

# Fostering Impact Through Resonance: Collaborative Methodologies in Arts Research

## Abstract

**Purpose:** This paper provides methodological insights into effectively collaborating with arts organizations, highlighting approaches that can lead to impactful and meaningful research outcomes. It focuses on impact-making processes and the role of resonance.

**Design/methodology/approach:** As part of an ongoing collaboration with two arts organizations, the theatre group *Next Door But One (NDB1)* and *St Ethelburga's Centre for Reconciliation and Peace*, this paper explores how knowledge co-creation processes during data collection and analysis can lead to impact.

**Findings:** Our study introduces the role of resonance - a state where people feel engaged, heard, and connected - as a critical vehicle for impact. Resonance emerged from our collaborative research approach grounded in emancipatory praxis, which allowed us to engage in mutual (un)learning to make space for new insights and perspectives. The process of creating trust and a sense of safety nurtures resonance in collaborative research.

**Research limitations/implications:** This research underscores the transformative potential of collaborative methodologies, highlighting their role in fostering resonance between partners and stakeholders. Given the complex and extensive networks of the partnering organizations, we acknowledge the challenge of attributing our collaboration as the principal driver of change.

**Practical implications:** Organizations that embrace resonance-seeking practices and spaces can co-create and enhance organizational capacity to articulate social value, and contribute to sustained positive impacts addressing societal challenges.

**Originality/value:** This paper unpacks the underexplored role of resonant-seeking approaches in developing and evidencing impact.

# Introduction

Marketing scholars have increasingly been encouraged to conduct impactful, collaborative research that addresses socially relevant issues (Hutton and Heath, 2020; Ozanne et al., 2017; Scott and Mende, 2022). This emerging area includes the role of arts consumption in achieving impact by engaging communities in well-being practices and experiences (e.g., Tymoszuk et al. 2021). Drawing upon an arts context, this paper focuses on methodological insights emerging from a collaborative research approach *with* (rather than *on*) arts organizations. Impact emerged from continuous interactions between academic and non-academic partners to encourage a deeper level of engagement between researchers, participants and research context. We therefore revisit impact as a dynamic process unfolding through shared interactions that can generate resonant spaces. We explain the importance of embedding and nurturing resonance, that is, “a form of world-relation, in which subject and world meet and transform each other” (Rosa, 2019, p. 298) in conducting impactful research.

Resonance constituted both the connective tissue and outcome of our research process, encouraging encounters that enabled impact to emerge through a co-creational approach. We were guided by an understanding of co-creation as an exploration and negotiation of emerging understandings about community issues, which are experienced in the moment between the partners and the environment. This dialogical interplay of meanings focuses on mutual (un)learning, that is, a process through which we gain both new insights (learning), and make space for new perspectives (unlearning), wherein academic and non-academic partners pursue practical solutions to shared community issues through mutual processes of what Hutton and Heath (2020) call emancipatory praxis.

Such a collaborative approach, grounded in emancipatory praxis, fosters relational engagement marked by care, attentiveness to diverse voices, and a commitment to addressing power asymmetries. This way of engaging fosters meaningful impact and facilitates resonant experiences between arts organizations, their audiences, and the spaces where these encounters occur. Through this approach to (co-)create impactful outcomes, we unpack the role of resonance as a connective tissue, enabling relational engagement to work successfully across different stages of the research process. In so doing, we contribute to current discussions on developing (e.g., making space for new learnings) and evidencing impact (e.g., value in smaller theoretical contributions which can better inform implications and actions emerging research) from a more caring approach (Preece et al., 2025; Scott and Mende, 2022).

This paper is structured as follows: We begin by outlining the social problem, followed by a description of our stakeholder collaboration. Next, we detail the co-creation process, and evaluate the outcomes and any unintended impacts. Finally, we address ethical considerations.

## **Problem generation and impact to be achieved**

This study is part of a broader initiative exploring how diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI; Arsel et al. 2022) in arts offerings can promote consumer well-being. Diversity and inclusion in the marketplace are strategic priorities in both research and public policy fields, helping combat stigmas and expand access for marginalized groups. However, while increased access to resources is a foundational goal of DEI initiatives, its significance lies in how such access fosters community well-being. In this context, the arts provide not only a site for well-being practices, but also a powerful mechanism for giving voice to communities who are often unheard—making them a natural partner in DEI-oriented research. Arts-based collaborations provide a particularly fertile space where DEI values are enacted through co-created experiences that generate both individual and collective well-being.

