

dundee radio club Community Ideas Fund reflective blog transcript

B + S: Hello and welcome to Dundee Radio Club's reflective blog for Creative Dundee.

B: I am Becca.

S: I am Su.

B: And we're doing a little blog based experiment by making this audio piece to think through the wonder of having received the Community Ideas Fund from the Creative Dundee Amps network, to get things going with our radio project back in 2024, and to continue listening together.

S: We have a few questions, thoughts and musings for each other and we're locking in for a short little conversation on this first incarnation of ddrc, post listening festival in February 2025. Should we take it back, right back to the Community Amps pitch?

B: Yes.

S: So, first question – why did you want to start a new radio club for Dundee? Where did that idea come from?

B: Well, I had been thinking about beginning a radio project in Dundee for quite a long time, too many years to have been thinking about it, without taking any action. And then the wonderful Community Ideas Fund project popped up again, and I have gone along to a number of the pitches over the years that Creative Dundee have been hosting these events with their Amps network. I think it's such a brilliant format, but I hadn't really thought about who I could collaborate with and, to collaborate on something like this, that had just been in my mind as a bit of an idea without really thinking through the practicalities of bringing it to life. And then we had been speaking about community radio quite a bit, and thinking about sound a lot more and about spaces for sound in the city, and there's a very prevalent conversation about space and Dundee, always. But it feels like that conversation is heightened, or has got new voices being part of it and it's a very active conversation – and I think with you, I thought maybe we could try and make a space for sound that's in the airwaves and that it could become maybe this idea that I'd had for a community radio station in the city, that was akin to some of the things that we see in other places across Scotland, across Europe, across the world. Community stations like Clyde Built, like EHFM and Radio Buena Vida, and a lot more that I like to follow and listen to. I mean, yeah, thinking about creating something like that for Dundee – with you. Why did you want to start dundee radio club?

S: Well, I love a club. I'm not actually a member of too many clubs in Dundee so I suppose it's a way to make new friends. But maybe we should talk about, how we did have a couple of options for what we might name it. Why did we decide on a club?

B: What were we going to call it before?

S: Dundee Community Radio.

B: Oh yeah!

S: So, it was actually going to be DDCR but we kept saying it the wrong way round, we kept saying DDRC – so I think it was sort of decided for us, wasn't it? But yeah, I think going back to that conversation around spaces – I love living in Dundee and I love spending time in Dundee and over the past few years, really just this want to be able to make and share [sound] in more spaces across Dundee. There's this wonderful creative ecology of independent makers and collectives and artists already based here but thinking on sound and music and just feeling that absolutely there is – or there was – this opportunity to create something that didn't already exist in Dundee and certainly in terms of radio – and so, yeah, Dundee Radio Club was born.

B: I really love radio as a medium, the sort of ephemeral nature of it – and that feels quite reflective of some of the conversations about space in the city. There's a lot of conversation about meanwhile spaces and the pros and cons of those, but something about radio just feeling like this slightly, I guess, quite a fixed medium in that it's existed for such a long time, but that what is made, or the ways that radio is made, can be quite transient, it can be very experimental, it can be a space for testing things out and not having to have a really fixed form. I guess one of the other questions that we have sort of pre-prepared about the intentions and then the reality of beginning the station or dundee radio club, *the club (!)* – was that I suppose at the outset we had actually been thinking about space and about having a physical space and making a sort of premises for radio. And again, wrapped up in the conversation around space in the city, some of our plans didn't quite follow through. And then it kind of gave way to an opportunity to make something quite different but very related, and very exciting – and unexpected, in many ways. And I think we both also love festivals. I suppose dundee radio club, in our first incarnation, with this pilot project through the Creative Dundee Amps network Community Ideas Fund, the Listening Festival was born, and I suppose it's become a project-within-a-project that we've created.

