

“THE IMPACT INSIDE”
EVALUATING THE ROLE OF THE KOESTLER
AWARDS IN IMPROVING PRISONS AND
PRISONERS

REPORT FOR KOESTLER ARTS

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1. SUMMARY

This brief summary draws together the essence of this evaluation report.

A range of research activities were undertaken which included: 6 theory of change interviews with former Koestler Awards entrants and prison staff; a survey of 345 prisoners across six prisons drawn from three cohorts – Koestler Awards entrants in 2017, arts participants (who did not enter the awards in 2017) and Non-arts participants ; observations at three of the prisons; and 18 interviews with Koestler Award entrants and prison staff at three prisons.

The aim was to answer the key research question which was at the core of this evaluation project:

“Do people who engage with the Koestler Awards Scheme have improved behaviour compared to prisoners not engaging in the Arts?”

The quantitative findings from the survey showed that compared to prisoners involved in arts activities but who did not enter the Awards scheme in 2017 and prisoners not involved in the arts, the Koestler Awards entrants in 2017 demonstrated statistically higher average levels of: self-reflection; hope; resilience; and wellbeing¹. These findings were adjusted through multiple linear regression to control for differences in: age, prison, sentence type, whether worked in the arts prior to prison, whether first sentence, and length of current sentence served.

The qualitative findings based on interviews with the Koestler Awards Scheme entrants and prison staff in three prisons supported the quantitative findings. Thematic analysis confirmed that scheme entrants reported that the Awards scheme had provided opportunities for:

- self-determination – through undertaking self-directed work for the Awards scheme – in preference to tutor directed work;
- redemption and pride in receiving recognition for their artwork;
- re-casting negative self-identities and offering individuals the prospect of change; and
- motivation – a goal to aim for – where previously they may have lacked motivation

The research design that was employed was the most robust possible within the constraints of the evaluation budget, resources and timeframe. However, the methodology was limited by: a relatively small survey sample size; due to practical constraints - the lack of a comparison pre-prison baseline for the survey outcomes; and the prisoner interviewees may not have been representative of all Koestler Awards scheme entrants, however, the views of the prisoners were confirmed by prison staff from the same institutions which lends support to the interview findings.

¹ Where $p < 0.05$

2. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings from the evaluation of: *“The Impact Inside”*: The role of the Koestler Awards in improving Prisons and Prisoners. The research was commissioned by Koestler Arts and conducted by the Policy Evaluation and Research Unit (PERU) at Manchester Metropolitan University in partnership with Social Justice Solutions (SJS).

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To provide the context to this research project and this report – this section presents an: overview of the Arts Awards; the key research question which this report aims to answer; and the structure of this report.

1.1 OVERVIEW OF THE KOESTLER AWARDS

The Koestler Awards Scheme allows prisoners and other people in the criminal justice system to submit artwork to their competitions. Possible outcomes for any submission include: a certificate of participation - provided to all entrants; written feedback from a professional artist; and a cash prize. In addition, some artworks are sold through Koestler Arts and/or displayed at art exhibitions. As such, the scheme therefore aims to recognise the contribution and talent of individuals creating artworks in prison and/or the community. Engaging in the scheme can take a range of forms. Some participants may have been encouraged by tutors - forming part of a broader programme of educational and skills development activities. For others, submitting a piece of artwork may have involved private, solitary work and personal initiative. Further details about the Awards can be found at: <https://www.koestlerarts.org.uk/>

1.2 CORE RESEARCH QUESTION

The research brief provided by Koestler Arts when commissioning this evaluation highlighted the role of the arts for long-term prisoners with an emphasis on the role that art more generally and the Arts Awards specifically can play whilst participants are in prison.

The core research question posed in the brief, was:

“Do people who engage with the Koestler Awards Scheme have improved behaviour compared to prisoners not engaging in the Arts?”

In response to this question the research project has been framed in terms of quantitatively and qualitatively assessing the impact of the Koestler Awards scheme on the behaviour of participants during their time in prison.

1.3 STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

The key findings presented in this report have been drawn from two technical reports (previously submitted to Koestler Arts, one based on the analysis of the quantitative survey data and the other on the thematic analysis of the qualitative data based on interviews and observations.

This report has been written for the lay reader with the principal aim of presenting the key findings in a manner which can be readily understood by readers without a technical statistics background.