We focus on providing methodological insights into how impact emerges through a collaborative research approach between academic and non-academic partners. Rather than positioning researchers as drivers of impact, we see impact as unfolding in spaces of shared engagement. To this end, the following impact question guides our study: “How can arts organizations and academic partners collaborate to develop innovative approaches that foster conditions for more impactful engagement?” The arts were chosen as the research context for their potential to offer connection and shared experiences, and to support practices that promote consumer well-being (Tymoszuk et al. 2021). Indeed, consumer engagement with arts organizations provides physical and mental well-being benefits, including reduced feelings of loneliness by fostering connection, and meaning, as well as hedonic dimensions (ibid.). Thus, such contexts not only allow for conducting impactful research but also unlock a greater understanding of how such research - and its underpinning methodologies - actually support goals of involved organizations and broader societal aims of tackling wicked challenges while promoting well-being (Mende and Scott, 2021; Arsel et al., 2022).

Based on the above, we applied an ‘inside-out approach’ during which the researchers start with *‘seeking partner organizations to help address a scholarly well-being question’* (Scott and Mende, 2022, p. 2574). In identifying our partner organizations, we aimed to ensure

that each organization is dedicated to addressing different yet intertwined societal issues. Aligning with Transformative Consumer Research's (TCR) focus on consumer well-being, we collaborated with organizations that were already actively engaged in fostering inclusive and transformative spaces. The partner organizations not only confront different forms of discrimination (e.g., religious beliefs, disability) but also include locally made creative arts and performance, in contrast to an often-dominant focus on 'highbrow' art contexts such as museums and galleries (Tymoszuk et al., 2021).

Yet, our collaborative approach later shifted to emancipatory praxis. Through this, our focus moved beyond engaging with partners and improving organizational practices to embracing the lived experience that unfolded in encountering our partner organizations as well as in encountering the relationship between the organizations and their consumers. These lived experiences reflect our presence within a space shaped by interactions between different actors (researchers, organizations, consumers), and, in doing so, enable a closer examination of both the research dynamic (e.g., openness to unexpected observations during fieldwork) and our engagement with research participants. By supporting reflection and dialogue, these spaces invite deeper connection and understanding of experiences and perspectives of partner organizations and their consumers.

We argue that such collaborative encounters unfold in resonant spaces – something we call 'impact-as-space'. 'Impact-as-space' facilitates the co-creation of meanings unfolding in situ, in turn forming the basis of discussion and (un)learning. The former manifests a safe space, in which power (between researchers, organizations and consumers) and meanings are shared and knowledge is therefore co-created. The latter manifests a brave space, in which multiple meanings and viewpoints are shared but also challenged, addressing tacit and unconsidered modes of thought as they emerge during the lived experience. For instance, during a Playback Theatre session on the topic of loss, our partner's participants experienced both a safe space and a brave space by proactively sharing and reliving their experiences of loss. It is through such insights that our approach moves beyond co-creating knowledge to also capturing otherwise excluded perspectives that can shift understanding and connection.

Furthermore, such a collaborative research focus becomes more essential when considering that most community-oriented arts organizations not only have restricted access to limited funding and infrastructure, but also that funding is more accessible to organizations that can evidence their societal impact. We argue that the discussed collaborative research and its

underpinning methodology enable guided reflection, understanding and connection, and as such, allow for the development of practices that can provide evidence for achieving desired societal impact.

## **Working with arts organizations: An inside-out approach**

Working *with* non-academic partners encourages active and meaningful collaborations between the involved partners in an attempt to engender learnings and reflections that foster positive impact. Such outcomes demand dedication, effort, time and continuous perspective-taking. The two lead authors conceptualized the initial research proposal, and recruited additional academic collaborators to further its development via a call for participants for the 2023 TCR conference.

