

# *Ability not Disability: Arts, Bravery and Changing Views in Ireland*

Blue Teapot Theatre Company  
Social Return on Investment Analysis



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# Preface

*As Chairperson of Blue Teapot Theatre Company, I welcome the findings of this comprehensive and insightful report 'Ability Not Disability: Arts, Bravery and Changing Views in Ireland: Blue Teapot Theatre Company SROI Analysis.'*

*Blue Teapot is a multi-award winning Theatre Company, Performing Arts School and Outreach programme for people with intellectual disabilities which is at the forefront of Arts and Disability in Ireland. We are committed to high quality theatre, training and the celebration of creativity.*

*Blue Teapot has gone from strength to strength since its foundation by the Brothers of Charity Services in 1996, moving to the establishment of an independent company in 2009. It has gained wide recognition and respect from artistic and civic organisations and is seen as a model flagship for Arts and Disability.*

*In 2016, Blue Teapot will turn 20 years. We took this as an opportunity to consult with our stakeholders to ensure our vision for the next chapter is informed by their collective feedback. An independent SROI evaluation was selected as the best vehicle to capture the views of a wide range of stakeholders and to gather detailed information on the impact of Blue Teapot's activities. The external validation of the report, which ensured that the report did not over value project outcomes, was also important to the Board of Blue Teapot.*

*This report is a powerful testament to the success of Blue Teapot. It is impressive to find that for every one euro invested in the Company there is a sizable return of four euros. It is clear that Blue Teapot creates highly valued outcomes for its stakeholders. Overall this report includes the views of 289 people including actors, performing art students, outreach participants, family members, support staff, audience members and representatives of local and national arts and civic organisations. The Board and staff of Blue Teapot were also consulted.*

*Blue Teapot's participants identify themselves as actors and artists. This report validates the ethos of the company, which is to affirm this creative identity by giving the best available training and professional opportunities. Performing on platforms such as Dublin Fringe and Galway International Arts Festival to huge critical acclaim and sell out shows reflects high quality theatre and also leads directly to positive outcomes,*

*including: professional recognition, major boosts in self confidence, improved communication and life skills. Theatre audiences commented on the insightful and life changing theatre of Blue Teapot. Family members describe the warm and friendly learning environment that is created by the Artistic Director Petal Pilley and her staff team.*

*The report also identifies key issues and challenges including; the need for progression opportunities for the performing arts students once they have finished their training, future employment opportunities for the actors, increased staffing levels, sourcing additional secure funding and strengthening of organisational structures. The recommendations provide a number of responses to these issues and will be embraced as a roadmap for future development. We look forward to working together with our many stakeholders to make this happen.*

*I would like to thank Caroline Gardner and Quality Matters for their extensive research and commitment to providing such a high quality report and to express my appreciation to all those who participated in the research. I congratulate everyone involved who works with, participates in and volunteers for their commitment to contributing to the creative hub of excellence that is Blue Teapot Theatre Company. I thank them for continuing to stretch boundaries and for their contribution to the regional and national arts dialogue in relation to inclusion.*

**Fiona Coffey,**

**Chairperson Blue Teapot Theatre Company.**

# Acknowledgements

The researchers would like to acknowledge the real generosity that was shown by all those connected with Blue Teapot. People's willingness to engage in this process, and desire to contribute honestly and enthusiastically to the dialogue about the value that Blue Teapot generates is testament to the importance of Blue Teapot within the communities it contributes to, namely the arts and disability communities.

289 people contributed their views to this evaluation, through surveys, interviews and

focus groups. Many thanks to everyone who generously gave their time. Many thanks also to the Blue Teapot staff who were instrumental in organising contacts with such a wide range of people.

To the participants of the Theatre Company, Performing Arts School and to the Bright Soul, thanks for your enthusiastic engagement in this evaluation. It is hoped that this research can support a greater understanding of the value of this project in your lives and that of your families.



# 1 Introduction to Blue Teapot and the Report

## 1.1 Introduction to Blue Teapot

Blue Teapot was founded in 1996 by Brothers of Charity Services Galway (BOCSG) prior to being established as an independent company in 2009. Over this time the organisation has developed into a multi-stranded theatre company, to national acclaim. The company has maintained its focus on providing quality professional performance art training opportunities for adults with intellectual disabilities, who cannot access performance training elsewhere. The company is housed in its own space in the heart of Galway, which is itself a hub for performance and training, and is used from a variety of organisations and collaborations.

The company has been successful in its goal of seeking to provide quality performance based experiences for audiences in Galway and across Ireland. The professional theatre company, which comprises a troupe of seven to nine actors, all graduates of the performance arts school, produces professional theatre productions in collaboration with directors, writers and other theatrical disciplines of national standing.

Blue Teapot is relatively unique in Ireland<sup>1</sup> providing a place where actors with an intellectual disability can train professionally and produce high quality theatre and where audiences can benefit from the unique standpoint of this group of professional artists. Blue Teapot has achieved significant acclaim through its' performance and theatre. Notable among a long list of performances and collaborations<sup>2</sup> have been the following:

- 2014 - **iD** (Galway International Arts Festival)
- In 2012/13 - **Sanctuary** was one of the hits of the Galway International Arts Festival and showed as part of the Dublin Fringe festival
- 2011 – **84** – Reading at the Druid Theatre
- 2010 – A well-reviewed version of Shakespeare **A Midsummer Night's Dream**
- 2009 – **St Patrick's Day Parade** (Galway) Awarded First Place
- 2003 - performance for the Opening Ceremony of **The Special Olympics World Games**
- 2000 – **A Millennium Fable** (Black Box Theatre, Galway; Linen Hall, Castlebar, Co. Mayo; Gort, Co Galway)

Blue Teapot is also part of the firmament of the Galway arts scene. The company has had collaborations with a number of well established arts organisations such as Macnas, Baboro, the International Arts Festival for Children and Galway Film Centre, as well further afield with venues and organisations such as Axis: Ballymun, The Dublin Fringe Arts Festival and non arts organisations such as Inclusion Ireland (a disability organisation). The company has performed in the theatre programme of Galway International Arts Festival and has been recognised as a vital part to the local arts scene through winning the Galway's Majors Award for Arts and Culture in 2013. Blue Teapot is also a partner in the Galway City bid to be the European City of Culture in 2020.

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<sup>1</sup> Kcat, whose work includes the Equinox Theatre Company, based in Killkenny, is one other example of an emerging theater whose work has been critically recognised and whose professionals are primarily people with intellectual disability. [www.kcat.ie](http://www.kcat.ie)

<sup>2</sup> For a full list of performances see: <http://www.bluteapot.ie/about-us/performance-history/>

In achieving it's mission in relation to arts training and production, Blue Teapot also seeks 'to effect a positive change in public consciousness concerning people with intellectual disabilities through the medium of theatre by allowing our members inherent talent and creativity to speak for itself'<sup>3</sup>.

Blue Teapot aims to change how people with intellectual disability and their families, as well as the wider community, perceive the potential and capacity of people with intellectual disability (ID). The company also uses the experience and perspective of its actors and participants as focal points for it's arts practice, thereby bringing the issues and themes people with ID are facing into a public forum.

This approach found significant influence through the play Sanctuary, which addresses issues around the criminalisation of sex for unmarried people with ID. Sanctuary played to sold-out audiences and received widespread critical acclaim, as well as being featured on the RTE documentary 'Somebody to Love'.

This theatre production also had a wider civil society influence. In 2014 Senator Catherine Zappone brought forward amendment change to the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Bill 2014, to the second stage of the process. This bill sought to eliminate discrimination against people with ID in Irish sexual offences legislation<sup>4</sup>. The play was integral in raising the issues addressed by the bill as well as the profile of these discussions. Prior to the a Seanad debate on the topic, Blue Teapot's Director Petal Pilley and Sanctuary cast members Charlene Kelly and Kieran Coppinger held a press conference in Dublin which was hosted by Senator Catherine Zappone to officially launch Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) (Amendment) Bill 2014. This work is now being progressed by political actors and representative disability services.



**Figure 1: Flyer for Seminar with title borrowed from the RTE Documentary which had a focus on Blue Teapot's Sanctuary Performance**

Blue Teapot has influenced public consciousness on these issues due to its ability to challenge stereotypes in an accessible manner through an arts focus. This influence, and the quality of its offering is dependent on the three core aspects of the programme; the Professional Theatre

<sup>3</sup> [www.bluteapot.ie](http://www.bluteapot.ie)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.oireachtas.ie/viewdoc.asp?fn=/documents/bills28/bills/2014/4114/document1.htm>



Company, the Performing Arts School, and the Bright Sparks Programme. These are discussed in further detail below:

### The Blue Teapot Theatre Company

In 2014 the theatre company had nine members. Roles in this ensemble company are limited and inclusion is by audition. This professional company produces performing arts events across Ireland and works with established and well-known writers and directors.

Recent performances include *Sanctuary* in 2013, which was named as a highlight of the Dublin Fringe and Galway Arts Festivals. *iD* was run to sell out audiences in 2014 as part of the Galway International Arts Festival. *iD* received positive reviews in Galway City Tribune's - 'A Must See!' and in the Irish Times. The company has received numerous accolades, including the 'Irish Times Theatre Award Nomination for Judges Special Award' in 2013.



**Figures 2: Sanctuary**

### The Performing Arts School

Founded in 2010, the school operates four days a week for nine hours each day. There are, on average, seven to eight participants. The school provides quality assured QQI certification at level two (for achievement of major award) in year one moving to level three in the second and third year (for achievement of a component award). To date learners have been 100% successful in achieving certificate at levels two and three.

Certified courses include: drama, costume art and design, music, theatre craft, event participation, media expression, non-verbal communication, drawing, pattern and relationships. Additional non-accredited modules include; dance, singing, creative writing, puppetry, acting for film and professional development (CV preparation, interview and audition skills). Additional external supports are provided to develop further literacy skills where required. Over one year the school provides 2,600 – 3,000 of tutor contact hours.

The school's ethos, which centres on the aim of providing a high quality learning environment is equal in importance to supporting students to attain certification. Tutors are all highly experienced in their professional areas and are currently working in their discipline as academics and/or lifelong practitioners.

The school has generally produced two significant events each year. Participant attendance and engagement increases around pre-production time.

Entrance into the programme is through a day-long audition. A number of potential capable candidates are turned away at each recruitment due to the limited number of places.





**Figures 3: East Meets West – St Patricks Day 2011**



**Figures 4: A Tea Party in Wonderland 2013**

### Bright Soul

Bright Soul provides a way for people with mild to moderate ID to engage in the performing arts in a less intensive manner than the performing arts school. Bright soul is one of the longest standing programmes of Blue Teapot, founded in 1996 as part of the Brothers Of Charity Services Galway programme (originally named Drama in the Community). It is described by the company as part of an outreach programme, which aims to provide opportunities to the wider community, in the company's own words: 'with Bright Soul, Blue Teapot casts its net out wider into the community'<sup>5</sup>.

Bright Soul caters to around 14 participants at any time and runs for two hours each week for 20 weeks of the year. The Bright Soul crew have performed regularly as part of Macnas, St Patrick's Day Parades and Bealtaine Festivals in the region, as well as putting on a regular Christmas show.



**Figures 5: A Tea Party in Wonderland 2013**

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<sup>5</sup> [www.bluteapot.ie](http://www.bluteapot.ie)

## 1.2 Blue Teapot at the Awards

Blue Teapot occupies a unique place within the Irish Arts scene, both nationally and within Galway. The company has been recognised in a number of national and regional awards, highlights of which include the following:

- Blue Teapot has also been recognised for its successful approach to education winning the **AONTAS STAR Award for the Connaught region in 2014**. It was also shortlisted for this award in 2012 and 2013. AONTAS<sup>6</sup> is the national body that support adult learning in Ireland. The awards are given regionally each year, nine in total, to adult learning centres who show innovation or excellence.
- Petal Pilley, the Director of Blue Teapot was awarded the prestigious Artist's Bursary, a major national award at the Jim McNaughton / TileStyle Artist Bursary in 2014 Allianz Business To Arts Awards, which honours an individual artist.
- The company has been recognised as a vital part to the local arts scene through winning the **Galway's Majors Award for 'Arts and Culture' in 2013**.
- Blue Teapot won the Social Entrepreneur Award in Ulster Banks Business Achievers Awards in December 2009.

## 1.3 Overview of the Objectives and Scope of the Evaluation

### Objectives of the Evaluation

This social return on investment (SROI) evaluation has been commissioned in order to review the work of Blue Teapot to ascertain:

- The views of various stakeholder groups in relation to Blue Teapots approach and work.
- The outcomes of the programmed for the various stakeholders groups, most importantly the participants and their families.
- The value of these outcomes, with the costs incurred in attaining them, in order to answer the question, does Blue Teapot provide good value for money?
- To explore how the programme could be adapted to improve the experience or outcomes of all stakeholders or the value for money proposition.

### Scope of the Evaluation

This evaluation reviews all inputs and outcomes of the Blue Teapot Theatre Company in the one-year period from Jan 2014 to Dec 2014. The scope was developed to include only the 'business as usual' elements of Blue Teapot, i.e. the work and programmes that take place every year, namely:

- The Professional Theatre Company
- The Performing Arts Programme
- Bright Sparks
- Youth / School Workshops

Three elements of the work which were particular to 2014 were not included in the SROI. The first were the outcomes, or any resources expended in relation to the extremely successful 'Somebody to Love' RTE documentary, which had a focus on the Sanctuary performance. Footage and commentary on Sanctuary were included the RTE documentary, which was shown twice on television, including once in primetime. This show and the reviews and publicity associated with it had significant outcomes in relation to instigating and contributing to a national discourse on the role of state legislation in relation to sexuality, love and disability. The reason for the decision not to

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.adultlearnersfestival.com/starawards/>

include this element of Blue Teapot's influence is that it was considered by staff to be '*a once every 10 years occurrence*'. To maintain the integrity of the SROI in reviewing and considering the impact and value of the work of the programme as it runs year to year, it was considered prudent to leave out the success of this engagement.

Also not included in the 'business as usual' concept was a small pilot of a new programme, which involved working with adolescents. The third work project not included was the production of this SROI. The income and expenditure (including staff time) has been calculated in relation to these projects and has not been included in the SROI.

## 1.4 The Blue Teapot Theory of Change

A theory of change is a description of how change occurs for each stakeholder group. The two diagrams on the following pages show the core stakeholder groups of Blue Teapot and the sequence of changes that result in the longer-term outcomes. Each stakeholder group was involved in developing these theories of change and the long-term outcomes were considered valuable and meaningful by each group.



Figure 5: Blue Teapot Theory of Change - Diagram One

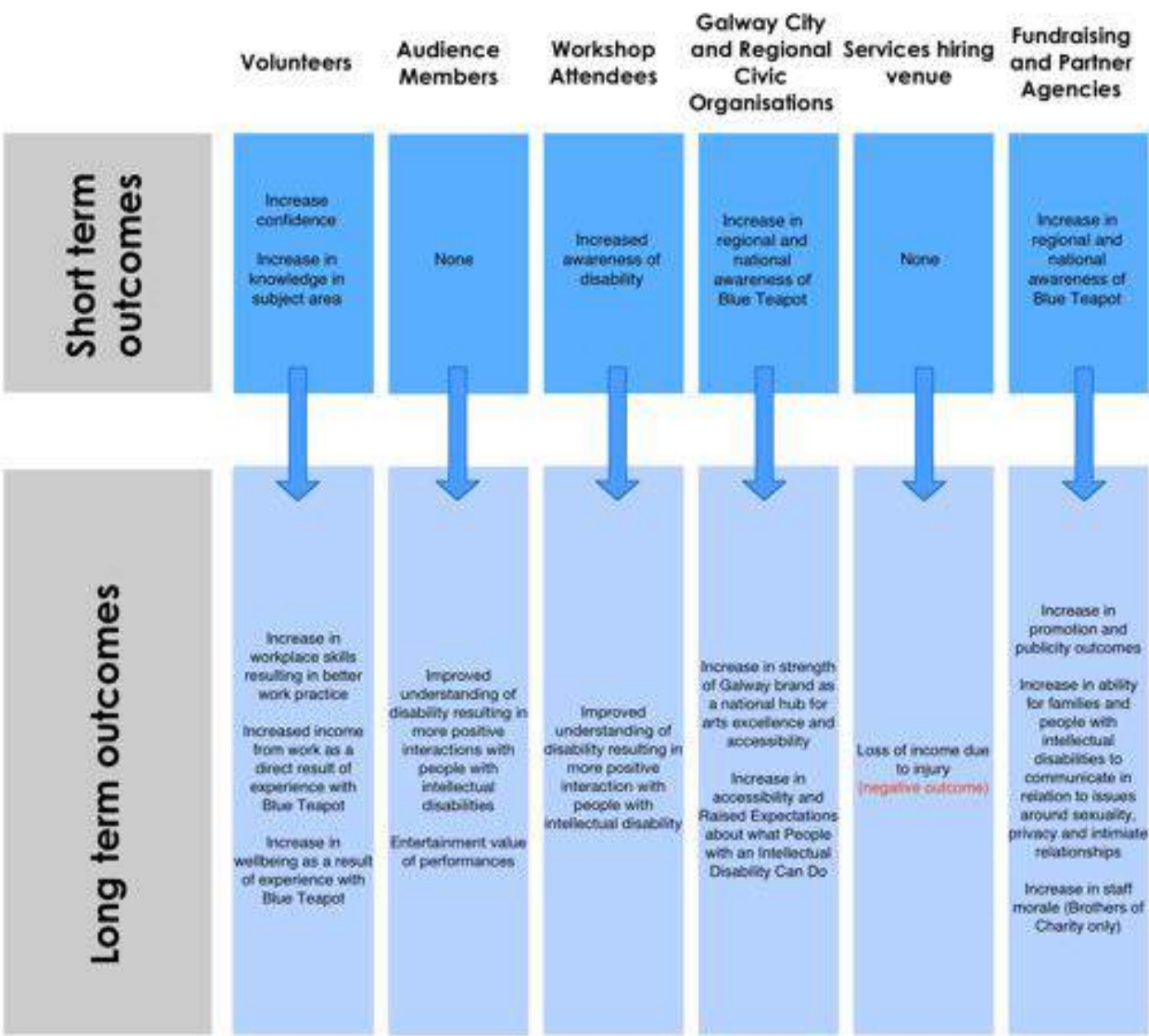


Figure 6: Blue Teapot Theory of Change - Diagram Two

1.5 Summary

This introduction establishes Blue Teapot as an ambitious and innovative company that seeks to engage local people with ID in creating outstanding performance art that creates important changes in public perception at a regional and national level. These goals are best described in Blue Teapots own words: ‘today, we continue to pioneer innovative, game changing theatre that puts our actors on to the national stages of Ireland’ s theatres where we rightly belong.’ (www.bluteapot.ie)

This evaluation will seek to identify whether these goals have been achieved and the value of Blue Teapots work in relation to the investment that Blue Teapot receives.

# 2 The International Context of Blue Teapot's Work

## 2.1 Introduction

This chapter briefly discusses the international context within which Blue Teapots work can be situated. Professional Theatre made by those with ID is a part of an international movement that views arts practice in the disability sector as not only of therapeutic or social value but also of value to wider society due to the potential of companies to produce high quality arts practice, with the right training and supported being comparable to other professional companies. Reviewers and researchers also note that while these companies have challenged people's assumptions about what people with ID can achieve, and set new standards, there is also a wider and universal value to the work, which is its ability to provide a unique and valuable perspective on core themes about what it is to be human.

## 2.2 International Intellectual Disability Theatre Companies

There is a rich international history of theatre involving and being created by people with ID. As well as existing within a historical tradition, albeit a minority one within the wider theatre culture, Blue Teapot has a number of international theatre company contemporaries, a majority of which are doing work which is considered important with the worlds of Disability and the Arts. A non exhaustive list includes: Mind the Gap, U.K, Moomsteatern from Sweden; Les Oiseaux Mouches from France; The Lawnmowers from the UK; Heart & Soul from the UK and Back to Back from Australia.

There are a number of common features, which define these theatre companies

other than their focus on working with actors with ID. The first is that the companies aim to produce theatre for a mainstream audience, running in mainstream as well as disability associated venues, engaging actors for both ID and non-ID, and working with other creative professionals from both backgrounds in a collaborative format. Most important however is the strongly held belief the people with ID can contribute to artistic movements at the highest level, and can create new insights in theatre practice and the themes explored within the work.

## 2.3 The Impact of Professional Theatre with ID Actors

There are a number of writers researching the impact of professional theatre on the lives of those involved as well as the audiences reached through the work, this section some of the themes of this research.

One of the core themes is that theatre provides a unique and powerful opportunity for ID individuals to influence the way in they are viewed by others. Studies in relation to the experience of people with intellectual disabilities from theatre in Norway and Sweden have found;

'That disabled actors, when working within their respective theatre groups, envision themselves as producers, cultural workers, and artists... In other everyday contexts, this is not often the case. Disabled individuals tend to see themselves as users or clients, often without many strong points' [1].

The experience of being appreciated for other aspects of their identity is not frequent or common to many people with ID. Research by Gürgens (2004) has

reported that participants within ID theatre, often feel;

*'stared at, commented on, and otherwise reacted to in a most stigmatizing manner in their everyday life but never when they acted on stage' [ 2, p. 173].*

Part of the empowering and liberating experience of being involved in theatre has been recorded by Warren [3], who observes that participation in the arts is explicitly and necessarily based on the idea of choice and freedom of expression. He comments that;

*'The arts engage the emotions and free the spirit. This can encourage individuals to do something because they want to and not just because someone else decides it is good for them' [3, p.4].*

He maintains that choice is not always so tangible in other aspects of ID activities. Through its expressive nature, the creativity of arts as compared to group based activities, creates a unique environment that enshrines and embodies choice and self expression. The level of engagement and participation required by the arts provides an opportunity for individuals to articulate and give voice to their uniqueness and identity in ways that other activities may struggle to achieve.

It is not just within ID communities that the experience of creating theatre is seen as having an intrinsic value in creating, choice, self-esteem and supporting recognition of identity and potential. McCammon et al (2012) [4] in a study on the lifetime affects of theatre engagement in a mainstream youth audience, involving 234 youth, found that as well as providing important outcomes for youth, there were residual impacts on people later life. Engagement in theatre had a life long outcome for people;

*'The most prominent outcome for most high school theatre and speech participants is lifelong self-confidence - outgoing, independence expressiveness with openness to ideas and people. [4]'*

The value of having an identity that is extended beyond simply being seen as

someone who is ID has also been raised as a key aspect of ID arts practice in previous writing and research. Hargraves (2009) asked individual ID actors whether they preferred being known as;

*'"An actor" or a "learning disabled actor". Without hesitation they each replied, "an actor": not least because they would most likely, in Clay's words, "get more lines"! Ewans also raised a point that one would not think to employ a disabled plumber, simply a plumber' [5, p. 507].*

A core aspect of this identity is based on the professionalisation of the form and appreciation by an audience of the work and craft. This in turn requires additional commitment and effort from ID participants. The need to commit and to practice and the resulting rewards of audience appreciation are noted as core elements in the creation of meaning, that differentiate professional intellectual disability arts practice from many other activities, that do not have a clear outcome which is appreciated and valued. However it should be noted that most studies are undertaken on successful arts projects which are operating at a professional level, and the same level of impact may not be achieved for amateur productions or professional productions which do not receive critical or audience approval.

There is a growing body of research to support the idea that arts activity can have significant results on important outcomes in relation to disability. A randomized control study [6] of the impact of arts facilitation on people with ID found that as compared to the control group, participants experienced enhanced social relationship and language comprehension, as rated by parents and workers. Of note in this study is that participants did not necessarily observe the same progression in themselves.

The benefits of meaningful work and of having an identity that is genuinely a reflection of achievement within mainstream society is a core outcome for intellectual disabled actors who have contributed to studies on the topic.



However the process of learning about the arts can also, through the artistic and group practice, result in clear outcomes in relation to social relationships and communication, benefits of significant meaning to families and intellectual disabled participants.

## 2.4 Creating Meaning for Audiences and Wider Society

The ability of ID theatre to affect change in perception and worldview is not limited to the performers and their immediate family and friends. Given the public nature of theatre, intellectual disability produced or made theatre has the ability to affect a change of opinion within the audience, and potentially, society at large.

The experience of the audience attending theatre produced, acted in or written by or with people with ID has been explored in a number of studies. In a study involving 128 youth and adults audience members, it was found that when watching a theatre production by intellectual disabled and non- intellectual disabled actors, adult audience members occasionally attempted to identify ID status on stage, whereas children did not [1]. Adults were not always able to distinguish between ID and non-ID actors and the researchers comment that;

*'in this type of theatre, it is possible to turn disability into ability' [1]*

This research revealed that adult audiences were often astounded at the ability of intellectually disabled actors to provide rewarding aesthetic experiences. As stated in this paper

*'they had never thought it possible for disabled people to participate in a theatrical production within a professional artistic framework' [1]*

Core to the experience of audiences and their delight in seeing ID actors in a new light - full of realised potential, is a darker realisation - that there is an implicit cultural understanding which views people with intellectual disabilities as being unable in all

areas of life not just those to which the disability pertains.