The report is structured in the following way:

1. **Summary** – which presents the key findings.
2. **Introduction** – which provides the context about the Koestler Awards, the aim of this research project and the outlines the sections of the report.
3. **Methodology** – which sets out the methodology used to collect and analyse quantitative and qualitative data used in this report along with the limitations of the methodology.
4. **Theory of change logic model** – which presents the change processes and outcomes which underpin the Awards Scheme.
5. **Quantitative data findings** – which presents the findings from the analysis of the characteristics of the prisoners who completed the survey questionnaire and the outcomes as measured through a combination of two validated tools
6. **Qualitative data findings** – which presents the findings of the thematic analysis of the qualitative fieldwork: observations of arts activities in prison; information conversations with the participants; and semi-structured interviews with prisoners and prison staff
7. **Conclusion**
8. **Appendix** - which presents tables showing the detailed findings from the quantitative analysis

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 OVERVIEW

In summary the research team undertook the following research activities:

- **Initial scoping** through **theory of change** interviews with a small number of former Koestler Awards entrants and staff working in prisons who supported prisoners either as art tutors and/or in submitting prisoners' artworks for the Awards scheme;
- **Quantitative data collection and analysis** – undertaking a survey in a sample of prisons where prisoners submitted entries to the Awards in 2017; collecting the data from this and analysing them;
- **Qualitative data collection and analysis** – undertaking semi-structured interviews with prisoners who were Awards entrants in 2017 and prison staff and on site observations of arts activities undertaken in a purposive sample of prisons

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Details of these activities are provided in the sections below along with the limitations of the methodology.

3.2 THEORY OF CHANGE

The research team undertook 6 interviews with: former Koestler Arts Awards entrants (n=3); and staff in three prisons (n=3) which have facilitated and supported prisoners submit entries for the Arts Awards. These telephone interviews were undertaken in 2017 and were intended to assist the research team in formulating a theory of change about the Arts Awards to underpin and inform the research methodology, in particular the formulation of the prisoner survey and the content of the interview schedules for the qualitative fieldwork.

The sampling of these interviews was in part purposive and opportune. Interviewees were selected because they all had past experience of the Awards either as an entrant or as a member of staff working in prison to support the prisoners develop their art and/or facilitate the submission of prisoners' art work. Individuals were identified by staff at Koestler Arts who were then contacted by the research team. The individuals who agreed to participate in these interviews were inevitably self-selecting and given the small sample size it is acknowledged that these may not have been representative of all prisoners who entered the Awards scheme nor all staff working in prisons who have enabled prisoners to enter the scheme. The limitations of the sample therefore needs to be recognised when considering the key output from the theory of change interviews – the logic model.

3.3 QUANTITATIVE DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The survey of prisoners was conducted between April and June 2018 with additional top-up surveys completed during September to October 2018.

SAMPLING PRISONS

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To ensure that the survey of prisoners was feasible within the budget and resources for this project, the research team in consultation with the Koestler Arts sought to: maximise the potential numbers of prisoners who had experience of the Koestler Awards; and minimise the number of prisons which the survey was applied to. To ensure gender homogeneity within the sample it was agreed that only male prisons would be selected.

Six male prisons were identified which had high numbers of Awards entrants in 2017 but also in previous years. They were: Bure; Dovegate; Oakwood, Parc; Usk and Wakefield and represented a mix of private and public prisons. All six establishments were approached and gave their permission to undertake the targeted quantitative survey fieldwork and potentially the follow-on qualitative interview fieldwork. Research approval was obtained from Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) National Research Committee (NRC) and the research received ethics approval through the Manchester Metropolitan University Ethics Committee.

SAMPLING OF PRISONERS

The survey was administered to three cohorts within each establishment:

- Koestler Awards entrants in 2017;
- Involved in the arts but did not enter the Awards in 2017; and
- Not involved in the arts

The intention was to obtain a total sample of 200 survey respondents for each cohort from across the prisons. The survey was administered to prisoners by prison staff with guidance from the research team on the prisoner sampling/selection process and the survey administration.

The survey achieved a total sample of 345 respondents across the prisons:

- A fifth of cases were Koestler entrants (N=74),
- Just over 40 per cent were non-Koestler arts participants (N= 146); and
- A third did not participate in the arts (N=111).

Further details can be found in the Appendix.

THE SURVEY

Based on the theory of change findings and in consultation with the Koestler Arts, the research team developed a survey tool which aimed to capture data on outcomes, demographic information and respondents' involvement in arts activities and education prior to and after entering prison.

Outcomes were assessed using the following scales/measures.

The Intermediate Outcomes Measurement Instrument (IOMI) tool was used to measure:

- Resilience;
- Wellbeing;
- Agency;
- Impulsivity;
- Motivation to change;
- Hope; and
- Interpersonal trust

Engagement in self-reflection was measured using a sub-scale of the Self Reflection and Insight Scale (SRIS).

Both of these tools had been validated by the tools' designers and were incorporated into this survey and used in accordance with the designers' guidance.

LIMITATIONS OF THE QUANTITATIVE DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The research design implemented for this study was the most robust possible for the budget and resource available. In this section the limitations of the quantitative data collection and analysis are noted and provides context for the way in which the findings can be interpreted.

Acknowledging the limitations of the methodology in this way is standard practice in research reporting and is a common challenge to all research projects. There will inevitably be a gap between what the research design would like to achieve and what in practice it is able to achieve.