Both the scholarly perspective and practical challenges of the organizations developed concurrently within various and overlapping steps. In the first step, through regular dialogue amongst the research team, ideas were proposed for theoretical lenses exploring and understanding impact through well-being in the arts, which aligned with the broad aims of the initial research agenda, while shaping the direction of the research.

At the point of recruiting the research team, connections with arts organizations had already been established by the lead author. In a subsequent step, we selected two partnering organizations from our existing network. Selection criteria for these organizations included: access to study the organization's consumer offering and their contributions to consumer well-being. Based on these criteria, in 2022, partnerships were established with the UK-based organizations: Next Door But One (NDB1) and St Ethelburga's Centre for Reconciliation and Peace.

NDB1 is an award-winning LGBTQ+ and disability-led theatre company based in York that promotes creative skills and encourages community connectedness. They predominantly work for and with marginalized consumers commonly facing barriers to participating in theatre, including people with disabilities, mental health issues, the bereaved, carers, and members of the LGBTQ+ community.

St Ethelburga's is a Christian charity that works with people of all faiths and none, and has a multi-faith team and board of trustees. St Ethelburga's set out to operate as a 'maker of peacemakers' in response to the ecological and climate emergency. A first connection with St

Ethelburga's was made in November 2022, following a Perspectiva community dialogical event addressing the topics of well-being and inclusion.

For each partner, we connected with key members to facilitate access, establish trust, discuss ethics procedures and agree on the parameters of the research partnership. In the case of NDB1, this was their CEO and Artistic Director. For St Ethelburga's, it was the Program Manager of their Listen to the World program, part of St Ethelburga's People of the World initiative to promote community, understanding, and connection between local and displaced people.

In our research, we conducted observations and ran focus groups with consumers of each arts organization (see Appendix). The iterative collaborative approach required multifaceted support throughout the process, yet no prior training was required for the key collaborators to cooperate. For instance, the Project Manager of St Ethelburga's Listen to the World program was present, but did not participate directly in the focus group, actively supporting the wider process. Simultaneously, to foster mutual trust, we, the researcher collaborators, presented, discussed and co-created study objectives, established ethical processes and familiarized ourselves with the organizations' goals, priorities, and constraints, to avoid causing unwanted interference when conducting the study (Scott and Mende, 2022).

## **The knowledge exchange, (co-)creation and learning process**

Our approach to co-creation was driven by a relational way of engaging with our partner organizations to produce practical changes that address community issues. This manifests Ozanne et al.'s (2017) reframing of the role of researchers as partners in the co-creation of knowledge. Building on this foundation, we show the role of resonance as both a methodological principle (i.e., connective tissue) and a tangible outcome within developed collaborations. By centering the creation of resonant spaces, what we label as 'impact-as-space', we move beyond engagement as a process of knowledge co-creation to one of mutual (un)learning, ultimately leading to transformation. This enhances the relational engagement literature by introducing resonance as a connective tissue that sustains collaborative praxis and fosters impact from a more caring approach (Preece et al., 2025).

Indeed, through reflective discussions between the research team and the non-academic partners, we realized that our approach fostered "a more enabling, more ethical and more

democratic participatory experience” (Hutton and Heath, 2020, p. 2708), while facilitating the creation of resonant spaces between us as the researchers and the arts organizations as participants and their consumers. Notably, resonance was only possible because we foregrounded non-academic partners and their stakeholders by entering into this engagement from the outset in an attempt to explore methodological innovations. This includes the consumers that the arts organizations serve but who were mostly indirectly involved in our work (see Figure 1).

As discussed earlier, our collaborative approach is grounded in what Hutton and Heath (2020) call emancipatory praxis. Such an approach argues that the repositioning of researchers as co-creators rather than as knowledge experts in the research process, offers an impetus for reflexive action through which we foster a closer relationship between the researcher, researched and the context. Our work embodies this approach through three key methodological shifts: (i) continuous rather than episodic engagement: we maintained an open, evolving dialogue with our partners, refining our inquiries based on their emerging needs and reflections; (ii) co-creation of analytical insights: rather than solely conducting independent analysis, we engaged in reciprocal reflection sessions with gatekeepers at NDB1 and St Ethelburga’s to validate and expand interpretations; and (iii) a focus on resonance rather than intervention: we did not impose research frameworks but instead sought to illuminate and amplify the reflexive spaces already present within these organizations.