S: Mhm. So, should we talk about the Listening Festival that took place between the 7th and 9th of February 2025. Depending on when you're listening to this, that was just over a month ago.

B: Oh my gosh it's our little anniversary. Our festival anniversary. We missed it, it's passed. [laughs]

S: So, we actually launched the open call... well, we'd committed to hosting a 48-hour Listening Festival back in September, and we launched the open call in November. At the time that we launched the open call, we were not entirely sure how many submissions that we would receive. We were absolutely certain that we wanted to make it as open as possible and really a space for everyone to feel that they could submit, and be a part of. I guess that's the thing about sound making or even this idea of working with sound – we were not looking for only those that already had experience with making radio – actually it was a bit

of an experiment for us, I suppose. Like, number one, it was absolutely a way for Creative Dundee and the extended Amps network to also get involved, but really, just looking for as many different voices and contributions as possible over that Listening Festival period.

B: Yeah, I think that there was something that we wanted to retain about the idea of having a more traditional idea of what a community radio station might look like with a space, and sort of giving people the opportunity to come in and try things out, and those that wanted to make radio mixes, but *also* by moving to this concentrated festival experience, really highlighting, I guess, the sort of the *moment* of listening. And so, encouraging people to try it out, to do things for the first time. And really sort of embrace festival energy. And then I think also with taking on the format of a listening festival, we had both been really inspired by Radiophrenia. And that's true from the outset, from when we made the pitch.

S: What is Radiophrenia, Becca?

B: Radiophrenia is a radio art project that is based in Glasgow. It sets up every year for a festival of listening. And, I think it's fair to say that it is quite experimental listening. It sort of makes space for radio works that wouldn't fit traditionally into, I guess, like general broadcast, I don't remember the terms that they use on the website ([for 'general broadcast'] – they aren't really looking for DJ mixes and things. They're looking for sound works that have been created that might not have space in a gallery, might not make sense on a more traditional idea of a radio station. And I think that we were really keen to sort of fuse these things together. So, looking to traditional community radio stations – ones that are very cool! Like the ones that are making really exciting mixes with really cool DJs [laughs], that we both listen to – but also reflecting on my own experience of working with a community radio station that's very much rooted in its locality. Where news is shared and community projects are highlighted. And then also drawing on Radiophrenia. And I guess your experience of making sound work. And wondering, in Dundee in particular, like.. where can it go? Or where can it be situated and where does it make sense? Where can people hear? How can people collaborate? How can people find space to put things out that aren't the spaces that I guess you think of when people are making music or sound? And do people even really know that there are spaces where you can share your sound art or sound work? I guess I find all the vocabulary of making the distinctions a bit confusing and a bit jumbled. And I appreciate the sort of spread that community radio stations or community radio projects can allow in a shared space.

S: I guess it's a nice moment to share that we've both been part of Creative Dundee's Amps community for several years now. And also, I think that was something we were really keen to be able to provide this opportunity to bring together so many of the people that we've met through that network – and beyond. One of the things that still really surprises me, because of the size of Dundee, I'm still meeting people for the first time, or finding out that someone is working on this incredible project, or they have this incredible practice. And, [I] love also making these introductions between people that maybe have not met before, even though we're all sharing this quite small city space, some might say. And so it was also an opportunity to share a lot of these voices, but also a means to introduce people to one another through the airwaves. Which I really love the idea of too.

B: Yeah, really celebrating the breadth of what creative activity looks like in Dundee. And I... oh I just had a thought there. Where did it go? It sort of came into my head and then went out of my head... I think what you were saying about when we had the idea for launching the open call. We had thought – and I suppose this comes with the idea of making, or the original idea of making a physical space in which to host a radio station – thinking that we would be very much sort of in Dundee, of Dundee, for Dundee. And really, really rooted here. Which I *still* think that we are. But by moving online something very unexpected happened.