In this study the principal limitations were:

- Despite efforts by the research team and the Koestler Arts working with the sample prisons, the number of surveys on which the analysis is based is relatively small. This limited the ability of the analysis to detect statistically significant differences between the three cohorts in relation to outcomes.
- The analysis aimed to control for factors which may have contributed to differences in the outcomes but were not related to the Awards. These included: age; the prison; sentence type; whether this was the respondent's first occasion in prison; whether employed in the arts pre-prison; length of sentence; and self-reported problems pre-prison. The fact that the three cohorts were drawn from the same prisons meant that they shared general environmental factors in common – i.e. that these environmental factors were managed within the sampling. However for example it was not possible to control for pre-existing differences between the three cohorts – as it was not feasible to collect pre-prison data on the survey respondents.

3.4 QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The qualitative fieldwork consisted of:

- Observations of arts activities undertaken in prison;
- Informal conversations with participants at these activities; and
- Formal semi-structured interviews with prisoners who had entered the Koestler Awards in 2017; and staff at the prison who worked with prisoners who had entered artworks for the Awards scheme

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This fieldwork was undertaken during September 2019 in three of the six prisons where the survey was undertaken. Originally the fieldwork was intended to take place in HMP/YOI Parc and HMP Dovegate with prisoners who had entered the Awards in 2017 and had completed the research survey. The fieldwork was extended to HMP Usk in order to interview prisoners from HMP/YOI Parc who had been transferred to HMP Usk.

The interviewees comprised: seven prisoners and one staff member from HMP Dovegate; three prisoners and two staff members from HMP/YOI Parc; and four prisoners (transferred from HMP/YOI Parc) and one staff member at HMP Usk.

The qualitative data was analysed thematically against the following themes:

- how prisoners came to be engaged in the Awards and the nature of involvement (prisoners)
- the extent to which officers are aware of and/or engaged with the Awards (officers)
- what impact engaging in the Awards has had on the prisoner identity as an artist (prisoners)
- attitude/behaviour change through engaging in the Awards (prisoners/ officers)
- whether recognition from an organisation such as Koestler Arts has impacted the prisoners' sense of belonging (prisoners)
- whether recognition for artwork has affected motivation to participate further in art-based activities or other programmes (prisoners/officers)
- how engagement in the Awards, over and above general arts engagement, has enhanced motivation to change and engage in broader activities (prisoners/officers)

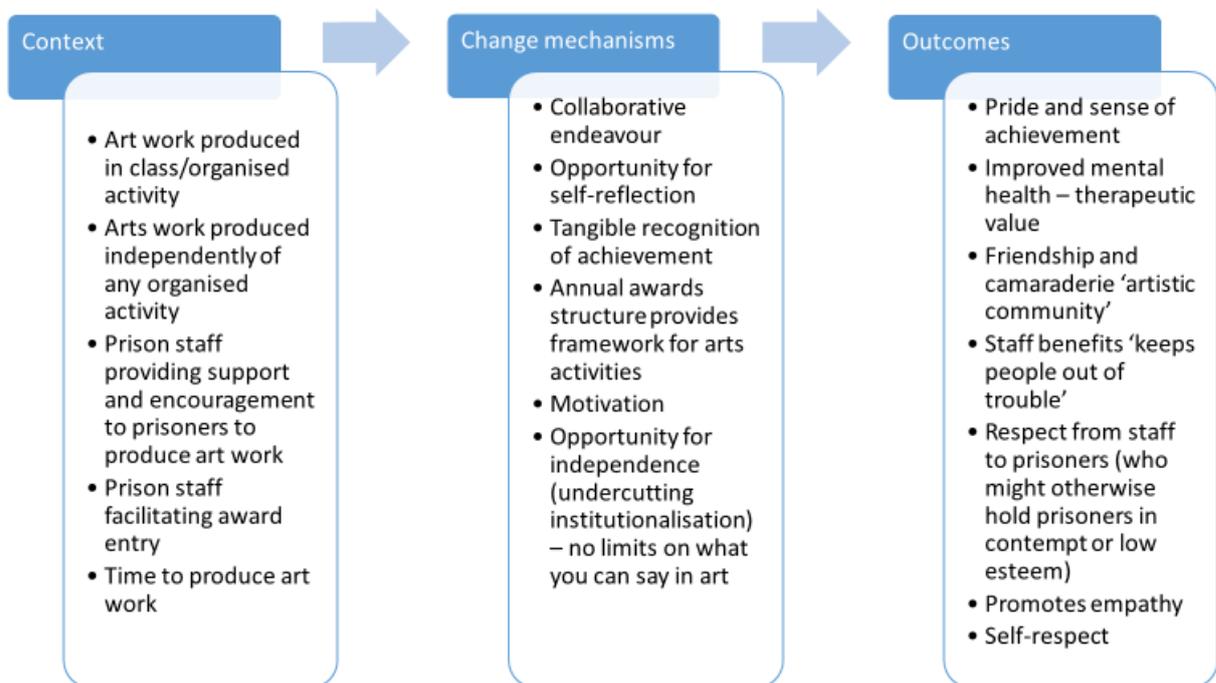
As with other elements of this study, the qualitative data collection and analysis was limited by the sampling methodology. The individuals who agreed to participate in these interviews were inevitably self-selecting and given the small sample size it is acknowledged that these may not have been representative of all prisoners who entered the Awards scheme nor all staff working in prisons who have enabled prisoners to enter the scheme. The observations and informal conversations were also similarly limited by what was observable during the research visit and by the individuals who were engaged in the arts activities during the visit. With these representative limitations acknowledged the data gathered was rich and nuanced and the findings from the thematic analysis of this qualitative data has provided a more in depth exploration of the impact of the Awards scheme on individuals to augment the quantitative data findings.