The applied approach was therefore an attempt to “avoid the presence of the absence” (ibid, p. 2707) of often overlooked consumers and methodological dynamics. Figure 1 illustrates the direct and indirect interactions underpinning the collaborative process. The solid arrows indicate direct interactions, whereas the dashed arrows indicate indirect interactions.

### **Figure 1 about here**

In the research process (see Appendix), we conducted six observations in the case of St Ethelburga’s. In the case of NDB1, we conducted three observations. Following each observation, we analyzed the data, comprising notes, video and audio recordings, and photos. Emerging insights with the respective key collaborator were shared and discussed during a follow-up interview in the form of a reflective session, which enabled further data collection, knowledge co-production, and an active challenging of our and our partners’ existing practices. Indeed, these encounters generated further insights and provided us with new opportunities to

collectively reflect, augment and contrast our data during the reflective sessions, thus challenging our observations, avoiding blindspots, reconfiguring the parameters of the initially agreed process and partnership, and refining our praxis when necessary, while prioritizing participants' voices.

This methodological stance aligns with TCR's principles (Mende and Scott, 2021), emphasizing resonance as both a connective tissue of the research and its outcome. Rather than structuring the research strictly around interventions or predefined frameworks, we allowed resonance - the feeling of being heard, seen, and engaged - to guide both the process and findings. This approach enabled us to work towards addressing the broader societal problem of promoting consumer well-being by co-experiencing and co-articulating impact within our partners' existing ecosystems. In doing so, we brought a diverse range of voices to the fore, not as data points (multiplicity of viewpoints) but as active agents (challenging shared realities of these multiple viewpoints) thus shaping the research trajectory.

Here, we must stress that resonance was not solely introduced by the researchers. Resonance was already embedded in the ethos and practices of our partner organizations but had yet to be identified as a valuable practice. Our role was not to create or drive impact but to participate in and learn from the dynamic, evolving spaces they cultivated. Additionally, our partner organizations provided fertile ground for co-creating and further nurturing resonant spaces. Notably, our methodological approach did not introduce reflexivity per se but, instead, provided opportunities for new and for further deepening existing reflective practices, strengthening bonds and increasing the flow of shared experiences - all vital elements of an emancipatory engagement process.

Enabled through the resonant space, we took on the role of provocateurs where deemed appropriate. For instance, NDB1, with its established expertise in fostering inclusive and reflective environments, introduced us to the terms 'safe space' (i.e., a social or physical context in which individuals—particularly those from marginalized or vulnerable groups—can express themselves freely without fear of discrimination, judgment or harm) and 'brave space' (i.e., a space in which former conditions are challenged in favor of new ways of seeing and experiencing) as examples of resonance-enhancing levers. Our engagement with NDB1 allowed us to learn from their practices and experiences, which in turn enriched our discussions with St Ethelburga's. Rather than facilitating or structuring impact, we participated in ongoing



dialogue, recognizing that safe and brave spaces are continuously evolving through the labor and insight of practitioners and communities.

The research process became a collaborative opportunity to further explore multifaceted dynamics between safe and brave spaces, deepening NDB1's and St Ethelburga's ongoing reflections on how to design arts experiences that foster meaningful engagement and consumer well-being. Subsequently, we decided to discuss the concepts with our second partner, St Ethelburga's, and explore opportunities for their consumers to take on more active roles, in tune with the concept of 'brave spaces'. Following joint reflections with the team at St Ethelburga's, this idea was deemed to conflict with the program's objectives and their wider offering due to the need to protect the safe space of Listen to the World, which aims to accommodate a constantly changing consumer community from diverse cultures. This led the research team to better understand the intricacies when designing arts experiences, often requiring *careful* and deliberate design to ensure resonance and consumer well-being are possible (Tymoszuk et al. 2021).