S: It became very international, very quickly! And actually what's really funny is that when we had launched this open call, and had said or had announced it would be 48 hours, we both thought we might need to make quite a lot of the material to fill those 48 hours – because we really didn't know how many submissions we might receive. Of course, we were hopeful that as many people as possible might like to submit something for inclusion in the programme. But actually, as it turns out, we really didn't have to make much radio at all... [laughs]

B: Slightly disappointed!

S: There weren't any slots left for us [laughs]. I think you had 20 minutes. I think I might have had something similar. But we had received, I think, more than 100 submissions through the open call. Which is kind of, it kind of blew our minds. And the loveliest thing – or maybe why we feel that happened – is that online there's this really lovely radio community, that sort of welcomed us with open arms, even though we were very new, and started sharing the open call. And it kind of just somehow resulted in us receiving submissions from, gosh, how many countries in the end?

B: Oh my goodness.. 20?! ...How many submissions? I don't remember the number of countries. But we had submissions from Brazil, Chile, Austria, Spain, Georgia, America...

S: Norway, Sweden. All across Scotland. Lots and lots and lots from Dundee. Which made us very happy.

B: Oh wait! 22 countries? I did have it written down!

S: But no wait! That's the number of countries that we broadcast to!

B: Yeah. Okay.

S: Which we'll come on to. We've got a section on facts.

B: Data wrangling! But yeah we were really struck by where we were seeing submissions coming in from. And by doing the open call – we included in the submission form – we wanted to have information about people's relationship to Dundee. And again, because we sort of set out with this intention of making something for Dundee, and really wanted to

celebrate everything that's going on here, but we're aware that by going online, and not just shared amongst the network – the existing Creative Dundee network – that the response *could* potentially go further. But yeah, the response from people internationally saying that this was their first meeting with Dundee, and that they hoped that it wouldn't be their last! Sort of building a relationship with people making work much further afield, was really lovely. But we also noticed something, again quite surprising, that lots of people who *did* have a relationship with Dundee, but were no longer based here – including quite a lot of creative people, or people who had gone through the university and who had moved away – reflecting the other ongoing conversation about retention of creative people in the city, and the opportunities in which to sustain a practice in the city – noticing people sort of come back or return to Dundee through their sounds, was also really lovely.

S: Should we talk about the festival?

B: Yes. Yes.

S: So. The festival began. It was quite an ambitious weekend. We committed to 48-hours. And we felt really strongly about being *on air* for those 48-hours. Which meant some serious shift work!

B: [laughs] Late nights. Early mornings.

S: But we also began with a really wonderful exhibition. Which was part of Volk Gallery. Do you want to share a little bit about what that was?

B: Yes! I think, to sort of encourage the festival atmosphere, we – I'm sort of jumping around a little bit, but – we received a very, very, *very* lovely invite from Lizzie Day and Luke Greer, of Volk Gallery – who are also members of Creative Dundee's Amps network. And I think that this feels like an extension of even just the network and the Forum and the space in which we made the pitch, and those connections that were there from before we even started broadcasting. And that collaborations just being so integral to the growth of Dundee radio club. But yes, we received an invitation from Volk to create an edition for their wonderful gallery. Their vending machine gallery, which is in the Keiller Center in Dundee, where they invite artists and creatives to make an edition that can fit within a nappy vending machine.

S: A *repurposed* nappy vending machine.

B: Repurposed! It doesn't come with nappies!

S: There are no nappies.

B: Nappies and zines. Zines about nappies! Anyways! The invitation has limitations only really of size, the dimensions in which to be vended. It's very, very open. We decided that we wanted to think about how we could create something sonic that could be vended. And the fact that we had moved to this digital format, by having the online festival – how we

could have something tangible, but still have something that was sound and audio based. And so we created some sonic postcards!

S: We created a dundee radio club membership pack!