4. THEORY OF CHANGE

The theory of change logic model presented in Figure 3.1 was devised following the analysis of a small number of interviews with former Koestler Awards entrants and staff from prisons involved in facilitating arts activities and/or supporting the submission of artworks for the Awards. The findings from this analysis were combined with a review of documentation related to the Awards scheme

The logic model was shared with Koestler Arts and informed the design of the survey and the development of the research instruments used in the qualitative fieldwork interviews.

Figure 4.1: Theory of change logic model for the Koestler Arts Awards



5. QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

This section presents the findings from the quantitative analysis in two related strands based on the survey data:

- **The characteristics of the survey sample** – it is important to be aware of this when considering the findings from outcome analysis; and
- The results from the **outcome analysis** based on the mean outcomes from the three survey cohort groups

5.1 COHORT CHARACTERISTICS

As reported in Section 2.3, 345 survey questionnaires were received from the six sampled prisons:

- Bure
- Dovegate
- Oakwood
- Parc
- Usk
- Wakefield

The number of respondents per prison ranged from 96 from HMP/YOI Parc to 34 from HMP Usk. This in part reflected the target numbers of surveys set for each prison based on the number of Koestler entrants from each prison, for example Parc had the highest number of entrants in 2017 (and previous years) and therefore were asked to survey the largest number of individuals across each of the cohorts.

The full breakdown of respondents by prison can be found in Table A2 in Appendix 1.

The key points of difference across the respondents based on key characteristics are as follows – with the figures presented below rounded up to the nearest unit:

- **Distribution across the sampled prisons** - The number of respondents per cohort were unevenly distributed across the prisons. For example a disproportionately high number of Koestler entrants responded from HMP Wakefield which represented 28 percent of the overall Koestler cohort with a very small proportion from HMP Dovegate – 5 percent of the overall Koestler cohort (see Table A3 in Appendix 1).
- **Distribution across the three cohorts** - The number of respondents who were involved in the Arts but had not entered the Awards scheme in 2017 (N=146) was twice as large as the Koestler cohort (N=74). With the 111 respondents in the Non-arts cohort. See Table A1 in Appendix 1.
- **Age** - The Koestler cohort on average was considerably older than the Arts and Non-arts cohorts – for example of those aged 60-69 28 percent were from the Koestler cohort, compared to 10 percent (Arts) and 4 percent (Non-arts) - see Table A4 in Appendix 1.
- **Sentence length** - The Koestler cohort were more than twice as likely than the other two groups to be serving life with a mandatory sentence of more than 10 years (20 percent)

compared to the Arts cohort (5 percent) and the Non-arts cohort (8 percent) see Table A5 in Appendix 1.

- **Duration in prison at time of survey** - On average the Koestler cohort had spent longer in prison, as part of their current sentence, than the other two groups – with one fifth of Koestler entrants having served 10 years or more of their current sentence compared to the Arts cohort (4 percent) and Non-arts cohort (5 percent) for the same duration of sentence served. See Table A6 in Appendix 1.
- **Pre-prison problems** - There is virtually no difference in the average number of problems reported between the three groups before their current sentence. Each cohort reported a mean of just over 3 problems per individual. See Table A7 in Appendix 1.
- **Arts involvement** - Both Koestler entrants (32 percent) and Arts participants (30 percent) were more likely to have worked previously in the arts than Non-arts respondents (4 percent)

As stated earlier in Section 3.3, understanding that there are differences between the three cohorts has enabled the research team to aim to control for these differences between the three cohorts. Also as indicated earlier, aside from being able to control for pre-prison differences in relation to the mean numbers of problems that the three cohorts had, it has not been possible to control for pre-prison differences in relation to the outcome measures, i.e. due to practical constraints it was not possible to obtain pre-prison baseline measures.

