Executive Summary
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28 projects were delivered across the UK, involving 200 partnerships and 750 artists (UK and international). The projects engaged 19 million people and more than 1,200 volunteers, achieving media coverage valued at £10m.

14-18 NOW, the official cultural programme taking place across the UK to mark the centenary of the First World War, has three key aims:

- To support the creation of a rich and stimulating body of new artworks using First World War heritage as an inspiration for creative and ambitious work
- To work in collaboration and partnership with a wide range of UK and international arts and cultural organisations to realise and promote the projects and the programme
- To engage communities all over the UK, especially young people and new audiences, in reflection on the period of the First World War, broadening awareness and bringing new perspectives.

This report evaluates the Summer 2014 season, the first of the three seasons, to be continued in 2016 and 2018.

A successful first year

14-18 NOW had a successful first season. There is evidence of strong impact on the participating organisations in terms of ambition, practice, partnerships, funding and skills.

The impact on audiences has been powerful with many audience members describing a deeper connection with the First World War and strong social, intellectual, emotional and spiritual outcomes with many examples of audience members having experiences that they feel will last a lifetime.

There is clearly an appetite for more. A UK-wide omnibus survey estimated that the market for 14-18 NOW is in the region of 30 million.

‘Completely extraordinary. Never seen anything like it before. Fascinating, educational, moving and astonishing.’

After a War attender

A UK-wide programme

Projects such as LIGHTS OUT and LETTER TO AN UNKNOWN SOLDIER ensured wide geographic reach with further UK-wide online, digital and broadcast projects.
There were however gaps in geographic coverage across some regions including the East Midlands, North East, Yorkshire and the Humber and the South East. The award of an additional £3 million grant from DCMS in December 2014 for projects focused on northern English cities will extend geographic coverage in future seasons.

A diverse, creative and world-class programme

Much of the work was felt to be world-class in its innovation and quality. *Dazzle Ships Liverpool* was realised by three organisations with an international reputation – National Museums Liverpool, The Liverpool Biennial and Tate Liverpool - who hadn’t worked together before. *Goodbye To All That* was viewed as offering artists a real opportunity to produce a new piece of writing.

The work of Chloe Dewe Mathews is being exhibited at Tate Modern and on an European tour. *Mametz* was also lauded as a world-class theatre performance.

Assessors felt that there was development of creative practice, examples including Torsten Rasch’s new *A Foreign Field* commission for the Three Choirs Festival, *LETTER TO AN UNKNOWN SOLDIER* and the video by Tony Heaton for *Does It Matter?*

For four of the events, the assessors’ scores on artistic risk (the extent to which artists or curators challenged themselves with the work) were low. This may be expected in some cases, given the need to ensure a strong body of work relating to a high profile, serious, emotive issue being delivered in a short time-scale where organisations were working to their strengths.

‘The first reveal of the cinematic backdrop of a real field is something which will stay with me for years. It’s easy to see why the Telegraph’s Dominic Cavendish has called *Mametz*, “the finest commemoration of the First World War centenary I’ve seen to date.” It is also National Theatre Wales’s finest work to date.’

Arts Council Wales

The 28 projects included:
- 30 events (23 of which had a free element)
- 78 new artworks
- 600 UK and over 150 international artists
- over 8,000 artist days
- 9 artforms and five different mediums
Development of artistic practice to mark national moments

The 14-18 NOW programme has been a significant advance in arts practice relating to the commemorations of serious events, as opposed to the celebratory cultural programmes of London 2012 or the Tour de France. It has demonstrated the potential for the development of artistic practice in the area of presenting serious and quality work in a sensitive area, and the impact of working at scale.

Strong examples included the Dazzle Ships project which offered the opportunity to create new work inspired by artists like Wadsworth who had developed the concept of dazzle camouflage for ships. LETTER TO AN UNKNOWN SOLDIER created a digital project with a war memorial as its starting point which, as a record of contemporary responses to the First World War, became a new kind of memorial.

14-18 NOW has carved out a very particular and specific role in commissioning and co-commissioning work which has demonstrated that:

• The arts can play an important role in solemn moments, as well as celebratory ones
• The heritage of the First World War can inspire and inform meaningful contemporary art work of all kinds
• People’s understanding and engagement with First World War heritage can be ignited and deepened through experiencing or participating in high quality heritage inspired arts events

New concepts of First World War commemoration

14-18 NOW has developed new ways of commemorating the First World War. Particularly strong examples are Goodbye To All That and LETTER TO AN UNKNOWN SOLDIER. Both of these projects have delivered innovative forms of commemoration, which include foregrounding a powerful and insightful international perspective – putting the ‘World’ back into the public understanding of the First World War - and large scale active public participation, creating new heritage in the form of a contemporary crowd-sourced record of the war from letters written today. Spectra provided the public with a new way to engage in an act of remembrance through contemporary artwork.