B: Which included some sonic postcards! But the wonderful thing was that when we were invited, it was very open about when we might be able to fit into their schedule of exhibitions. And we decided to sort of have the launch of our edition with Volk coincide with the launch of the festival. Which made perfect sense! It made everything a little bit hectic, but it was such a beautiful way to begin our festival weekend. We were beginning in the afternoon of the 7th, and before we went on air, before the festival schedule began, we were down at Volk in the Keiller Centre, launching with a lovely audience! And sort of testing out what it might be like to be *live* to air. So with a sneaky prelude to the festival, we started broadcasting out from our launch, which kicked everything off! And was a really lovely way to sort of stand with people, to share space with people, and listen together. And again, sort of blending that physical and digital space sharing that, again, reflected the sort of evolution of the idea, and of the project. Being really rooted to Dundee. Being present in the city. And still having this wide audience, and wide pool of people that were able to listen in.

S: So, we started our live broadcast at the Keiller Centre as part of the Volk Gallery exhibition opening. And then we raced back! To begin... to officially begin, the Listening Festival broadcast. One of my favourite things... well, actually, there were many favourite things, and maybe we can share some of our highlights throughout that weekend... But what I really loved, is that we had some software which allowed us to see *who* was listening in and from where; and how many people at any given time. Which was so lovely! Because as the hours started to roll past there were just more and more countries [joining]. And at one point it felt like we truly were broadcasting globally, beaming out to 23 countries. We have a list of those which we can run through now... We had just short of 1,800 listeners across those countries. And those countries included: Argentina. Brazil. Indonesia. Norway. Sweden. Spain. France. The Netherlands. Denmark. Ukraine. Italy. Germany. Greece. Switzerland. Ireland. Scotland. England. Russia. Ethiopia. Canada. America. And, South Korea. Which was kind of amazing, because actually there's quite a few countries there that we didn't have submissions from. And so, just this.. wonderful, like, 'how did someone come to find the dundee radio club broadcast?!' Which is quite exciting!

B: Yeah! The power of Instagram! We really are sort of indebted to the network, that Su mentioned, of community stations. And, just people being very open to sharing what we were up to on social media. And it going quite far, with, I guess, quite a limited presence. We're very new! And so [limited] followers, and all of those things. But, yes, people in all of those countries were able to hear a really wonderful mix of sounds.

S: And just to touch on some of those submissions, and the themes that they were exploring... It was a very vast number of topics! Ranging from – oh my gosh! – we had animal infrasound, The Atacama Desert in Chile...

B: The chaos and calm of seasonality in Georgia, and looking at the Georgian language. Heckling! And its links to Dundee's social history.

S: There was sonic sci-fi. We had choral contributions. We had original music that people had made exclusively for Dundee radio club.

B: And we had a real focus on projects that are based in Dundee: lots of grassroots projects in the city. Lots of projects with young people, lots of projects that celebrate the city and champion creativity more broadly. Shall we read some of what those were?

S: Yes, we had a contribution from... Tayside Healthcare Arts Trust –

Both: V&A Dundee's Young People's Collective. UNESCO. Hot Chocolate. City Flowers Garden Studio. Musicians from across the city, like you mentioned. And neighbours, in North Fife, including Andy Truscott, Rachel Simpson, Seth Bennett, Claire Gorman, Day Moves, Jam Radio. We had contributions from teaching staff from both Abertay and University of Dundee. We had solidarity in sound from the Art Workers of Palestine, Dundee Nablus Twinning Association, as well as busking legend Eric Gunnerson, Singing In Solidarity at a demo a few weeks, months past, whenever you listen to this. We had a DJ mix from Kore9 Collective. We had notes from XR Dundee, Volk Gallery, Campy Squirrels and Dundee Litter Pickers.

B: And lots of little, we called them, sonic business cards... audio business cards?

S: Audio ads...

B: I guess sort of drawing on – for those of you familiar with Creative Dundee, their wonderful Pass the Mic format. So, notes from Creative Dundee Amps members sharing what they do, how they do it, and where you could get in touch and follow them. If you heard any of those, we are still running an evaluation project, gathering feedback about the festival.