5.2 OUTCOMES

The outcomes analysis compared the outcomes as measured by the IOMI scales for wellbeing and related measures and the SIRI sub-scale for engaging in self-reflection for the three cohorts drawn from across the six sampled prisons. These were the:

- Koestler cohort – who entered the Koestler Awards scheme in 2017; with
- Arts cohort - Art participants who did not enter the Awards scheme in 2017²; with
- Non-arts participants

The analysis was undertaken in two ways.

Method 1: Comparing the simple mean outcome scores in the three groups for: each subscale on the IMOI scale (see 2.3 above); self-reported problems score; and self-reflection score. The results are detailed in columns 2-4 in Table 4.1

Method 2: Comparing the mean outcome scores in the three groups for each subscale on the IMOI scale, reported problems score and self-reflection score, after controlling for the variables mentioned above in a multiple linear regression model. These results are detailed in columns 5-7 in Table 5.1 below.

² It should be noted that approximately half of the Arts participants had entered the Awards scheme in years prior to 2017.

The rows denoted as '**contrast**' show the difference in scores between the Koestler cohort and Arts and Non-arts cohorts in relation to the measure indicated in the cell above in Column 1

Cells shaded in dark green show statistically significant positive differences between the Koestler cohort and other two cohorts. Cells shaded in light green show that there is a positive difference between the Koestler 2017 Awards cohort and the other two cohorts however the difference is not statistically significant.

The analysis based on the adjusted average (mean)³ scores showed that:

- Koestler 2017 Awards entrants report higher levels of self-reflection (3.889) than non-Koestler arts participants (3.582) and those who do not participate in the arts (3.546). This finding is statistically significant⁴.
- Koestler 2017 Awards entrants report higher levels of hope (4.040) than non-Koestler arts participants (3.657) which is statistically significant⁵.
- Koestler 2017 Awards entrants have higher levels of resilience (3.736) than non-Koestler arts participants (3.335) which is statistically significant⁶.
- Koestler 2017 Awards entrants have higher levels of wellbeing (3.875) than non-Koestler arts participants (3.535) which is statistically significant⁷.
- While Koestler 2017 Awards entrants report higher scores than non-arts participants in terms of hope, resilience and wellbeing, the differences are smaller than those between Koestler 2017 Awards participants and non-Koestler arts participants.

³ Where multiple linear regression has been applied controlling for age, prison, sentence type, whether worked in the arts prior to prison, whether first sentence, length of current sentence served

⁴ Where $p < 0.05$

⁵ Where $p < 0.05$

⁶ Where $p < 0.05$

⁷ Where $p < 0.05$

Table 5.1 Outcomes based on calculating simple and adjusted means

| <i>Column 1</i> | Method 1 – Means | | | Method 2 - Adjusted means+ | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| | <i>Koestler Column 2</i> | <i>Arts Column 3</i> | <i>Non-arts Column 4</i> | <i>Koestler Column 5</i> | <i>Arts Column 6</i> | <i>Non-arts Column 7</i> |
| Self-reflection | 3.944 | 3.565 | 3.513 | 3.889 | 3.582 | 3.546 |
| Contrast | | -.379*** | -.431*** | | -.308* | -.343* |
| Post-sentence problems # | 3.420 | 3.202 | 3.274 | 3.357 | 3.194 | 3.301 |
| Contrast | | -.218** | -.146 | | -.163* | -.056 |
| IOMI scale | | | | | | |
| 1.Agency | 3.938 | 3.703 | 3.750 | 3.953 | 3.735 | 3.935 |
| Contrast | | -.236* | -.188 | | -.217 | -.018 |
| 2.Hope | 3.964 | 3.636 | 3.600 | 4.040 | 3.657 | 3.744 |
| Contrast | | -.328* | -.364* | | -.383* | -.295 |
| 3.Impulsivity | 2.190 | 2.493 | 2.496 | 2.277 | 2.470 | 2.429 |
| Contrast | | .303* | .306 | | .194 | .152 |
| 4.Motivation | 4.185 | 4.164 | 4.069 | 4.133 | 4.134 | 4.106 |
| Contrast | | -.021 | -.116 | | .002 | -.027 |
| 5.Resilience | 3.600 | 3.317 | 3.400 | 3.736 | 3.335 | 3.482 |
| Contrast | | -.283* | -.200 | | -.400* | -.254 |
| 6.Trust | 4.018 | 3.853 | 3.947 | 3.912 | 3.818 | 3.976 |
| Contrast | | -.164 | -.071 | | -.094 | .064 |
| 7. Wellbeing | 3.867 | 3.517 | 3.569 | 3.875 | 3.535 | 3.705 |
| Contrast | | -.350** | -.298* | | -.340* | -.170 |

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001 The p values denote the level of statistical significance. The lower the p value the more statistically significant the result.