‘If you are looking for a new way to commemorate I think something like this, something a bit more artistic, for me I think that actually hits home a bit more. Traditional is great, it has its place. We do a lot of it, it shouldn’t change but having something in addition, something like this, is a good thing.’ Audience member: Spectra

From the series Shot at Dawn, © Chloe Dewe Mathews, 2014
Exploration of First World War heritage

There is evidence of extensive research into specific aspects of First World War heritage across all the 28 projects. 25 different aspects of First World War heritage were explored including:

- pals battalions
- trench warfare
- maritime dazzle camouflage
- literature

Many of the projects drew on external archives and expertise including ten with the Imperial War Museum but also with organisations such as the National Library of Wales as well as individual historians and academics.

Several of the projects explored lesser known aspects of heritage such as Does It Matter? where the assessor felt that the voice of the disabled artist was refreshing and relevant given the millions of servicemen injured, disabled and disfigured by the war.

The assessor for Empire Café had recently been to Brazil and had seen many works looking at slavery. She felt that Fagen’s work would stand up internationally and vastly exceeded her expectations:

‘Graham’s work shone as an unusual and distinctive way into these issues.’

Assessor, Empire Café

Assessors and artists felt that there were two projects, LETTER TO AN UNKNOWN SOLDIER and Memories of August 1914 which had created their own heritage. LETTER TO AN UNKNOWN SOLDIER was felt to have created a snapshot of contemporary attitudes to a historic event which was unusual in its expansiveness. Archiving the letters in the British Library will create a heritage resource for future social historians to study the response to the First World War in letter form, drawing some parallels with the Mass Observation Diaries of the Second World War.

Effective and sustainable partnerships

Co-commissioners formed over 200 partnerships to deliver their projects; the type of organisations that were involved are summarised below. Over half of these were new partnerships and producers felt that the profile and support of 14-18 NOW had helped them develop more diverse and higher profile partnerships.
Partnership examples of note include:

- Liverpool City Council’s with the BBC
- National Theatre Wales with academic and heritage organisations
- Three Choirs Festival and Chemnitz Opera
- WildWorks with Lost Gardens of Heligan
- Liverpool Biennial and Cammell Laird shipyard

Many of the partnerships are proving to be sustainable. 11 commissions have ongoing lives highlighting one of the benefits of a five year programme.

‘The *After a War* weekend at BAC marked a major development in our partnership with the venue. We benefited from the BAC’s experience of presenting building-wide events whilst nurturing the venues interest and desire to present international artists. We are already in discussion about future projects.’ *LIFT*

**New and more diverse sources of funding**

The profile and innovation of 14-18 NOW helped producers access new, more diverse and higher profile sources of funding. Key examples include:

- Liverpool City Council securing DCMS funding for *Memories of August 1914*
- *Mametz* enabling National Theatre Wales to secure funding from the Welsh Government’s Major Events Unit for the first time
- Three Choirs Festival using public subscription for the first time for *A Foreign Field*.

**Greater ambition and new skills**

The scale, diversity and innovation amongst the projects has led to the development of new skills amongst participating organisations, particularly around working with multiple partners, across different artforms, undertaking larger scale and often site-specific work.

**A cohort of new and future volunteers**

Overall the volunteer experience was positive with over 90% of volunteers reporting that they would be likely to volunteer for similar projects in future. Two-thirds (65%) of volunteers reported that their confidence had increased as a result of taking part in 14-18 NOW projects.

This increase in confidence was one of the major outcomes for volunteers. For some, volunteering had increased their confidence in their acting ability, for others their confidence in taking part in new or different activities. There was also
evidence of the emotional impact which their involvement had on some volunteers.

‘On the day for the public to come, it all came together so well, the atmosphere was magical, inspiring, and very moving.’ Volunteer: 100

There were also instances where volunteering had engendered a feeling of a shared sense of community.

‘It was a chance to perform and also to be part of a quality event and to be part of something meaningful to the local community.’ Volunteer: 100

In some instances however, the demands on volunteers’ time and their capabilities caused challenges in delivery.

19 million people engaged

14-18 NOW engaged with approximately 19 million people in its first season, significantly exceeding the target of 10 million for the whole programme.

The programme was widely accessible with over 1 million people attending free events such as Memories of August 1914.

The participatory projects commissioned by 14-18 NOW were particularly successful:

- 16.7 million people across the UK took part in LIGHTS OUT on the evening of 4 August 2014
- 1.4 million 16-24 year olds took part in LIGHTS OUT
- Over 21,400 people from the UK and overseas wrote a letter for the LETTER TO AN UNKNOWN SOLDIER project.

Participation rates in LIGHTS OUT were higher among older age cohorts, largely due to their higher awareness levels.