S: Gathering sonic thoughts.

B: Sonic thoughts; what you liked, what you felt could have been better, what you would like more of... would you even like us to do it again?! Would you be interested in contributing to something more regular? If and when we can bring that into fruition! Because, we're thinking of the future and we're thinking about what comes next. And while we're not entirely sure what that is, having everyone's comments and feedback is really helping us to think about what is required to help make something happen down the line. Because I think we are also reflecting on what went into making the festival, and the big sonic soup that we had. [laughs]

S: Mhm. [laughs]

B: And one of the really lovely things actually about doing, gathering the feedback, and doing this evaluation... it's wonderful to hear about what people heard, how long they listened for and to get their comments on what we could improve upon. But, again, it's been really nice to reflect on the fact that although we did have this surprising international element, the energy of the whole project has still been described as "a *sonic love letter to Dundee*." Which really reflects on the original intention, and the original pitch to the Community Ideas Fund. But yes, we are looking to continue! And, potentially blend that celebration, that festival celebration, with something that can happen a little bit more regularly. We recently broadcast out from Generator's Members' Show – and their performance night, and we are thinking about connecting to other radio stations, community radio station,s to see what we can evolve. We're also contributing to Radiophrenia – I say we, not me! [both laugh] And I went to a conference which was all about socially engaged sonic practice. And I hope that all of these things do sort of funnel into what we do next... maybe I should check in with my collaborator! Do you want to do more?!

S: I would love to do more! And I think we would both really love to do more with all of you! Something that was so lovely, and was so encouraging is that so many people already have said that they would love to do a more regular show if there was a more regular dundee radio club platform. So we are working away to figure out what could be possible! But yes, we would love to hear your feedback! However big or small. Both positive and also parts that maybe you would love to be included in the next dundee radio club broadcast... please let us know! How do people let us know, Becca?

B: They can do our feedback form which you can find a link to on our website, which is: dundee radio [dot] club

S: Or our Instagram, which is: dundee radio [dot] club

B: Very simple!

Both: Dundee Radio [dot] Club

B: Or, you can email us, of course, at dundee radio club [at] gmail [dot] com

[both laugh]

B: Our little sonic experiment of a blog post has become quite long! We thank you all for listening along! Shall we... some thank yous!

S: We do have some thank yous which we would like to use the next few minutes to share. Including everyone that contributed a sound work, a recording, a mix, a conversation, episode of a podcast...

B: ...those that have been making radio for years and years and years and are really pioneers and trailblazers in community and radio art making, and those that tried it for the first time!

S: Those that tried it for the first time, yeah... we absolutely loved hearing from those that got in touch to say this was the first time they'd ever made something for radio, and that we were able to share it. That was really special for us.

B: Yeah – and hopefully it will not be the last! So, a thank you to...

Both: Aaron McCarthy. Again + Again. Anna Alonzo Curbelo. Andrew Ramsey. Andy Truscott. Anne Ruthven. Art Workers For Palestine Dundee. Oh, Becca Clark (!)

B: It's me!

S: I'm going to thank you!