While resonance (and the corresponding space) can be seen as a result of the oscillation between brave and safe space, in the work with our non-academic partners, this example demonstrates our initially limited understanding of the fragile nature of safe spaces and the immense deliberation and efforts that go into creating them. Notably, these discussions led to greater attention and awareness of common constraints practitioners face in the academic's attempt to exercise agency in favor of emancipatory social change. It also motivated our non-academic partners to design safe and brave spaces for experimentation in their arts practices and offerings when engaging with their consumers in more emancipatory and resonant ways. Eventually, and unexpectedly, this informed and reshaped our understanding of impact (i.e. impact-as-space) and how impact can be achieved via methodological innovation. That is, we came to understand that positive impact for consumers (via the respective partner organization) was achieved through the emancipatory research process itself and the resonance that ensued in the co-created spaces between partners and stakeholders.

### **Figure 2 about here**

As Figure 2 illustrates, spaces of resonance are possible between different actors through continuous, reciprocal and iterative processes between the research team and the arts organizations and the art organization and their consumers/communities. This challenged our understanding of impact beyond contributions to our field (cf. Penfield et al., 2014) to encompass resonance-seeking practices. Resonance – between researchers and our partners at NDB1 and St Ethelburga's, as well as between our non-academic partners and their consumers

– was therefore identified as an underlying, nurturing factor for art consumption and consumer well-being. This emerging positive impact stresses the urgency and importance of resonance spaces within collaborative work.

## **Co-creating impact through resonance**

Achieving impact requires identifying change, measuring it accurately, and understanding the timeframe over which it occurs (Keeling and Marshall, 2022). Drawing on Keeling and Marshall (2022), we posit that our impact occurred through advancement in methods and investigation. More generally, impact can occur at different levels: the partnering organizations, the consumer/community (i.e., social and economic impact), and in the academic realm. Here, we acknowledge the challenge and complexity of attributing drivers of change, given the extensive networks of the partnering organizations. Nonetheless, our research played a significant role in shaping the outcomes through its direct contributions to the organizations' decision-making and their interactions with stakeholders.

As described earlier, resonance emerged between partners and stakeholders and was achieved through emancipatory processes that generated a space in which impact became co-created. We therefore understand space already as an impact (i.e., space-as-impact), emerging from joint engagement in emancipatory processes that gives way to impact-making opportunities on socio-economic levels. Importantly, the application of an engagement approach does not automatically lead to resonant experiences. Instead, creating resonant spaces requires a greater level of trust, an increasing flow of information between parties and a sense of safety. This can be achieved through deliberate, open and transparent, as well as continuous dialogical co-creation efforts between partners.

At the level of the partnering organizations, our engagement facilitated new exchanges of insight between the two partners, as learning from one context informed discussions in another. In this sense, impact was not researcher-driven, but the result of being present in and through continuous engagement in shared reflection with them. This was only possible through prolonged interaction with the arts organizations as part of our methodological approach, which enabled our partnering organizations to move from conventional relational engagement towards resonant-inducing practices.

We first witnessed the impact of our research when the CEO and Artistic Director of NDB1 revealed how the emerging findings illuminated the value of their work in the perception of internal and external users. For the organization, this finding helped situate its work and its impact in the wider context of participatory arts and articulate this clearly to external

stakeholders, including funders. Notably, he stated that we “showed that research can be done differently”, highlighting the impact that emerged through the resonant co-creation:

“A reflection on the research and its impact on NDB1, is the support in helping us articulate our practice around safe/brave spaces and acts of courage (which I don't think I would have landed on as concretely if it wasn't for you). I guess we knew as a company it was part and parcel of what we do, but had never been afforded the time, questions or external reflections to interrogate that at all. But by working with you, it's in effect given us a whole new set of vocabulary to communicate what we do and how we do it, but also in the discussion of 'creating brave spaces' it validates our work further as it moves us away from anybody incorrectly thinking that 'we are just putting on nice plays for people' and there is real social value to our work.”

This also underscores the vital role of research insights for an Arts Council National Portfolio organization to maintain and secure funding. Evidence-based policy-making and funding structures require arts organizations to demonstrate impact to secure sustainable funding sources to create substantial, ongoing impact through their work for their consumers. The long-term impact of these reflections on the organization are invaluable in their iterative process of connecting with consumer communities and developing inclusive and participatory arts practices.

