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Culture, Public Health and the Experience of Incarceration: Exploring Cross-Sector Collaboration

Culture Forward, in collaboration with the Ikon Gallery held an insightful event on the intersection of culture, public health and experiences of incarceration.

8 August 2024

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All Photos by Francesco Falciani (www.photofalciani.com)

The gathering brought together researchers and staff from the University of Birmingham and University of Wolverhampton, artists, and representatives from different cultural organisation, such as Birmingham Hippodrome, Birmingham Royal Ballet and Midlands Arts Centre.



Linzi Stauvers commented, 'For 10 years, Ikon Gallery has been running a visual arts programme at HMP Grendon. The Culture Forward sandpit, collaboratively organised by the University of Birmingham and Birmingham City Council's Public Health team, allowed us to share good practice whilst considering how we might model creative practice into different carceral settings. We discussed the ethical complexities of evaluating projects in prisons, which rely on the development of trusting relationships between the artists, producers, staff and residents. With the academics, we started to consider creative approaches to demonstrating the impact of artistic practice on the wellbeing of the prisoners, the wider prison community and people on parole.'

The sandpit underscored the importance of integrating creative approaches within public health frameworks, emphasising collaboration between cultural organisations and health institutions to drive positive community outcomes. Culture Forward extends its thanks to the Ikon Gallery for their brilliant hosting and for the opportunity to have the event take place in the midst of the awe-inspiring **Dion Kitson Rue Britannia exhibition**, which is open to the public until 8th September 2024.

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