This frequently unchallenged and limiting stereotype is well described by Tomlinson (1982), the founder of an ID theatre company:

*'Society expects its crippled members to act crippled. The implication of this is that the bearings of a crippled person, when in the company of a non-crippled person, should be submissive and acquiescent . . . [but with performance,] the very act of controlling the particular medium for a certain time in front of a largely passive, captive crowd, actually does allow for the possibility of clearing away much of the mythology that has been created about disability' [7, p 82].*

It is this experience that audiences find both astounding and which provides a memorable experience. Stereotypes are removed and replaced with a reality where people with ID are suddenly more alike than they are different from the audience - and their feelings, abilities, challenges and aspirations.

Other commentators note that the ability of theatre to affect cultural change in a wide audience is extremely valuable. Barnes (2003) warns ID arts groups of the temptation to aim at performing only to family and friends, and that they should consider the opportunity cost of not striving to make theatre that can speak to a wider audience [8].

This said it should be noted that the ID art experience can exist within a range of artistic levels, supports and programme ambitions. Not all groups or artists will work at a professional standard. This is true within mainstream arts development programmes as it is in ID focused programmes.

## 2.5 Intellectual Disability Theatre as Legitimate Art

Another significant theme within the literature is that the challenges that ID theatre presents, and that these challenges, when managed successfully,

can be of significant value to the general understanding of the artistic practice the operate in.

Prior to the point of ID art being a source of learning however, is a need for critics and institutions to view ID art as being of mainstream interest and relevance, for the art form to be acknowledged by its contemporaries. Like most new artistic movements ID theatre has had to prove itself. One of the best indicators of success of ID theatre has been ticket sales and critical reviews. Hargrave, a researcher who has studied disability and performance in three countries, Australia, England, and America, has, through interviews with diverse stakeholders, concluded that the theatre productions studied:

*'Stand up as legitimate products of theatre for paying audiences... They are imperfect, eloquent, frustrating, at times intoxicating experiences that call into question deep-seated beliefs and sensibilities. In short, they are all works of art'* [5, p. 38].

He goes on to say that each company studied has developed a unique important voice within their chosen medium, contributing to an understanding of the medium in a wider sense, as well as creating valuable artworks in and of themselves.

The notion that the unique perspective of ID performance, can have an equally unique ability to challenge mainstream audiences on issues in their own lives is a point made a number of commentators, including Conroy (2009) who notes:

*'The work of disabled scholars and scholars of disability, disabled practitioners and makers of theatre with and for disabled people needs a creative space to articulate and explore the tensions between us all.'*[9].

## 2.6 Summary

This brief review situates Blue Teapot within an international movement of professional ID theatre companies. Each of which is driven by a desire to challenge societal notions about what can be achieved by ID individuals. In doing so many of these companies have introduced new ideas into existing theatre practice and have significantly challenged societal notions on the capabilities of ID actors, and by extension the capabilities of those with disability. In addition to this these performances have often challenged and brought about understanding and a change in perspective on other issues, common to all.

The benefits of professional arts practice for ID actors are significant. The opportunity for self-direction, achievement and self actualisation are all heightened through meaningful performance focused artist development. When audiences are appreciative of the work and performance and see actors as educators and entertainers this has a significant impact of changing the usual societal understanding of disability, from ID actors being an object of unwanted attention to one where intellectually disabled actors invite and control the way in which attention is given. This role reversal has real implications for how ID people see themselves and also for how audiences view the world.

The themes raised within this review are all core to the Blue Teapot evaluation and reflect many of the key findings of the research. It is hoped that the Blue Teapots evaluation in turn supports a greater understanding of the benefits and potential and value of ID arts based practice to the intellectual disability community and wider society

# 3 Introduction to SROI and Methodology

## 3.1 Introduction to SROI

SROI is a method of assessing the impact that a service has had. It also assesses what this impact is likely to be worth to those who receive the benefit. To do this an SROI involves substantial information collection from those stakeholder groups that may potentially receive a positive or negative impact from the project. The stakeholder groups in relation to Blue Teapot included participants, family members, volunteers and other organisations.

The information provided by each group, is supported by research, which seeks to assist in the valuation process. Research has a particular role in providing information on:

What would have occurred anyway, as this is deducted from overall valuations – the programme cannot claim it (deadweight)

- The length of time that impact can conservatively be assessed as lasting.
- The reduction in the influence that the original event will have on the impact overtime (Drop-off)
- The amount of responsibility that the intervention or programme can reasonably claim for the overall outcome. Often other organisations or the role of other supports such as family will play a role in change. This contribution must be accounted for and deducted from the valuations, as the organisation cannot claim all of the value of the outcome.

The purpose of undertaking additional research is to ensure that the assumptions made in relation to the value of the change is robust.

SROI is underpinned by seven principles, these inform all elements of the methodology, and these are;

**Principle 1: Involve Stakeholders:** The first step in the process is asking people who are affected what changed for them.

**Principle 2: Understand What Changes:** All stakeholders are asked about the negative as well as the positive outcomes of the programme. SROI is about understanding everything that changed not just the positive things.

**Principle 3: Value the Things that Matter:** Stakeholders are involved in discussing how much the changes that happened as a result of the programme are worth to them. When a market value for an outcome is not readily available, such as in the case of self-esteem, a proxy value will be selected and a rationale provided for why the valuation is considered appropriate.

**Principle 4: Only Include what is Material:** Not everything that emerges through the process will be material, materiality means that a piece of information will affect the final SROI calculation or could affect decision made on the basis of the information being excluded. If it could affect a decision, then the information is considered material.

**Principle 5: Do not Over Claim:** It is important that throughout the report all value assessments are undertaken conservatively veering on the side of undervaluing rather than overvaluing outcomes.

**Principle 6: Be Transparent:** All the calculations that were undertaken to arrive at an assessment of social value must be clear and traceable to the interested reader. To assist with this an impact map is available, which outlines all the calculations within assessment. Also to support transparency the appendix contains additional data and research tools.



**Principle 7: Verify the Result:** This report has been validated by the SROI Network. This process confirms that it has been undertaken in line with the seven principles. This is an important step and should provide the reader with some additional confidence that these considerations of value have been undertaken in line with good practice.

## 3.2 Scope of the SROI

The SROI reviews all inputs and outcomes over the period of 2014. The aim of the SROI is to review the standard work of Blue Teapot and the value of this. As such there are three activities which were not included in the project's scope:

1) A pilot programme, entitled 'Sparkle' that worked with youth. This was not included as it was a pilot programme and has not been made a standard part of the programme. The staff input into this programme and the outcomes for participants have therefore not been recorded.

2) Over the period of the SROI evaluation the service received significant media attention based on a nationally broadcast RTE documentary which included footage and commentary on 'Somebody to Love'. The documentary had very successful outcomes in relation to raising issues in relation to disability, marriage and sexuality, as well as the profile of the company. It also provided a national TV audience with examples of how much people with ID can accomplish. However staff considered this to be an anomaly to the 'business as usual' environment, and unlikely to be repeated in coming years, as such it has not been included within the SROI.

3) The development of the SROI itself.

## 3.3 Overview of the Methodology

The methodology was guided by the seven principles of SROI and included the following steps, which are described in more detail in the remainder of this chapter.

Steps in the methodology are:

1. Agree the Scope
2. Develop a Stakeholder Map
3. Undertake focus groups to develop the theory of change and indicators

4. Undertake interviews
5. Analyse data and conduct research to support assumptions
6. Undertake a sensitivity analysis
7. Develop conclusions and recommendations

These steps are described in more detail below.

## 3.4 Step One: Agree the Scope

The scope of the project was agreed in an initial phone interview with the Creative Director of Blue Teapot. The principle guiding the development of the scope was that the SROI should evidence the value of the core and ongoing elements of the programme. The period for the SROI was Jan 2014 to Dec 2014. The SROI includes all programme costs, both real and in-kind over this period, as well as all outcomes, with the exception of the three activities named in 3.2.

## 3.5 Step Two: Develop the Stakeholder Map

A stakeholder map was developed in consultation with key staff members initially through a phone interview, and then reviewed in a focus group. The impact map identifies all the organisations that were potentially affected by Blue Teapot, either negatively or positively. Within the interviews all stakeholders were also asked about any other groups who they could identify as receiving either negative or positive outcomes.

A list of stakeholders is identified in the engagement table in the following page. This table highlights that overall the views of 289 people were included in the report.

## 3.6 Step Three: Initial Focus Groups

The research involved two rounds of focus groups, in the initial round three participant groups (Theatre Company, Performing Arts Programme and Bright Soul Programme) were worked with using creative facilitation

techniques, such as storytelling, or 'human scales' (facilitation techniques are described in detail in the appendix) in order to derive a theory of change from the perspective of programme participants.

A staff focus group was also held to finalise the draft stakeholder map and to explore potential outcomes, both negative and positive for each stakeholder group. Sixteen independent stakeholder groups were identified and engaged with throughout the process.

### 3.7 Step Four: Stakeholder Interviews

In-depth qualitative semi structured interviews were conducted over the phone or in person with: parents, regional / local civic and arts organisations, national civic and arts organisations, the board and staff and/or management within support organisations. These lasted between 25 and 45 minutes, interviews were partially transcribed.

Transcripts for use in the research were sent to key stakeholders, or if preferred key quotations were read out to respondents on the phone allowing for endorsement, elaboration or small changes.

### 3.8 Step Five: Data Analysis

Analysis of interview transcripts was undertaken in Excel using a coding system iteratively developed as part of the thematic analysis. This involved an initial coding of themes and then subsequent refinement of the coding system by the researcher before this was reviewed by a colleague for consistency and accuracy. Small changes and refinements were made at each point until the team was content that the themes were an accurate assessment of the collective views of each stakeholder group.

Quantitative data was analysed in an Excel spreadsheet or through Sogo software; the online survey software used within the research.

Table 1: Table showing engagement

Stakeholder	Numbers engaged	Engagement (part one)	Engagement (part two)	Engagement (part three)
Performing Arts participants (8)	8/8 (100%)	A 1.5 hour focus group	Second focus group 1.5 hours	Representatives in focus group
Bright Soul participants (14)	5/14 (38%)	A one hour focus group		
Theatre Company participants (8)	8/8 (100%)	A 1.5 hour focus group		Representatives in focus group
Groups receiving workshops	55 (100%)	Existing survey data analysed / interview (25 mins)		
Family members of people attending Theatre Company or Performing Arts programme	17 (100%)	Phone interviews (average 40 mins)		Representatives in focus group
Parents of people attending Bright Soul	5 /14 (36%)	Phone interviews (average 25 mins)		
Support organisations (disability and transport)	4	Phone interviews (average 25 minutes)	Email responses for validation	Focus group / review by email
Staff (core staff)	3/3 (100%)	A 1.5 hour focus group	A 1.5 hour focus group	Focus group / review by email
Sessional / contact staff	17/25 (68%)	Phone interviews (25 mins) and survey	Survey	Focus group
Volunteers	5/6 (83%)	Phone / face to face interviews	Survey	Focus group
Neighbours	12	Face to face / phone interviews		
Audience attending the theatre events	106	Survey at a theatre shows in Dublin and Galway	-	
Organisations using the space	3/3 (100%)	Phone interview (30 mins)		Review by email
Regional / local civic and arts organisations	5	Phone interviews (40 mins)	Email responses for validation	Review by email
National civic and arts organisations	4	Phone interviews (35 mins)	Email responses for validation	Review by email
Board members	5	Phone interview (35 minutes)	Email responses for validation	Focus group / review by email
Referral /funding agency staff (Brothers of Charity and Ability West)	22	Interviews with two senior staff (also board members)	Survey to 22 team leader role staff	Review by email
Miscellaneous	1	Phone interview with local agent		
<b>Total people engaged in research</b>	<b>289</b>			

### 3.9 Step Six: SROI Valuation Research / Secondary Focus Groups

Proxy valuations, the monetary value given to each outcome, were derived from a combination of research and participants views. High value proxies, primarily participant's outcomes, were reviewed with reference to available research and were then discussed in a parent focus group in order to endorse or adapt the outcome values. These focus groups also involved an opportunity to check estimations taken from interviews in relation to the time period that outcomes were expected to last. Debate and agreement by the group on time period greatly strengthened estimations.

These focus groups also involved a review of draft recommendations. After each of the four main focus groups in phase two of the process (staff, participants, parents and board) recommendations were adapted to reflect new observations, additions and clarifications. This process ensured that the final focus group, with the board, had the benefit of being informed by the views of each stakeholder group.

### 3.10 Step Seven: Final Stakeholder Review of Content

Relevant chapters of the research were sent to stakeholder groups where their views were representative of a larger group, i.e. key staff were speaking from an organisational standpoint. This provided the chance for any final feedback or clarifications.

### 3.11 Step Eight: Sensitivity Testing

The SROI analysis was then sensitivity tested, this involves reviewing other potential logical scenarios to ensure that a small change in assumptions does not create a large change

in final SROI figures. The calculations and alternate logic that was reviewed is outlined in Chapter 17.

### 3.12 Management of Ethical Considerations

Prior to the interviews, focus groups or at the beginning of each survey, participants were informed that the process was voluntary and anonymous. These terms were explained in simple language and an opportunity was provided to ask questions. Participants were also informed of who commissioned the research and that the purpose was to publish a report that would help Blue Teapot in its future planning as well as assist all stakeholders on better understanding the outcomes and value of Blue Teapots work in order to further maximise this in the future.

Quotes and stories from interviewees were reviewed to ensure that these maintained respondents anonymity, these meant that some could not be used in the report. The one exception to this was an interview conducted with a national arts organisation, where a unique viewpoint would have made it impossible to ensure that the identity of interviewee was concealed. Following the interview transcript being sent to the interviewee and respondent approval given of same, the interviewee provided permission (by phone and email) to waive the right to anonymity and agreed that the full transcript could be made available to the service, as well as to the research.

In all cases, the limits of confidentiality regards child protection were explained to interviewees, however a need to extend confidentiality in relation to child protection was not required at any point in the research.

### 3.13 Limitations to the Research

#### Lack of Longitudinal Data

The quality of the SROI would be improved through the keeping of Blue Teapot longitudinal data on significant outcome



areas. The lack of these systems means that data was captured through interviews with a focus on reflecting on change over the last year. This report recommends the use of pre and post outcome data capture to improve the quality of data capture into the future.

### Detailed Data on Proxies

While comprehensive research has been undertaken to explore medical or cost per unit proxies for outcomes related to improvements in factors related to ID, such as; improving communication and ability to move around independently, concrete and reliable proxies were not available in some cases. Research from data from comparable populations has been used alongside costs of comparable services provided by stakeholder groups.

### Positive Bias

To avoid positive bias as much as possible high percentages of each stakeholder group were contacted, with the most important

stakeholder groups, i.e. participants and their parents having a 70% - 100% participation rate. However it should be noted that positive bias, i.e. a tendency to include people who are more positively disposed to the project, is a possibility when anything less than 100% of stakeholder group is involved.

### Use of Assumptions within the SROI

An SROI makes assumptions in relation to each outcome and its valuation, these assumptions, such as the length of time an outcomes lasts, deadweight and drop off, are based on stakeholder views and ideally supported by evidence from peer reviewed research. However in some cases information was scarcer. To account for this, assumptions with less evidence have been made conservatively. i.e. deadweight and drop off have been weighted more heavily and in the case of the length of the outcome, this has been estimated at fewer years. Also sensitivity testing has been undertaken to ensure that likely changes in the assumptions do not significantly alter the final SROI.

# 1 Outcomes and Value for the Participants in the Theatre Company Ensemble

## 3.14 Introduction

To provide insight into the experiences and changes that occurred for participants in the Theatre Company ensemble, a focus group was held and interviews were conducted with family members or legal guardians of the participants. In total, eight interviews were completed, with correspondents to eight Theatre Company participants.

Each family member or guardian was asked questions that considered the impact and changes experienced by participants over the period of the SROI, which was January to December 2014.

Of note is that the average length of attendance or involvement in the Theatre Company ensemble for participants was seven years. This presented some challenges for family members in relation to narrowing the outcomes to the 2014 period under review, however this was discussed with participants as part of each interview.

When family members were asked to rate the overall impact that Blue Teapot had on the participant's life, respondents valued this positive change at an average of 9.8 out of 10 (n=8) and frequently described Blue Teapot as 'life changing', when referring to the impact of the organisation on their child.

## 3.15 A Theory of Change

A theory of change is a model for explaining how engagement in an activity leads to changes for participants; this is described pictorially in the introduction chapter.

The following is a written description of the way in which the Blue Teapot functions from the perspective of the client, and the outcomes that they receive from the process:

Following attending a number of years at the Performing Arts programme, and auditions for the Theatre Company ensemble, some school graduates are invited to join the professional Theatre Company ensemble.

As a result of attending the school and attaining accreditation at Level 3 on the NQF, participants learned and mastered a broad range of skills in relation to communication and the performing arts.

Over the course of rehearsals and preparation for performances, Theatre Company participants reported a significantly improvement in their self-confidence. This is best highlighted by the following quote from a family member:

*She has improved her confidence and really developed a sense of her own worth. This has caused her to become more aware of her own abilities. I think that Blue Teapot has widened her experience of life and make her feel that she has more to offer the world. (Parent 5)*

Another medium term outcome was the formation of new friendships with Blue Teapot staff, production crew and other members of the Theatre Company ensemble, which gave the participants a real sense of belonging. Following these medium term outcomes, participants reported the following long term outcomes, which were considered of high value to their life and general wellbeing or happiness:

- 1) **An improvement in communication and social skills:** Out of eight family members, seven (n=7) reported an improvement in communication and social skills for Theatre Company

participants, or reported that they had maintained a previous significant improvement.

- 2) **A reduction in social isolation and improved sense of community:** All family members (n=8) reported a significant reduction in social isolation or an improved sense of community for Theatre Company participants, or that they had maintained a previous change in this outcome.
- 3) **An improved sense of purpose or life satisfaction:** Seven family members (n=7) reported an improved sense of purpose and life satisfaction for Theatre Company participants, or that they had maintained a previous change in this outcome.
- 4) **An improved independence in relation to travel or life skills:** Five family members (n=5) reported an improved sense of independence in relation to either travel or life skills for Theatre Company participants over the SROI period.
- 5) **An increase in paid employment or income:** All participants (n=8) received opportunities for paid employment as a result of involvement in Blue Teapot's Theatre Company ensemble.

### 3.16 Views of Family Members and Participants

#### View One – Participants have a special interest in arts

The majority of family members (n=7) reported that Theatre Company participants had a special interest or talent in the creative and performing arts, and saw Blue Teapot as a unique environment in which this could be developed and supported:

*I think he has special interest in creative arts; he is a natural in my book. I am not an expert, but knowing and seeing him act, I think that he's exceptional. (Parent 3)*

*Our daughter rehearses here at home and also does paintings. I think that she's a great artist. (Parent 15)*

Family members mentioned that participants would often practice acting and rehearse scripts for Blue Teapot in their personal time or at home. They felt that Blue Teapot provided a unique opportunity for their children to grow their natural talents and find satisfaction and meaning in doing something that they loved.

Half of the family members (n=4) stated in interviews that Blue Teapot was a more satisfactory experience for Theatre Company participants compared to other specialised activities for adults and adolescents with developmental or ID.

*Other activities would not tap into his intelligence and would not offer the satisfaction that he could gain from Blue Teapot. (Parent 1)*

*He was attending a day centre, however, they would not be able to engage with him and maintain his interest in the same way as Blue Teapot. At Blue Teapot, he is able to make friends and express himself fully. (Parent 4)*

Feedback indicated that family members felt that the Theatre Company ensemble provided more opportunities for participants than most other programmes provide.

#### View Two – Dedication of staff working with participants

More than half (n=5) of family members stated that Blue Teapot staff demonstrated a true and unique commitment to their work with adults and adolescents with developmental and intellectual disabilities. This is highlighted by the following quotes:

*The staff are so friendly and work so well with participants. There is no such thing as passing them over if they are not doing well, and they all love them so much. It's fabulous. They are as much wanted at Blue Teapot as they are at home. (Parent 2)*

*Blue Teapot is like a family or a community. They look after each other and there is no negative feedback ever from participants. (Parent 3)*

*The staff are truly committed and go beyond their daily work. (Parent 1)*

Family members saw this dedication as the reason or the strong sense of community for participants involved in the Theatre Company ensemble and their families.



### 3.17 Outcome One - Improvement in Communication and Social Skills

Seven family members (n=7) reported an improvement in communication and social skills, or that they had maintained a previous significant improvement in their communication and social skills because Blue Teapot. The remaining family member (n=1) reported that the Theatre Company participant only experienced a small change in relation to this outcome, which was not considered significant enough to be valued part of the SROI.

For this outcome, an improvement in communication and social skills was defined as being:

- Significantly improved vocabulary or ability to articulate / ability to express themselves;
- Improved eye contact and/or focus on others when speaking;

- The individual being more attentive, focussed and outgoing when communicating, and being able to express views and participate in conversations more easily.

The impact of improvements in communication for participants, can be best described by the following quotes from family members:

*He has improved greatly in his speech. Previously, he did not talk to anyone in the house and would just stay in his room. Now he is more able to talk with everyone, and it is has improved a great deal. People can understand what he's talking about, and they used to not really understand what he was saying. His comprehension has really improved. (Parent 11)*

*I've found that she is more confident in her speech, she'll take initiative when she's making conversation with other people. She is more outgoing, like coming forward and speaking up in public if she's got something to add. (Parent 4)*

The value of this improvement in communication and social skills for Theatre Company participants has been calculated using a proxy valuation of the cost of speech and language therapy sessions for individuals with ID.<sup>7</sup> A report by Inclusion Ireland [9] found that, on average, the cost of speech and language therapy in Ireland costs €100 per session.

To determine a more precise value of the improvement in communication skills, research on the effectiveness of speech and language therapy was referenced [11]. A study on the effect of speech therapy for children with down syndrome found that attending five one-hour sessions per week over a nine-month period showed a greater improvements in speech and vocabulary

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<sup>7</sup> A commonly utilised therapy to improve communication skills for individuals with intellectual disabilities is considered to be speech and language therapy [10].



compared to a control group [11]<sup>8</sup>. Using this information, the cost to improve the communication and social skills of an individual with an intellectual disability was estimated as being €18,000 per individual<sup>9</sup>.

In interviews, family members initially stated this outcome would last a “lifetime”. However after a focus group, through group discussion, family members revised this initial estimation and agreed that this improvement was more likely to last four years, if other supports ceased. It was felt that if Blue Teapot were to cease, this improvement in communication and social skills could reverse over time and that the continuation of progress was dependent on a continued connection to the theatre company.

**Attribution:** Attribution is an estimation of how much the outcome was caused by the contribution of another person or organisation. Attribution for this outcome was based on responses from family members in interviews, which found 28% of the improvement in communication and social skills was estimated to be as a result of the support of family and friends, as well as the influence of carers, education programmes, community and voluntary work or part-time paid employment.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** There was a low deadweight, of 5% calculated for this outcome. In interviews, all family members reported that this change could not have resulted from other supports without the intervention of Blue Teapot. The majority of family members stated that Blue Teapot participants had previously attended specialised day programmes for people with ID and that these did not improve their communication skills to any comparable extent as had Blue Teapot.

The drop off calculated for this outcome was 20% annually, which is defined as the reduction in causality between this outcome and Blue Teapot. This means that the benefit of this outcome would reduce to zero within five years. Family members stated this improvement in communication and social

skills was only possible because of the involvement of Blue Teapot, which was substantiated in the focus group with parents.

### 3.18 Outcome Two – A Reduction in Social Isolation and Improved Sense of Community

All family members (n=8) reported a significant reduction in social isolation, or an improved sense of community for Theatre Company participants, or that participants have maintained a previous significant improvement in this outcome. In interviews, this reduction in isolation was described as, two of more of the following:

- Building and maintaining new friendships outside of the family;
- More outgoing and comfortable participation in social activities;
- An increased sense of feeling that one is a valued member of a community or group.

The following quotes best describe this change:

*She belongs to Blue Teapot, she is an extension of the theatre group and there is no separation or division. It is all a team effort. She is delighted when other participants come to see the play. She enjoys being in the presence of her own theatre community. (Parent 15)*

*They are all great pals at Blue Teapot. You can see among the new group, our son explains that he is mentoring new participants and helping others with theatre. The social buzz is great. Mentoring is a new role for our son. (Parent 1)*

*We have learnt how to trust each other - we are friends for life (Theatre member 2)*

*He wants to be in environment where he is close to Blue Teapot, his friends and that community. (Parent 3)*

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<sup>8</sup> The control group attended only one sessions per week for a nine-week period, and did not demonstrate the same level of improvement in vocabulary and speech [11].

