

The development of the Forum has been led by DARE, the partnership between the University of Leeds and Opera North since 2015, in partnership with universities and cultural organisations from across the north of England.

## Symposia

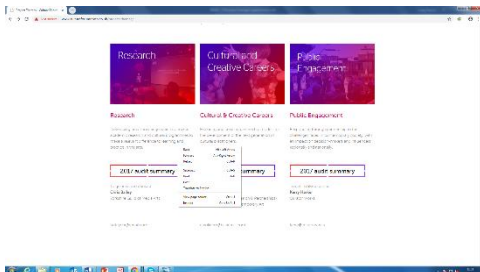


The Forum was launched in Leeds in June 2016, with keynotes from Peter Bazalgette (then Chair, Arts Council England) and Professor Andrew Thompson, Executive Chair, AHRC. Over 170 delegates from universities and cultural organisations nation-wide participated in discussion groups led by member organisations.

The event also launched the [CFN website](#), which aims to communicate the purpose and proposition of the Forum; to showcase members and member case studies; to link to relevant resources, and to act as a portal for posts on relevant themes.

Four further symposia have taken place at member venues in Manchester (Whitworth and CFCCA), Hull (University), Rotherham (Clifton Park Museum), each with between 45 and 120 participants. Themes have included developing the Forum strategy, [workforce diversity](#), connecting small arts organisations with HE, and placemaking.

## Commissioning



In 2017/18 four pieces of work were commissioned to acquire data relevant to the Forum's priority themes: - **The creation of an online Research Catalogue** of academic papers informed by HE/cultural partnership; **An audit of workforce diversity** in cultural organisations; **A reflection on the barriers** inhibiting small arts organisations/artists partnering with universities; A series of **case studies**.

## Project management

DARE has facilitated the CFN Steering Group to date. The Group meets around three times a year and comprises representatives from The Whitworth, Open Eye Gallery, and Liverpool John Moores University. The aim is for each CFN theme and project to be co-led by members representing organisational, sector and geographic diversity.

## Funding

Three Project Initiation Grants have been awarded by Arts Council England since 2015, which have enabled activity including the launch, symposia and commissioning. An ACE National Lottery Project Grant will fund the 12-month Project Manager post and associated activities.

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