+ multiple linear regression controlling for age, prison, sentence type, whether worked in the arts prior to prison, whether first sentence, length of current sentence served

6. QUALITATIVE DATA FINDINGS

The qualitative data findings presented in this section complement the findings from the quantitative findings reported in the preceding section. They provide a more nuanced and rich qualitative account of the impact of the Awards scheme based on:

- The experience of respondents from the Koestler cohort who had previously completed the survey questionnaires and
- From the perspective of prison staff who were able to reflect on the effect of the Arts Awards on prisoners who had entered the Awards scheme either during, before and after 2017.

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In the first section here the disaggregated impact of the Arts Awards scheme itself are presented followed in the second section by the effects of the arts activities undertaken by prisoners in order in most cases to be able to enter the Awards scheme itself.

6.1 QUALITATIVE IMPACTS OF THE AWARDS SCHEME

The research aimed to identify significant impacts that were specific to entering the Koestler Awards scheme, as opposed to the benefits that accrued from involvement in arts activities more generally. From the perspective of interviewees it was not always possible to separate the two. However, it was suggested by one prisoner that the opportunity to undertake a self-directed piece of work, which Koestler offered, provided self-determination. He felt that developing their own creative pieces, rather than producing pieces directed by tutors as part of a course, allowed individuals to thrive.

The most important outcomes of entering the Awards for the majority of prisoners interviewed for the research were receiving feedback (from the judges or members of the public) and having their work featured in the national Koestler Arts exhibition at the Southbank Centre in London. Also, the receipt of any level of award was viewed positively. The receipt of cash prizes and higher level awards (silver or gold) were, not surprisingly, particularly highly valued.

On being asked what the impact of winning a higher level award, silver or gold, might be, one interviewee stated: *“It would give me forgiveness, I’ve worked on a piece, I’ve worked on myself”*. (Prisoner RT). This is a significant statement, suggesting the extent to which this specific recognition of the interviewee’s artwork had the potential for far-reaching effects on how that individual viewed himself in relation to the victim(s) of his crime, or to society more widely. The prospect of redemption through art may be a challenging concept for some but for this prisoner it was evidently present.

One of the prisoners who had sold a piece of art via the scheme was profoundly affected by this. He said:

“It seemed unreal to me, that someone would pay hard cash for something I had made, made me feel so different.” (CP)

Another interviewee was seemingly less deeply affected but nevertheless saw the sale as very positive:

“Selling a piece was a very nice outcome, had never expected that and I was chuffed. Gave me a boost and made me feel that it wasn’t a waste of time. Also good to know that Koestler actually does what is says it will do.” (PE)

The tangible confirmation that their creative output held value was expressed by a number of participants as somehow being linked to them being ‘good’ rather than wholly ‘bad’. For people convicted of very serious crimes this had the potential to work alongside therapeutic interventions and other rehabilitative activity to re-cast negative self-identities and offer the prospect of change.

One interviewee who had not sold a piece speculated on how he would feel if this happened, stating that he would like someone to buy a piece of his art as it would make him proud. He also said he *“would like to think it went to a good home”* (GB). This seemed to be indicative of him feeling his art was of value and to have it purchased by someone ‘good’ could confirm on some level his own ‘goodness’.

One interviewee explained the impact of being told that one of his submissions had been selected for the national exhibition:

“When I was told that my work had been chosen – it was one of 180 from over 7.000 in total – well, that was just something else. And I got tickets for my family to attend, made me feel so proud.” (Prisoner, VS).

The value of the exhibition was noted as also having a positive impact on wider perceptions about prisoners:

“It can change people’s perception of what goes on in prisons. We’re not like just all sat in our cells playing Playstation.” (Prisoner RG)

Others shared similar views, suggesting that countering society’s generally negative perceptions of prisoners was a very important function of the Awards scheme and that the exhibition was a particularly powerful mechanism for achieving this.

Honest feedback was the most frequently cited positive outcome from the scheme. In one prison, there was a wall-mounted display of the hand-written post-cards which people visiting the exhibition had used to express their views about the works on display. This was highly regarded by prisoners, some of whom, were keen to show the researcher a specific piece of feedback their own work had generated. Comments were valued and the fact that people had taken the time to offer feedback was appreciated:

“It is nice to think that someone has taken the time to look at what you’ve done, and then they’ve even been willing to write down their opinion” (DW)

For most of the people we spoke to, feedback from judges was highly valued. This was largely because they were viewed as *“professionals from the Art world”* (MM) and were seen to be

assessing the entries purely on artistic merit. To achieve a silver or gold award was regarded as a significant accolade and an expression of true worth.

The impact of receiving feedback was important to all but for some views about this were nuanced. Some interviewees were very clear that they were doing 'art for art's sake' and had no expectations of having their artworks admired or publicly recognised in any way. They had often been encouraged to enter the Awards scheme by tutors within the prison education department and although the results of this could be welcome the awards outcomes were not necessarily a key motivator.