<sup>9</sup> €100 x (5 sessions x 32 weeks) = €18,000

The value of a reduction in social isolation to the individual has been calculated using a proxy of the cost of attending day support programme for adults with ID using work-like activities. Research [12] indicates the cost of this support is valued at €15,981<sup>10</sup>. In a focus group, family members considered that this benefit would approximately four years, as their children had made friendships that they actively engaged with outside of Blue Teapot, however it was unknown how this sense of community would be maintained if the theatre company ceased to exist.

**Attribution:** Attribution for this outcome was based on responses from clients in interviews. It was calculated that 21% of this reduction in social isolation was a result of the support of family and friends, as well as the influence other activities like carers, day programmes, and paid employment. This means that 79% of this improvement is a result of the activity of Blue Teapot.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** A figure for deadweight, the change that would have occurred anyway without Blue Teapot, was calculated as 20%. This figure is based on interview feedback and the parent focus groups, where respondents considered that, in general, other groups did not generate the same sense of belonging and community as Blue Teapot. Parents generally agreed that participants would have approximately a one in five chance of establishing this sense of community in another group. It was noted that for many in the parents focus group, finding a group that their child felt they belonged to had been extremely challenging in the past.

A figure for drop off was estimated at 20% to account for the reduction in causality between the outcome over time and the influence of Blue Teapot, leading to a zero value after five years.

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<sup>10</sup> The average cost for day support services was based on the cost of costs for day support services in Ireland for individuals with moderate, low and minimum support needs. (€23,143 + €20,386 + €4,414) / 3 = €15,981 per annum

### 3.19 Outcome Three - An Improved Sense of Purpose and Life Satisfaction

Seven family members (n=7) reported an improvement in the sense of purpose and life satisfaction for Theatre Company participants, or they maintained a previous significant improvement in this outcome. One remaining family member (n=1) stated that the Theatre Company participant did not experience this change.

An improvement in the sense of purpose and life satisfaction for Theatre Company participants was defined as being an improved sense of direction, fulfilment and satisfaction through engagement in meaningful activities. All family members mentioned that this satisfaction was related to engagement in the performing arts, through having clear goals, which were considered important, and having the supports to achieve these goals. The role of community recognition of this effort was also viewed as being an important driver of meaning and satisfaction. It was noted that meaningful opportunities were extremely rare for many people with ID.

The following quotes from family members illustrate the change:

*At a fundamental level, (Blue Teapot) has given meaning to her life. It has given her a reason to get excited about participating in something worthwhile. It has given her interest, meaning and excitement and it is what she lives for. Even when she is with me, she's working on her lines and rehearsing plays. She is always watching films and television, and is very keen to observe other actor's at work. (Parent 4)*

*Acting makes you happy. (Theatre member 2)*

*I love getting ready for a show, and I love hearing people clapping. (Theatre member 5)*

*She has always been interested in acting. She was artistic in many ways. She used to be quite withdrawn, but Blue Teapot has*

*improved her confidence and it has brought her more into being an adult person. (Parent 16)*

The value of an improvement in life satisfaction and sense of purpose was calculated using three different price valuation metrics:

1. A price valuation using the Health-Adjusted Life Years metric (represented in QALYs or Disability-Adjusted Life Years (DALY) and the Willingness-to-Pay (WTP) framework);
2. A price valuation based on research on the financial quality of life for individuals and families accessing disability services in Canada;
3. A price valuation on the cost of 12 sessions with a registered life coach in Ireland.

These are discussed in detail below:

**Method 1:** A commonly used method of health valuation is QALYs (along with other measures of health-adjusted life years such as DALYs), which measures the quality of life associated with a person's state of health, with 1.0 being perfect health and 0.0 being death; some models allow for measures less than zero to represent states that are worse than death [13]. According to research on QALY values, it is generally accepted that the measured willingness-to-pay for one additional QALY (.1) is between £25,000 - £30,000 in U.K currency (or €34,647) [14,15]. Based on research (5, 8), the weight of the quality of life impact of down syndrome was calculated as being between 0.36 to 0.5 DALYs. To arrive at a valuation for a significant improvement in quality of life for an individual with ID, the lower DALY figure of 0.36 has been used. Therefore, the cost to improve the wellbeing and quality of life of an individual with a down syndrome is estimated as €12,473<sup>11</sup>.

**Method 2:** According to research on the buying power of individuals and families accessing developmental and intellectual disability services in Canada, on average, 2.2% of the average household income is spent on accessing social and recreational

activities [17]<sup>12</sup>. Based on Canadian census data, the average household income is estimated as \$74,540 [18]. Therefore it can be estimated that, on average, \$16,839 is spent on social and recreational activities<sup>13</sup>. When converted to euro, this would translate to an average annual spend on social and recreational services for children with disabilities of €12,111<sup>14</sup>.

**Method 3:** To calculate the value of an improvement in life satisfaction for the whole population (without the additional burden of an ID), a proxy valuation of the cost of registered life coaching classes over a 12-week period<sup>15</sup>, has been considered. Based on the average cost of three life coach services in Ireland<sup>16</sup>, the average cost is estimated as €780<sup>17</sup>.

To estimate the cost of this improvement in life satisfaction to the individual, the average cost of all three price valuations was calculated as being €8,454<sup>18</sup>.

In the focus group, family members considered that this benefit would last four and half years.

**Attribution:** Attribution for this outcome was based on responses from family members in interviews. It was calculated that 20% of an improvement in life satisfaction was a result of the support of family and friends, as well as the influence other activities like carers, day programmes, and paid employment. This means that 80% of this improvement was a result of the involvement of Blue Teapot.

12 A limitation of this price valuation is this figure is based on the total expenditures paid on disability services for individuals with a developmental or intellectual disability, and is not based on the willingness-to-pay for these services. Also, this figure is based on findings of a Canadian study on families and individuals with a family member with a developmental or intellectual disability.

13 (\$74,540 x 2.2%) = \$16,839

14 Calculated using XE Currency Converted on 19/05/2015.

15 A limitation of this price valuation is that this figure is based on the cost of life coaching services for the whole population, and may not be applicable to an individual with an intellectual disability.

16 The average cost of life coach classes were based on local services

(www.eoinryancoaching.com, www.mylifecoachireland.com, and www.coach4life.ie)

17 (€1,020 + €720 + €600) / 3 = €780

18 (€12,473 + \$16,839.+ €780) = €8,454

11 (0.36 DALYs x €34,647) = €12,473

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** A figure for drop off was estimated at 20% to account for the reduction in causality between the outcome over time and the influence of Blue Teapot, leading to a zero value after five years.

There was a low deadweight of 5% calculated for this outcome. In interviews, all family members reported that this change could not have resulted from other supports. The rationale was that, the challenge of the work combined with supports offered to achieve the goals set and then the acclaim and recognition that stemmed from achievement of the goals created a sense of meaning for Theatre Company participants which was not replicable elsewhere.

### 3.20 Outcome Four - Greater Independence

Five family members (n=5) reported an improvement in participant independence related to travel or life skills for Theatre Company participants. The remaining family member (n=1) reported a small change in relation to this outcome, which was not considered significant enough to be categorised alongside the other changes in this category. The remaining two family members (n=2) stated there was no change for this outcome.

An improvement in independence was defined as being an improved ability to travel independently to familiar and unfamiliar settings, an improved motivation for travelling independently, as well as a greater sense of direction when navigating. The following quotes can best describe this change for Theatre Company participants:

*Within Galway City, he has improved his ability to commute and travel through the city. He has become more observant, and began noticing street names and would know what to do if he missed the bus or could walk towards the centre of the city to catch another bus. (Parent 1)*

*I get two buses here and back... it's not far for me at all... I've learned this since being in Blue Teapot. (Theatre member 7)*

The financial proxy for an improvement in independence is valued as being the disposable income received from an individual receiving disability allowance from the State, which covers additional living expenses like travel. This costs is, on average, €33 per week, which results in a total figure of €1,716 [19]<sup>19</sup>. This value also translates to an average of two or three taxi journeys, which are required to travel if an individual can not access public transport.

The average length of the effect of the outcome was estimated at four years, based on feedback from the focus group with family members.

**Attribution:** Based on interviews with family members, it was calculated that the attribution for other supports contributing to this change was 44%. Other supports included the influence home environments. This means that 56% of this improvement in independence was a result of the work of Blue Teapot.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** An annual drop off of 20% was estimated. There was a low deadweight calculated for this outcome. In interviews, all family members reported that this change is unlikely to have resulted from other supports without the intervention of Blue Teapot, this was based on assessment on progress of individuals in this area prior to attending Blue Teapot.

### 3.21 Outcome Five – Increase in Paid Employment / Income

In interviews with family members improved opportunities for paid employment was described as being important both in itself, allowing participants who previously had no independent income to contribute to household expenses, as well as having some financial independence. Theatre group participants saw income as really important and allowing them to have autonomy and independence and to be able to save or spend money on things of value to them. Income was also perceived as symbol of their contribution to others and as an important symbol of their value.

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19 (€33 x 52 weeks) = €1,716.00



Some of these points are highlighted in the quotes below:

*If I didn't get paid I'd have no money... I'd be broke and have no money in bank.*  
(Theatre member 1)

*Money is valuable to you.* (Theatre member 2)

A review of organisational financial statements shows that the total payment received by the Blue Teapot Theatre Company in 2014 is €4800. This means, on average, each individual received a payment of €600. This corresponds to an average payment per show of €75, which is generally inline with industry standards for early stage actors. The value of this outcome was reported by participants and family members was reported to last approximately three years.

**Attribution:** There is no attribution figure for this outcome.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** According to both participants and parents there was no deadweight in relation to this outcome, nor was there any attribution outside of the Blue Teapot, as income was solely related to theatre and arts work, made possible by the training and opportunities offered through the company. The outcome did not have any

impact after the year in which money was earned.



## 3.22 Summary

Theatre company participants have benefited significantly from engagement with Blue Teapot. Both participants and their parents said that there were no other services that could have resulted in the collective changes that have been experienced by participants. The most significant of these was providing and assisting individuals to find real meaning and to contribute meaningfully to their communities through their work in the arts. Individuals also experienced an increase in communication ability and independence, which have had real and valuable contributions to the quality of life of participants.

# 2 Outcomes and Value of Blue Teapot for the Participants in the Performing Arts School

## 3.23 Introduction

The same process of engagement was undertaken in relation to the Theatre Company, interviews and focus groups were held with family members of participants in Blue Teapot's Performing Arts programme, and focus groups were undertaken with participants on the programme. In total, eight interviews were completed with family members, which corresponds to eight participants.

This process revealed that the theory of change for Performing Arts participants was almost the same as that of the Theatre Company participants - with two main differences.

The first was that family members reported an additional negative outcome, which was a fear of lack of opportunities for Blue Teapot participants in the future or following completion of the Blue Teapot programme. This negative outcome was not experienced by parents of members of the Theatre Company who were comforted by the fact that their family members had a formal role in the theatre group and the opportunities for employment and performance that this provided.

The second was that participants of the art school had not received an income from performance, as they were still in training and not acting at a professional level.

When family members were asked to rate the overall impact that Blue Teapot had on the quality of life of the Performing Arts

participants, this positive change was rated at 9.3 out of 10 (n=8). Again parents saw the role of Blue Teapot and the overall impacts as life changing.

## 3.24 Views of Family Member and Participants

**View One – The unique role of Blue Teapot in meeting the needs and abilities of participants**

The vast majority of parents (n=7) felt that Blue Teapot better served the needs and abilities of participants more than other available programs for individuals with intellectual disabilities. This value can be demonstrated by the following quotes:

*Blue Teapot is a different type of syllabus and better serves the needs and ability of our daughter more than mainstream education. (Performing Arts Parent 5)*

*I was afraid to think about where he would be, as there was no service available for him. When he started attending Blue Teapot it was life saving. (Performing Arts Parent 8)*

*He was attending another day programme but the activities were monotonous and boring. Some of the other people were non-verbal and he could not talk with other people. These activities were not very challenging. (Performing Arts Parent 9)*

Approximately 50% of parents said their children were more relaxed and interested in everyday life as a result of attending Blue Teapot, in comparison to other day programs attended previously. This value is best shown by the following quotes:

*Prior to Blue Teapot, he was attending a service where he was not very interested in the activities. Now, he's very relaxed and happier because of the activities. (Performing Arts Parent 9)*

*Our son is more outgoing and participating, and he is more extroverted. (Performing Arts Parent 7)*

The difference in ethos, staff relationship with participants, content of the activities and the meaning of these were all considered as fundamental reasons for the achievement of the positive outcomes outlined within this chapter.

### 3.25 Outcome One – Improvement in Communication and Social Skills

All family members (n=8) reported an improvement in communication and social skills for Performing Art participants. Like the Theatre Company participants, the same indicators were used to measure the change valued within the SROI.<sup>20</sup> The following quotes, taken from interviews with family members, best describe this change and the impact on individuals.

*[Prior to starting Blue Teapot] her eye-to-eye contact was not great, but it is a specific area of communication that we've seen a real improvement in. She is also more conscious of the pace of her speech and developed a better awareness of the need to slow her speech, especially when she gets excited. This*

*is a large change because her communication has improved that she is able to communicate with other people beside her family, and communicate her needs to other people. (Performing Arts Parent 5)*

*Her vocabulary has improved, and her understanding of her speech and what's she saying has improved. Her willingness to speak out loud has improved both at home and in public. (Performing Arts Parent 6)*

*Her vocabulary has improved, and I've noticed that her eye contact and interaction has also improved. The pace of her speech is quite good, and there would be more drama and life accentuating her speech. (Performing Arts Parent 12)*

The same proxy valuation as was used for the outcome with Theatre Company participants has been used with Performing Arts participants.

The value of this improvement in communication and social skills to the individuals was estimated as €18,000<sup>21</sup>, which is the cost of speech and language therapy sessions over a nine-month period. Based on a focus group with parents, it is estimated that the benefit of this improvement would last three years<sup>22</sup>.

**Attribution:** Attribution for this outcome was based on responses from family members in interviews. It was calculated that 26% of the improvement in communication and social skills was a result of the support of family and friends, as well as the influence of carers, social outings, education programmes, community and voluntary work and part-time paid employment. Other social activities that influenced this outcome were programmes for adolescents and adults with intellectual disabilities, like Best Buddies and the Special Olympics.

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<sup>20</sup> For this outcome, an improvement in communication and social skills was defined as being: Improved vocabulary, improved eye contact when speaking, and Individuals becoming more attentive, focused and outgoing when communicating.

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<sup>21</sup> €100 x (5 sessions x 32 weeks) = €18,000

<sup>22</sup> There was a general agreement on this time frame. It was noted that if Blue Teapot was not available to support participants, benefits could most likely not be maintained past two and half years.

This fact reflects that many participants in the Performing Arts programme are currently or were previously involved in other social activities and clubs for individuals with ID. However Blue Teapot was seen as having a very significant impact on this area of participants' development. Blue Teapot was attributed to creating approximately 74% of this positive change.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** The reduction in causality between the outcome and involvement in Blue Teapot's Theatre Company ensemble was estimated at 20% annually. There was a low deadweight of 5% estimated for this improvement in communication and social skills. In interviews, and within the focus group, family members commented that this change had not occurred through previous programmes of which most participants had attended, and that Blue Teapot was unique in supporting such significant and tangible change.

### 3.26 Outcome Two - Reduction in Isolation and an Improved Sense of Community

In focus groups with participants and interviews and focus groups with family members, the reduction in isolation was described as being an important outcome.

All family members (n=8) reported a reduction in social isolation and an improved sense of community for Performing Arts participants. This change was defined as:

- Building and maintaining new friendships outside of the family;
- More outgoing and comfortable participation in social activities;
- An increased sense of feeling that one is a valued member of a community or group.

The following quotes illustrate this change for participants:

*Our daughter is more willing to participate in Blue Teapot and loves meeting her friends. She has made good friends, and that alone is part of the drive to get to Blue Teapot*

*everyday. She enjoys the social aspect of the programme. (Performing Arts Parent 6)*

*Before Blue Teapot he was afraid of people, and now there has been a complete change in him. He's become more outgoing and he's out in the community. (Performing Arts Parent 8)*

*He's made close friends through Blue Teapot, they are very close and share a bond with each other. (Performing Arts Parent 12)*

Like for the Theatre Company participants, the value of this reduction in social isolation to the individual has been calculated using a proxy valuation of the cost of attending a day support programme for adults with intellectual disabilities with work-like activities, which research [12] indicates is valued at €15,981<sup>23</sup>. In a focus group, family members considered that this benefit would last three years.

**Attribution:** Attribution for this outcome was based on responses from interview participants. It was calculated that 25% of this reduction in social isolation was a result of the support of family and friends, as well as the influence other activities like carers, day programmes, and other social outing and programmes for individuals with intellectual disabilities, like Special Olympics or Best Buddies. This means that 75% of this figure was a result of the involvement of Blue Teapot.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** An annual figure for drop off was estimated at 20% to account for the reduction in causality between the outcome over time and the influence of Blue Teapot, leading to a zero value after five years.

A figure for deadweight, the change that would have occurred anyway without Blue Teapot, was calculated at 15%. This figure is based on what was considered, by interviewees a small likelihood that this change could have occurred for some members of the group through volunteer work

<sup>23</sup> The average cost for day support services was based on the cost of costs for day support services in Ireland for individuals with moderate, low and minimum support needs. (€23,143 + €20,386 + €4,414) / 3 = €15,981 per annum



placements. However parents noted that these were challenging to access and did not always result in positive outcomes or come with sufficient supports.

### 3.27 Outcome Three - Improved Sense of Purpose and Life Satisfaction

Out of eight family members, six (n=6) reported an improvement in the sense of purpose and life satisfaction of Performing Arts participants. The remaining two family members (n=2) observed only a small change in relation to this improvement, which has not been counted as of equal value to the change reported by the six interviewees.

Like the Theatre Company participants, this improvement in the sense of purpose and life satisfaction was defined as being a clear sense of direction, fulfilment and satisfaction through the engagement in activities. The following quotes from parents highlight the value of this improvement for participants:

*He is more fulfilled in life because of Blue Teapot. While he has enjoyed performing, he's always been very shy and now.*  
(Performing Arts Parent 7)

*So much more happier because of going to Blue Teapot. He seems to be more alive and more energetic when he's performing.*  
(Performing Arts Parent 9)

*Blue Teapot means a lot to me and my family. It's great to get up every morning to get together with the group.* (Performing Arts Student 2)

The same proxy valuation used for Theatre Company participants in this outcome has been used for Performing Arts participants.

The value of this improvement in life satisfaction and sense of purpose to the individual was estimated using three price valuation methods<sup>24</sup>. The cost used in this

valuation is based on the average of these results, which is €8,454<sup>25</sup>. The average length for this outcome was estimated at three years, based on feedback from the second focus group with family members.

**Attribution:** Attribution for this outcome was based on responses from interview participant responses. It was calculated that 18% of this improvement in life satisfaction was a result of the support of family and friends, as well as the influence other activities like carers, social outings and day programmes. This means that 82% of this improvement was a result of the involvement of Blue Teapot

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** A figure for drop off was estimated at 20%. A low deadweight of 5% was calculated for improvement in life satisfaction and purpose in life. In interviews and focus groups, all family members reported that this change could not have resulted from other supports. This reflects the fact that some family members said that Blue Teapot participants previously attended specialised day programmes for people with intellectual disabilities that did not provide the same outcome.

### 3.28 Outcome Four - Improved Independence

Six family members (n=6) reported an improved sense of independence related to travel and living skills for Performing Arts participants. Of the remaining two participants, one family member (n=1) stated that the participant experienced only a small change, and the remaining family member (n=1) stated the participant did not experience this outcome.

Like the Theatre Company participants, an improvement in the independence of Performing Arts participants was defined as being an improved ability to travel independently to familiar and unfamiliar settings, an improved motivation for travelling, as well as a greater sense of direction when

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(represented in QALYs or Disability-Adjusted Life Years (DALY) and the Willingness-to-Pay (WTP) framework); (2) A price valuation based on a study on the financial quality of life for individuals and families accessing disability services in Canada; and (3) A price valuation on the cost of 12-session with a registered life coach.  
25 (€12,473 + \$16,839.+ €780) = €8,454

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24 The value of this improvement in life satisfaction and sense of purpose was calculated using three different valuation metrics: (1) A health valuation using the Health-Adjusted Life Years metric

navigating. The following quotes can best illustrate this improvement for participants:

*Our daughter would always travel a lot with her family and with school, but always with a companion and under supervision. Now she has to travel independently to Blue Teapot. This has also come with more organisation and extra things that she is aware of, like having an umbrella, checking the weather forecast, having change for the bus. (Performing Arts Parent 5)*

*She's more on time when attending. She's capable of getting herself prepared and has breakfast before leaving for the bus. She's been very capable of commuting between the home and Blue Teapot. She's very motivated about attending Blue Teapot. (Performing Arts Parent 10)*

*Blue Teapot has provided a context and motivation for our son to travel more independently. (Performing Arts Parent 7)*

The financial proxy for an improvement in independence is the disposable income received from an individual receiving disability allowance from the State, which covers additional living expenses like travel. This costs is, on average, €33 per week, a figure which translates to two or three taxi rides a week. The total value of this in a year is €1,716 [19]<sup>26</sup>.

The average length for the effect of this change was considered to last three years, based on feedback from family members in a focus group.

**Attribution:** Based on interviews with family members, it was calculated that the attribution for other supports contributing to this change was 23%. Other supports included the influence of a group home and support of family and friends. This means that 77% of this improvement was a result of the involvement of Blue Teapot.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** An annual drop off of 20% was estimated to account for the reduction in causality between this outcome and the Blue Teapot Theatre Company over

time. There was a low deadweight of 5% estimated for this outcome. In interviews, all family members reported that this change could not have resulted from other supports without the involvement of Blue Teapot this was based on assessment on progress of individuals in this area prior to attending Blue Teapot.

### 3.29 Summary

Like the Theatre Company participants, the Performing Arts participants have significantly benefited from engagement with Blue Teapot. The level of outcomes experienced by the Performing Arts group is consistent with the Theatre Company. The most significant areas of improvement were in communication and social skills, as well as the reduction in isolation and improved sense of community.



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26 (€33 x 52 weeks) = €1,716

# 4 Outcome and Value of Blue Teapot for the Participants in Bright Soul

## 4.1 Introduction

Similar to other Blue Teapot participants, interviews were held with family member of participants in Blue Teapot's Bright Soul programme, and a focus group was undertaken with participants in the programme. Out of 14 participants in the Bright Soul programme, five family members (n=5) were interviewed as part of this evaluation, which corresponds to five Bright Soul participants. The outcomes were calculated for 14 participants.

The Bright Soul programme is an outreach programme developed by Blue Teapot for adults with mild to moderate ID to engage in social and performing art activities. The average length of attendance or involvement for participants in the Bright Soul was eight years. This posed some challenges for family members in relation to narrowing outcomes to the SROI period; however, this was discussed with respondents as part of each interview.

The theory of change which describes the changes that occurred for participants was: Blue Teapot's Bright Soul programme provided participants with opportunities to engage with others and form social bonds with other Blue Teapot participants over time, which meant they were happier and more confident in life. Overall, this had a positive impact, which led to an improvement in communication skills for participants. This theory of change was developed using feedback from focus group with participants, and was shared with family members during interviews so it could be adapted or endorsed.

When family members were asked to rate the overall impact that Blue Teapot had on the quality of life of the Bright Soul participants, this positive change was rated at 9 out of 10 (n=8).

## 4.2 Views of Family Member and Participants

View One – Blue Teapot is a unique and valued learning environment

In interviews, all family members (n=5) reported that Blue Teapot was a unique environment for participants to learn and engage socially with others.

*There is always laughter and excitement when you arrive at Blue Teapot. All the children appear to be participating together and it seems like there is a strong sense of community. (Parent 17)*

*The whole atmosphere is very relaxed, caring and is a strong learning environment. I'm so impressed that our children can accomplish so much. (Parent 19)*

The atmosphere and commitment of the staff and ethos of the space and group were noted as core elements of the service, which contributed to it being such a unique and positive environment.

## 4.3 Outcome One- Improvement or Maintenance of Communication and Social Skills

All family members (n=5) reported an improvement in communication and social skills for Bright Soul participants, or that they had maintained a previous significant

improvement as a result of attending Blue Teapot<sup>27</sup>.

Like Blue Teapot's Theatre Company and Performing Arts participants, an improvement in communication and social skills was defined as being:

- Improved vocabulary;
- Improved eye contact when speaking;
- Individuals becoming more attentive, focussed and outgoing when communicating.