In terms of changes to existing programs and praxis, this can take different forms and is context-dependent. For instance, NDB1 sets out to meet their community “where they are”<sup>1</sup>. While putting their communities first facilitates a sense of security (safe space), they also offer opportunities for their consumers to take on an active role to, for example, tackle traumas and discuss sensitive topics (brave space). In contrast, St Ethelburga's Listen to the World program<sup>2</sup> focuses on the collaborative practice of expanded listening (e.g., through their open mic nights, described by St Ethelburga's as “a place where the musical traditions and talents of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers find a home among local artists”). Both cases are examples of resonance-seeking, impact-making approaches that attempt to foster consumer well-being.

Through our work with the partners and their stakeholders, we jointly unlocked and enhanced reflective practices and a willingness to engage in exploratory and equally emancipatory processes that can give way to new problem identification and awareness, and opportunities to innovate current praxis. At the consumer/community level, the evidence

---

<sup>1</sup> Quote from NDB1's CEO and Artistic Director.

<sup>2</sup> Note that we only refer to the Listen to the World program. Other programs have different foci and, for example, are designed to foster courage.

emerging from observations, interviews, and focus groups gathered by the research team illuminated the voices within the community and helped make changes to the programs. This aligns with Scott and Mende's (2022) assertion that research aiming towards positively impacting well-being at the consumer and societal level can be measured in terms of bringing underrepresented voices to the fore and evoking improvements to organizational practices. Yet, such meaningful and practical insights are often context-dependent. Here, case studies provide deep contextual insights, which create thick descriptions and, as such, enhance the transferability of findings to other (relevant) fields. A methodological innovation in investigating inequalities and barriers/facilitators emerged thanks to the engagement with the actual consumers through an extension of the space (see Figure 2) to gather insights from participants. This allowed underrepresented voices to be heard and to potentially inform praxis changes at St Ethelburga's. Following one focus group with St Ethelburga's, several participants contacted us to reiterate the impact and value the program has; for instance:

"I would say that the Listen to the World concerts are special and needed. The setting of the concert already creates space for listeners and musicians alike to come together to fulfil a greater purpose than simply having a 'joyful' time... We are entering a space that has an intention to promote compassion, understanding and healing in some way."

We explicitly highlight the importance of space, both in a physical and non-physical sense, in ultimately promoting consumer well-being, and the role and importance of resonance as an impact-making feature.

On an academic level, our work generated a positive impact in the form of greater awareness, reflexivity and methodological advancement. This made space for new learnings (e.g., being open to the research dynamic and adapting to emerging perspectives) of the phenomena at hand, develop new insights and adjust and innovate methods underpinning our investigation. The quote from our practice partner explicitly describes how impact emerged from the aforementioned impact levels and inspired specific changes in their practice through our methodological approach:

"The engagement with the research team allowed us to jointly embark on a process of reflexivity and reflection. This helped to generate trust, explore potential blindspots together and it gave us an opportunity to engage with our

community in a new, different, and hopefully deeper manner thanks to the focus group. The insights also informed our grant application, shaping plans to expand the program's scope. This includes incorporating more intercultural events, piloting workshops that bring artists together across genres and styles, and fostering 'soft' conversations that model ways of bridging difference. It thus allowed us to identify the value of the space we create – for us and the community we serve.”

Although we set out to provide reflective opportunities for the organizations, we did not anticipate impact in the form of feedback and greater meaningfulness of the partnership to occur early in the process already but, instead, to manifest gradually over time. These early impacts were unintentional but generated greater trust, strengthened bonds and an increasing flow of information (Penfield et al., 2014) – all indicators of the success of the engagement process (Ozanne et al., 2017). Eventually, this allowed us to develop our iterative research design further and capture consumer transformations via, for instance, subsequent data collections including focus groups. Moreover, we realized the collaborative nature required to facilitate reflexivity on our end that, in turn, allowed for deep reflections regarding the competencies we cultivate, and the social reality we participate in producing.