"I was doing the painting anyway, not really for the awards, but in the end, cos of the teacher, I submitted about five pieces. As far as the competition goes, I got a Highly Commended and a Bronze, which was nice but it depends who is judging, art is subjective isn't it?" (PE)

This same interviewee, who had no prior experience of creative art, had started art classes in one prison and then progressed to completing a GCSE, becoming the art class technician and beginning the AS level art course. His aim was to continue to complete the A level but he was transferred and that option was not available at the receiving prison.

Staff felt that part of the value of entering the Awards scheme was that it gave people who may have lacked goals something to aim for. They felt that even the most basic outcome, receiving a certificate, could be enormously valuable to people who may never have received a certificate for anything in their lives. They provided numerous examples of students who had not previously felt they could achieve anything but experiencing transformation as a result of engaging successfully in creative activity and producing art that was tangibly recognised as being of value.

A few of the prisoners stated that one of the positive aspects of the Awards scheme was that it raised money for victims of crime (a proportion of the money from the sale of art work went to the Victim Support charity). This had the potential to make interviewees feel better about themselves. This particular redemptive impact was something that the interviewees returned to frequently and was evidently a highly valued aspect of participation in the Awards.

In the interviews, the issue of *not* gaining recognition or being aware of any outcome arising from submitting entries to the Koestler Awards scheme was explored. Most prisoners who were interviewed could only speculate on this as they had positive experiences of receiving feedback or other outcomes following their participation. They suggested that receiving recognition was important and that the absence of any response to their entries could have a negative impact.

One prisoner said that he had entered pieces whilst at one prison but following transfer had not heard anything since. He said he was disappointed not to have received any feedback or even an acknowledgement. He has since entered a piece at his current prison and has received an acknowledgement for this. He said he felt 'boosted' by that.

Another prisoner described what had happened to him following submission of entries. He stated that he had submitted several pieces whilst at one prison but did not hear about any outcomes. Many months later he noticed funds in his account that were puzzling to him as he had no idea where the money had come from. He said that a family member had made enquiries on his behalf and it transpired that the payment into his account arose from the sale of one of his Koestler pieces.

He subsequently discovered that he had also achieved two bronze awards. But he had never received his certificates and would like them to be sent on. He had made a request for this and was awaiting a response. He was also awaiting the outcome of his most recent submission. Whilst the individual was extremely happy that his artwork had been recognised so significantly, he was, understandably, disappointed that he had not been informed about this outcome. This led to some ambivalence in his feelings about the Awards scheme, although, he viewed the lack of response as being the responsibility of the prison system rather than Koestler Arts.

In the above two instances it should be noted that there can be challenges for prisons ensuring information and documentation is forwarded when prisoners move prison.

Given the importance attached to feedback and hearing about outcomes expressed by the interviewees, it clearly undermines the positive impact of the Awards when outcomes were not communicated in a timely fashion to entrants, or as reported in one case, not communicated at all.

7. CONCLUSION

This report has aimed to present the key findings from the evaluation to answer the key research question:

“Do people who engage with the Koestler Awards Scheme have improved behaviour compared to prisoners not engaging in the Arts?”

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The answers to this question are as follows.

The quantitative findings from the survey completed by prisoners from six sampled prisons showed that compared to prisoners involved in arts activities but who did not enter the Awards in 2017 and prisoners not involved in the arts, the Koestler Awards entrants in 2017 demonstrated statistically higher average levels of: self-reflection; hope; resilience; and wellbeing⁸. These findings were adjusted through multiple linear regression to control for differences in: age, prison, sentence type, whether worked in the arts prior to prison, whether first sentence, and length of current sentence served.

However, it should be noted that while the most robust methodology was deployed based on budget and resources, these findings need to be understood in the context of the limitations of the methodology. These included: a relatively small survey sample; and that it was not possible to compare these outcomes with any pre-prison baseline data for the survey respondents.

The qualitative findings based on interviews with the Koestler Award Scheme entrants and prison staff in three of the sampled prisons supported the quantitative findings. Thematic analysis confirmed that scheme entrants reported that the Awards scheme had provided opportunities for:

- self-determination – through undertaking self-directed work for the Awards scheme – in preference to tutor directed work;
- redemption and pride in receiving recognition for their artwork;
- re-casting negative self-identities and offering individuals the prospect of change; and
- motivation – a goal to aim for – where previously they may have lacked motivation

These findings also need to be considered within the limitations of the methodology, i.e. that the prisoner interviewees may not have been representative of all Koestler Awards scheme entrants, however, the views of the prisoners were confirmed by prison staff from the same institutions which lends support to these findings.