The following quotes from family members illustrates this change for participants:

*He can express himself more openly, he can express his emotions more because of the class. Blue Teapot brings this out more in my son, he has been really responsive since going to Blue Teapot. (Parent 17)*

*My brother is autistic and Blue Teapot has given him an opportunity to express himself in public. There's been many times where I've seen him perform and act in ways that I've never seen him communicate before, and I think it's because Blue Teapot has found a way to encourage and engage with him in new ways. (Sibling 18)*

*Blue Teapot has made him more confident, able to speak out, and express himself in new ways. I have seen his life in Galway and he's very happy with the people that he works with at Blue Teapot, he doesn't speak out as much while at home. (Parent 20)*

Half the proxy valuation that was used for this outcome with Theatre Company and Performing Arts participants was used for Bright Soul participants, as the time invested in this group and the outcomes were not as significant. The value of this improvement in communication and social skills to the individuals was estimated at €9,000<sup>28</sup>, which

half the cost of speech and language therapy sessions over a nine-month period. Based on a focus group with parents, it is estimated that the benefit of this improvement would last one and half years<sup>29</sup>. In interviews, family members indicated that the benefits of this outcome would last one year.

**Attribution:** Attribution for this outcome was based on responses from family members in interviews. It was calculated that 13% of the improvement in communication and social skills was a result of the support of family and friends, as well as the influence of carers, social outings and other day programmes. This means that 87% of this outcome is a result of the involvement of Blue Teapot.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** An annual drop off of 20% was estimated to account for the reduction in causality between this outcome and the Blue Teapot Theatre Company over time. There was a low deadweight of 5% calculated. In interviews and focus groups, all family members reported that this change could not have resulted from other supports. This reflects the fact that some family members said that Blue Teapot participants previously attended specialised day programmes for people with intellectual disabilities that did not provide the same outcome.

## 4.4 Summary

All family members indicated that there was a significant improvement in communication and social skills for Bright Soul participants as a result of their involvement in Blue Teapot. The group was seen as extremely important to their child and family and the professionalism and commitment of staff and the ethos of the services were seen as rare and special.

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<sup>27</sup> The average number of years was 7.6 years, which was rounded up to 8.

<sup>28</sup> €100 x (5 sessions x 32 weeks) = €18,000

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<sup>29</sup> There was a general agreement on this time frame.

# 5 Outcomes and Value for the Families of Participants (Theatre Company and Performing Arts School)

## 5.1 Introduction

Interviews were held with family members and legal guardians of participants in the Theatre Company and Performing Arts programmes to understand their views and the changes that may have resulted for parents and care givers as a result of attending Blue Teapot. All interviews were arranged by telephone and took approximately 40-minutes to complete. As part of the interview schedule, respondents were asked a set of questions related to the changes for Blue Teapot participants, followed by questions about outcomes experienced for themselves. In total, 16 respondents participated in interviews.

As part of this SROI study, three outcomes were identified and valued a result of their family member's involvement in the Blue Teapot programme:

- Improved parent and child interaction or communication;
- Reduction in stress or worry about the child;
- New relationships with other parents and/or new experiences as a result of Blue Teapot.

## 5.2 Views of Families

### View One – Changed views about intellectual disabilities

In interviews, a third of family members (n=5) said that attending performances by Blue Teapot had changed their views of ID, especially in relation to adult relationships and issues of sexuality. The following quotes demonstrate the value of this change:

*When I saw Sanctuary and saw how successful the play was, especially how well each of the actors performed, it shows the potential that people with disabilities can achieve with the right training. It has changed my thoughts on sexuality and intellectual disabilities, I would be concerned about our daughter meeting someone and this play would make us think about this. (Parent 10)*

A minority of family members (n=2) indicated that attending Blue Teapot's Sanctuary performance had provided an opportunity for family members to discuss these topics with their sibling or child.

Other views from parents have been outlined in previous chapters.

## 5.3 Outcome One - Improved Parent and Child Interaction

Out of 16 family members, the vast majority (n=14) reported an improvement in parent-child interaction and communication. The remaining two family members (n=2) did not experience this outcome.

An improvement in parent-child interaction was described as:

- Improved ability to communicate and understand each other, strengthening of relationship between parent/carer and adult child;



- Improved behaviours and ability to meet behavioural standards, reduction in discipline required.

This improvement can be best described by the following quotes:

*We have grown together in a sense; I have been with him and seen him develop. We could talk about things going on his life, his interest and his relationships. (Parent 3)*

*I have started to treat our daughter more like an adult, because our conversations are much more adult. Our daughter is a lot more aware of what is going on at home, and has more insight into our day-to-day life. (Parent 6)*

The value of this change has been calculated using a proxy valuation of the cost of attending a six-week parenting or parental counselling course<sup>30</sup>, which has been calculated as being €308<sup>31</sup>. Respondents estimated the length of this outcome would last two and half years.

**Attribution:** In interviews, family members reported that 21% of this improvement in parent and child interaction was a result of the influence of family and friends, such as family members working with participants to improve their communication skills or behaviours. Other services and mental health professionals were not indicated to be an influence on this outcome. This means that 79% of this outcome as a result of the involvement of Blue Teapot.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** There was no deadweight estimated for this improvement in parent-child interaction. When family members were asked if this positive change would have occurred without Blue Teapot, all

family members said this was only possible because of involvement in Blue Teapot. A figure for drop off was estimated at 20% to account for the reduction in causality between the outcome over time and the influence of Blue Teapot, leading to a zero value after five years.

## 5.4 Outcome Two - Reduction in Worry and Stress about Child

Out of sixteen family members, nine (n=9) reported a reduction in worry and stress as a result of their participant's involvement in Blue Teapot. Of the remaining, two family members (n=2) reported that they only experienced only a small change in relation to this outcome, which was not valued as being significant enough to be calculated within the SROI, and the remaining five family members (n=5) reported that they did not experience this change.

A reduction in worry and stress for family members was described as a decrease in the intensity or frequency of feelings of stress about their child's well-being or safety. Some parents also described this outcome as an increase in the amount of personal time available to parents, which would otherwise be spent caring for their child's needs. This reduction in worry and stress can be best described by the following quotes:

*I am less stressed and worried, and I would have more time available to deal with other things. (Parent 7)*

*I was worried about our son's emotional well-being, as he used to be very depressed. I am now less worried about his well-being because he has chilled out and no longer has down days. (Parent 9)*

*I used to worry a great deal about the routine of her life and going through the motions of living, but there was no excitement in her life. When you know someone is happy in their given situation, it means a lot to a parent and saves a lot of worry. (Parent 4)*

<sup>30</sup> According to Down Syndrome Ireland there are no specialised parenting courses for supporting parents with a child with an intellectual disability. In general, parents will find counselors with experience working with families and children with an intellectual disability.

<sup>31</sup> The cost of a six-week parenting courses were calculated based on costs of three Irish parenting courses ([www.bardnados.ie](http://www.bardnados.ie), [www.practicalparenting.ie](http://www.practicalparenting.ie), and [www.familymatters.ie](http://www.familymatters.ie)). The average cost of parenting courses were calculated as (€420 + €360 + €145) / 3 = €308.

This was valued at €350 per individual<sup>32</sup>, which is the average cost for a eight week mindfulness programme focussed on reducing stress, low mood and anxiety. In interviews, family members estimated that this benefit would last one year.

**Attribution:** Attribution for this outcome was based on responses from interview participants. It was calculated that 23% of this improvement in life satisfaction was a result of the support of family and friends, as well as the influence other activities like carers. This means that 77% of this improvement was a result of the involvement of Blue Teapot.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** There was a low deadweight calculated for this outcome of 5%. As within the interviews, all family members reported that this change could not have resulted from engagement in other supports or services. A figure for drop off was estimated at 20% to account for the reduction in causality between the outcome over time and the influence of Blue Teapot, leading to a zero value after five years.

## 5.5 Outcome Three - New Relationships and/or New Experiences for Families

Five family members (n=5) reported they formed new relationships or had new experiences as a result of their child's involvement in Blue Teapot. For the remaining family members (n=12), they did not experience this outcome. This change for family members was described as having new opportunities to travel and meet new people because of their child's involvement in Blue Teapot performances. This change is best described by the following quotes:

*I'm happy that he's acting and he's travelling to other places, because we can travel to other places too. (Parent 14)*

*I have met so many parents and staff through Blue Teapot. They've become friends. I've had an opportunity to visit new places and meet different people. (Parent 8)*

*I feel very connected with a community because of the staff, other participants and other parents that are involved in Blue Teapot. (Parent 2)*

New friendships and new experiences for family members was valued at cost proxy €52 per individual per month which is the monthly cost for a gym membership <sup>33</sup> or €624 a year. In a focus group with family members, the length of this outcome was estimated as being two years.

**Attribution:** Attribution for this outcome was based on responses from interviews participant's responses. It was calculated that 20% of this outcome was a result of other social activities related the disability community.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** Deadweight was calculated at a low 10% as all family member reported that this change was unlikely to occur in services without such a clear sense of community. A figure for drop off was estimated at 60% to account for the reduction in causality between the outcome over time and the influence of Blue Teapot, leading to a zero value in less than two years.

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<sup>32</sup> The cost for this proxy was based on the costs of two eight-week mindfulness programmes based in Ireland, the Centre for Mindfulness Ireland, Mindfulness at Work. The average price was €350. All programmes noted that a key outcome was effectively dealing with stress and anxiety. ([www.cfmi.ie](http://www.cfmi.ie), [www.mindfulness.ie](http://www.mindfulness.ie), [www.mindfulnessatwork.ie](http://www.mindfulnessatwork.ie))

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<sup>33</sup> The average cost was calculated using the price of a monthly membership for three fitness gyms in Co. Galway. ( $\text{€}49 + \text{€}49 + \text{€}58 / 3$ ) = €52 ([www.leisureland.ie](http://www.leisureland.ie), [www.nrgfitness.ie](http://www.nrgfitness.ie), [www.warehousegym.ie](http://www.warehousegym.ie))



## 5.6 Outcome Four - Fear of Lack of Opportunities in the Future for Performing Arts Participants (Negative Outcome)

In interviews, eight family members (n=8), whose adolescent or adult child was attending the Performing Arts programme, indicated that they were concerned about future opportunities for their children after they completed the programme at Blue Teapot. This concern was considered a negative outcome within the SROI.

Unlike the experience of Theatre Company participants, the Performing Arts participants are not employed as performers and, in comparison, will have limited opportunities for paid employment in theatre or dramatic arts on completion of the course.

In interviews, family members were asked if they were concerned about the possibility of future opportunities for Performing Arts participants, all family members (n=8) reported they were concerned about this possibility and actively worried about it.

Family members described this outcome as a fear for future opportunities for Performing Arts participants to have new experiences related to their sense of fulfilment and satisfaction in life. Half of the family members (n=4) reported this concern was related participants no longer being able to attend Blue Teapot, while the remainder (n=4) indicated that most other disability services would not provide the same level of benefit as Blue Teapot's Performing Arts programme.

Interview feedback indicated that benefits of attending Blue Teapot outweighed concerns about the lack of future opportunities for Performing Arts participants. The following quotes can demonstrate this negative outcome:

*My concern is that when the Blue Teapot finishes where will our daughter go then. She has enhanced abilities and self-esteem, and ambitions to change the world, and we don't know where she will go next. (Parent 5)*

*We are very concerned, particularly where our daughter is going to go next. It seems to always a fight, specifically trying to find organizations that are funded or programmes that would have the appropriate level of challenge for our daughter. (Parent 10)*

*I am concerned that there are no further courses, groups and programmes that would give our daughter the same sense of independence, creativity and self-worth. I can't see that there is anything out there like Blue Teapot. (Parent 6)*

To calculate the costs incurred by this negative outcome, the same proxy valuation was used for Theatre Company participants to value the improvement in life satisfaction and sense of purpose<sup>34</sup>. As family members considered this value to be higher than the expected costs<sup>35</sup>, only 25% of the cost has been estimated for this negative outcome, which is calculated as being €2,114<sup>36</sup>. The average length for this outcome was estimated at three years, based on feedback from the focus group with family members.

**Attribution:** Attribution for this outcome was based on responses from interviewee. It was calculated that 50% of this negative outcome was a result of the success of Blue Teapot,

<sup>34</sup> The value of this improvement in life satisfaction and sense of purpose to the individual was estimated using three price valuation methods. The cost used in this valuation is based on the average of these results, which is €8,454

<sup>35</sup> Based on feedback from family members, the benefits accrued from attending Blue Teapot outweighed concerns about future opportunities for Performing Arts participants,

<sup>36</sup> (€8,454 x 25%) = €2,114

which made a lack of future move on opportunities more difficult, the other 50% was due to the fact that there were few move on opportunities in general.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** A figure for drop off was estimated at 20% to account for the reduction in causality between the outcome over time and the influence of Blue Teapot, leading to a zero value after five years. A relatively high deadweight of 50% was calculated for this outcome, as parents pointed out that they would have been worried about their child's future if Blue Teapot had not existed.

## 5.7 Summary

Overall, family members have received benefits from participants' involvement in the Blue Teapot programme. Respondents indicated that these outcomes were a result of their family members' involvement in Blue Teapot and that outcomes for parents were closely connected to the experiences of their children. The majority of respondents experienced an improvement in their parent-child interaction. More than half of the family members experienced a reduction in worry or feelings of stress, except that for many there was also an increase in worry about what would happen for their children after the end of the programme.

# 6 Outcome and Value for Client Support Services (External Organisations)

## 6.1 Introduction

Six of the participants of Blue Teapot Theatre Company and Performing Arts programmes were attending other programmes or receiving other personal supports. This section of the report reports on the views of workers and managers who provide these supports, whether within housing support services or disability services.

This section also includes the views of transportation workers, who see many of the participants twice a day, five days a week.

## 6.2 Views of Client Support Services

**View One - Provision of an important option for those with disability which contributes to a sense of achievement and identify**

Like other stakeholder groups, key workers spoke about the importance of the role that Blue Teapot plays in giving the participants a sense of purpose and meaning. The importance of this is outlined by the following quotes:

*Blue Teapot and {service user's name} goes hand in hand, it has made my life far easier. He had a few issues and Blue Teapot has been the one solid thing his life. (Support service 3)*

*I was in a supermarket with the client, I was helping with the shop, and a random stranger, came over, apologized for interrupting and came up to the client and told him how great and impressive he was in the theatre. After this he was 10 feet tall, his*

*chest puffed out. It was great to be recognized for his work. (Support service 2)*

*Our mutual client now thinks, "I am a professional, this is a job and I need to do it properly, he takes his professional responsibilities very seriously. The challenge is real and this is what creates the sense of achievement - it's not an easy ask. (Support service 1)*

This last quote highlights a commonly held view, that the meaning that Blue Teapot provides is closely connected to the challenges and supports provided in the role. The general sentiment from workers was that the very real challenge of the performing arts is not often replicated in other day programmes and that these challenges create value for participants.

**View Two - Professional approach of the organisation**

The professionalism of the staff in relation to their attitudes, dealing with issues, challenges and maintaining the values of the organisation were noted by all stakeholders, including workers and managers from other organisations.

*Working outside Blue Teapot I find people with disabilities are marginalised, but not in Blue Teapot. The staff have such huge integrity. (Support service 1)*

However, it was noted that the time pressures on staff made it challenging, at times, to engage with other workers.

*At times they are so busy it's hard to get in touch with him. At times there are two very different experiences of a story {as relating to*



*a shared client] they have not had the time to really engage with me. However generally communications are going really well, they are very professional to deal with. (Support service 2)*

### 6.3 Outcome One - Reduction in Staff Support Costs

Staff and managers were in agreement that when a shared client attended Blue Teapot, there was a time saving for staff from client support services when compared to the number of hours that they would have spent providing key working and other personal supports.

22 referrers were also asked by survey whether, if a client attends Blue Teapot, this is likely to have an affect of reducing the time that the key workers spends in 1-2-1 support sessions with this individual, for the time they are in Blue Teapot. Of all those whose team had referred a client the majority stated that this was true or very true (n=13) – that time was saved, two respondents (n=2) stated this was neither true or untrue and two (n=2) said this was untrue or them. The remainder did not respond to the question.

The way in which time is saved is outlined in the following quotes:

*Absolutely Blue Teapot has lessened my need for engagement with him. In the last year it's saved me about two hours a week. They are an integral part of his life and they indirectly support me. (Support service 1)*

*It means less time we need to spend with him {client}, at least an hour a week is saved, every week. Primarily in relation to tenancy*

*supports and emotional support. (Support service 2)*

*It would save our service approximately €1,500 a year in staff support costs. (Support service 3)*

The value of a reduction in staff hours has been calculated based on the average time saving of one a half hours per week. Staff were asked the approximate the value of salaries and staff wages, which were estimated at €40,000 gross, which calculates to a saving of €21 per hour (or approximately €1,500 over the year). This value was consistent across the three services providing the client support services.

**Attribution:** Based on interview feedback, attribution was nil as this was viewed as being entirely due to the Blue Teapot programme.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** The time that these savings is estimated at three years, which has been tied to the other outcomes lengths as established by parents and participants (i.e. three years). The deadweight for this outcome is 25%, as it possible that attendance at another programme may have achieved some of these outcomes with a drop off of 30%.

### 6.4 Summary

Workers within other disability and related services and their managers estimate the savings per client per year to the service to be €1,500. The reason that client support staff were able to reduce supports offered to Blue Teapot clients was that these supports were less needed. The challenge and meaning offered by the performing arts and the professional, supportive and empowering approach of Blue Teapot staff meant that clients made significant progress and required less support from external agencies.

# 7 Outcomes and Value for Sessional Workers

## 7.1 Introduction

Core to Blue Teapot's values are the engagement of arts industry experts in the delivery of programmes and performances. The engagement of the best talent speaks to another value also core to Blue Teapot, this is that actors with ID can perform to as high a standard as non-ID actors and deserve to work with some of the best directors and writers; to large audiences in national venues.

This chapter reviews the views and experiences of sessional or contract staff who worked with Blue Teapot in 2014. The views of 17 individuals are included in this chapter, 14 of these described themselves as a contractor and two described themselves as other.

## 7.2 Views of Sessional Workers

### View One - An inspirational and validating place to work

Five interviewees (n=5) commented that Blue Teapot provides a uniquely validating and inspirational place to work. Sessional workers commented that Blue Teapot lifts their spirits, and even on the toughest days contributes to an increased sense of fulfilment.

*I can go in there in a terrible grump and within a couple of minutes I am in a in a happy place... This is the most valuable impact for me - above money or work experience or skills development. This is specific to the Blue Teapot team: I am not referring to naive assumptions about people with intellectual disabilities always being happy and uplifting (they're not). I am referring to the very particular atmosphere at the Blue Teapot theatre, which is a result of the staff, volunteers, company members, etc. I*

*work with lots of groups with intellectual disabilities and the Blue Teapot vibe is particular. (Contractor 2)*

*The emotional impact of doing this work was incalculable. Literally, this was a life-changing experience for me personally. (Contractor 3)*

A major theme amongst interviewees was that Blue Teapot is unlike other jobs or work, due to a sense of community, camaraderie, positivity and purpose amongst participants and staff. The dedication and commitment to Blue Teapot and the desire to work with the company was highlighted by the stories of two respondents, one who travelled for over three hours each day to work with the company, and another who migrated from London to Galway to work with the company for a period of time.

### View Two - Important artistically

The majority of sessional workers were accomplished in a specific artistic discipline. Many were currently engaged within the arts and considered Blue Teapot to be artistically significant at both regional and national level:

*Blue Teapot is a focus point for Disability Arts in Galway. (Contractor 2)*

*They are an essential resource and a vibrant artistic group, who are leaders in their field. They achieve high standards of excellence in terms of theatre making. (Contractor 12)*

### View Three - A leader in equality and opportunity

A majority view from contractors was that the ability of Blue Teapot to challenge conceptions of society was a core strength. The role of Blue Teapot in challenging social norms and in

providing a roadmap for how opportunities for people with ID can be provided. The role of the Blue Teapot as being a leader in its field is highlighted by the following comments:

*Living up to what is laid out in the UN Declaration of Human Rights. Being a beacon as to what is not only possible but also vital if a society is to truly face up to what it means to be inclusive from a perspective of equality based on outcomes and not just opportunities. (Contractor 13)*

*Their openness in talking about and confronting the issues that people with intellectual disabilities live with; the way they empower people with intellectual disabilities to express themselves in a professional and personal manner. (Contractor 6)*

*Their ability to stand up to stigma and negative preconceptions, they do themselves a favour by not pandering to people's expectations. (Contractor 9)*

#### View Four - Unique qualities of the participants

Two contractor tutors spoke about the openness, spontaneity, and engagement of the group and the culture, which they said was unique with ID and other artistic environments, as highlighted by the following comments:

*There is always a real willingness to engage, they just jump, with other adults they always ask a million questions before they do anything. (Contractor 5)*

*A very unique chance to work with actors and production who are professional spontaneous and ever evolving, it's very exciting to work there. (Contractor 6)*

#### View Five – A lack of resources

Out of 17 respondents, 11 individuals commented on a lack of resourcing as an issue facing Blue Teapot. This had an impact on the staff who were seen to be working too great a number of jobs and on the premises, which was

seen as needing additional investment, particularly in relation to flooring and heating.

### 7.3 Outcome One - Increase in Workplace Skills Resulting in Better Work Practice

There are no professional courses in the South of Ireland teaching creative and arts practice with a focus on ID. Contractors and volunteers commented that Blue Teapot plays an important role in supporting the development of a specific range of work skills, made the more important as there are few opportunities to learn these skills in an academic environment.

A number of respondents also highlighted that these work place skills are best learnt through work rather than in a classroom, where mentoring, experimentation and reflection are supported by experienced practitioners.

The approach taken by Blue Teapot, with staff who have not worked with people with ID before turns what could be a challenging work experience into a productive learning experience. For many interviewees this highly supportive approach of the staff in Blue Teapot led to a very real increase in new work place skills, which in turn led to better teaching experiences and outcomes, as reported by these tutors:

*[I learnt] leadership, facilitation, organisational skills, I found the support I received in Blue Teapot developing a {new} programme invaluable. (Contractor 7)*

*The group gathered around the Blue Teapot programme was extraordinarily able. They were experienced in dealing with the Company, and creative to an extreme in how they approached the work. I learned from them flexibility, adaptability, and new ways of approaching new issues. (Contractor 2)*

More than half of the group (n=10) stated that they had increased their skills in significant

ways, directly as a result of their work with Blue Teapot. Three people commented that they improved their skills, although not significantly, these responses were not valued within this outcome. The interviews and survey commentary indicated that an increase in skills resulted in improved or better work practice in two categories, the first experienced by most, was increased skills in relation to communication or their role as an educator. This was seen as leading to better service provision and better quality or more effective classes and teaching. This outcome was experienced by 8 of the 10 people, if this rate is translated across the 25 sessional workers, it can be anticipated that 12 individuals experienced this outcome. This outcome is illustrated by the following quotes:

*I learnt to adapt and developed more observation skills, if someone did something I would capture this and add this into the next thing that was taught. I learnt to add layers. This was really a new teaching technique. (Contractor)*

*I developed greater patience, listening skills, and ways of issuing clear and precise instructions. (Contractor 3)*

The second improvement in work practice as a result of new skills was in relation to specific elements, of artistic practice. This was experienced by two people and described in the following words:

*The experience strengthened my understanding of what is and isn't possible pace-wise. I also sharpened some of my thoughts about my own {artistic} practice, i.e. I got lots of ideas about pieces I'd like to make with ID groups. (Contractor 14)*

*I worked on preparing a production in an entirely new (to me) process. My learning curve was steep; the normal way to prepare a production - repetition of pre-determined events shaping into a production - did not apply here. We had to work not only on material we were creating from nothing, but*

*also in a work-process that I'd never done before. (Contractor 7)*

Respondents were asked to estimate the value of the skills and the resulting improvements in workplace practice and based on interviewee feedback this was equated to four days of training. Market assessments show a day of non-subsidised professional practice training to be valued between €150 and €300<sup>37</sup>, a proxy valuation for the outcomes experienced has subsequently been valued at €800<sup>38</sup>. The length of time for this outcome was estimated at four years as the vast majority described the impact period of this learning as being a 'life-time'; this was true of both interviews and survey respondents.

**Attribution:** The attribution for the learning was calculated at 30%, which was the average amount indicated by the respondents for how much of their learning was attributable to other work or experiences in 2014.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** Drop off was estimated to be approximately 25%. The deadweight for this outcome was calculated based on interviewee feedback, at 25%, it was generally agreed that it was unlikely for a similar learning experience to provider in other volunteering opportunities.

## 7.4 Outcome Two - Increased Income as a Result of working for Blue Teapot (that would not have been replaced through other sources)

In an SROI methodology, it is common practice that the wages for staff would not be considered an outcome for staff, this is due to the logic that if staff did not work for the organisation under review then they would be able to work elsewhere and be likely to earn an equivalent income.