16-24 year olds who were aware of LIGHTS OUT were just as likely to have participated as those in older age cohorts. Similarly, those from lower socio-economic groups who were aware of the project were more likely to have participated than those in higher (ABC1) socio-economic groups.

A million visits over five days were made to see Memories of August 1914 in Liverpool, contributing £24 million to the local economy and attracting
about a quarter of a million tourist visits to the city.

**New arts audiences**

The innovation of some of the events in terms of either form or location attracted new audiences to companies and artforms. Not only had 47% of those attending *Mametz* never been to a National Theatre Wales production but a fifth were attending an outdoor theatre performance for the first time.

**New heritage audiences**

14-18 NOW wanted to attract new audiences and engage different communities in heritage.

In terms of young people:

- 1.4 million aged 16-24 participated in *LIGHTS OUT*
- Over 500 primary and secondary schools across the UK were part of *LETTER TO AN UNKNOWN SOLDIER* project
- 15,000 wrote a letter to the Unknown Soldier.

A number of 14-18 NOW projects involved significant and varied elements of community engagement.

Factotum for *LIGHTS OUT* in Northern Ireland developed new relationships with seven community groups in Belfast; the groups included Age Ni, an LGBTQ youth group, an umbrella group working in North Belfast, a theatre summer school, a disability support group and a summer school.

*Memories of August 1914* involved research and reminiscence with older people to inform the narrative and extensive involvement of communities in more deprived areas of Liverpool.

*A Foreign Field* involved choristers aged 7 to 14 years old and *Siyaya* worked with over 700 children in local schools.

For some events, audience attendance or participation was driven by a desire to experience something artistic or spectacular and commemoration or remembrance were either not, or only minimally, a driver for engagement. While for some of these, particularly for *Memories of August 1914*, the commemorative aspect of the event failed to resonate, for others it did do so and for almost half the attenders at *Memories of August 1914* and for a similar proportion for *Mametz*, the event was their only active engagement with the commemoration in 2014.

‘I can easier connect to it than when I read news or read history books or because it is through storytelling, through personal experience and reflection of people and artists.’ Audience member: *After a War*
To be honest I have never been to a commemoration. It is a terrible thing to say but that is just a fact.

100: The Day Our World Changed attender

Rich artistic experience

Audiences expressed a strongly positive response to 14-18 NOW’s core proposition which is using contemporary art as a means of commemorating the First World War.

‘The entire performance was quite extraordinary. I have never seen anything like it in my life. I was blown away. It was completely riveting. The acting was of a fantastically high standard and well cast and the script was amazing. Whoever dreamt it up to be performed like that is a complete genius.’

Audience member: Mametz

Some audience members were however, mostly interested in the artistic or spectacular nature of the events.

‘I wanted to show the kids something spectacular I think. I am not really interested in the memorial aspects of it.’ Audience member: Spectra

Greater knowledge of the First World War

Clearly all the events had content related to the First World War but active participation in LETTER TO AN UNKNOWN SOLDIER particularly helped participants develop their knowledge and understanding of the First World War. This was in part because participation was unrestricted – anyone could take part – and it allowed people to be open and express what they really thought about the First World War, but also war in general. Participants felt this was in marked contrast to more formal or ‘official’ forms of commemoration. These not only increased knowledge of the First World War but also helped people develop new, more personal perspectives on it which deepened their understanding.

It changed from being a grave for a stranger into a father or uncle or cousin or brother, all the people that I have read letters, the letter that were supposed to go to him. It changed into something really personal which is definitely something that the letters have taught me.’ Participant: LETTER TO AN UNKNOWN SOLDIER

Increased relevance of the First World War

Overall, more than one in three (36%) or 6.8m of the people who engaged with 14-18 NOW activity in 2014 felt the First World War was now more relevant to them, with younger people feeling a greater sense of increased relevance.

People experiencing an artist-led 14-18 NOW project were almost three times as likely to find the First World War more relevant to them, compared to those who commemorated the war through non-14-18 NOW events.

“I feel that the First World War is now more relevant to me”

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<th>Age Group</th>
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<td>55 or over</td>
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Much of this appreciation of relevance was brought about by participants and attenders being able to make personal and local connections.

‘It was a way of telling my father’s story that was told to my brother and me for years but from my uncle’s perspective and not my father’s – consequently both my father and uncle are remembered a hundred years on.’ Participant: LETTER TO AN UNKNOWN SOLDIER

‘Being from Wales I feel a strong Welsh connection with the First World War through Mametz Wood.’ Audience member: Mametz

Where projects were specifically focused on exploring the engagement of or impact on communities, they did result in a sense of connection, shared experience and greater understanding.

‘I was most impressed by the cultural exchange experienced by the singers from England and the singers from Germany performing together. For me, this represented a true olive branch between two former World War One rivals and was the main reason I purchased tickets for the concert.’ Audience member: A Foreign Field

Increased social capital

14-18 NOW events successfully brought people together in shared acts of commemoration and as a result created community engagement and sense of belonging for many.

