOWARD A FUTURE FRAMEWORK FOR THE STREET MUSEUM MODEL

The general concept of the Street Museum has been shown to work well as a model. The ideal elements of Street Museum are:

- Collaborative partnership between a community group or organisation, a cultural institution or museum, and, possibly, an arts charity or organisation operating in the community's area (particularly as a conduit between the cultural organisation and the community)
- A motivated and engaged community that actively participates in shaping and co-curating a street-based exhibition
- An innovative and appealing approach to museum or cultural curation that the community and delivery partners can co-produce
- An open and in-depth evaluation process to support ongoing reflection and learning as the project unfolds.

The following are general guiding principles that should be considered when applying the Street Museum model in other communities based on the findings and learnings mentioned in Sections 6 and 7:

Empower or find those people in the community who can champion this effort.	This can be a local community centre, church or a local group that have capacity and enthusiasm for the project.
Ensure the community's voice is front and centre and diverse.	These projects need to be flexible enough to adapt to what the community wants to do, along as it is financially feasible, within the capacity of the delivery partners, and meets the expectations of the funding body (if applicable).
Think big, but stay local.	Use an inclusive, participatory approach to enlist local residents and businesses in the project while ensuring that the project means something to the community it is situated within.
Make the most of the diversity of voices and expertise to deliver success.	Bring together project partners that have complimentary expertise and openness to collaborative working to the process.
Use local knowledge and themes to help shape the curatorial process.	If working with a nearby museum as a delivery partner, use participatory methods to explore identity and values to facilitate the curation process.
Ensure that curatorial expertise is embedded into the planning process.	Whether drawing on the local knowledge of a museum partner or enlisting guidance from a local curator, creating a dispersed museum such as Street Museum still requires that certain 'behind the scenes' organisational elements are planned for. Recruit local

	curators and empower them with the skills to co-deliver the project.
Don't underestimate the complexity of applying technology to conventional museum processes.	3D printing is an excellent way to bring museum artefacts to communities, but the technology can be inconsistent and not all artefacts will print viable copies. Including 3D printing in the process may require compromises in the selection process.
Give yourself plenty of time.	As much as is possible within the constraints of funding or community needs, ensure that there is time to deliver a range of activities to build up enthusiasm and that there is sufficient time to host the exhibition itself.
Give room for a variety of activities that build up excitement for the Street Museum and help build an engagement with culture and community.	Not one activity will draw all community members so a variety of activities will reach more of the community.
Secure funding that is open to innovation and participatory projects.	These projects depend on the participation of communities, which means that the delivery activity and its related timeline may benefit from a flexible approach. Inflexible or overly prescriptive funding schemes may stifle participation and adversely impact the community engagement.
Don't be afraid to experiment.	These projects are experimental partly because of their novelty to the communities they come into but also because curating a museum exhibition outside of a conventional museum is still a new venture for the cultural sector. Trying something new may fail, but what is learned from that experience can be invaluable for community and cultural engagement going forward.

10. CONCLUSION

This project was an effectively delivered exploration of using innovative approaches to democratise and disperse access to museums and their collections into communities of historically low engagement with culture. At its core, Street Museum has been a community-driven and community-shaped project which benefited from an effective collaborative working relationship between its delivery partners, Blackhall Colliery Community Centre, Durham University, and East Durham Creates.

The whole project benefited from an experimental and learning modality, which was expressed in a number of ways:

- evaluation was part of the project from the very start (with the primary evaluator attending a number of events and activities in person to collect observational notes) and was experimental in its approach
- the creation and development of the museum itself employed a co-design approach that heavily involved local community members and relied on a collaborative partnership for delivery
- the project was flexible enough to be able to pivot around the content and timing needs of the local community
- the project experimented and innovated with 3D printing technology for the exhibition
- the project undertook a diverse range of activities and events both at the community centre and in the wider community to build up interest in cultural engagement in the build up to the Street Museum exhibition

While there are opportunities for learning from this project, and this report lays out some recommendations for continual learning, its success also indicates that projects of this sort are good routes to improving community and cultural engagement in poorly engaged communities. The Street Museum experience can and should be enjoyed in more and diverse communities as an effective means to widen access to culture and improve community cohesion and spirit.

