



Helix Arts at Newcastle Business School

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# Business students help top North East charity diversify to thrive

Funding for small arts organisations has been changing significantly and

**becoming increasingly competitive in recent years. And yet, demand continues to be high from communities who want to work with talented artists.**

Newcastle-based charity Helix Arts recently joined forces with students at Newcastle Business School to develop a new revenue stream to ensure Helix continues to make an impact with all kinds of groups, whatever their circumstances, across the North East and beyond.

Helix Arts has been part of the North East arts scene for over 35 years. An Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation, it specialises in improving cultural and social inclusion by creating opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to take part in ambitious arts activity across a range of art forms from film-making and creative writing to animation, music, photography and drama.

The charity teamed up with four final year students on the Business with Finance programme at Newcastle Business School, which currently holds the title UK Business School of the Year in the prestigious Times Higher Education (THE) Awards. Helix Arts tasked the students with exploring the potential for running an events management arm with the goal of generating a profit which could be reinvested back into its charitable activities.

Undergraduates Andrew MacQuarrie, Ryan Murfin, Liam Price and Sean Town formed 'Syndicate Consultants' to take on the brief. They used primary and secondary research to deliver a feasibility study which explored the North East events market in-depth and devised a recommendation and implementation strategy with full financial analysis.

Catherine Hearne, Chief Executive at Helix Arts, said: "We decided to approach the Business School after reading about The Business Clinic in the local press. Small arts charities like ours are under increasing pressure to diversify and generate new income streams due to changes in funding structures regionally and nationally.

"I've been blown away by the energy, enthusiasm and ideas the team brought to our brief. They went far beyond our expectations. We'd asked them to explore the feasibility of Helix Arts diversifying into events management and were highly impressed that they went several steps further and were able to make a recommendation that not only is there a gap in the market, they even highlighted the specific areas we could target our expertise.

"Working with the students has been a fantastic experience and not onerous in the least. The next step for us is studying their strategy in detail over the summer with a view to implementing their recommendations in the autumn."

The Business Clinic at Newcastle Business School is an education scheme whereby a group of business students participate in a 'consultancy firm' to provide advice for clients. The service is offered for all types of businesses from SME's and multi-nationals through to not-for-profit organisations. Students are encouraged to get to the root of the problem, deliver results and provide a detailed report and presentation of their recommendations.

The University has an enviable global reputation for delivering some of the best business management education in the UK which enables individuals to achieve leadership, management and career potential through research-rich, business relevant academic education.

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If you have a media enquiry please contact our Media and Communications team at [media.communications@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:media.communications@northumbria.ac.uk) or call [0191 227 4571](tel:01912274571).

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