<sup>37</sup> <http://visualartists.ie/category/jobs-ops/courses/>,  
<https://www.griffith.ie/find-a-course/short-courses>

<sup>38</sup> (4 x €200) = €800

This logic, however, does not necessarily extend to informal contract staff. This is due to the fact that work opportunities, if not provided by Blue Teapot, may not have otherwise existed. Employment within the arts sector can be challenging to find, especially for practitioners who are new to the field or are still establishing themselves. To explore whether this was true, sessional workers were asked how much they worked for Blue Teapot in 2014, how likely it was that these hours could have been replaced were they not to exist and how important this income was to them. The outcome of 'increased income as a result of working for Blue Teapot that would not have been replaced through other income' was only recorded for people, who stated that it was very unlikely that these hours could have been replaced and for whom this income was very important.

11 people said that if it was not for Blue Teapot they would not have been able to replace all of these work hours; all but one who provided an answer stated that this income was 'very important to my life and income'. To calculate the number of people affected by this the proportion of respondents experiencing this change (10/17) has been multiplied by the total group (25) meaning this outcome is expected to affect 15 people.

The average hours worked by these 10 people was 66 hours. To calculate the value of these hours are times at the average living wage<sup>39</sup> which equates to €11.45 an hour, equalling a total approximate income of €756 in income for each of the 10 individuals.

**Attribution:** Based on interview feedback, attribution was nil as this was viewed as being entirely due to the Blue Teapot programme.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** Five of the 10 people who had this outcome stated that some of the hours could have been replaced by other work in their industry, however that the majority of hours would not have been replaced. To reflect this the deadweight has been set at 35%. The length of time is only one year, the year in which the additional income was earned and relates to the direct increase in earning that could not otherwise have been replaced.

## 7.5 Outcome Three - Increased Income from other Contracts and work as a Direct Result from Experience with Blue Teapot

Another method of assessing whether Blue Teapot supported increased income was to ask individuals whether as a result of Blue Teapot they had accessed other contracts or employment. Nine of the 17 respondents stated that 'Yes, definitely Blue Teapot had resulted in them getting other work in their field'. This translates to 13 of the full group of sessional workers. Four people stated that they were not sure and three stated that they had not. For the purposes of the SROI, only those that replied 'Yes Definitely' to this question were counted as receiving this outcome. This outcome is articulated within the following quotes:

*I find that being able to say that I work with Blue Teapot often makes people take me more seriously in a professional capacity - the company is very highly regarded. (Contractor 2)*

*I got a lot of recognition in my field for having being associated with such an innovative and successful project. (Contractor 6)*

The average value of these additional contracts for the nine people who attained additional contracts as a result of their engagement with Blue Teapot was €7,305. Respondents were asked about the likelihood of having gained this work without Blue Teapot, the average assessment was they had a 41% chance of attaining this work without Blue Teapot; this rating has been used to calculate deadweight. Attribution was also reasonably high at 40%, which was attributed to other workplace contacts or experience.

The length of time of impact for an increase in income, as a result of other contracts, is estimated at two years. In the interviews people stated that being connected to Blue Teapot had significant meaning in other arts

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<sup>39</sup> <http://www.livingwage.ie/>



and disability sector which would result in additional work opportunities and contracts for a number of years.

**Attribution:** Based on interview feedback, attribution was calculated as being 41% as a result of the influence of other factors. This means that 59% of this outcome was a result of the Blue Teapot programme.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** The drop off is set at a reasonably high 30% as in year two other work in the person's CV would also support them in getting new and additional work, this would not all be down to Blue Teapot.

## 7.6 Outcome Four – Personal Satisfaction (not included as material within the SROI)

A common theme amongst contractors was that working with Blue Teapot gave them significant workplace satisfaction, as highlighted in the following quotes

*Working with the members of Blue Teapot always lifts my spirits, even on the toughest days. I can go in there in a terrible grump and within a couple of minutes I am in a happy place. (Contractor 3)*

*Its the most amazing place to work. That feeling is not easy to come by. I enjoy working with them more than any other groups I worked with 2014. (Contractor 9)*

However when valued, job satisfaction of the contracting staff was not considered to reach the materiality threshold and so has not been included in the SROI spread sheet.

## 7.7 Summary

Sessional contract workers were in agreement that Blue Teapot was a unique and rewarding place to work. The majority stated that they enjoyed working for the company much more than other work, due to the sense of community and camaraderie. The vision and values of the company, which were based on equality and the desire to create environments where people were genuinely challenged to meet their potential – was considered rare and special within a disability setting. Like many stakeholder groups the commitment to producing honest and challenging theatre was highly regarded. The majority of sessional workers described their time with the company as having a profound affect on their life views and choices and in some cases this extended to their families as well.

The outcomes of working for Blue Teapot for over half the contract workers was an increase in income that would not have been replaced by other work, as well as for many the potential to use their connection with Blue Teapot to gain other contracts. This was seen as being due to the renown of the company and the value of a connection to the company in the jobs market.

# 8 Outcomes and Value for Volunteers

## 8.1 Introduction

Blue Teapot maximises its resources by using volunteers to support provision of services. According to staff and volunteers this also provides important opportunities for individuals to gain skills in working with arts and disability. It was highlighted by a number of volunteers that these opportunities are not generally available within other academic and training contexts.

The information in this section was attained through interviews and a survey with volunteers and contractors. Volunteers provided a total of 410 hours to Blue Teapot in 2014 by six volunteers. An additional 119 voluntary hours were also provided by sessional workers / contractors. All hours have been valued at the Irish minimum wage in 2014 of €8.65 per hours, which translates to a total contribution of €4,575 by volunteers to the service.

## 8.2 Views of Volunteers

### View One - an inspirational and validating place to work

Volunteers were unanimous in commenting on the supportive and inspiring nature of the Blue Teapot as a place to learn and develop skills, as shown in the quote below:

Blue Teapot is clearly strong... at advocating for often unheard voices, and at fostering talent and joy in actors, students and volunteers alike. (Volunteer 2)

### View Two – leading equality and opportunity in the arts

Reflecting the views of other stakeholder groups, volunteers all appreciated how Blue Teapot created real and unique opportunities

for people with disabilities. Three volunteers viewed the approach and values of the service as different to other environments they had experienced. These views are highlighted in the following quotes:

*That they treat everyone who work with them as an equal despite the various levels of abilities that they might have. They don't positive discriminate the company by staging 'pity' productions. (Volunteer 4)*

*Blue Teapot fosters a compassionate, caring and understanding environment; including and integrating people with ID into a broader social and cultural production; challenging the stereotypes and established notions of what it means to have an ID. (Volunteer 3)*

### View Three - a lack of resources

Four out of the six volunteers commented that the one weakness of the organisation was a lack of resources. The impact of this was noted as being a restriction on the numbers of people who could benefit from the services as well as a negative impact on staff, as highlighted below:

*The staff need more support, since there are so few of them trying to juggle so many things. They work hard and do it well but the organisation could grow even more if they had the means to hire more staff. (Volunteer 5)*

### View Four - a lack of move on options for participants

Two volunteers commented that it could be challenging for those who completed programmes and had to return to services which did not work in the same or with the same ethos as Blue Teapot:

*There is an issue that there are no further options for next steps {for those completing the theatre}. There is no outlet for several people in mainstream services, this dampens all the creativity and expression that they had. Most people go onto day care services, some of these provide options and others do not. For those people that don't have options there is sense of failed ambition and lost hopes and their lives are full of this already. People's ability to maintain expression and confidence depends on the outlets for arts practice and performance that they have in mainstream care. (Volunteer 2)*

Additional creative options for participants provided by other organisations was noted as a way of responding to this. However, the challenges in translating the ethos of Blue Teapot was noted.

### 8.3 Outcome One - Increase in Workplace Skills Resulting in Better Work Practice

Four of the six respondents stated they had increased their workplace skills significantly. With one other volunteer stating that they had increased their skills but not significantly, and the remaining respondent stating that they had increased skills significantly, however prior to 2014.

The improvement in skills resulted in an increased ability to work effectively with the target group, either with Blue Teapot participants or with other ID clients within other workplaces. Skills development occurred in; communication and teaching skills, or administration and theatre management. Volunteers saw this increase in skills as contributing to improvements in work outcomes in other environments they were working as well as assisting them to gain other work, which is discussed as a separate outcome. The quotes below highlight the kind of skills developed:

*I learnt how to work with people with intellectual disabilities in a creative*

*environment, co-ordinating different aspects of theatre administration of a small theatre company and improving my written and spoken English. (Volunteer 1)*

*I developed organisational skills in archiving and evidence checking. I also gained communication skills with people who are non-verbal or have intellectual disabilities. (Volunteer 5)*

Volunteers estimated the value of this learning and its application as equivalent to 4.5 days of training. At market value this translates to €200 per day<sup>40</sup> resulting in a total value of €900.

Four volunteers stated that this learning was likely to last a lifetime and one volunteer stated that this would have an impact of four years. To ensure a conservative estimate this outcome has been estimated at four years.

**Attribution:** Participants were not volunteering or training with any other organisations and all saw Blue Teapot as their only source of learning over this period, therefore attribution has been estimated at 0%.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** The deadweight has been estimated at 25% as two of the participants said they may have volunteered elsewhere had they not engaged with Blue Teapot, although were not sure if this would have resulted in similar beneficial outcomes. Drop off was estimated at 30% as participants were all planning on continuing or complement their volunteering. This means that this learning would be overtaken by other experiences over time.

### 8.4 Outcome Two - Increased Income from Work as a Direct Result of Experience with Blue Teapot

Another method of assessing whether Blue Teapot supported increased income was to ask individuals whether as a result of Blue

<sup>40</sup> Six training providers for Irish disability and community services were reviewed from the following websites: [www.disability-federation.ie](http://www.disability-federation.ie) and [www.wheel.ie](http://www.wheel.ie).

Teapot they had got other contracts or employment. Three of the five respondents stated that 'Yes, definitely Blue Teapot had resulted in them getting other work in their field'.

The value of contracts that individuals received directly as a result of working with Blue Teapot in 2014 in a volunteer capacity was estimated by participants at €25,500, working out at an average increase in individual income of €16,800.

The length of time of impact for an increase in income as a result of other contracts is estimated at two years as the interviewees spoken to on the phone stated that they expected these contracts to continue for 2015 and 2016.

**Attribution:** Based on interview feedback, attribution was nil as this was viewed as being entirely due to the Blue Teapot programme.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** The drop off is set at a reasonably high 30% as in year two and all subsequent years other work in the individuals CV would also support them to access additional work, so future earnings would not all be down to Blue Teapot.

Respondents were asked about the likelihood of having gained this work without Blue Teapot, the average assessment was they had a 45% chance of attaining this work without Blue Teapot; this rating has been used to calculate deadweight.

## 8.5 Outcome Three - Increase in Wellbeing as a Result of Experience with Blue Teapot

Four of the five volunteers stated that 'Yes, in clear and substantial ways I am happier because of my volunteer work with Blue Teapot'. Participants considered their increase in wellbeing as primarily a result of their work with Blue Teapot, with an average rate of attribution of 25%<sup>41</sup>, to other life and work experiences.

This sense of wellbeing related to a number of factors including; making a worthwhile contribution, a sense of belonging to a community and a project that was highly valued, as well as gaining clarity in what they wanted to do in the future / developing a sense of purpose. This last point was identified as an outcome by four of the five individuals.

The average value given to this increase in wellbeing was averaged at €3,850 (to the nearest €50, using contingent valuation methods) by the interviewees in the survey. Attribution for this increase in wellbeing was averaged at 25%, with other life experiences, most particularly friends and study being responsible for a proportion of this increase in wellbeing.

**Attribution:** Based on interview feedback, attribution was nil as this was viewed as being due to the Blue Teapot programme.

**Deadweight and Drop Off** A high deadweight of 50% was set for this outcome, as participants identified that if Blue Teapot was not available to them then, they would be likely to undertake other programmes. Which may have resulted in a sense of belonging and meaning, however it was felt that other programmes did not contribute these factors as much as Blue Teapot did. The increase in wellbeing was estimated to have a lifespan of two years with a drop off of 30%.

## 8.6 Summary

Volunteers were in agreement that Blue Teapot had a significant and real impact on their life; this was through increasing workplace skills which allowed them to be more productive and affective in their work, supporting them into new work and contributing to their sense of community and meaning. This, for many was described as an event that was really significant in their life and which had an impact on their values and world view. The interviewees highlighted that these outcomes were possible due to the care and attention that Blue Teapot gave its volunteers; this was noted by interviewees as a significant strength of the organisation.

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<sup>41</sup> One x €10,000, one x €401 - €800, one x €801 - €1200, the averaged midpoints of these categories equals €3,850

# 9 Outcomes and Value for Audience

## 9.1 Introduction

One of the main beneficiary groups of the performing arts is undoubtedly the audience. The audience pays a ticket price in return for the hope of being entertained, moved or challenged. A combination of two or more of these makes for a memorable experience. Depending on the quality of the art form, the expectations are either met or not, in some cases the arts can have a significant impact

on the audience; changing their views, deepening and creating life experiences that will resonate with them for many years to come.

In 2014 the total audience numbers of Blue Teapot shows numbered 1,428. This accounted for ticket sales of **€25,417** or, on average income of €17.80 per person per ticket including complementary tickets or €22 when only paid tickets are taken into account.

**Table 2: Audience numbers in 2014**

Show	Venue	Detail	Seats Sold	Comp-limentary tickets	Total
<b>ID</b>	Blue Teapot Theatre, Galway	Galway International Arts Festival	487	38	525
<b>ID</b>	Blue Teapot Theatre, Galway	Galway Rural Development Disability Awareness workshop preview	60	0	60
<b>Sanctuary excerpt</b>	Bank of Ireland Theatre, Galway	NUIG - Centre for Disability Law & Policy	0	110	110
<b>Sanctuary*</b>	<b>Town Hall Theatre, Galway</b>	<b>Blue Teapot Fundraiser</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>325</b>
<b>Sanctuary*</b>	<b>Liberty Hall Theatre, Dublin</b>	<b>Partnership with Down Syndrome Ireland &amp; Inclusion Ireland</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>325</b>
<b>Bright Soul Christmas Show</b>	Blue Teapot Theatre, Galway	Blue Teapot production	0	83	83
<b>Totals</b>			<b>1151</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>1428</b>

\* Audience surveys were undertaken at these events

To ascertain how the audience experienced the Sanctuary performance, 102 audience members from two shows were surveyed, members were also interviewed after the show. The two shows that were surveyed engaged audiences from Dublin and Galway, which was done to ascertain that whether

value was higher for local audiences with a closer relationship to the company. The data showed that value perception of the two audiences was broadly similar.

On average 86% of people were seeing the show for the first time (86%), with 7% of people



having seen the show before (the remainder gave no answer).

The audience was divided roughly in half between those who had family members or close friends who had a disability and those who did not (49 – yes I do (48%), 50 – no I don't (50%), 2 - no answer (2%). While there is no comparable data on the number of people who have a close friend or relative with a disability in Ireland, it is estimated that between one in five and one in six of the population has a long-term disability (Watson 2011). It could therefore be hypothesised that these figures are not too far removed from that of the general population, however data is not available to confirm this.

From the survey and interviews it can be ascertained that there were two outcomes for the audience which are considered to have material value from the perspective of the SROI. The first was an Improved Understanding of Disability Resulting in more positive interactions with people with ID and the second was the Entertainment Value of the show.

There were also two very strong core themes emerging from the audience surveys and interviews, these were that the performance was regarded as highly entraining and the standard was unexpected. The second was that that stemming from this the performance has changed the way audience considered important issues and identities, in relation to ID and themselves.

## 9.2 View of Audience Members

**View One – The performance was highly entertaining and the standard very high**

As with all theatre experiences the audience came hoping to be entertained and entranced by the stories and the artistic merit of the production. According to both interviews and comments on the surveys, this expectation was more than met, as shown by the comments below:

*'It was so insightful. Thank you so much to the actors and the production team, it was*

*emotional and highly interesting, remarkable'. (Audience member 26, Galway)*

*'There were tears rolling down my cheeks, this has not happened since I was five maybe. Just the realisation that we are all looking for chances at happiness.' (Audience member 35 Galway)*

*'Excellent acting, superior direction, would cast several of the actors tomorrow'. (Audience member 53, Galway)*

### View Two – Perspective changing

A common made comment by audience members was that the performance had changed the way they viewed issues:

*'I loved it I thought the writing was really brave, they tackled the issues head-on and they did it through comedy; it was heartfelt and warm' (Audience member: Dublin)*

*I thought the play was excellent, acting was brilliant and it addressed a fundamental human rights issue. I think this play did more than years of campaigning and debate by bringing it to such a basic human level. (Audience member: Galway)*

*Amazing show, I have a brother with ID who is in a relationship, but they cant be together. I found it very emotional and upsetting and inspiring. I think this is life-changing theatre. I hope they put it on again so I can bring some family members and change some views. (Audience member: Galway)*

This view was shared by media coverage of the show, which included the following coverage:

*"Without doubt it is the most important stage kiss in Irish theatrical history" – Newstalk*

*"O'Reilly and the gifted Teapot cast shine a welcome light on this issue which they illuminate with great tact, perceptiveness and*

*last but by no means least, a rich vein of humour". Charlie McBride, Galway Advertiser*

### 9.3 Outcome One - Improved Understanding of Disability Resulting in More Positive Interactions with People with ID

Around three quarters (n=74%) of the audience stated that the theatre experience had changed the way they thought about disability. This translates to an estimated 1057 people experiencing this outcome (74% x 1,428).

Of note is that of the 27 who stated that their views on disability had not changed seven people (26% of the no group) highlighted that the reasons for this were they worked with people with disability and so were aware of the potential of people with ID prior to seeing the show.

Within the survey, respondents could select a number of ways in which their views had positively changed, the results are shown below:

**57** – It opened my thinking in relation to ID and sexuality (41%)

**47** – It increased my understanding of potential of people with ID (34%)

**35** – It changed the way I view what all people are capable of (25%)

**1** – Other (1%)

**140** - Total responses

Some of the ways in which opinions were changed are highlighted below:

*'It was fantastic; it made me think I would like to be on stage' (Audience member with ID: Galway).*

*'There are certain aspects (of ID) that I now understand, questions I had that never asked or it was never talked about at home'. (Audience member, Dublin)*

The value of a changed perspective has been calculated based on the price of a short course or lecture, as well as travel to attend the lecture. Lectures were selected, as these are events where an attendee would expect to have their views challenged, or to gain new knowledge and perspective.

Reviewing a range of public lectures<sup>42</sup>, the value of this outcome can be seen as being equivalent to €25 per person, which is around half for travel and half for ticket price.

**Attribution:** Based on interview feedback, attribution was nil as this was viewed as being entirely due to the Blue Teapot programme.

**Deadweight and Drop Off** Based on audience feedback this outcome was considered to last for four years as a change in attitude was seen as lasting a lifetime, and having a low deadweight and drop off at 15% based on commentary about the uniqueness and rarity of the experience.

### 9.4 Outcome Two - Entertainment Value of the Performances

Audience members valued the experience of attending the show at just over double the ticket price<sup>43</sup>. The following data was obtained through survey from 102 respondents post-performance:

**2** - less than ticket price (2%)

**24** - ticket price (23%)

**33** - twice ticket price (32%)

**37** - three or more (36%)

**6** - no answer (6%)

Using the average value as indicated by audience members the entertainment received was worth approximately €42 for the audience.

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<sup>42</sup> Associations conducting public lectures and short courses for the public such as: Astronomy Association [www.astronomy.ie](http://www.astronomy.ie), Psychological Society of Ireland [www.psihq.ie](http://www.psihq.ie), Irish Humanist Association [www.hai.ie](http://www.hai.ie) or the Irish School of Philosophy [www.practicalphilosophy.ie](http://www.practicalphilosophy.ie)

<sup>43</sup>  $(2 \times 10 = 20) + (24 \times 20 = 480) + (33 \times 40 = 1320) + (37 \times 60 = 2220) / 96 = €42$

The period of enjoyment is for only the time of the event, so this outcome has no future value.

**Attribution:** Based on survey feedback, attribution was nil as this was viewed as being entirely due to the Blue Teapot performances.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** Deadweight was set at a comparatively high 40% as based on audience feedback from which can be assumed that a proportion (60 people were regular theatre goers – 59%) would potentially have gone to another production had they not attended this event (the remainder were new to theatre and a small minority only attended Blue Teapot events). There was no drop off estimated for this outcome.

## 9.5 Summary

The audience held a view consistent with the media reviews received by Blue Teapot, namely that the performance was emotionally affecting, providing a memorable and impactful performance that used humour and craft to challenge ideas and present new ways of viewing the world. The main way in which perspectives were challenged in relation to disability and the limitations that society places on people with ID as well in relation to aspects of the human experience shared by us all, such as freedom and communication in intimate relationship.

# 10 Outcomes and Value for Workshop Attendees

## 10.1 Introduction

In 2014 Blue Teapot provided workshops to two youth services / festivals, these were the Baboro International Children's Arts Festival, and the Tuam Youth Group, Get Lippy from Ballinasloe and East Galway Youth Theatre. Data in this section of the report was obtained from an interview in the case of the Baboro workshops and from analysis of evaluation forms in relation to the youth workshops.

## 10.2 Outcome One - Increasing the Accessibility in Baboro Youth Festival (not material to the SROI)

Blue Teapot has a history of working with the Baboro Children's Arts Festival, contributing sessions and performances to events. In 2014, they ran a workshop for 16 children. Baboro maintains that having a Galway company involved in the festival increases local interest and promotes a sense of local pride.

Running workshops with Blue Teapot also increases the festivals profile and ability to serve a diverse audience.

*Our work with Blue Teapot gave us much more of an inclusion focus, this enhances our profile. We have quite a big profile for special needs children. Without Blue Teapot we would not have had a special needs group working with special needs children... it widens our audience base and widens our profile in what we do. (Baboro senior staff)*

However, while the partnership was significantly appreciated from the perspective of the festival managers, the overall value of the contribution of Blue Teapot in terms of direct workshop provisions (due to the relatively small size of the audience) or the consequent focus on accessibility and the publicity that arises from this was considered

to be less than €2,000 and so is considered immaterial from the perspective of the SROI.

## 10.3 Outcome Two - Increased Awareness of the Potential of People with ID Resulting in a Planned Change in Behaviour Towards People with ID

An assessment of the feedback from the youth workshops shows that Blue Teapot was successful in changing attitudes of those attending.

When attendees were asked if, after the performance, they would have a different and more positive reaction to people with ID following the show, 100%, or 48 people said that they would. 44 (92%) said that they felt that people with ID were more like them after the show with the remainder saying their feelings had not changed and one saying that they felt that people with ID were less like them. 47 of the 48 people in attendance thought that people with ID were more like them following the workshop.

This change is valued using the same proxy and timeline as attitudinal change highlighted in the audience chapter, i.e. attitudinal change resulting in a likely behavioural change has a proxy value of €25 per person (similar to the value of a public lecture or seminar and travel to attend).

**Attribution:** Based on feedback, attribution was nil as this was viewed as being entirely due to the Blue Teapot programme.

**Deadweight and Drop off:** The outcome is expected to last four years, with a deadweight and drop off of 15%.

In the SROI sheet this change has been calculated for the attendees of Baboro and the youth groups (16+48), which was change for 64 people.

## 10.4 Summary

This analysis shows that in order for attitudinal change to contribute significantly to the overall value provided by Blue Teapot, the show needs to reach large audiences, as the value per individual is relatively low. However when large audiences are exposed to the work of Blue Teapot this has a reliably positive and lasting affect.



# 11 Outcomes and Value for Galway City and County Civic Organisations

## 11.1 Introduction

To assess whether Blue Teapot has contributed value at a city or regional level, the researchers spoke to representatives within the city and regional councils, as well as senior staff within local festivals and arts organisations and senior staff within local academic institutions. Interviews with these individuals lasted between twenty-five and forty minutes. All interviewees had working relationships or knowledge of Blue Teapot, i.e. in the case of the councils funding was granted to Blue Teapot (€8,000 between the two organisations), in the case of local festivals they had worked professionally with the company.

This chapter summarises the central themes of these discussions and values the outcomes that occurred for city and county organisations<sup>44</sup> as a result of Blue Teapots work.

## 11.2 Views of Civic, Academic and Arts Organisations

### View One - Ability to deliver high quality arts performances / reliability

All commentators spoke about the value of Blue Teapot from the perspective of the company's contribution to the arts, and to audiences in the region. Commissioners and funders noted the consistency of Blue Teapots shows and all commented that audiences eagerly awaited Blue Teapot offerings as they

have built a reputation for creating quality, enjoyable and challenging performances.