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12. APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Timeline and Participant Numbers of Events and Activities

Prepared by Eleanor Mathieson (Street Museum Project Manager)

EVENT	DATE	TIME	VOLUNTEERS/ PARTNER IN KIND[15]	VOLUNTEERS/ PARTNER IN KIND DETAILS	PEOPLE WHO ATTENDED
Hands on History Day	28th Oct 2021	12 – 4pm	4 student volunteers 6 partner in kind (each giving 8 hours including set up and pack down)	**4 student volunteers 5 partners in Kind**	75
Christmas Fair	11th Dec 2021	12-4pm	1 (giving 6 hours including set up and pack down)	**1 partner in kind**	70 people engaged (70 packs used/picked up)
Curators Session 1	17th Dec 2021	1-2pm			7 curators 5 members of Street Museum (SM) team
Curators Session 2	13th Jan 2022	12-2pm			**10 TOTAL** 5 curators (+ 1 curator fed in via email) 4 members of SM team
Go and See Day	15th Jan 2022	9am – 12:30pm	2 (each giving 4 hours)	2 Partners in Kind	29 members of public
Lantern Making	18th Jan 2022	4-5:30pm			9 (plus 9 homes/people visited on the lantern parade)
Curators Session 3	27th Jan 2022	11am – 1pm			**9 TOTAL** 5 curators 4 members of SM team
History Hunt	24th Feb 2022	11:30am – 2:30pm			69 members of public

[15] Partner in kind refers to in-kind hours of support or delivery as provided by project partners (i.e., BCCC, EDC, DU, CFNE, DCC)

EVENT	DATE	TIME	VOLUNTEERS/ PARTNER IN KIND[15]	VOLUNTEERS/ PARTNER IN KIND DETAILS	PEOPLE WHO ATTENDED
Street Museum Creative Labs	11th and 13th April 2022	10:30-1pm each day	4	4 Curious 12 presenters	6 participants
Street Museum Objects Hand out day	14th April 2022	11am – 2pm			**33 TOTAL** 5 curators 3 members of SM team 15 exhibitors picking up objects 10 Dementia Choir
Street Museum Exhibition Launch	19th April	12 – 1:30pm			63 members of public
Street Museum Exhibition visitors/trail participants	19th April – 24th April	ALL DAY			**Estimate 3000 saw objects in windows** – based on 500 maps from Community Centre And population of Blackhall, footfall on high street past shops and using or walking and driving past homes/ businesses/ Church/ Library

Appendix 2. Themes Explored During Evaluation Events/Interviews/Sessions

Quiz Sheets produced for participants to complete during the Street Museum Exhibition launch on April 19, 2022

Question to determine if participants were familiar with any of the Durham University museums:

- Name one of the Museums at Durham University

Note: In the representative sample I viewed, all respondents noted the Oriental Museum.

Questions during Street Museum Exhibition launch: April 19, 2022

1. What are you most curious about with Street Museum?
   a. The fun activities
   b. Finding the 3D objects
   c. Learning about history

45 votes cast, with 11.1% (n.5) choosing 'Learning about history', 15.6% (n.7) choosing 'The fun activities', and 73.3% (n. 33) choosing 'Finding the 3D objects'

Playful Reflection Session: May 5, 2022

Questions asked and activities designed during the May 5 playful reflection session with three of the project delivery partners, 1 member of staff from the Community Centre, and 4 of the community co-curators.

1. Write 3 words down to describe your experience with Street Museum
2. Why did you get involved?
3. LEGO BUILD 1: Describe Street Museum to others.
4. What was your favourite activity from Street Museum?
5. How do you feel Street Museum impacted Blackhall Colliery?
6. What else would you have liked to have seen as part of Street Museum?
7. LEGO BUILD 2: Imagine we've decided to run the Street Museum in Blackhall Colliery in 2025: Work in pairs to add a new feature for Street Museum 2.0.
8. What do you understand about the process of curation now that you've been part of Street Museum?
9. What do you understand about the university's museums and collections now?
10. Another community wants to do Street Museum: what advice would you give them?
11. Anything else you'd like to share? Ideas? Opinions? Vents?

Interviews with Delivery Partners: June 23 and 27, 2022

Questions asked during June 23 and 27 interviews. These interviews involved all of the delivery partners on the project, 6 individuals in total. I was interested in exploring the following:

1. What was your role on Street Museum
2. What did you think Street Museum was going to be like?
3. What was Street Museum actually like?
4. From an org/planning perspective, what went **particularly well** for you?
5. From an org/planning perspective, what **did not** go so well?
6. Next steps? What should we do now?
7. Anything else?

