**Hull Independent Producer Initiative (HIPI)**

HIPI was established as a partnership project between Hull 2017 and the University of Hull in order to:

* Create a stronger creative network
* Enhance capacity of companies to write funding bids
* Export Hull’s culture further, increasing the amount of work toured
* Develop artistic aspirations and resources for productions

HIPI is a capacity growing initiative that allows more theatre companies and artists to live and work in Hull. Helen Goodman was appointed to the HIPI post in Autumn 2016. She met regularly with Hull-based companies and artist, both individually and through a series of networking events she organised. Her work focused on nine companies: Middle Child, Silent Uproar, Ensemble 52, Apus Productions, Roaring Girls, She Productions, Pub Corner Poets, Bellow Theatre and Broccolily.

Helen organised a series of masterclasses including sessions covering: PR, evaluation and report, grant applications, and making work for alternative spaces. These sessions were successful in enabling those working in the theatre sector in Hull to develop and expand their skills and knowledge. 100% of participants reported gaining a moderate to significant amount of new skills and knowledge from the five masterclasses run in April to June 2017. Half of participants at a session run by Cornershop PR and two thirds of those who attended a workshop on Grants for the Arts provided by the Arts Council reported gaining significant levels of new skills and knowledge.

“Liked the masterclass intention and feel that something is happening. For too long this area has been neglected by the arts. Interested in the legacy going on from 2017 and how to implement information from classes.” - Participant

“The work of identifying and approaching audiences is done so professionally in the theatre and related worlds. I've had ideas in the direction of PR and marketing in the past, but without the knowledge and resources and connections and, basically, the confidence I needed to build on them. Now I have those things, or at least the access to develop them.” – Participant

Helen supported Hull based companies to tour their work, including a showcase at New Diorama Theatre and a ‘Hull takeover’ at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. At New Diorama, 630 people attended 10 performances across 5 days and 90% of the shows were sold out. Middle Child’s ‘All We Ever Wanted Was Everything’ won three awards from its Edinburgh run and was seen by 3187 audience members, representing over 96% capacity.

From the support provided through HIPI, Hull-based theatre companies have also made successful bids for funding to start new projects and to develop existing ones. For example, Silent Uproar report that the HIPI project has enabled them to raise over £70,000 from a variety of sources and Bellow Theatre attribute three grants, totalling over £15,000, to Helen’s work with them.

“For the development of the work being made within Hull, and long term improvement this has been the best thing to come out of City of Culture for many of the artists and companies making work within the city. It has filled a real gap, and has been invaluable for all of us.” – Bellow Theatre