*They are a model flagship company for arts and disability... We care for Blue Teapot and their work. For the last several years their theatre has been a highlight of the festivals, their shows are highly anticipated, and are expected to sell out, and they do.*

*We have Blue Teapot in the festival not because they are from Galway but because they are worthwhile. They are doing really interesting work. Like all good art it's a good idea executed well. Our mission is to provide the best possible arts experience for as many people as possible and Blue Teapot fits with this.*

### View Two - Contribution to the arts and the bravery and uniqueness of approach

The uniqueness of the vision and methods, and the bravery which they explore new forms of theatre and performance were again noted by all respondents. It is this quality which, respondents observed makes Blue Teapot artistically important as well being attractive to audiences.

*A key thing about Blue Teapot, is their unique contribution to the Irish cultural landscape. They contribute to the national understanding about what theatre is. The other thing they are doing is taking their theatre out of their locality. Theatre companies can often survive in a locality because of networks and so on,*

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<sup>44</sup> To preserve anonymity the quotes have not been numbered as in other chapters. This is as there were fewer respondents who were more identifiable by their quotes.

*but when it stands on its own with an audience that is not aware of their context, then this is important.*

*It's one of the best companies in the world working with disability and the arts, and its in the west of Ireland... what Blue Teapot has been able to achieve in relation to technical aspects of the production is very impressive. They are a very brave company as well. The way they build accommodation of actors with ID into the theatrical frame is very exciting; Having Petal on stage is extremely effective... They have made a very significant contribution to national arts dialogue in relation to inclusion, it's a huge statement – that performers that come from a non-professional background and also with a disability are capable of achieving at the highest level.*

*Blue Teapot is selected (to be art of a national festival) as it brings diversity, to the programme – however we are not doing it because of a social reason, and we are looking at the work from the perspective of value to the arts. We think they are doing interesting work and doing it well. They deserve to be supported and to develop. Blue Teapot are bringing a constituency into the landscape that was previously not represented or presented in bits and pieces. Blue Teapot has bought this group and their ideas over to mainstream audience. This is a notable success.*

A key point made by all commentators from the arts and civic organisations was that Blue Teapot, while having a clear accessibility and change agenda, was successful, and consistently so, due to its artistic and performance credentials.

### View Three - strengths of the team / setting new boundaries

The role of the team in setting standards in performance with an inclusion focus was noted as being innovative and impressive. The approach of Blue Teapot was viewed as

being a core driver of the artistic success of the company. The approach was seen as being defined by high standards, and facilitation and support of the ensemble to achieve this, as well as engagement of the best performance artists and professionals. The last point was seen as integral to values of the company in seeing ID actors as deserving of the same respect and opportunity as other actors. The result was achievement at the level of other successful professional actors or companies.

*They are setting standards for themselves that are very high and they are reaching them. It's a real tribute to Petal as artistic director that she is able to set up the hurdles and take them safely across them.*

The success of the company and the standards it attains were seen as changing paradigms within Irish theatre and challenging some long held ideas within the performance world, this idea was expressed by commentators as follows:

*The company is of a professional standard, but the actors are not coming in through a professional route – i.e. through a casting agency... This work eschews some of these traditional structures.*

*They have changed the perception of the arts and disability; I don't think they get enough recognition.*

### View Four - challenges of accessing additional funding

There was an agreement from local civic organisations that accessing funding for Blue Teapot was extremely challenging. Funds at the county and city level are restricted and have decreased over recent years:

*We like what they have achieved. They are doing what they have set out to do. We would have liked to have increased it but this was not possible – it would send out the wrong signals if we decreased their funding. We care for Blue Teapot and their work.*

*I think they should [receive more funding support] as they are doing an extraordinary job, we are very lucky in Galway as we receive some good funding from the arts council – possibly it makes it a little harder for other Galway based companies. It comes back to the parable of the talents. If they were in Longford in Tipperary they have more access to funding.*

*I would like to support them to get funding, they are so committed, Blue Teapot go the extra mile. I feel that they have work that extra bit harder to prove themselves and they do.*

*I think this is a timing issue, I think that a challenge for the arts council is that they have been cut by 33%, over the last number of years, so its is very competitive, its very difficult environment for new entrants.*

These quotes all show significant good will from the civic and arts community for Blue Teapot, and a desire to see and support the company to grow. However, these comments were made alongside a clear acknowledgement in relation to the reduction in funding for Irish arts organisations.

#### View Five - potential for increased partnerships

Two commentators highlighted that there was some untapped potential for Blue Teapot to perform in other theatre spaces, which has the potential to increase profile and audiences, as well as avoid pigeonholing:

*They could work towards going to more mainstream theatres, and using other theatres more which may help further develop the audience. Its important to get out of the usual venue, and not always be arts and disability performance in an arts and disability venue. Blue Teapot have done it before with Druid, and in Dublin and should do it again.*

#### View Six - sustainability of business model and opportunities for progression

Commentators were asked about the potential negative of a lack of move on options for people at the end of the Performing Arts programme. The responses were focused on the fact that no arts programme can assure participants of a future career, and that the arts can be notoriously tough to engage with professionally. Also noted by a number of commentators was the fact that the skills learnt are generally transferable for a mainstream population. The question of whether this was also true of an ID population was raised. The comment below discusses move on options for a mainstream population:

*It is accepted as part of the bargain when they show up - that not everyone will be able to make a living from their craft, and we encourage them to broadly to reflect on how the skills can be used in other contexts and professions. We also highlight how theatre can be a valuable hobby or interest throughout life. Even when students do not make it professionally, they have generally benefited more than they have not.*

However challenges in integrating skills into other work and life opportunities was noted as being more difficult for people with ID who have less opportunities generally.

There were a number of suggestions as to how Blue Teapot may adapt its business model to create other opportunities for participants on the programme. It was noted that other organisations may be well placed to lead on creating new progression routes, and the responsibility of this was not all down to Blue Teapot. Ideas included: 1) Ex-participants and theatre company members earning an income through providing professional workshops to other community and school groups and the broader ID community, and 2) the creation of an agent role to assist ID actors accessing work and 3) creative outlets from non professional actors who are graduating from the school. These ideas are discussed in interviewee's own words below:

*You generally need an agent to be acting at those larger theatres. An agent for ID actors seems like an excellent idea. The question needs to be raised as to whether ID actors engaged in mainstream theatre will receive the same level of support. Do people need to be trained to work with individuals of different experience? In order for this to happen a role needs to be created (i.e. agent), and possibly there may also be need to change in the rehearsal room and how this is conducted.*

*It would be worthwhile to explore how workshops run by people with ID could be included in (third level) training programmes.*

*What about on-going workshops for those actors who are coming out of the programme, or non professional community theatre, that is focused on participation?*

Three commentators also raised the suggestion that Blue Teapot review its business model, it was pointed out that the full ensemble cast as well as complex sets, meant that the touring cost of productions was very high. There may be benefit in exploring smaller more compact works that are better situated to travel outside of Galway.

*Full ensemble is really ideal in relation to ethos and arts practice, however is there an option about smaller productions that can travel separately - be more viable.*

This theme was also raised by a number of interviewees from venues or funders based outside of Galway, who suggested that leaner, less costly performances would be worth considering to support more performances and increase audience reach and therefore impact of the shows.

### 11.3 Outcome One - Increase in strength of Galway Brand as a National Hub for Arts Excellence and Accessibility

Local civic and arts organisations agreed that Blue Teapot contributed in very significant ways to the brand of Galway in relation to arts excellence and inclusion. As stated by one commentator:

*Galway means Macnas, Galway Film Fleadh, Druid, the Arts Festival – this is all work that reaches a lot of people. But we have another tagline; that the council created, this is ‘Galway city of Equals’ – therefore we want to give the impression regardless of where you come from, regardless of your physical challenges, the city of Galway will treat you equally. By Blue Teapot coming out of Galway it shows, in clear terms, that the city promotes creativity from all groups and people – it’s not just about the Film Fleadh and Druid.*

The civic organisations agreed that Blue Teapot actively contributes to the Galway Brand, highlighting aspects such as the democratic nature of arts participation and the diversity and innovation in arts practice.

Like any brand the ‘Galway Arts Brand’ has to be continually re-enforced and strengthened for it to be sustainable and meaningful, as described below:

*We also have an image of hen parties and 24 hour drinking; a few years ago I was thinking this image was swamping our perception as an arts city. I think that the pendulum has swung back again, alongside others; Blue Teapot has played an important role in this.*

When asked to value Blue Teapot’s contribution to city and county branding, an example was provided by one interviewee, with responsibility in the area of city or county branding - when Galway was ‘smitten by cryptosporidium’ (a bacteria in the water) to maintain the Galway Brand in relation to the

city being a good place to come the council had to take adverts in the national newspapers. It was noted that this happened again years later with the cloud ash.

To achieve the same outcome as that provided by Blue Teapot in relation to arts and accessibility branding, it was estimated that €40,000 could be spent on newspaper advertising (based on spend in the previous examples) or provision of local events.

**Attribution:** Attribution for this outcome was estimated as being 20%, which relates to the influence of other factors.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** The time estimated for the impact of this outcome is two years with a low deadweight, given that, according to interviewees, there are few organisations working at this level of national profile. Drop off was set at 30% to account for the fact that branding has to be constantly renewed to maintain public perceptions.

## 11.4 Outcome Two - Increase in Accessibility and Raised Expectations about what People with an ID Can Do

Local civic organisations all agreed that there is county gain in relation to changing perceptions of what people with disability can do, and then in providing concrete options for civic engagement for people who are traditionally excluded from these opportunities.

To calculate the value of this outcome interviewees were asked what they could do to achieve the same outcomes in relation to increasing accessibility and expectations in the situation where Blue Teapot did not exist. Answers are below:

*We would get an artist in residence – however it might it have taken us a while to get around to thinking about theatre as a forum for disability.... Also there is no guarantee we could do it every year, and if you have gaps you go back to square one. It's so important that you keep working, in other types of arts there are yarning gaps and you don't know if it will continue. You could never get the same consistency; anything else would have stops and starts.*

A residency was estimated to cost between €20,000 and €30,000. Another commentator estimated a comparative proxy as a new commission with a comparative price of €30,000.

**Attribution:** Attribution for this outcome was estimated as being 20%, which relates to the influence of other factors.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** This impact is expected to last for three years, based on stakeholder feedback with a low deadweight of 10%, as there are few other companies working in the area with the reach and profile of Blue Teapot. Drop off was estimated to be a higher 30%.

## 11.5 Summary

A summary of the themes and outcomes discussed in this section is possibly best illustrated through this quote, which highlights how the unique approach of Blue Teapot has resulted in real outcomes that have an impact at the county and city level:

*In terms of contribution they have opened up avenues for people with disabilities in the arts, they have elevated this to quite a high level. This influences people expectations and challenges people assumptions. They have demanded excellence, its been done gently but with real direction. The standard of practice has been raised; this sets a permanent bar for what arts and disability can do.*



# 12 Outcomes and Value for Services Hiring the Venue

## 12.1 Introduction

There are three arts companies, which regularly hire the Blue Teapot arts venue, these are:

- 1) Speckled Egg Dance studio, which works with a disability target group through dance
- 2) Core theatre college, which works with adults through acting and performance
- 3) Spontaneous Theatre Project, which teaches improvisation to adults.

These companies use the space on average twice a month. The space is hired for €10 a session resulting in an annual income of €1,030, included as an input in the SROI valuation.

## 12.2 Views of Services

**View One - The venue is well placed, is accessible and has a good energy**

All three respondents commented on how accessible and welcoming the venue was, naming parking, and its proximity to main transportation routes, which had the impact of making it accessible to their service users and clients:

*I can get some spaces for free, but then my participants cannot easily access the premises. My participants are all in ID service provision. Therefore they have to get mini buses and taxis, and these find it really hard to find the space. I get inundated with calls by drivers saying how do I get them here. The traffic around Blue Teapot is good as its a slightly out of the way building, there are specialised taxis and they all know all where it is.*

Another commonly agreed theme was the energy or positive vibe of the venue, which made it a pleasure to use:

*The energy of the space is a real positive; it's a lovely environment.*

**View Two - The positive reputation of Blue Teapot and their impact on regional arts practice and inclusion**

All three respondents commented on the importance of the role of Blue Teapot in contributing to regional arts practice particularly in relation to social inclusion:

*Running an ID targeted practice there is a way of giving people a Blue Teapot experience. Blue Teapot is the best ID experience in Galway. Its got huge big-up in the ID world, and not everybody can be a part of it.*

Two respondents commented on the impact that Blue Teapot had on the general community and /or specifically on their family and friends, as highlighted by the following quote:

*Because of this work I have bought my son in, our family life has been affected, it has opened up questions about integration and power and cognitive difference. These conversations don't happen in the west of Ireland.*

### View Three - Uniqueness of the approach / contribution to regional artistic practice

The other way in which Blue Teapot contributed to the arts was through; the quality and uniqueness of its shows and the innovation in approach and artistic format, which interviewees maintained was of real value to the broader performance community.

An important attribute of the company connected to their quality and innovation was Blue Teapots generosity in training and supporting artistic practice in others, and sharing their substantial knowledge in working with actors of differing backgrounds:

*There is no disability arts training in Ireland and it provides an important space for practitioners to hone their skills and become excellent in this practice.*

It was noted that Blue Teapot is one of the best placed companies within Ireland to support this knowledge and skill base in practitioners, who work as sessional workers, volunteers or as interns. The suggestion was also raised that this training role could be further formalised and may have potential to generate and income stream for the organisation.

### View Four - A lack of move on options

As with other stakeholders' groups, interviewees were asked about whether they perceived a negative element of the programme in relation to limited move on options following students three years in the Performing Arts programme.

There were mixed responses interviewees stating that no performing arts courses could guarantee move on options, and the skills learnt were transferable to other aspects of people life. Other respondents commented that for some individuals who had to return to mainstream service delivery without creative outlets this could indeed be a challenging and difficult experience, and individual potential and gains could be lost.

## 12.3 Outcome One - Support to Establish an Independent Arts Practice (immaterial in the SROI)

One company stated that Blue Teapot had significantly contributed to its establishment through advice, personal support, and mentoring and very significantly referrals. This support and referral has had an impact on current day earnings as described below:

*I wouldn't work in this area without Blue Teapot. I trained in dance and ID but I gave it up. This {Blue Teapots support} has had an affect on my whole life, this is what I will do for the next 25 years. I have benefited from the Blue Teapot public relations. They provided the people, and people considered it positively because of the connection to Blue Teapot. I attribute about 5% of my earnings to Blue Teapot's contribution. My earnings mean I am no longer receiving social welfare.*

As the estimated value of this outcome<sup>45</sup> does not meet the threshold of €2,000 for materiality. The outcome has not been included in the SROI. This is largely due to the fact that much of the support given to this company was at the establishment period of this project between 2011 and 2012, meaning a much smaller attribution was due to supports in 2014.

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<sup>45</sup> The exact earnings have not been provided to protect interviewees sensitive information however 5% of these is less than the materiality threshold of €2,000.

## 12.4 Outcome Two - Lost Income Due to Injuries in the Space

All interviewees commented that while the space is accessible; the space could be improved, particularly in relation to heat and flooring. One respondent identified a negative outcome in relation to the floors of the building not being appropriate to physical theatre and dance and that, in their opinion, this had led to minor injuries for themselves, which in turn resulted in a loss of income. This loss of income was estimated at €800, deadweight has been estimated at 25%, as it is possible that injuries would have occurred in other spaces.

**Attribution:** The period of impact of this outcome is one year, and attribution was 40%, due to the fact that the type of work also contributed to this injury.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** There was no drop off for this outcome. The deadweight for this outcome was calculated based on interviewee feedback, at 25%.

## 12.5 Summary

The companies using the space had significant appreciation of Blue Teapot and its contribution to the local arts and disability scene. Overall the company was seen as innovative and generous in its interactions with other arts organisations.

# 13 Outcomes and Value for Funding / Partner Agencies

## 13.1 Introduction

Brothers of Charity Services Galway (BOCSG), a large disability service based in Galway, were instrumental in establishing Blue Teapot. The organisation has played a central and consistent role in the growth of Blue Teapot. Ability West has likewise played a central role in Blue Teapot's development. Both organisations provide funding for the service and have a number of seats on the board, as well as having a role in referring clients to Blue Teapot.

The names of the three organisations are connected within the minds of many stakeholders; therefore, the success of Blue Teapot, as well as being reliant on the support of these partner and funding agencies, has directly benefited the partner agencies.

This chapter of the report, which reviews the views and outcomes for the partner agencies, was developed based on interviews with senior staff within each partner organisation and survey feedback from 22 senior staff across the organisations. 18 of the staff surveyed had referred a client or a member of their team had referred a client to Blue Teapot and all respondents were aware of the work of the organisation. This survey was undertaken to test whether manager ideas on outcomes for their staff and service was a view common to all staff across their service. In all cases the survey data showed a consistently held view as to how Blue Teapot contributed to the work of their organisations as well as within the broader disability community.

## 13.2 A Brief Overview of the Relationship between Partner / Funding Agencies and Blue Teapot

In the early years, up to 2009, Blue Teapot was a small but innovative arts programme within the broader BOCSG stable. The BOCSG have a strong commitment to supporting artists with ID to take their place in the arts and cultural life of Galway city and county. To this end the organisation had created and resourced (in 2006) the post of Director of the Blue Teapot Theatre to ensure sustainability of the project in the longer term. In 2007 a decision was made to support Blue Teapot to become a separate legal entity, which was completed in 2009.

BOCSG still maintain very close connections to the project, employing the Director and maintaining two places on the Board of Management. BOCSG also continues to fund the service, with financial input into the organisation of €179,378, in 2014, which is detailed within the inputs section of the report.

Ability West also contribute to the funding of the service, providing €24,209 on an annual basis.

The inputs from these two core funding partners are included in the SROI analysis as well as being noted in the Inputs chapter of the SROI.

### 13.3 Views of Staff from Brothers of Charity Services Galway and Ability West

#### View One - Blue Teapot changes the way people perceive ID

The majority view raised in 18 of 22 surveys<sup>46</sup> as well as in the three interviews was that Blue Teapot has changed the way that people perceive what individuals with ID can accomplish.

When staff were asked in a survey if Blue Teapot has raised public awareness of the potential of people with ID again the vast majority (20) stated this was very true, with two stating this was true.

Comments showed that this has had an impact of those with a disability, the disability community and as well as changing and challenging views in the wider population. The comments below describe this important contribution:

*I think they force us to look at Ability rather than Disability. (Staff respondent 18)*

*It has a positive affect in showing the wider disability community the possibilities that are there for individuals to participate in projects. I believe it is an inspiration to others. (Staff respondent 3)*

*Equality at its best. (Staff respondent 12)*

*Blue Teapot has a clear message - people are people - some have disability of one kind or another but they are not defined by their disability - they have the same hopes and dreams as everybody else. (Staff respondent 14)*

View Two - The arts have an important role in service provision for people with ID which should be extended

Another central theme was that the excellent work and example of Blue Teapot should be further built upon. Over a third of respondents commented that the arts and drama opportunities for individuals with disability need to be extended.

*When service users are fulfilled and happy their confidence improved and all this has a positive impact for the individual and everyone they are involved with. (Staff respondent 10)*

*Drama is such a part of bringing an individual with ID out of themselves, empowering them and building their own resilience, they can show people what they can do, more than what they can't. Its brilliant and we need to encourage more music and drama into the wider scope of our services on a regular basis. (Staff respondent 8)*

*Would like to get more service users involved. Its a very positive project to have and the work they have done in the past has been incredible and has opened the eyes of the community. (Staff respondent 7)*

It was also noted in interviews that the unique methodology and ethos of Blue Teapot plays an important role in allowing people with disability to express themselves and connect with others.

### 13.4 Outcome One - Promotion / Publicity for Partner Organisations

According to interviewees as a result of the close connection between the partner organisations and Blue Teapot, the funder / partner organisations benefit from the success

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<sup>46</sup> This was in an open text box, and did not need to be completed by respondents.



and goodwill of Blue Teapot. As discussed previously, their role in supporting and growing the organisation is connected with its current and on going success and innovation. This relationship highlights core values of the funder services, which these organisation work to introduce into all aspects of their programmes and which finds particular acclaim and recognition in Blue Teapot.

A very practical example of this is that Blue Teapot is promoted on the Brothers of Charity website.



Figure 2: BOCSG Website, highlighting work of Blue Teapot

The relationship is highlighted in the quotes of a BOCSG senior staff member:

*Blue Teapot highlights the innovative and progressive approach of the Brothers of Charity to our funders and others stakeholders. Brothers of Charity has suffered from the perception of all religious orders and state institutions in relation to the legacy of abuse. Blue Teapot has been so valuable in re-contextualising and highlighting the good work that we do now. It increases our reputation as a creative, innovative and responsive organisation that facilitates people with disability to achieve their dreams and wishes and to take their rightful place in Galway's cultural life. It's very hard to buy that. (Senior staff BOCSG)*

For Ability West this outcome is articulated in the following manner:

*Blue Teapot raises the profile of people with ID, which is of benefit to our organisation and those we support. For a long time people with disabilities were kept in the backroom, now we have them in the town hall, winning awards, appearing the national media. We welcome this, people are more understanding and people are more welcoming. We try to get more people involved in the community and this creates more open environments, which are of real benefit to us. Community integration is a real goal of ours. The downturn has made this work much more difficult, we are encouraging people to get involved in clubs and local residents associations. Blue Teapot really assists in this by increasing the profile of ID.*

When asked about the value of this publicity and promotion, staff stated that, firstly, this kind of community wide goodwill was difficult to purchase, and while money could be spent in order to try to achieve such an outcome, it was often extremely challenging to change perceptions and to communicate value or change based messages to the public or local community in meaningful ways. The quotes below highlight how the funder/partner organisations may have attempted to attain a similar outcome and the cost of these methods, should Blue Teapot not be doing this work so well.

*To achieve something similar we would need to make short documentaries and work to get these shown and viewed. It would cost at least €20,000 for a documentary, but really we could not have had this same benefit from anywhere else. (Senior staff BOCSG)*

*A good proxy for this outcome could be the time it would take if we had a programme for engaging in more outreach with parents and community knocking on doors and liaising directly with people. A half time post could cost around €25,000. (Senior staff Ability West)*

Taking the following into consideration the value of 'an increase in promotion and

publicity' has been valued at €22,500, with a three year life span.

**Attribution:** The attribution is estimated at 20%, as BOCSG have had other successes with arts projects in 2014, most notably "That's Life". Drop off is estimated at 15% as each year it is likely that the work of 2014 will have less impact on the public perception of ID and the partner organisations.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** Based on staff feedback, the deadweight has been set at 25%, had partner organisations not been putting resources into Blue Teapot, they are likely to have undertaken other projects. However as suggested to attain such community awareness and good will is very rare. There was no drop off for this outcome.

### 13.5 Outcome Two - Increased Ability of Families / People with ID to Communicate in Relation to Issues around Sexuality, Privacy and Intimate Relationships

Both organisations maintain that Blue Teapot has had a significant impact on the ability of their clients (people with physical and ID) and their client's families to discuss issues that previously were not discussed in most families or work environments, namely sexuality and intimate relationships.

Interviewees commented that this has been achieved in a gentle manner, which also serves to raise awareness of the potential of people with disability to contribute to their community and achieve goals, in personal or professional arenas. This outcome is discussed below:

*With a show like Sanctuary, they have broken new ground. It has opened the eyes of family members, staff, and people with a disability themselves in the most beautiful and gentle way. It has helped open up the conversation for people to talk about sexuality and Intellectual Disability. I can think of no other*

*process, which could have achieved these results so sensitively and so effectively.*  
(Senior staff member BOCSG)

Two senior staff interviewees noted that the staff had observed a significant change in openness and willingness between staff and family members to discuss issues in relation to sexuality, identity and relationships, which in turn had an impact in relation to family closeness and potentially in relation to the quality of life of individuals with ID.

When service staff were asked in a survey if Blue Teapot's work has assisted parents and family members to be able to more easily discuss issues around independence, privacy and sexuality, 20 stated this was true or very true and 2 replied 'neither' or left the answer blank.

To achieve the same outcome, had Blue Teapot not existed senior staff estimated that each organisation would have to dedicate substantial resources to train both staff members and parents in these issues. However as with other outcomes the challenge in achieving pragmatic outcomes were noted. While a service can run a workshop on sexuality for instance, engagement of families and subsequent outcomes of increased awareness is by no means assured.

It is conservatively estimated that the value of this awareness raising is equivalent to one part time staff member in each organisation, working as a trainer and liaison person, this works out an equivalent cost of €40,000<sup>47</sup> per year for each organisations. It is expected that the length of time of this awareness is significant, given that once awareness and dialogue occurs it is hard to undo, therefore this has been estimated at lasting four years.