⁸ Where $p < 0.05$

8. APPENDIX

Table A1: Sample by respondent type – Koestler entrant 2017, non-Koestler Arts participant, non-Arts

| | Targeted survey | |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------|
| | N= | % |
| Koestler 2017 | 74 | 21.4 |
| Arts Participant | 146 | 42.3 |
| No arts | 111 | 32.2 |
| Koestler not 2017 | 11 | 3.2 |
| | | |
| Missing | 3 | 0.9 |
| | | |
| Total | 345 | 100.0 |

Table A2 Survey respondents by prison

| | N= | % |
|-----------|-----|-------|
| Bure | 46 | 13.3 |
| Dovegate | 46 | 13.3 |
| Oakwood | 76 | 22.0 |
| Parc | 91 | 26.4 |
| Usk | 34 | 9.9 |
| Wakefield | 46 | 13.3 |
| | | |
| Missing | 6 | 1.7 |
| | | |
| Total | 345 | 100.0 |

Table A3: Target sample by prison and group

| | Koestler | Arts | Non-Arts | Missing | All |
|----------------|---------------------------|------|----------|---------|------|
| | <i>Column percentages</i> | | | | |
| Bure | 10.8 | 18.5 | 8.1 | 14.3 | 13.3 |
| Dovegate | 5.4 | 16.4 | 15.3 | 7.1 | 13.3 |
| Oakwood | 20.3 | 21.2 | 27.0 | 0.0 | 22.0 |
| Parc | 21.6 | 26.7 | 23.4 | 71.4 | 26.4 |
| Usk | 12.2 | 6.2 | 13.5 | 7.0 | 9.9 |
| Wakefield | 28.4 | 8.2 | 11.7 | 0.0 | 13.3 |
| Missing prison | 1.3 | 2.7 | 1.0 | 0.0 | 1.7 |
| N= | 74 | 146 | 111 | 14 | 345 |

Table A4: Target sample by age and cohort

| | Koestler | Arts | No Arts | Missing | All |
|------------|---------------------------|------|---------|---------|------|
| | <i>Column percentages</i> | | | | |
| Under 30 | 14.9 | 20.6 | 20.7 | 14.3 | 19.1 |
| 30-39 | 18.9 | 24.7 | 18.0 | 28.6 | 21.5 |
| 40-49 | 9.5 | 17.1 | 25.2 | 28.6 | 18.6 |
| 50-59 | 20.3 | 16.4 | 12.6 | 0.0 | 15.4 |
| 60-69 | 24.32 | 9.6 | 3.6 | 7.1 | 10.7 |
| 70 or over | 9.5 | 5.5 | 4.5 | 0.0 | 5.8 |
| Missing | 2.7 | 6.2 | 15.3 | 21.4 | 9.0 |
| N= | 74 | 146 | 111 | 14 | 345 |

Table A5: Target sample by type of sentence and group

| | Koestler | Arts | No Arts | Missing | All |
|---|---------------------------|------|---------|---------|------|
| | <i>Column percentages</i> | | | | |
| On remand | 0.0 | 1.4 | 0.0 | 7.1 | 1.0 |
| Fixed term 4 years or less | 13.5 | 28.1 | 31.5 | 28.6 | 26.1 |
| Fixed term of more than 4 years | 50.0 | 48.6 | 40.5 | 28.6 | 45.5 |
| Life with mandatory sentence of less than 10 years | 4.1 | 3.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.3 |
| Life with mandatory sentence of more than 10 years | 20.3 | 4.5 | 8.1 | 14.3 | 9.6 |
| IPP | 5.4 | 6.2 | 5.4 | 0.0 | 5.5 |
| Missing | 6.7 | 7.5 | 14.4 | 21.4 | 10.1 |
| N= | 74 | 146 | 111 | 14 | 345 |

Table A6: Target sample by length of current sentence served and group

| | Koestler | Arts | No Arts | Missing | All |
|--|---------------------------|------|---------|---------|------|
| | <i>Column percentages</i> | | | | |
| Current length of sentence served | | | | | |
| Less than 1 year | 0.0 | 36.3 | 27.9 | 35.7 | 25.8 |
| 1-2 years | 10.8 | 11.0 | 17.1 | 7.1 | 12.8 |
| 2-4 years | 37.8 | 24.0 | 20.7 | 28.6 | 26.1 |
| 4-7 years | 18.9 | 14.4 | 9.9 | 0.0 | 13.3 |
| 7-10 years | 6.8 | 4.8 | 2.7 | 0.0 | 4.4 |
| More than 10 years | 20.3 | 4.1 | 4.5 | 7.1 | 7.8 |
| Missing | 5.4 | 5.5 | 17.1 | 21.4 | 9.9 |
| N= | 74 | 146 | 111 | 14 | 345 |

Table A7: Target sample by average score on pre-sentence problems by group – mean scores with 95 per cent confidence interval

| | Koestler | Arts | No Arts |
|--|-----------------|-------------|----------------|
| Average scores on pre-sentence problems | | | |
| Means | 3.28 | 3.24 | 3.25 |
| <i>95 per cent confidence interval</i> | | | |
| Upper limit | 3.45 | 3.36 | 3.40 |
| Lower limit | 3.11 | 3.16 | 3.10 |
| | | | |