CULTURE DAYS

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN ARTS AND CULTURE

with the 6IX Academy

WEBINAR SUMMARY:

In this webinar, we heard from the Co–Founder and Creative Director of the 6IX Academy, Beckie Dileo, business teacher lead Kevin D'Souza, and student artist and mentor, Aniqa Al-Basith, on how this social entrepreneurship high school program engages with youth in impactful ways through innovative community collaborations, cross-sector partnerships, and youth-led social ARTivism initiatives.

This resource presents key takeaways from the webinar and tips on how community, event organizers, and arts organizations can cultivate engagement with youth, and support their involvement, empowerment, and leadership in their creative communities.

The future is now – don't underestimate the value of young voices, and give them space to lead!

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A NATIONAL CELEBRATION OF ARTS, CULTURE AND CREATIVITY

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ENGAGING YOUTH IN ARTS AND CULTURE

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

How can I engage with youth?

- Develop programs, events, and initiatives WITH youth! No idea is too small – directly involve youth and encourage them to have a say in your program and event development and production.
- By directly consulting youth from your community, you can find out what they are interested in and what they want to express an opinion about.
- Youth are changemakers! What do they want to stand behind and support?
- Align their interests with their talents – what topics most interest them, and what are their creative skills?

It is all about collaborations – think outside the box!

- Engage with youth through community connections.
- Explore cross-sector partnerships in your events to increase youth engagement.
    - By partnering with local businesses, schools, community centres, libraries, etc. you can create programs and events that connect young people to other creative opportunities with community partners.

KEY TAKEAWAYS CONT.

- Community outreach! Make a list of organizations in your neighbourhood and community (international, municipal, provincial, or nationally) and find out what their initiatives or larger objectives are. Consider how any of your youth-directed programs or events could align.

- Partner with youth-led community organizations, groups, school-run groups, and clubs to collaborate on creative projects, events, and campaigns together.





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Create opportunities for young people to showcase their voice, art and creativity.

- Social media can be a useful platform to exhibit youth creativity! Involve them in your organization's social media plans and graphic design, and encourage youth-led social media content and campaigns. Content creation can take the form of video, photography, illustration, traditional art, dance, song, etc.

- Make the creation process seen! Document the process of creating these campaigns, designs, and digital exhibits to be featured on social media.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

ARTivism: social justice-focused creative projects

- Encourage or help facilitate youth-led social justice creative projects – eg. mental health and anti-bullying t-shirt campaigns, women empowerment cultural photography series, Truth and Reconciliation workshops, and initiatives.

- Get youth creative expression, voice, and messaging directly into your social media campaigns, events, and programs.

Use art to inspire social change! Empower young people to help shape the world around them.



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TIPS:

- Begin with a project or idea and seek different avenues, opportunities, and platforms to continue to showcase the work youth are creating.

- The arts are the foundation of society and belong on the walls of schools, local buildings and establishments, etc.

- If you need merchandise (water bottles, mugs, t-shirts, etc.) reach out to your local high schools and ask if the art students would be interested in creating the art and designs for them. Through this process, youth will learn about your group or organization and learn arts entrepreneurship skills (eg. how to work with a client, create a pitch, and build a portfolio) through real-life creative work experiences.

- Approach your local high schools! Consider reaching out to your local high schools to get teachers, students, and groups involved in your arts and culture events. When you approach the school, have a proposal ready so the collaboration is efficient and doesn't get lost off a busy teacher's desk. Make the "YES" as easy as possible.



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