**Attribution:** Attribution was estimated to be 25%: to other factors such as family discussions and some staff engagement, however the majority of change occurring this area was viewed by interviewees as being directly related to Blue Teapot.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** Deadweight is anticipated to be low, as within the last ten years, prior to the Blue Teapot, according to interviewees, no work has been as impactful

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<sup>47</sup> Based on average workers wages for such a role and PRSI

as Blue Teapot in this area, it is therefore estimated to be in the region of 10%. The drop off is estimated at 30% to account for the fact that this topic exists within a broader cultural setting.

### 13.6 Outcome Three - Increase in Staff Morale (BOCSG only)

BOCSG, is a large organisation with over 250 staff. According to key stakeholders, like many social service organisations over the last several years, the organisation has been subject to significant cuts in funding and as a result has had to implement multiple strategic responses, including re-organisation, scaling back services and incurring some job losses. Such changes have had a tangible negative impact on staff morale.

According to senior staff, the success of Blue Teapot, and the impact of its performances have had a much needed positive impact on staff morale. Staff agreed with the views of senior management on this issue: when asked to rate whether Blue Teapot helps to raise morale for those who work in disability services, 19 BOCSG staff<sup>48</sup> stated by survey that this was true (5) or very true (14), only one respondent replied that it was neither true or untrue, no respondents stated this was untrue.

Part of the dynamic that has resulted in increased morale has been making tangible the values and importance of BOCSG. Through its association with Blue Teapot, particularly in relation to empowerment, opportunity and supporting people to attain their potential. This dynamic is highlighted in the following quote:

*There is no question that Blue Teapot has improved and affected our staff morale. As managers of services, it is a visual reminder of our ethos and our success. It reminds us we are doing a good job and that our work is valuable. We put a significant amount of funding into Blue Teapot, when other aspects of the organisation suffered badly in the recession we tried to protect Blue Teapot as*

*much as possible from the severe budget cuts. (Senior staff member BOCSG)*

To achieve the same increase in morale, stakeholders estimated that the organisation would need to run one of its 'Making it Happen Seminars'. These are events that support quality and learning and aim to increase staff morale and personal connection to their work. These involve over a hundred of staff and services users at each seminar. At a cost of around €25 a person, with approximate organisation and management costs of €2,000, as well as the cost of wages for those attending on the day this works out at a total cost to the organisation of approximately €50,000.

**Attribution:** Attribution is challenging to ascertain in this example due to a lack of conclusive feedback on morale, as such it has been set at a very conservative 50%.

**Deadweight and Drop Off:** The length of time and impact of Blue Teapot on morale is expected to be approximately two years, with deadweight of 25%, and a drop off 25%, following the logic in the outcome above.

### 13.7 Summary

The funding partners have played an important role in supporting the establishment and growth of Blue Teapot. As a result the identities of the three organisations are linked in the minds of staff, funders and some members of the wider community. This close organisational connection means that the success of Blue Teapot has impacted positively on the work of Brothers of Charity Services Galway and Ability West, both large disability services in region. The outcomes for these funder and partners services as agreed by 25 management and senior staff are; 1) an increase in publicity and promotion, 2) an enhanced ability to discuss issues with individual clients and their families, namely sexuality and intimate relationships and, 3) for BOCSG, staff agreed that the inspiring work of Blue Teapot had a real and important positive impact on staff morale across the organisation.

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<sup>48</sup> In the overall survey 20 respondents were BOCSG and two were from Ability West.

# 14 Outcome and Value for Board Members

## 14.1 Introduction

Board members were engaged in the SROI research process through interviews and a focus group, overall all six members participated in an aspect or all aspects of the process.

The input section of this report identifies that the Board inputs substantial time and value into Blue Teapot. The contribution of board members over 2014 was estimated at approximately 130 hours, which based on an average of four professional salaries within the group, has been valued at a pro rata annual wage of €70,000, or €34 an hour. The overall equivalent value of the boards contribution is therefore in the vicinity of €4,420.

This chapter highlights the views of the Board in relation to the project as well as outcomes that members receive as individuals.

## 14.2 Views of Blue Teapot Board Members

### View One - Contribution to national dialogue in relation to arts and disability

Like most other stakeholder groups, Board members commented that Blue Teapot contributes to the national arts dialogue in important ways, and noted that this is not an easy outcome to achieve, especially at the level that Blue Teapot have operated at:

*The outstanding success of the theatre they produce. The national reputation they have gained as a ground breaking theatre company – it has transformed how people in Ireland and Galway see people with disability.*

*In Sanctuary, a character says to someone she fancies, ‘do you mind that I have Downs’, the characters talk about how they feel and think about having an ID, this is really a first in this kind of public forum. People can talk about things they didn’t talk about before, rarely have their disabilities been discussed by people with intellectual disability in such an open and honest way.*

### View Two - Strengths of the team and community, which is built on the unique approach

The board noted that the success of the company is substantially due to the talent and commitment of the staff team. It was noted that the organisation has a number of talented directors including Petal Piley the current award winning programme co-ordinator. Central to the success of the company is the ethos of the organisation which is embodied by the existing team and which was described by the board as being inclusive, challenging and supportive. Blue Teapot ethos in turn creates a tangible sense of community among the staff volunteers, parents and participants, which also contributes to the uniqueness of the programme.

Board members were also in agreement as to the importance of the model of working and approach, and the uniqueness of this within the wider service provision landscape:

*The participants of Blue Teapot relate to each other with equality and a sense of pride and value. In my opinion it is often not as apparent in other kinds of services. The power base is very different in more traditional models of service. I think that this is because everyone is treated equally [in Blue Teapot], their roles as professional actors are hugely valued. They are seen as*



*having an identity as other than solely being a person with ID. They are seen as being an actor first, and having a disability second, this is challenging to do, and a real achievement.*

*It caters for a cohort who are interested in the arts and there is no other service for this. Some service users were with us and not happy with us. One client moved to Blue Teapot and she is thriving as she is where she should be, this is about clients having a service that meets their needs, where they are happy and served. It's about matching individual needs to services, to something that we would love to do move of.*

### View Three - Negative outcome of no limited move on options for performance arts participants

As with other stakeholder groups a negative aspect of the process for participants was noted as being a lack of move on options for many people. This was something that Blue Teapot, may with additional resources, address to some extent, however it was also noted that other organisations also had a role to play in providing move on options. This issue is highlighted in the following quote:

*Where do they go after? It is possible that some of them could be without a service when they graduate from the Performing Arts School but generally BOCSG will aim to provide day programmes or supported employment if possible. However the day programme may not be something that they particularly enjoy – this will have many more limitations for them than when they were part of the Blue Teapot.*

### View Four - Business model opportunities

The committee were in support of the development of future business opportunities that can further provide move on options for participants and graduates of the programmes. While these opportunities would

require further feasibility analysis, there was support for exploring options in relation to an agent role for disability actors in Ireland:

*To have people in roles in mainstream television is really important. I support the notion of developing the role of an agent to support the transition of the actors into mainstream acting roles.*

Another option with significant support for further exploration was, in relation to Blue Teapot, developing programmes where programme graduates could act as trainers, which is a model that has been used by other ID theatre companies internationally.

### View Five - Limitations of funding

The board were in agreement that funding was an issue for the service and that funding challenges meant that the staff were stretched to capacity and that further development of the service could not occur within existing resources, despite there being an obvious need for this. The challenges of accessing arts funding was noted particularly:

*There is a real challenge in accessing ongoing core arts or corporate funding. There is lack of support for the staff team in relation to the scale of the projects that the team takes on. It is really run on a shoestring for the amount of work that they do.*

The lack of assurance in existing funding streams was also noted:

*The HSE is the main funder, and there are benefits, but the future interests are always unsure. There is no assurance that there will be continued funding despite the projects success.*



### 14.3 Outcome One - Increase in Personal Satisfaction and Validation (considered immaterial in SROI terms)

This outcome was experienced by three of six board members. Two board members were relatively new to the service in 2014, joining in the last quarter, and so as yet had not experienced any significant personal outcomes as an outcomes from their contribution. The quotes below highlight what engagement in Blue Teapot has meant for members who had been engaged throughout the year:

*Even with budget cutbacks and a challenging work environment, I am so proud to be associated with this project. Going to awards ceremonies and winning Community and Arts awards is a validation for our work. How else would I be part of a Mayor's achievement award or an Irish Times recognition award?*

*The most validating thing to hear is when I hear an actress from Blue Teapot on Miriam O'Callaghan, say that 'I always wanted to be an actress, it is my dream come true'. This*

*gives me great personal satisfaction. We are in the business of trying to assist people within Blue Teapot to achieve their goals. Blue Teapot does this so well, its shows us what we can all do in our lives – 'to reach for the stars'.*

It was agreed that the outcome was conservatively valued at the equivalent of attending a community course, worth an estimated €500 per year. This outcome does, therefore, reach the materiality threshold of €2,00, and so been included in the SROI.

### 14.4 Summary

The Board were in agreement that Blue Teapot had unique place within both arts and disability services. To the arts it has brought a new perspective and performances that have met with consistent audience approval and critical acclaim. To disability services it has highlighted the potential of people with ID, provided a creative outlet to many participants and shown how an approach which values the creative and contributions of people with ID as equals can have significant impacts on individuals, families and the wider community. A challenge from the boards perspective was in accessing additional funding and furthering opportunities for participants without overstretching their talented and committed team.

# 15 Outcomes and Value for Neighbours

## 15.1 Introduction

Blue Teapot is based in a mainly urban street, which contains at one end a number of businesses including a beauty salon and funeral parlour, which backs onto a shopping street, and at the other residential housing. The area was cited by many of the neighbours as being 'old Galway'.



Twelve neighbours were interviewed in person or by phone<sup>49</sup>. Three of these were businesses on the street or on the directly adjoining street and the remaining nine were residents. The vast majority (11 of 12) knew who Blue Teapot were and the work that they did. The remaining individual was new to the neighbourhood and did not yet know any of the neighbours.

## 15.2 Views of Neighbours

### View One – Good neighbours

Ten out of twelve people interviewed stated that Blue Teapot were good neighbours, with one neighbour being too new to the area to comment and another stating that they were

ambivalent: having no views either negative or positive. The following sample quotes highlight some of the neighbours' views in this regard:

*They are an excellent neighbour... they don't impinge, it's a happy and vibrant place, any time you pass by there is laughter and its lovely place for the people that go. (Neighbour 4)*

*I like them because I smile at them and they smile back. (child's comment from Neighbour 5)*

*No problems, all positive, all good. They build community spirit. (Neighbour 11)*

Two people also commented on the value or importance of the work that Blue Teapot do and its importance to people with ID or the city of Galway.

### View Two – They have added value to the area

Five people stated that Blue Teapot had added value to the area, and that their presence continued to do so by either improving the look of a previously disused building or bringing vibrancy to the area. This is highlighted in the following comments:

*I think it adds value to the neighbourhood when there is a theatre on the street. Having a theatre on the street makes the area a little more hip. It reminds me of the Meat Packing district in New York, this used to be the meat packing area of Galway. (Neighbour 3)*

*It's positive to see it, what I like about it is it was absolutely dead and now there are people around and it improves the neighbourhood. (Neighbour 4)*

<sup>49</sup> Note that the numbers adjoining the quotes relate to each houses interview number, not the number of each individuals house.

All neighbours were asked whether there were negative aspects to having Blue Teapot as neighbours, and were prompted in relation to congestion and noise. Only one neighbour raised an issue:

*In the past the neighbours used to complain about the traffic sometimes, I don't know if they do now. (Neighbour 12)*

However, as no other neighbours commented on this, it was not considered a significant theme. This may also be related to the fact that another neighbourhood business with a car park had agreed to open their car park up to Blue Teapot theatregoers when there were events. This was offered in support of the work of Blue Teapot who they saw as a great charity. Given this information this potential negative outcome was not included in the SROI, as it was considered not to be relevant to the SROI period under review.

### 15.3 Outcome One - Improvement in Neighbourhood / Value of Housing (immaterial in terms of SROI)

While it was clearly stated by five out of 12 neighbours that they thought that Blue Teapot

has increased the feel of the local environment, the sense of local community and had added value to their property by cleaning up a previously dilapidated building.

However, when a potential increase in valuation was explored through an interview with a local Auctioneer, this outcome was considered immaterial in relation to having an affect on property values. While the agent, who knew the area well, agreed that Blue Teapot has greatly improved the building and look of this section of the street, and contributed to the local community spirit, he stated that an estate agency would be very unlikely to use the existence of Blue Teapot on the street as a selling point, when trying to sell a neighbouring house. This is due to the fact that the venue is rented, therefore the tenancy is not secure in the long-term, i.e. the lease could be ended by the landlord or tenant. The value of the local tenancy of Blue Teapot was therefore considered to be largely subjective and likely to result in no or only a very negligible increase in property values. This value is considered immaterial in SROI terms and is not included in the SROI analysis.



Figure 3: The run down building with graffiti prior to Blue Teapot



Figure 4: The improved look of the building post move in

## 15.4 Summary

Neighbours were very supportive of Blue Teapot and regarded it as a welcome addition to the neighbourhood, bringing a sense of life and community spirit to the area and contributing to a sense of local rejuvenation. There were no negative aspects to the company being based in a residential setting. However, a number of respondents suggested that having a community theatre on the street could potentially raise house prices slightly, an interview with a local estate agent, revealed that due to the fact that tenancy was only rental this was unlikely to have an affect on house prices, as such the positive impact of Blue Teapot on neighbours has not been included in the SROI figures.



# 16 Inputs

## 16.1 Introduction

This section of the report highlights the investment into Blue Teapot over 2014. Inputs include all income that would usually appear in the audited accounts such as funding, philanthropy and income from the rental space and that relate to activities within the scope of the SROI.

In line with the methodology of SROI the impact map also considers inputs that don't appear on the balance sheet, such as the contribution of time and human resources by volunteers and board members.

## 16.2 Table of Inputs

Input	Source and details	Amount
<b>Fundraising</b>	Fundraising was undertaken through a variety of means and included a large public event / dinner.	<b>€31,027</b>
<b>Volunteer hours</b>	This information was attained through interviews and survey with volunteers and contractors, which revealed that a total of 529 voluntary hours were worked (410 by volunteers, 119 voluntary hours by contractors). This data was also cross-referenced with management records and through discussions with the director.  All hours have been valued at the Irish minimum wage in 2014 of €8.65 per hours. This translates to a total contribution of €4,522.	<b>€4,522</b>
<b>Board contribution in volunteer hours</b>	This information was attained through interviews and survey with volunteers and contractors, which revealed that a total of 130 voluntary hours were worked. This data was also cross-referenced with service records.  All hours have been valued at an average pro-rata rate equivalent to the current earnings of the board, which based on the average of four current board members salaries is €70,000, or pro rata €34 an hour This translates to a total contribution of €4,420.	<b>€4,420</b>
<b>Grants Galway City and County councils</b>	The Galway City Council and county council provided a grants of the following: Galway City grant (€4000), Galway County Council grant (€2,000), Galway Rural Development Grant (€1,260)	<b>€7,260</b>
<b>Brothers of Charity Services Galway (channel of state funding) and Ability West</b>	BOCSG receive core funding from HSE for outsourced services which is channelled to Blue Teapot (€179,378) and (€24,209).  BOCSG also fund the Directors / Co-ordinators wage (€45,117)	<b>€248,704</b>

<b>State funding</b>	Back to education grant and RT allowance	<b>€115,988 (see note below for revised cost in the SROI sheet)</b>
<b>Philanthropic funding</b>	This includes the following amounts: ESB Energy for generations (€4,000), Lotto funding (€4,000), Schnieder Electric (€1,500), Ireland Funds (€5,000)	<b>€14,500</b>
<b>Income from rental of space</b>	This income data was taken from accounting sheets and crossed referenced with interviews from companies who hire the space.	<b>€1,030</b>
<b>Membership subs (Bright Souls)</b>	This is paid by parents as a contribution their children's attendance in the programme.	<b>€1,300</b>
<b>Audience tickets sales and venue re-imbursements (1151 ticket sales)</b>	Figures are derived from box office statements from venue, contracts and confirmation emails from production partners/event facilitators.	<b>€25,417</b>
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>€454,168</b>
<b>Less resources which relate to work outside the scope of the SROI</b>		<b>- €7,400</b>
Approximate staff resource hours spent on the Teen Souls pilot and in promotion related to 'Somebody to Love', which is estimated at two staff weeks, (approximately €1,400) as well as partial payment for the SROI evaluation which is outside the scope of the SROI (€6000). This figure has been subtracted on the SROI sheet from the state funding section.		
<b>Total of SROI relevant inputs for 2014</b>		<b>€446,768</b>

### 16.3 Summary

This analysis of financial input differs from the formal accounts of the organisations in a number of small ways. Firstly, this overview of inputs includes the non-valued contribution of volunteers and the board, pricing this combined input at €8,942. Secondly, a small amount finance related to the SROI itself, as well as to work outside of the SROI and the general year to year of the project has been excluded.

The inputs show that Blue Teapot is dependant on fundraising and grant making (total income €52,787) which together presents 13% of the overall income of the organisation, which matches very closely expenditure of the programme. This is a notable figure considering there are not dedicated resources for fundraising and grant writing within the staff team. This reliance on fund raising and grants also presents potential sustainability issues for the organisation in continuing with the high levels of quality programming and productions which incur a degree of unavoidable costs.

# 17 SROI Sensitivity Test and Conclusion

## 17.1 Overview

This SROI has been based on actual outcomes experienced by Blue Teapots participants and their family members as well as other stakeholder groups.

However, some assumptions have been made in relation to deadweight and drop off. Undertaking a sensitivity analysis provides an estimate of what the impact would have been if different assumptions had been used. This chapter outlines the sensitivity tests undertaken.

SROI is a precise methodology although the final valuations are based on a series of assumptions, and the final valuation is therefore likely to be generally more accurate than specifically accurate. This general accuracy is strength of the methodology if explored and critiqued in a transparent manner. Supporting the reader to critique the logic within the report is the purpose of this chapter. Ideally it is this discussion, which also encourages stakeholders to question for themselves how much certain outcomes are worth.

## 17.2 The Discount Rate

In this study all the financial values in year two and three have been calculated using a discount rate of 3.5%. This figure appears in the top left of the impact map. This is the standard rate recommended for the public sector by HM Treasury in the U.K (1).

## 17.3 Increasing Deadweight and Drop Off

The estimation for deadweight, what percent of change would have occurred without the Blue Teapot, has been arrived at by considering two primary information sources. The first is the stakeholder feedback, the most

significant theme of which was that change was very unlikely to have occurred without Blue Teapot. Family members of participants based these comments on prior experiences mainstream services, or on their experience of trying to find suitable programmes for their family member over the last number of years. When their family members had attended day or work programmes, there was string agreement that these services had not resulted in such significant improvements in relation to the communication, satisfaction and meaning, ability to travel independently and sense of community.

The sensitivity analysis adapted the SROI impact map to a situation where deadweight was increased by 100%. For each outcome with an existing deadweight less than 50%, those over this threshold had an additional 50% added to them rather than being doubled, in the few outcomes with no deadweight this was increased to 10%.

This means that if the SROI impact map outlined an assumption that 20% of people would have achieved this outcome without the intervention (deadweight), then the sensitivity analysis reviewed the affect on the final valuation of the situation where 40% of people would have achieved the outcome without the intervention.

This alternate scenario, where deadweight was increased across all outcomes would lower the overall impact to €3.49.

Alternately a test was also undertaken to try out the affect of an assumption that there would be no participant and family outcomes without Blue Teapot, which many of the interviewees maintained was likely. In this scenario the value increased to €4.47. This range of approximately one from very high and one very low deadweight's indicates a fairly stable SROI range of value.

If drop off increased to 50% across all outcomes this would bring the SROI valuation down to €3.09.

Attribution was calculated based on very specific interviewee feedback and so, alternate scenarios have not been considered necessary to test.

## 17.4 Alternate Downward Valuations not Used in the SROI

One of the highest valuations within the analysis is for a reduction in social isolation, which was a significant outcome for participants and their families. If the proxy for a reduction in social isolation was reduced from €15,981 to €2,606, the second valuation coming from wellbeing valuation estimates for a reduction in social isolation for the general population (2) then the overall SROI reduces to €3.77. However, it was felt that a disability specific valuation logic was more appropriate to reflect the fewer options that people with disability have in relation to engaging with usual means of community integration such as clubs, education, groups and the work force.

Another area in which alternate valuation could be considered is the valuation in relation to: improved fulfilment / life satisfaction / sense of purpose. To attain a final proxy three different logics were used and averaged (QALY research, the average amount that families in Canada spend on such services and a proxy that could be used by the general population). The sensitivity test considered the highest and lowest of these. This resulted in change in the range of values from €4.28 to €4.00.

All other outcomes were considered to have no other likely reasonable lower valuations with as robust a rationale as the one supplied within the analysis.

## 17.5 Considerations for Increasing Programme Value

### Reducing Parental Fear Regards move-on by working with Mainstream Programmes to Establish more Creative Outlets

If the negative outcome experienced by parents was removed (i.e. worrying about future lack of opportunities for their children to experience fulfilment and satisfaction), then this would increase the overall SROI value to €4.21. This could be done by having clear progression routes back into mainstream services or other community arts programs that allowed for on going and meaningful engagement in arts or by creating further opportunities for employment for graduates, see recommendations for a discussion of various options to achieve this.

### Increasing the number of Participants in the Performance Art School

If an additional two students are included in the programme for a per unit increase of income of €15,000, then this sees the over value ratio increase to €4.22<sup>50</sup>.

If the costs for each student are €20,000 per place then the value ratio remains the same. However, it should be noted that the current ratio is a good one and keeping this steady while providing new places is an obvious positive to the community.

## 17.6 SROI Conclusion

The Social Return on Investment (SROI) ratio is calculated by dividing the value of the total impacts by the total inputs in a given time period. The SROI ratio for Blue Teapot is 1: €4.18. This means that for every euro invested into Blue Teapot there is a return to the individuals and services of over four euro.

The sensitivity text showed that most alternate logical scenarios in relation to deadweight and drop off, provided a fairly small range of alternate valuations with the range existing between €3.09 and €4.47. The use of

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<sup>50</sup> If we assume approximate proportions of change as exist with the current impact map for a change in participants, family member and service providers.

alternative valuations couched the SROI within this range also.

This final SROI figure shows a strong return on investment in SROI terms.

This value for money ratio is related to the amount of people engaged with as well the importance placed on the outcomes for family members and participants, which many described in terms such as life changing and priceless.

The high value is also due to the very clear impact of the programme on participant's life skills. Other contributors to the value are, the success of the project in contributing the city and county arts, in relation to provision of new outlets and supporting the regional image as an accessible arts community.

The services which support Blue Teapot also receive significant outcomes in relation to

benefits to their staff, staff morale and their ability to engage with stakeholder communities.

The fact that Blue Teapot has impacts across such a wide range of stakeholders is a testament to its partnership ethos and reflects the sentiments of so many of those interviewed, which is that Blue Teapot is the centre of a vibrant and inspiring community, which they have created. Blue Teapot has played a pivotal role in re-writing the rules in both disability services and arts practice and has created a better and a very valuable life experience for all those that engage with the service.



# 18 Recommendations

## **Recommendation Group One – The Business Model and Move on Options for Participants**

### 18.1 Establishment of an Agent for ID Actors and Performers

There was significant support for the development of a part time agent role to promote professional and mainstream acting opportunities for graduates of the performing arts programme, as well as other disability and arts courses within Ireland.

This would have a dual purpose of increasing visibility of ID actors and performers and providing graduates with more professional opportunities in theatre, television and broadcast and other relevant forums. This role has potential to also include supports for theatre and production companies in relation to using ID actors, as well as promoting the use of ID actors and benefits of this to companies. This model could aim to be self-sustaining over time. This recommendation would benefit from additional feasibility testing and would be best actioned in consultation and partnership with relevant national bodies.

### 18.2 To Establish a Social Enterprise Project which provides Workshops Tutored by Blue Teapot Graduates

There was significant support from stakeholder groups for the establishment of an additional social enterprise component of Blue Teapot. This would involve graduates of the Performing Arts programme or the theatre company delivering workshops / training to other groups such as: ID groups and staff in ID services, youth and school groups, students in third

level arts programmes, summer schools and adult performance art programmes.

This project would provide paid work to Blue Teapot graduates in the same manner as the Theatre Company. To progress the project would require dedicated part time staff support, and funding for this. It is recommended that the initial pilot period is at least three years, to allow for development of partnerships and markets.

There are a number of companies within Europe providing services through this model and these should provide useful learning in relation to the business model, the unique selling point of such programmes, and the time and supports required for establishment of the model. Development of the project would also draw on learning from recent Blue Teapot workshop provision experiences.

This project would benefit from a feasibility study and the subsequent development of a business model to clarify resources required and evidence that the model has potential to be sustainable over time.

### 18.3 To Review Transition Supports for Graduates Moving between Blue Teapot and Mainstream Services<sup>51</sup>

In order to ensure that individuals have a positive experience of moving between the Performing Arts programme and other disability supports, the transition process should be reviewed to ensure that it creates, as far as possible, meaningful and challenging positions for graduates that utilise the skills and creativity gained through their engagement with Blue Teapot.