Interviews with Durham University curators: July 18 and 22, 2022

Questions asked during the July 18 and 22 interviews. These interviews involved all of the curators at Durham University, totally 5 individuals.

1. What role did you have (if any) on Street Museum?
2. What did you think Street Museum was going to be like and did it meet those expectation?
3. From your professional perspective, what is your view of Street Museum (or similar projects)?
4. Should Durham University continue to be involved with projects like this? Why?
5. What important next steps or views should we take on board when considering projects like Street Museum in the future?

> **Street Museum**
>
> **'early initial observations/talking points (in red)'**

Prepared by Ladan Cockshut

Note: We've only just moved into the final evaluation stage of Street Museum, so this is very preliminary (the final report will come out later in 2022), but we believe that this project is an excellent example of the bid's ethos and approach. In this project **we have used culture collaboratively to support improved cohesion and wellbeing in communities**. Many of the key partners in the CoC bid have been involved. It has **reached a wide range of stakeholders and provided a rich depth of activities and opportunities.** Our evaluation approach has been collaborative, innovative and participatory, and we are demonstrating how a robust partnership can generate impact and positivity in communities through culture.

Context

- This is a collaborative project between Blackhall Colliery Community Centre, East Durham Creates, and Durham University, which launched in 2021.
- It was funded by the Museums Association.
- Local creative producer Ellie Mathieson project-managed Street Museum's delivery, with overall project direction by Ged Matthews (DU) and curation oversight by Charlotte Spink (DU).
- Creative Fuse North East (at DU) is delivering all of the action research, evaluation, and monitoring activity for this project.

Project aim

- To work with a local community to co-curate objects from the DU collections to be 3D printed and go on display in homes and businesses across the BC, with the aim of increasing community cohesion and engagement through culture and improving pride in their local community.
- One sub-aim has been to improve BC's interaction with and connection to Durham University's museums and collections.
- Another sub-aim is to take the learning and evaluation from the project to help inform a framework for Street Museum rolled out in other communities.

How did the collaboration work?

- All partners and practitioners had input and collaborated on every aspect of the project, though certain partners/practitioners took the lead on specific elements. Effective oversight and project management kept the work on track and to schedule.

- East Durham Creates approached one of its cultural hub partners, Blackhall Colliery Community Centre (BCCC), to facilitate participation as the central location and hub for Street Museum
- Most activities took place at BCCC or were launched from there; the venue hosted events between Oct '21 and April 22. The Street Museum itself launched from BCCC on April 19. BCCC manager (Alison Paterson) was key point of contact for the Centre and driving force behind the volunteer and co-curator recruitment. Alison and her staff also actively designed and promoted activities for Street Museum, including all wearing fun, historical costumes on the Hands on History days.
- Project manager Ellie Mathieson worked with BCCC (especially Alison) to recruit 7 curators, design the activities and scope of the Street Museum, ensured its effective delivery, and was heavily involved with all of the public and project facing activities.
- DU's efforts, spearheaded by Ged Matthews (its cultural engagement manager), involved a combination of resourcing the work (Ged), facilitated and collaborative curation techniques (Charlotte Spink), advising on and producing all of the 3D printed artefacts (Kamal Badreshany), schools and community engagement activities (such as Hands on History days) (Charlotte Spink, Ross Wilkinson, Ellie Mathieson, and PG students), and the evaluation and action research work (Ladan Cockshut).

What happened on the project?

- The deep ties, trust and community cohesion activities already in place through the efforts of BCCC and its manager and staff—and their already established relationship with EDC—helped get the community on board. EDC (Jess Hunt) participated in all of the events and supported its ongoing delivery through communication and partner engagement.
- The project involved a series of iterative and interactive events to not only engage the local community but recruit local residents to co-curate the Museum and choose the 30 artefacts from Durham University's collections to be 3D printed and displayed in people's homes and local business or community building windows. The work could be best described as diverse, inclusive, and iterative in nature.
- The project also hosted 3 'hands on history' days between October 2021 and April 2022, community activity events at the Community Centre and local care home to create bunting, explore history, and imagine ideas for the Street Museum. The Street Museum launched on April 19th
- Distinctive activities of note included:
  o Co-curation planning sessions, using creative and reflective methods to explore culture and representations of meaning for the BC community
  o Learning and engagement events where community members (especially children) could learn about and actively engage with history and culture
  o Visits to the DU museums collections (facilitated by EDC)
  o Engagement activities with local care home residents to learn about their cultural perspective and memories of BC
  o Design and layout of the Street Museum itself; alignment of 3D printed objects with volunteering families, businesses or organizations

- o Launch event for the Street Museum; management and promotion of the 5-day museum itself
- o Follow-up evaluation sessions with the co-curators, project managers, and other core delivery team members in May and June 2022

How did the evaluation work?