As noted by several observers, measuring impact is challenging for numerous reasons (Penfield et al., 2014), particularly within arts activities. For instance, the significant time lag between creating direct research outputs and societal benefits as well as the evolving nature of impact, mean that it is difficult to trace a clear path (Ozanne et al., 2017; Penfield et al., 2014). Perhaps more importantly, the current academic system prioritizes and rewards measurable and codified outputs (Penfield et al., 2014). Emancipatory praxis, however, moves beyond standardized and more readily attainable measures relating to social impact and well-being to foster inclusion and positive relational outputs to have a genuinely positive societal impact.

## **The Ethics of Impact**

Our research embarked on the notion that a positive impact of collaborative projects is possible if it is grounded in necessary ethical considerations underpinning the research endeavor. Moreover, all researchers are responsible for the ethical consequences of their work (Hutton and Heath, 2020) – both from outcomes and process or methodological perspectives. This responsibility is painfully palpable when the context or subject of their scholarship involves

people and/or organizations, and is compounded when these people are engaged in socially, politically or culturally important work – such is the situation in our work.

To further mitigate against potentially adverse effects, we, prior to the research, identified potential ethical issues and developed transparent strategies to address these issues where possible. For instance, as a research group of white, middle-class academics working in the diversity and inclusion space, we were cognizant that the participant organizations and their community members' lived experiences differ from ours and must be centered; they are the key informants of our understanding, and we consciously incorporated and continue to incorporate this knowledge in our co-created contribution to theoretical development and its impacts (Hutton and Heath, 2020).

Indeed, in foregrounding the partner organizations and their consumers as well as their existing dynamics, valuing and prioritizing their input, and reconfiguring research goals, we aimed to deconstruct existing power structures and privileges that we carry as researchers from a certain, privileged background. Through our ongoing interactions with the arts organizations, we understood that the ethical approach provided a foundation for impact-making processes. It facilitated the creation of a safe space, allowing resonance to occur between us as researchers and the non-academic partners, and to identify and understand the value of space. The resulting trust paved the way for more emancipatory and creative processes of experimentation, within and towards what might be termed 'brave space'.

Both organizations acknowledged the impactful nature of the research, and expressed their desire to continue and even expand the collaboration, which points to the resonance and the research's positive impact on partners and stakeholders going beyond our methodological impact. The learnings to date will allow us to expand our reach further, develop new partnerships, and permit the testing and/or substantiating of the change and impact we have witnessed. Joint funding applications will also allow for further development of our work and help the involved organizations secure funding, through which well-being practices can be further supported.

The recommendations we provide go beyond promoting inclusive research designs and practices to intentionally design spaces that encourage reflexivity and opportunities for resonance as part of collaborative research. Thus, we call for actively embracing the unpredictability of social life to help practitioners and scholars engage with such emerging contradictions and cultivate spaces of resonant inquiry.

# Appendix

Overview of the research process discussed in the manuscript

**Research methodology.** The research methodology we discuss follows a collaborative research approach grounded in emancipatory praxis in an attempt to generate co-created ways of knowing and understanding. Applying an inside-out-approach to impact research, we as a team formulated our research aims and then identified relevant partners. Prior to our engagement with the non-academic research partners, the research team familiarized themselves with their work in terms of their previous and existing productions, and additional information about how they support and work with their respective communities. The research team comprised six researchers working in marketing, consumption, sustainable business, and dance science, thus, bringing together diverse, multi-disciplinary scholarly perspectives. Profile criteria of the research team included having an interest in research that supports consumer well-being through the arts, willingness to contribute to relational engagement when working with stakeholders (Ozanne et al., 2017) and experience in working with diverse qualitative research approaches.

We started our collaboration with the identified partners by conducting observations and taking extensive field notes. In parallel, drawing on our revision of the literature and the collective, interdisciplinary knowledge and experience of working with arts partners, we developed an initial short topic guide to lead reflections following the observations. Data collection consisted of three stages; firstly, in-person observations at both partners in York (n=4) and in London (n=9) to collect data exploring the services they offer to their consumers.