‘I think anything that brings people together is a good thing. Anything that brings people together in joy and happiness is an even better thing. If it can be at all attached to an event that is so momentous as the centenary of the First World War so that there is some focus on ending war, which is the opposite of peace and this is a very peaceful piece of work it is all to the good. I think it is a very good idea to commemorate it in this way.’ Audience member: Spectra

Projects involving volunteers demonstrated significant evidence of increased social capital. Many volunteers commented on the experience of meeting new people and making lasting relationships.

‘Everything about it was brilliant, the people and the new friends I made’ Volunteer: Memories

Impact on communities

A number of 14-18 NOW projects involved significant and varied elements of community engagement. Memories of August 1914 provided the opportunity for Liverpool City Council to involve, and engage with, the residents of Kensington – one of the most disadvantaged areas of the city. Involvement in the project and the media coverage it received had helped to change negative perceptions of their community.

‘We wanted people to see us with fresh eyes ... there were a couple of media interviews and coverage on the local BBC, which all said what a fabulous place it is and what great local people and it really cheered people up to be presented in that way’ Newsham Park Community Group: Memories
Legacy
A significant proportion of participants and attenders have been motivated by their experience to explore the heritage of First World War further, both generally and particularly in terms of specific family and local area connections:

51% of attenders at Memories of August 1914 wanted to find out more about what the people of Liverpool did in the First World War.

27% of contributors to LETTER TO AN UNKNOWN SOLDIER found out more about their family history in connection to the First World War.

The first season of 14-18 NOW also left a tangible legacy in the form of four publications:
- Shot at Dawn featuring the photographs of Chloe Dewe Mathews
- Goodbye To All That curated by Lavinia Greenlaw
- LETTER TO AN UNKNOWN SOLDIER - a selection of over 130 letters submitted to the project
- On the Shoulders of Giants: Memories of August 1914 - the official book capturing the event in Liverpool

Learnings
14-18 NOW has delivered a creative, high-profile, national programme of events which has developed artistic practice, powerfully commemorated the First World War, reached 19 million people and captured the public imagination.

Within this significant success, there are some lessons to be learnt in terms of programme delivery.

Longer lead-in times for commissioning and event development: enabling a wider range of commissions in terms of risk and challenge which should be possible with longer lead-in time.

More producer support: There were a number of projects in the first season who identified the need for a single 14-18 NOW producer or project manager as a single point of contact.

Consider the proportionality of commissioning agreement: in relation to demands made on projects, particularly from a brand and marketing perspective where 14-18 NOW is a significantly minor partner.

Widen the geographic reach: whilst the national projects such as LIGHTS OUT and LETTER TO AN UNKNOWN SOLDIER gave the project UK-wide coverage, there were some gaps in geographic coverage with no projects presented in the North East, Yorkshire and The Humber, the East Midlands and the South East in the first season.

Commission projects that will develop international partnerships: a significant number of international artists contributed to the first season of 14-18 NOW. Four projects: A Foreign Field (Chemnitz Opera), Forbidden Zone (Saltzburg Festival), Memories of August 1914 (Royal de Luxe) and LIFT (Hebbel Theatre Berlin and Kaaitheater Brussels) involved partnerships with international arts organisations. Whilst much of the work in

‘The book is accessible and easy to read. The essays offered sometimes complex ideas and concepts clearly and effectively. I was gripped by the overarching theme of understanding creativity in the light of conflict, and by the way each writer responded to this theme in different ways.’
Assessor: Goodbye To All That
2014 was felt to be world-class in its innovation, the programme in future seasons should aim to develop more international collaborations.

**Commission projects that will further diversify the audience:** there were no major projects programmed in the first season with a specific focus on attracting culturally diverse audiences. In order to achieve the objective to attract these audiences it would be useful to identify opportunities for inter-project collaboration especially around audience development for UK-wide projects.

**A significant future audience for 14-18 NOW**

There is clearly an appetite for the 14-18 NOW proposition. A population survey in June 2014 suggested that the potential market is in the region of 30m people across the UK. The experience of this first wave of 14-18 NOW events has clearly whetted their appetite for more.

The market for heritage is estimated at 73% of the population (England data), and for contemporary art significantly smaller at 18% of the UK population. As well as being different in size, these markets also differ in their demographic profile, with the market for contemporary art being significantly younger and more diverse than the heritage market.

14-18 NOW’s offer therefore has the potential to open up the heritage market to younger, more diverse audiences. The challenge for 14-18 NOW is to commission a programme which will achieve this, and the engagements achieved in 2014 illustrate the potential to successfully engage new audiences in heritage through contemporary work.

‘It was definitely an eye opener to attend more unique and intriguing events.’

*Audience member: Mametz*
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