- We used a mixed methods approach to understand and explore the whole Street Museum, with the overarching aim of providing a proposed framework for other communities to consider when rolling out later phases of the Street Museum model.
- In particular we have done (*with the caveat that the work is still underway until June 2022)
  - o Observational data collection
  - o Video and visual data collection methods
  - o Playful and participatory exploratory evaluation techniques
  - o Play-based focus groups and evaluation
  - o Surveys and attendance numbers collection
  - o Moving/walking methods
  - o Participant observation techniques
  - o Reflective evaluation and interviewing methodologies
  - o Anecdotal and/or historical case studies
  - o Conversational methodologies
- **Note:** Evaluation is still underway, with more activities planned in June. Analysis and reporting will take place in July.

Initial evaluation observations

- Levels of collaboration (and a commitment to it) were high, multimodal, and diverse, which could be credited to the project direction and early commitment to collaboration outlined in the funding application.
- BC's community voice was clearly articulated throughout the project, particularly in the co-curation, item selection, and Museum period.
- Participation by co-curators was very high, with only one of the seven having low levels of participation (mostly due to their college work commitments), with all remaining actively engaged throughout the 7-month period. 5 of the co-curators displayed objects in their home or workplace. In fact one noted that their favourite activity in the Street Museum project was attending the 'Curators' Meetings'. Another co-curator expressed a design that 'it went on for a longer period'.
- The activities and success of Street Museum were likely due to a number of factors (still under analysis), but an early finding is that success was likelier due to the energy and effectiveness of the BCCC and its staff. They appear well respected and embedded into the community, so it helped facilitate the community getting involved. All events were well attended.
- DU staff appear positively affected by the project and for some it has been an important career development or research opportunity, including opportunities to prepare and

present papers on the work at upcoming professional conferences, a chance to explore 3D printing functionalities in novel locations and of 'tricky' objects, and to trial exploratory and novel evaluation methods for wider application in cultural and creative sector evaluation work.

- Key facilitators for attendance at the Hands-On History events were the grandmothers. While many families attended with a different combination of carers and adults with the children, it was noticeable how many children were brought to activities by their grandmothers, who had significant caring responsibilities for their grandchildren while their parents were at work.
- Words given by the co-curators to describe their participation in and experience of Street Museum include:
    o Community (x3), wow, educational, inspirational, pride, family, welcome, history, friendship, growth, inclusive
- Community engagement levels were good, though in modest numbers overall. Rather than large numbers, the notable engagement was by a modest number of families committing to a deep engagement with the project over a long period of time. An anecdote to reflect this:
    o *A local family (two grandparents and one grandchild, aged 11) came along to all of the Hands-on History days, then volunteered to host one of the 3D objects, and finally made a special trip into Durham to view one of the original museum objects on display at the Palace Green Library. The family told me (when I encountered them on the street as I walked the Street Museum route) that they were planning to host a 'birthday party' for their statue as it was a 3D printing of a Japanese Buddha statue and Buddha's birthday was coming in early May (**note:** as a thank you for participating, all '3D object hosts' were gifted their object). The family told me that they appreciated the variety of activities over a long period of time.*
- The Museum itself was well attended on the first day (April 19th), though may not have been as well attended on subsequent days. This could be due to inconsistent or underutilised promotional channels or activities or missed opportunities to work more with the local schools to encourage their involvement during the Easter holidays (when Street Museum took place).
- The Museum dates and map were promoted to the community itself, but there could have been opportunities to promote it further afield.
- The map itself was well designed, but finding locations was tricky and the route itself was quite long (all objects were accessible by wheelchair or car, but may prove difficult to walk the whole length for those with certain mobility challenges). One venue (a local business) was closed for Street Museum (they were going out of business), but they had not informed the project manager. A suitable new location was found for the object, but as the map was printed before this was learned, it could have caused confusion to those unaware.