

SMALL GRANTS CASE STUDY



PROGRAMME

CR/CD Small Grants Scheme

ORGANISATION

Ballymac Friendship Trust

PROJECT NAME

Time of Your Life!

LOCATION

Belfast (East)

COUNCIL AREA

Belfast City Council

GRANT AWARD

£3,940

OVERVIEW

Time of Your Life is a forum theatre production, an innovative and engaging model where spectators influence and engage with the performance as both spectators and actors, with the power to stop and change the performance. Through this project the causes and consequences of paramilitarism in East Belfast were explored.

Young adults from Ballymac, Tullycarnett and Walkway participated in nine workshops (x3 each group), three theatre productions (x1 each group), and three post show discussions (x1 each group).

An online publication will be produced to document the issues raised through the project, for organisations to learn from. Plans to film the complete show were postponed due to the Covid-19 crisis.

One of the goals of the project was to encourage an open and genuine conversation about the place of paramilitarism in working-class communities in the life experience of young people.



T:BUC THEME, AREA OF WORK AND DELIVERY METHOD

1. Key Priority 3: Our Safe Community
2. Challenging Sectarianism/Racism & Policing and Community Safety
3. Drama Performance & Public Debate

IMPACT

- The project received positive feedback from the community and agencies as an excellent means to consult with communities.
- 295 people engaged with the project: 47 people through workshops who were actively involved in developing a practical response to sectarianism and paramilitarism and 248 people through performances who felt they benefited from the experiences portrayed in the performance.
- A range of opportunities were offered to participants to engage in accredited educational activity and to take part in a quality, inclusive theatre project.
- The project provided new platforms for creative contact between communities and strengthened capacity to practically explore the possibility of shared actions.
- There were opportunities for local residents to gain hands-on experience of staging a performance and organising a tour.
- Due to the success of the project it has leveraged additional financial support and resulted in a regional tour to Ards, Carrick, Dungannon and other venues.

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The play itself is essentially a series of short monologues, exchanges, observations and stories structured by a loose set of family and peer relationships. It specifically addresses the experience of young men. We intended that it should be fast-moving and engaging, aimed at audiences who may not have much experience of live theatre.

**Fintan
Brady**
Project
Co-ordinator

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