

Working strategically: insights from

INCLUDE



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INCLUDE
Inclusion Focus Programme



Approaching access and inclusion work strategically helped the INCLUDE groups set realistic goals and embed access and inclusion as key to their whole group's development.

GETTING PEOPLE INVOLVED

SHORT TERM



The committees of the INCLUDE groups engaged with all their members and got extra people involved with building and delivering their strategy.

Scunthorpe and North Lincolnshire Concert Society recruited a new group of volunteers from their membership to help with INCLUDE. Asking people to help with a specific, time-limited project worked well and they've uncovered new skills and expertise that will benefit the society into the future. They're planning to host a 'thank you' event for these volunteers to mark the end of the project and celebrate the effort they put in.

OutSingCancer Choir noticed the value of dedicated social time. Introducing 30 minutes to socialise at the start of a rehearsal has given members time to get to know each other, become more involved with the development of the choir, and made the group more cohesive.

First photo: Luton Choral Society's inclusion event

Second photo: Members of SNLCS's INCLUDE group at Make Music Day

You could try...

- Setting up an 'Access and Inclusion' working group.
- Asking everyone in your group if they'd like to get involved with helping on a specific task, or short-term project.
- Building in social time to your rehearsals and using this time to chat to each other about group development.
- Scheduling ways of saying 'thank you' into your action plan.

DEVELOPING AND USING A PLAN

SHORT TERM

Each group wrote an Inclusion Action Plan that contained:

- an overall mission / vision statement,
- objectives (decided following research into the groups and their communities),
- specific actions, with timescales and named responsible people,
- a date for review,
- an idea of how the impact of each action could be measured.

These were 'living documents' that were updated throughout the programme. They were reviewed after 12 months, giving the groups a chance to reflect on what they had achieved and realign their goals for the following year. **Scunthorpe and North Lincolnshire Concert Society** found that having a plan helped to focus their actions, assess progress and remind them of how much they had achieved.

The time dedicated to thinking about and developing the plan was helpful: **Great Bowden Recital Trust** reflected that it gave them the opportunity to take a step back and think more strategically about their inclusion work, something they hadn't previously had time to do.

You could try...

- Inviting a group of interested people from your group to create an inclusion action plan.
- Using our action plan template and Insights from INCLUDE to write your plan.

IMPACT ON RESOURCES

LONG TERM



When considering what they needed to put their plans into action, all four INCLUDE groups found that the greatest impact was on volunteer time.

Most of the work they did was not expensive but did require extra time and effort. They needed funds to cover the additional events they held to connect with other music groups and for Make Music Day. These were funded through the INCLUDE programme, as they would have had to raise their own funds otherwise.

Widening the diversity of their membership and audiences is a long-term goal, and significant change is difficult to see after 18 months. However, they have all noticed short-term positive impacts for their groups and can see that they are beginning to move towards their long-term goal.

“It has set the foundations for making sure our organisation does think about how to make concerts accessible to all and consider ways to become more inclusive, which feels like a very positive step to have taken - SNLCS”

You could try...

- Talking realistically about the resources you’ll need to make the actions in your plan happen.
- Including actions that will help build the resources you need, e.g. such as applying for funding, recruiting volunteers, or attending free training. Using Making Music’s resources – we have lots of information, advice, and events that can help.
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COMMUNICATING YOUR STRATEGY

SHORT TERM

As part of their strategies, the INCLUDE groups made sure to promote the inclusion work they were doing. They communicated with people outside their groups using social media and webpages (for example, Great Bowden Recital Trust’s [INCLUDE webpage](#)), and kept their members up to date through email newsletters, notices in rehearsals, and updates in concert programmes.

Luton Choral Society noticed that regularly talking about the work they had done helped remind their members of the adjustments and resources available to them: “you have to keep reminding people of the resources available and where to find them; we are all busy people”.

Scunthorpe and North Lincolnshire Concert Society wrote an Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion policy and an inclusion statement to put on their website. Publicly stating their inclusion goals demonstrates their commitment to inclusion to potential members, funders, and other stakeholders.

You could try...

- Creating a webpage to share stories about the actions you’ve taken.
- Sharing appropriate updates about your inclusion work on social media.
- Including an ‘access and inclusion update’ in members’ newsletters.
- Writing a public-facing inclusion statement for your group. See our [Welcoming new people by building diversity and inclusion resource](#) for some examples.

This is one of a set of four ‘Insights from INCLUDE’. You can find the full set at makingmusic.org.uk/insights-from-include

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