Secondly, we conducted a series of interviews with the respective contact person of our collaborators. This included initial interviews (n=2) to learn more about their work, their ambitions and relationships with their communities, and to discuss the research, eliminate doubts and discuss wider research dynamics. It also included follow-up interviews after each observation (n=13) in the form of a reflective sessions to discuss emerging insights and contrast them with the reviewed literature, avoid blindspots and generate awareness. This strategy was deemed useful in generating greater trust and an increasing flow of information to engage in a productive research partnership. This iterative and reflective approach proved useful in establishing trust and creating a productive research partnership. It also fostered a



level of connection that led to the emergence of the concept of ‘resonance’ as a central and meaningful theme.

Thirdly, we conducted focus groups (n=2) and individual interviews (n=4) with consumers of the partners’ offerings. Three members of the research team interviewed the partners and consumers. The interviews and focus groups were facilitated with the help of the partners, and a broad range of people from diverse backgrounds and experiences were recruited to offer equally diverse insights. In particular, such a process entailed recruiting participants and conveying the background and relevance of the study to participating consumers, setting up the room thoughtfully to encourage open discussion, and passing on additional reflections from the focus group via email to the research collaborators. Even though such a setup can appear somewhat trivial, it relates with implications of the research process in terms of the roles of researchers in the study’s setting (e.g., how the research will take place and if that way it will allow researchers to reflect on challenges and produce useful learnings for practitioners and their wider communities).

Audiences were very engaged during the interview process and discussed the role and importance the offerings of the partners had on and in their own lives and for their wider community. A similar dynamic emerged in the focus groups. Here, we deliberately explored the role of resonance in greater detail. Finally, we agreed with the partners to offer interviewees and focus group participants the opportunity to contact the research team directly, thus encouraging consumers to add more information they might not want to share during the data collection encounters. This proved effective and we were able to collect additional, deeper and often more personal insights. As we were interested in how our partners could facilitate transformative consumption experiences and offer resonant experiences, and how these can drive consumer well-being, this layered, multi-phase approach not only served a successful and detailed data collection but also deep methodological insights into generating impact and the role of resonance in so doing.

## References

Arsel, Z., Crockett, D. and Scott, M.L. (2022). Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI): A Curation and Research Agenda, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 48(5), 920-933.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucab057>



Hutton, M. and Heath, T. (2020). Researching on the edge: emancipatory praxis for social justice. *European Journal of Marketing*, 54(11), 2697-2721.

Keeling, D.I. and Marshall, G.W. (2022), "A call for impact! Launch of the new impact article", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 56 No. 9, pp. 2509-2514.

<https://doi.org/10.1108/EJM-08-2022-0578>

Mende, M., and Scott, M. L. (2021). May the Force Be with You: Expanding the Scope for Marketing Research as a Force for Good in a Sustainable World. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 40(2), 116-125. <https://doi.org/10.1177/07439156211000741>

Ozanne, J.L., Davis, B., Murray, J.B., Grier, S., Benmecheddal, A., Downey, H., Ekpo, A.E., Garnier, M., Hietanen, J., Gall-Ely, M.L., Seregina, A., Thomas, K.D. and Veer, E., (2017). Assessing the Societal Impact of Research: The Relational Engagement Approach. *Journal of Public Policy and Marketing*. 36, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jppm.14.121>

Penfield, T., Baker, M.J., Scoble, R. and Wykes, M.C. (2014). Assessment, evaluations, and definitions of research impact: A review. *Research Evaluation*. 23, 21–32.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/reseval/rvt021>

Preece, C., Rojas-Gaviria, P., Cappellini, B., Kerrigan, F., Hewer, P., Higgins, L. and Sobande, F. (2025), "Let's ROC: a dynamic experience-based roadmap for relational engagement", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. ahead-of-print No. ahead-of-print. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJM-04-2024-0333>

Rosa, H. (2019). *Resonance: A Sociology of Our Relationship to the World*. Polity Press.

Scott, M.L. and Mende, M (2022). Impact for good: a journey toward impact through marketing scholarship, *European Journal of Marketing*, 56(9), 2573-2585.

Tymoszuk, U., Spiro, N., Perkins, R., Mason-Bertrand, A., Gee, K., and Williamon, A. (2021). Arts engagement trends in the United Kingdom and their mental and social wellbeing implications: HEartS Survey. *PloS one*, 16(3), e0246078.

<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0246078>