Both: Bobby Jewel and Neil McGuire. Bogi, AKA DJ Bobo. Brandon Locher. Bx Šik. Callum Osinski. Carlo Patrão. Carys Wall. chema. Christina Ruf. claretforgeorge. Craig Hunter. Creative Chit Chat (coming back!). Creative Dundee Amps! All of you. David Trouton & Chris Biddlecombe. Day Moves. Diego Véliz. Duet Zaldua Birchall. Dundee Nablus Twinning Association. Dundee Print Collective. Ed Muirhead. Eloïse Bertil. Finlay Hall and The Imaginary Choir. Gardika Gigih. Gareth John & Laura Tansley. Helga Luzhnikova. Isabel Val Sánchez. Jaimini Jethwa. James Barrowman and Erin Farley. Johanna Linsley and Jan Mertens. Johnny Threshold. joshua elza breen-tucci. Julia Griner. K.V. Grimm. Kaska Hempel. Kate Laity. Kathy Hinde. Katie Revell. Longsong. Loom. Lux Lucis. Magz Hall. Malcolm Kyeyune. Martin Zeilinger. Mathias Arrignon. naafi. Nichol Keene. Nick Luscombe. Oliver Ridgewell. Pauleeji. Pete Cox. Pete McConville. Radio Art Lab Orchestra. Rae-Yen Song. Richy Carey and Wild Tracks Radio. Rob St John. Rose Ferraby. Sara Mokrani. Sean Wheelan. Shado-Lite. Oh, you, SHHE! [laughs]. Shiori Usui. Simon Kirby. Simone Seales. Siôn Parkinson. Smart Hopewell. Sonia Killmann. Sophia Archontis. Sound Thought. SUBTERRA. Tattie Chater Davies. Tayside Healthcare Arts Trust. Tom from Le Freak. Tommy Perman. UNESCO City of Design Dundee. VorticeX. XR Dundee. And YPC, Young Peoples Collective, V&A Dundee.

B: And a few more! [laughs] And I think a huge, huge thank you to Creative Dundee for creating the Creative Dundee Amps network.

S: And a huge, huge thank you to the Amps network for entrusting in dundee radio club this lovely opportunity to create this festival. And the first of, hopefully, many, many more dundee radio club broadcasts to come.

B: Yes. More more more! This was just a pilot. This is a tester! Taster. Testing. Testing. Testing. One. Testing. One. Two. One. Two. Three. Three.

S: We are going to say goodbye. We are going to share the dundee radio club Manifesto. Gosh. It feels like we're...

B: It feels like the festival is ending again! Oh. It's not! It's not.

S: If you are a member of the Amps community, you too can apply for the Community Ideas Fund, which is open now, depending on when you are listening to this, with a closing date of...

B: The 31st of March. At 10pm.

S: At 10pm. We absolutely encourage you to apply. It's been so, so lovely to bring dundee radio club to life.

B: Yes. And the projects that have happened across the years are all so varied. Please check them out on the website that you're probably currently on. The application form is very straightforward. The team at Creative Dundee are very wonderful, if you have any questions, please ask them. And it's just such a beautiful thing to pitch to your peers, to your community, to make something that goes back into the community. It's a lovely thing.

S: Thank you, Amps. Thank you, Creative Dundee. And thank you, to you, for listening to this!

B: And thank you to you!

S: And thank you to you! And also, Becca thank you to you; for those of you not aware, Becca designed the dundee radio club logo and all of the artwork, and at no point ever shared that. There are, of course, there always lots of things happening in the background, including definitely some sort of manic programming and very, very last minute introductions that we went live to air with!

B: Learning about broadcasting, as you're broadcasting!

S: It's been wonderful to be a part of this and to think on what might come next for dundee radio club.

B: But also, thank you to you, because, yes, being open to collaborating on something, which is the real, like, kernel of the proposal of the Community Ideas Fund, that you *have* to work in collaboration with someone. And I'm very, very grateful that you wanted to collaborate with me on this, and therefore, we were able to pitch. And here we are, thinking about what comes next.

S: And not just 48-hours, because we actually ran over in the end. I think it was closer to 50-hours.

B: And we're still thinking about this.

S: And we're still friends. So we did okay! Thank you so much, and... we are...

Both: dundee radio club!

S: Until next time!

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dundee radio club Manifesto

Like every club, we believe in the power of community. Creating a frequency of safe listening and learning. An inclusive sonic space that may take a myriad of audio forms. We believe that listening is a form of activism and exchange. We invite and encourage you to attend and attune to the auricular. Sonic perceptions may be lifted. This manifesto may oscillate.