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<sup>51</sup> Such as Brothers of Charity Services Galway, Ability West and Rehab Care

## 18.4 Support the Regional Development of Further Performance Art Opportunities for Graduates of the Performing Arts School

One of the only consistently discussed negative outcomes of Blue Teapot was that following completion of the Performing Arts School there are few move on options for individuals. This was viewed as having significant negative affects on individuals, who have found meaning and value in their work and lives, although are not supported or able to sustain this.

It is recommended that Blue Teapot work with other partner agencies and mainstream services to ensure appropriate arts based, challenging and supportive programmes are offered for this group (and other clients) at a range of levels including amateur performance, internships and community theatre.

There is potential for Blue Teapot to provide paid mentoring for the development of such programmes.

## 18.5 Consider the Business Model which Underpins Blue Teapots Performances

A number of commentators, particularly from arts organisations, suggested that Blue Teapot explore a range of options for producing theatre, other than performances with the full ensemble cast. It was noted that there were significant cost challenges in bringing the full ensemble company to audiences outside of Galway and that there was potential for undertaking shows with a smaller cast, resulting in shows that are easier to travel with. The complexity of sets could also be reviewed for shows with an intended national audience, which will reduce get-in costs.

On consideration, Blue Teapot may not change its model and approach, however, a clear rationale for the approach taken by the company will also serve to clarify the cost structure in future funding applications.

## 18.6 Develop a Multi-agency Strategy for the Purchase of a Purpose Built Space / or Purchase and Refurbishment of the Existing Space

The other area with some negative feedback was in relation to the physical building. While it was noted that as a space, the building has an excellent 'vibe and energy', as well as being very accessible, it was also noted that heating, damp and flooring could all be improved to ensure that all spaces within the building are fit for purpose. It is recommended that any future organisational strategies consider purchase of a dedicated building or refurbishment of the existing space and the risk to sustainability inherent in the existing rental arrangement. The ability to access low cost loans<sup>52</sup> for community enterprises could be considered as part of this strategy.

## 18.7 Broaden Partnerships and Use of Established Theatres

A theme within the research was the need for Blue Teapot to continue to develop its partnership work and location sharing with established arts venues. This was a view held particularly by arts commentators and funders and was considered an important aspect of pushing the mainstreaming of Blue Teapot theatre and ensuring its continued contribution to regional and national arts dialogue. It was also commented that the use of alternate venues may assist in further developing the audience for Blue Teapots work.

## 18.8 The Further Use of Volunteers Should also be Considered, as this is a Significant Strength of the Blue Teapot Approach

The service has significant strength, as evidenced through the SROI, in relation to engaging and providing meaningful

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<sup>52</sup> i.e. [www.clanncredo.ie](http://www.clanncredo.ie)

opportunities for volunteers, who derive significant value from this experience. There is potential for Blue Teapot to further benefit from experienced volunteers, particularly in relation to areas related to fundraising, administration, facilitation and support and project management, among others.

### 18.9 Increase the Rehabilitative Funding Places from Five to Nine and Clarify the Recruitment Process

To develop a strategy for increasing the places in the Performing Arts School in order to meet more of the demand for services. This is to be achieved through increased HSE rehabilitative funding, business scholarships and potentially paid places (by external sponsoring agencies).

To review and embed a clear and transparent recruitment and scoring system, which considers the interest and competence or talent of potential recruits.

### 18.10 To Develop a Fundraising Strategy that builds on the Public Profile of the Blue Teapot

To develop a fundraising strategy that utilises: business sponsorship, donor funding, one-off events, grant applications, arts and community liaison. The strategy will utilise the positive public relations of the organisation to support development.

To explore initial start-up options for resourcing the strategy, such as: 1) an initial volunteer or intern, whose first task is to fund a part time fundraiser role, and/or 2) to develop a fundraising sub-group of the board.

### 18.11 Training Provision in Disability and the Arts

Blue Teapot has benefited from the support of a number of long-term volunteers. To maintain and encourage consistent volunteerism and to further embed the organisations values in relation to appropriately rewarding people for their work, it is recommended that a training scheme be developed for volunteers who

wish to undertake more formal training after working with Blue Teapot for a specific time.

Another theme within the research, highlighted by multiple stakeholder groups, is that there are few available professional training options for people wishing to work in disability and arts, within Ireland. There is potential for the informal role which Blue Teapot plays in this area to be formalised through provision of professional qualifications in partnership with a relevant third level provider, or through the existing QQI structures. This would need to be resourced through an appropriate business strategy and could present opportunities for new revenue streams, should start up funding be made available.

### 18.12 All Development is Undertaken with an Awareness of the Need to Ensure Sustainability of Existing Work, Staff and Production Quality

The high quality of the Blue Teapots theatre and performance was seen as the key strength of the organisation, and the factor that other successes depended upon. Also highlighted as a key theme within the research, was the lean staff structure and the dedication and commitment of the team to their work.

In order to undertake any new projects, there is a need to attain further resources so as to maintain the sustainability and quality of the existing programmes.

## **Recommendation Group 2 – Internal Processes and Systems**

### **18.13 Board Processes Reviewed to Ensure Efficiency and Best Use of Time and Skills**

The board has a vital role to play in relation to supporting the future development of Blue Teapot and the achievement of any future strategic actions. It is recommended that the board undertake the following steps to ensure they are best placed to optimise the significant knowledge and resources within the group; 1) develop a strategic plan to guide developmental work over the next five years, 2) review board processes to ensure that meetings are time efficient, productive and that potential conflicts of interest are managed in line with good practice such as the Governance Code and, 3) to explore annual provision of collective events such as

AGMs and collaborative strategic planning sessions, which bring together various key stakeholder groups, particularly board members, parents, participants and staff.

### **18.14 Implement a Standard Outcome Assessment Process as Part of an Outcome Framework**

This evaluation has shown that Blue Teapot creates important and meaningful change for key stakeholder groups. It is recommended that Blue Teapot uses an accessible pre-and post assessment with participants and their families to record change, in as robust manner as possible. The outcomes as articulated in this SROI should guide this process. It is recommended that a partnership with a university or third level training institution is developed to support selection of appropriate outcome tools.

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# 20 Appendix

## 20.1 Glossary

**Attribution:** attribution is an assessment of how much the outcome is as a result of the activity or intervention of the organisation under review, and how much is due to other organisations or interventions.

**BOCSG:** Brothers of Charity Services Galway

**Deadweight:** This is an estimation of the amount of change that would have occurred without the intervention.

**Displacement:** Some value that is created may merely displace the same value for other stakeholders. Displacement is an assessment of how much of the outcome has displaced other outcomes.

**Drop-off:** As time passes after an initial intervention, the causality between the initial intervention and the continued outcome will lessen; drop-off describes this relationship.

**Duration:** How long an outcome will last after the initial intervention.

**Financial proxy:** This is an estimation of a financial value for the outcome when a market value does not exist.

**ID:** Intellectual disability

**Impact map:** This is a spread sheet which accompanies an SROI report and which contains all the information and calculations that result in the final SROI assessment.

**Inputs:** The resources that are used to create the intervention by each stakeholder group.

**Materiality:** in an SROI, if information is material, this means that its inclusion will affect the final valuation within an SROI, and therefore affect decision-making. If a piece of information or a stakeholder group will have an effect on the SROI then this needs to be included in the process.

**Outcomes:** The changes that occur as a result of the intervention. In an SROI, outcomes include planned and unplanned, as well as positive and negative changes.

**Outputs:** The amount of activity communicated in numerical units, i.e. three people.

**Stakeholders:** People and organisations that are affected by the activity.

**Theory of Change:** the story about the sequence of events and changes that led to final outcomes for participants.

## 20.2 Materiality Assessment

This table outlines how decisions on materiality were made in relation to outcomes and stakeholder groups.

Stakeholder	Outcome	Relevance. The outcomes are related to the objectives and scope of the intervention or what happened to stakeholders as a result of the intervention.	Significance. The outcomes are of a scale that will have some influence on the final outcome of the SROI. The threshold for materiality in the SROI was €1,500, values under this changed the SROI by only 1 or 2 cents, which was considered immaterial when considering the overall valuation band.	Point at which the stakeholder or outcome was excluded from the SROI and rationale.
Theatre Company Participants	Improved self-confidence	✓	X The value of these outcomes were considered higher in the value chain	
	New friendships	✓	X The value of these outcomes were considered higher in the value chain	
	Improved communication and social skills	✓	✓	N/A
	Reduced sense of isolation / greater sense of community	✓	✓	N/A
	Improved or maintained fulfilment and life satisfaction	✓	✓	N/A
	Greater independence in relation to travel and living skills	✓	✓	N/A
	Increase in paid employment or income	✓	✓	N/A
Performing Arts Participants	Improved communication and social skills	✓	✓	N/A
	Reduced sense of isolation / greater sense of community	✓	✓	N/A
	Improved fulfilment / life satisfaction / sense of purpose	✓	✓	N/A
	Greater independence in relation to travel and living skills	✓	✓	N/A

Bright Soul Participants	Maintenance of communication and social skills improvement	✓	✓	N/A
Family members and legal guardians of participants in Blue Teapot's Theatre Company and Performing Arts programme	Improved parent and child interaction	✓	✓	N/A
	Reduction in stress or worry about child	✓	✓	N/A
	New relationships with other parents / parental support and / or new opportunities or experiences (i.e. travel)	✓	✓	N/A
	(Negative outcome) Fear of future lack of opportunity to experience fulfillment/ satisfaction	✓	✓	N/A
Client Support Services (External organisations)	Reduction in staff support costs	✓	✓	N/A
Sessional Workers	Increase in workplace skills resulting in better work practice	✓	✓	N/A
	Increased Income as a result of working for Blue Teapot that would not have replaced through other sources	✓	✓	N/A
	Increased Income from other contracts and work as a direct result from experience with Blue Teapot	✓	✓	N/A
	Personal satisfaction	✓	X The value of these outcomes were considered too small for inclusion within the review	Excluded after the first SROI calculations were undertaken as the final value did not meet the threshold for materiality.
Volunteers	Increase in workplace skills resulting in better work practice	✓	✓	N/A

	Increased income from work as a direct result of experience with Blue Teapot	✓	✓	N/A
	Increase in wellbeing as a result of experience with Blue Teapot	✓	✓	N/A
Audience	An improved understanding of disability resulting in more positive interactions with people with ID	✓	✓	N/A
	Entertainment value of performances	✓	✓	N/A
Workshops Attendees	Increasing the Accessibility in Baboro Youth Festival	✓	X The value of these outcomes were considered too small for inclusion within the review	Excluded after the first SROI calculations were undertaken as the final value did not meet the threshold for materiality.
	Increased awareness of the potential of people with ID resulting in a planned change in behaviour towards people with ID	✓	✓	N/A
Galway City and Regional Civic Organisations	Increase in strength of Galway brand as a national hub for arts excellence and accessibility	✓	✓	N/A
	Increase in accessibility and raised expectations about what people with an Intellectual disability can do	✓	✓	N/A
Services hiring venue	Support to Establish an Independent Arts Practice	✓	X The value of these outcomes were considered too small for inclusion within the review	Excluded after the first SROI calculations were undertaken as the final value did not meet the threshold for materiality.
	(Negative outcome) Loss of income due to injury	✓	✓	N/A



Funding and Partner Agencies (Brothers of Charity services and Ability West)	Increase in promotion and publicity outcomes	✓	✓	N/A
	Increase in ability for families and people with intellectual disabilities to communicate in relation to issues around sexuality, privacy and intimate relationships	✓	✓	N/A
	Increase in Staff Morale (Brothers of Charity Only)	✓	✓	N/A
Board Members	Increase in Personal Satisfaction and Validation	✓	✓	N/A
Neighbours	Improvement in neighbourhood / Value of Housing	✓	X The value of these outcomes were considered too small for inclusion within the review	Excluded after the first SROI calculations were undertaken as the final value did not meet the threshold for materiality.
State funders	Not included as a stakeholder group as no specific outcomes identified			

## 20.3 Distance Travelled Outcome Indicators

The following table outlines the indicators that were used within semi structured Blue Teapot interviews to assist family members and the researcher to define the change experienced by participants as small, medium or large in relation to others on the programme. These indicators were developed following the first theory of change focus groups.

Area	Small change	Medium Change	Large Change
<i>Improved communication and social skills</i>	Small or inconsistent change in terms of vocabulary, eye to eye engagement, clarity of expression and willingness to speak with other people. no change as had communication skills prior to programme	Medium Increase in ability to communicate in terms of vocabulary, eye to eye engagement, clarity of expression and willingness to speak with other people / maintenance of previous significant change	Large Increase in ability to communicate in terms of vocabulary, eye to eye engagement, clarity of expression and willingness to speak with other people.

<i>Reduced sense of isolation / greater sense of community</i>	Inconsistent increase in ability to communicate with others, no change as had community prior to programme	Feeling more able to connect with others / increase in ability to communicate with family and friends / made new friends / maintenance of previous significant change.	Feeling significantly more connected to community, family and friends where previously, in the year or so prior to Blue Teapot did not have social networks.
<i>Improved or maintained fulfilment and life satisfaction</i>	Inconsistent increase in ability to communicate with others, no change as had meaning prior to programme	Increased opportunity to engage in activities related to personal interests and derive meaning and fulfilment for activities / maintenance of previous significant change.	Significant change - previously not having an outlet for personal interests related to performing arts, in the year or so prior to Blue Teapot, to increased opportunities to engage in social activities and pursue activities related to personal interests
<i>Greater independence in relation to travel and living skills</i>	Inconsistent increase in ability to travel independently / no change as had skills prior to programme	Increased ability for travelling independently and take care of personal needs independently for a short period of time / maintenance of previous significant change.	Previously having difficulty travelling independently or spending time alone in the year or so prior to Blue Teapot, an increased ability to travel independently and capacity to attend to own needs for short periods of time without supervision or support.
<i>Improved parent and child interaction</i>	Inconsistent increase in parent child interaction / no change as had skills prior to programme	none	Previously having limited conversation with child AND/OR feeling that child was dependent on family members, in the year or so prior to Blue Teapot, to having more varied conversation or child feeling less dependent on family members for social support
<i>Reduction in stress or worry about child</i>	Not concerned for child prior to Blue Teapot	None	Reduction in the intensity and frequency of stress experienced by family members related to wellbeing and experiences of child.
<i>New relationships with other parents / parental support and / or new opportunities or experiences (i.e. travel)</i>	no new friendships or experiences	Occasional opportunity to engage with other parents of participants or travel with participants	Will regularly engage with other parents and staff involved with Blue Teapot AND/OR involved in performing arts and has experienced opportunities to travel to different places in relation to child's work with Blue Teapot

<i>Fear of future lack of opportunity to experience fulfillment/satisfaction (Negative outcome)</i>	None	General concern about the lack of opportunities for child related to support needs or disability (i.e. once a month)	Frequently concerned about the lack of opportunities for child related to their interest in performing arts AND/OR lack of theatre programme available for adults with intellectual disabilities
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**Figure 5: A Chart for Distance Travelled Indicators**

## 20.4 Audience Survey

**Hello there,** Blue Teapot has hired us as an independent research organisation to evaluate the impact of its work. As part of this we hope that you could provide us with some of your thoughts in relation attending Sanctuary. **This survey should take no more than 5 minutes** and is confidential, your honesty is appreciated.

1. Is this the first time you have seen Sanctuary (circle one)?      **Yes**      **No**

2. What best describes you?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>I come to theatre fairly regularly (i.e. at least a few times a year)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>This is my first time coming to theatre / first time in a long time</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>I come to see Blue Teapot shows but not other theatre</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Because of seeing previous Blue Teapot shows I am now more interested in other shows</b>

3. Have you someone in your family or close circle of friends that has an intellectual disability?

**Yes**      **No**

4. Has coming to Sanctuary changed the way you view intellectual disability?

**Yes**      **No**

5. If yes to question four, please tick how sanctuary has changed your views (tick as many as relevant):

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>It has opened my thinking in relation to intellectual disability and sexuality</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>I understand the potential of people with Intellectual disability more clearly</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>It has changed the way that I view what all people are capable of</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Other (please detail):</b>

6. Tick which statement is the most true:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Tonight's experience was worth less than the ticket price</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Tonight's experience was worth the ticket price</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Tonight's experience was worth twice the ticket price</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Tonight's experience was worth three times the ticket price or more</b>

7. If you would like to let us know other ways in which you have been affected by Blue Teapot or the Sanctuary show, please provide a few details on the reverse of the page.

Thank you so much for your assistance, have a great evening.

## 20.5 Evaluation Sheet Disability Awareness Workshops (unformatted)

(iD preview)

1. Age range: **12 – 18, 19 – 29, 30 – 45, 46-60, 61+**

2. Have you ever seen a show with disabled actors before? **Yes / no**

3. How many times have you interacted with Blue Teapot in the Past

**0      1      2      3      4+**

4. Has your interaction with Blue Teapot changed how you view people with intellectual disability (ID) in a positive or negative way? **Positive / negative**

Please explain:

5. As a result of this do you see people with ID as less like you or more like you? Circle one

**More like me      less like me      neutral**

Please explain

6. As a result of this contact do you think you will have a different reaction to people with ID in the future? **Yes      No**

7. Do you see Blue Teapot actors as on a par with professional actors with ID? **Yes      No**

Thank you

## 20.6 Focus Group Process for Participants of the Theatre Company and the School

The method of focus group facilitation was selected to reflect the interests and communication style of group, namely storytelling and working with cameras in performance. The session involved storytelling and storyboarding, and encouraged open discussion. The group was engaged in constructing a theory of change, based on their stories using coloured paper across the theatre floor. A video was then made of the participants describing their journey using the theory of change as the storyboard. The story went from initially hearing about the organisation to the current day.

## 20.7 Focus Group Process (Participants of the Bright Sparks)

The method of focus group facilitated was selected to reflect the interests and communication style of group, namely physical theatre. Human scales were used, with the facilitator and volunteers spread in a line across the theatre space, each presenting different points on a scale. It was explained to participants what was being measured and then participants were asked to select a point on the scale by physically standing in the spot that represented their point on the scale. Discussion was encouraged throughout..

## 20.8 Interview Questions for Family Members and Legal Guardians of Blue Teapot Participants

The following questions were formed by the structure by the findings of the focus groups. A theory of change was developed and reviewed with respondents. Interviews were conducted with family members or legal guardians of the participants. The average length of each interview was 40-minutes.



1. Explain the purpose of the research and interview process, explain confidentiality and voluntary participation of respondent
2. Explain the Theory of Change and the SROI period
3. What has been the impact of Blue Teapot for the participant?
4. What benefits has the participant gained from attending Blue Teapot?
5. What would the participant have been doing if they could not attend Blue Teapot?
6. What do you think works well about Blue Teapot?
7. What do you think could be improved about Blue Teapot?
  - a. For the participant, has Blue Teapot improved their ability to communicate with their family, friends and others? In relation to this outcome, can you describe the improvement between SROI period?
  - b. In relation to this outcome, how long do you think this change will last?
  - c. In relation to this outcome, how much of this change was a result of influence of other organisations or individuals?<sup>53</sup>
8. For the participant, has Blue Teapot improved their behaviours at home?
9. For the participant, has Blue Teapot improved their sense of belonging or social cohesion?
10. For the participant, has Blue Teapot improved their ability to travel on their own?
11. For the participant, can you think of any negative outcomes as a result of Blue Teapot?
12. Are you concerned about what the participant will do after Blue Teapot, if there were no opportunities to further engage in creative arts?
13. Does the participant have a special talent or interest for creative arts?
14. How has Blue Teapot impacted your life or your family's life?
15. What have been benefits in your life since the participant attended Blue Teapot?
16. As a parent or legal guardian, has Blue Teapot had a positive impact on your parenting?
17. As a parent or legal guardian, has Blue Teapot helped you become less worried or concerned in life? In relation to this outcome, can you describe the improvement between SROI period?
18. As a parent or legal guardian, can you think of any negative outcomes as a result of Blue Teapot?
19. Has Blue Teapot changed your views of intellectual disabilities?

## 20.9 Interview questions for volunteers, professionals and other stakeholders

The following questions were used in telephone interviews for volunteers, professionals and other stakeholders involved with Blue Teapot.

1. Explain purpose of SROI, confidentiality and limits to this, anonymity; explain how agreement on final data and analysis will be sought (i.e. email agreement).
2. How much did you input? If volunteer time then a question in relation to usual or last pro rate hourly pay.

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<sup>53</sup> Questions on the length of outcome and attribution were asked in relation to all SROI outcomes.

3. Were there any positive outcomes from your engagement? Triggers were identified throughout the process, and were used to start discussions in relation to outcomes.
4. For each outcome identified questions were asked in relation to the time outcomes were expected to last, the value of the outcome, attribution and deadweight:
  - a. i.e. if Blue Teapot had not existed, how else may you have got the same outcome, (discuss and seek value)
  - b. i.e. if Blue Teapot had not existed, how likely would it be that you would have made or received this change from elsewhere
  - c. i.e. Considering the change we discussed, how much was due to other factors such as family friends, other services etc.
5. Were there any other people or groups who you think may have been affected by Blue Teapot?
6. Were there any negative outcomes to your organisation or any other people or organisations involved with Blue Teapot?
7. What are the strengths and weaknesses of Blue Teapot
8. Anything else to add?

## 20.10 Survey Questions for Volunteers

The following questions were used in an online survey designed for volunteers working with Blue Teapot. The software used was Sogo Survey and information about the survey was distributed through Blue Teapot's volunteer network.

1. Explain the purpose of the research and interview process, explain confidentiality and voluntary participation of respondent
2. Has your volunteer work with Blue Teapot increased your work skills? Approximately how many hours did you volunteer for Blue Teapot during the SROI period?
3. What new skills have you develop because of your volunteer work for Blue Teapot?
4. What are the other factors, programmes or jobs that have influenced your new skills development?
5. Estimate how many days of training it would take for an average person to learn the equivalent level of skills you developed from volunteering at Blue Teapot?
6. How long do you think this training will benefit you?
7. Has volunteering with Blue Teapot resulted in getting other employment in your field?
8. What is the likelihood that you would have got employment without volunteering for Blue Teapot?
  - a. If yes, approximately how much of the value of the contract / paid work that you received?
9. Has volunteer for Blue Teapot increased your overall happiness?
10. Which of the following is the best equivalent to the value of the improvement in happiness you experienced from volunteering with Blue Teapot?
  - a. The cost of a night out with friends or family (€50 to €150)
  - b. Attending a few months of a group activity related to a hobby or interest (€50 to €150)
  - c. Attending a year of a group activity related to a hobby or interest (€151 to €400)

- d. A week away with friends or family (€401 to €800)
  - e. Two weeks away with family or friends (€801 to €2000)
  - f. Other (please provide a description and value)
11. How much percentage is Blue Teapot responsible for this increase in happiness?
  12. What other impacts or changes were a result of Blue Teapot?
  13. If you were no longer able to work with Blue Teapot, what would you miss in your life? Would you take any action to fill this gap?
  14. Has volunteering with Blue Teapot had a negative impact?
  15. What is the strength of Blue Teapot? What are the weaknesses of Blue Teapot?

## 20.11 Survey Questions for Contractors

The following questions were used in an online survey designed for professionals working with Blue Teapot. The software used was Sogo Survey and information about the survey was distributed through Blue Teapot's professional network.

1. Explain the purpose of the research and interview process, explain confidentiality and voluntary participation of respondent
2. What describes your professional relationship with Blue Teapot (i.e. contractor, part-time employee or other)?
3. Has your work with Blue Teapot increased your work skills?
4. Approximately how many paid hours did you work for Blue Teapot during the SROI period?
5. Approximately how many unpaid or voluntary hours did you work for Blue Teapot during the SROI period?
6. What new skills have you develop because of your volunteer work for Blue Teapot?
7. What are the other factors, programmes or jobs that have influenced your new skills development?
8. Estimate how many days of training it would take for an average person to learn the equivalent level of skills you developed from volunteering at Blue Teapot?
9. How long do you think this training will benefit you?
10. Has working with Blue Teapot resulted in getting other employment in your field? What is the likelihood that you would have got this work without the influence of Blue Teapot?
11. What was the value of the contact or paid work you got?
12. What other impacts or changes were a result of Blue Teapot?
13. If you were no longer able to work with Blue Teapot, what would you miss in your life? Would you take any action to fill this gap?
14. Has working with Blue Teapot had a negative impact?
15. What are the strengths of Blue Teapot? What are the weaknesses of Blue Teapot?

## 20.12 Final Focus Groups

Three final focus groups were held with staff, the board and parents and participants. Each of these involved the following:

- Discussing the outcomes and valuations to provide an opportunity to discuss and agree discounts, timelines and valuations
- To discuss and revise the recommendations