



Case Study: **Helix Arts** <http://www.helixarts.com/>

Robert joined Helix Arts (then known as Artists Agency) as Development Director in 1999, becoming Co-director in 2002, Director in 2006 and finally Chief Executive. During this time he led the company through numerous change programmes – some through necessity, some pro-active – including: name change, rebranding, office re-location, staffing and leadership re-structures, business re-modeling, setting up new accounting systems, transition to Full Cost Recovery, new vision, mission and rolling three-year priorities.

In 2007 he secured and led Helix Arts' Arts Council Thrive! Organisation Development Programme - £324k, 2007/08 to 2010/11 – which constituted the following activity:

- **Market Development:** Demand Side: Stakeholder Analysis (£10k); Supply Side: Artists CPD (£44k)
- **Organisation Development:** Investment in Reserves (£40k); Investment in ICT / Staff CPD (£28k); Consultancy / Business Modeling (£7k)
- **Product / Practice Development:** Programme Innovation Budget (£27.5k); Multi-Disciplinary Advisory Panel (£14k); Project Archive (£6k); Toolkits – Contracting / Project Management (£10k) Artistic Quality Framework (£4k)
- **Gather and disseminate evidence:** Develop Academic Research (£12.5k); Commission Research – Youth Criminal Justice Programme (£11.5k); Narrative Research Pilot (£16.5k); Conference Event (£7k)
- **Build capacity:** Part fund new post: Fundraiser / Business Support Manager (£45k, over 2.5 years)
- **Change programme support:** Project Facilitator, Evaluation, Interim Fundraising Support, Sundries (£41k)

Throughout the Thrive! Programme – 21 projects nationally – Helix Arts was a national front-runner, as cited by programme evaluators PriceWaterhouseCooper.

As a result the company sustained growth and improved efficiency –headlines as follows – between 2001/02 and 2009/10, growth in...

- **Turnover** 272%
- Total **value of projects** 1225%
- **Earned income** 562%
- Whilst increasing **core costs** by only 103%
- 2010/11 was Helix Arts **sixth consecutive record year**
- **Grew the core team** from 6 to 9 permanent staff
- In 2010/11 the company had a **turnover of around £500k**, with **core costs in the region of £260k**
- See <http://www.helixarts.com/> to find out more about Helix Arts.

All this work enabled Helix Arts to...

- **Reach more people** – delivering services to approximately 400 people through 500 workshops and 160 hours of mentoring per year.
- **Demonstrate impact** – through the implementation of a bespoke personal development monitoring tool alongside a new narrative research methodology.
- **Drive up quality standards** – through the development of a quality assessment framework for the participatory arts.
- **Build new partnerships** – with partners from public and third sectors, arts and academia, funding bodies and the private sector – securing £2.75m 2001/02-2009/10.

At the end of March 2011 Robert left the company in a strong position with a 22% up-lift in Arts Council England revenue funding, new revenue funding from the Northern Rock Foundation and interim funding for 2011/12 from the Government's Transition Fund. He also led the succession planning process.