Radio Festival Discussions

In order to launch the LLARC, we ran discussions as part of the Radio Festival. The following quotes are partial transcripts from the discussion groups, as well as from the plenary. We decided to only partially transcribe this discussion in order to protect the identity of the participants.

In Group 1 the discussion started by thinking about why a network is needed.

"That's part of why I think we need a network. Because things do go wrong in life and we might say, I can't sustain this. What do I do next. Having a network enables you to look at contingency planning as well. Help and support. […]" (Person 1)

In terms of issues of digital participation Person 2 highlights the necessity for the Radio Network to operate in digital as well as physical spaces in order to be inclusive of everyone with and without digital skills.

"I'm excited about the online, but we also have to respect our members [who are older people and might not use the internet]" (Person 2)

Person 3 agrees and specifies that the Radio Network should equally attract fm as well as online radio stations. S/he also emphasises that a bigger mission of the Radio Network needs to be to challenge ageist assumptions.

"In terms of the network, it's about the network attracting both if you like ofcom regulated stations, but also attracting web-based. So therefore, one shouldn't exclude the other. It's an open network. And it needs to include older adults, but also those who produce programmes. What is the vision and the purpose of the network? For me it's about trying to change the existing narrative about how people think about growing older" (Person 3)

Person 3: "When I talk about democratising older people's voices it already challenges existing stereotypes. And I think one of the most effective ways of doing that is older people themselves actually changing the narrative. And that can be done in all sorts of ways. By talking about more positive attitudes. But for me the network is about how do we encourage older adults who never would have thought of this as a potential area of interest or engagement to become engaged"
Person 4: "Because you've never thought of this"
Person 3: "no I haven't. So how do we encourage older people to become as volunteers.

Person 3 also points out that one of the main attractions to be a part of the Radio Network lies in learning and developing new skills.

Person 3: "There are skill sets that you can develop that are very enjoyable."
Person 1: "Absolutely"
Person 3: "Not just being in a studio, but being able to talk, being able to actually express what interests you."

Person 1: *"I think what's really important in what you said is, whether we agree with it or not, is that the policy is that you are older if you're 50+ so actually I think part of the challenge is not focusing on retired people. They have time they have capacity and I completely understand that. But we need people to be aware and discuss and accept and I mean our communities are falling apart […] So what we want is to try and find a way of expressing and cohesion that isn't proving of being divisive."*

Person 3: *"I think Radio is a way of enabling those discussions. People like us. Just chatting. […] Make the Radio experience for older adults exciting and new. And draw on people's experiences. […] So one of the fundamental purposes of the Network is to get older people in front and behind the mic, as volunteers."*

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Challenges:

Person 4: *"So what is stopping this [the goals of the Radio Network of engaging older adults] right now?"*
Person 3: *"Because first of all in terms of Ofcom, you've got a level of regulation. In terms of the digital approach, what's impressive, it makes it totally accessible if you can access broadband. And I do think the studio experience for many people is quite exciting and we mustn't lose that. It's just about democratising voices."*

One challenge discussed by Person 1 was the need to promote Community Radio for people who might not already listen to it and that in addition to providing content, another mission for the Radio Network is to build an audience. S/he talks about the experience as a radio listener:

Person 1: *"But with Community Radio you hear the passion in their voice. That's the difference. And a lot of people don't want to be filmed, but they don't mind their voices being heard. What I'm learning here today is that it doesn't take much at all [to produce community radio] and I'm so excited. There are communities that have got things to say. I'm beginning to realise that I've been engrained in the world of the BBC. Because it's so powerful and it's everywhere. They've got their channels and their frequencies. And they came first. But this is exciting that [community radio] is there."*

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Group 2

On the importance of funding of a Network and therefore resulting necessity to set up a governance and administrative scheme for the Network.

Person 5: *"But in the end, you need some money. […] I only know how to get money as an academic. But certainly because of the kind of work you're doing it makes sense to work with people outside the university. So they might have access to other sources of funding. This funding can help administer a network…"*
Person 6: *"The other possibility would quite simply be to get a volunteer. Because in an older people's Radio Network there will be lots of people who know how to do it. And that wouldn't cost any expenses. Maybe a little bit of equipment."*

Intergenerational Cohesion / run by older people:

Person 6 *"If we have an older people's network it should be run by older people themselves"*

Person 7: *"I think it's because we feel that we can express these issues better. Because we have actually experienced them as older people. I think that's why we're much more comfortable as a team. We've gone through all these experiences and when we have guests come in, we do our own research on the*

guest that we're interviewing. There is a lot more understanding between us. Because we are all older people."

Person 8: *"It's a radical form of broadcasting that challenges stereotypes and narratives on ageing."*

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Specific technology considerations Group 3

Person 9: *"… Lack of understanding how you control what you do with facebook. Because I joined it too, because I thought it would be helpful with the work I was doing with the voluntary sector I was involved in. But my first communication was with a young lady from Poland who wanted to be my friend. […] If there was a way in which I could be more confident in the safety aspects of using it."*

Person 10: *"A group would be helpful with that, because it would just be a group of people. It wouldn't be everyone on facebook. Only people assigned for that group."*

Person 11: *"You would still have to have a profile though. But maybe [radio station] could have a profile that you all have access too. So you can all use it but it's not one particular person. Maybe. Could be an option. Then it's joined responsibility, but it's not your face on it."*

Person 11: *"Sharing content on mixcloud or google drive. If you've got an amazing interview, you might want this to go as far as possible."*

Person 9: *"We upload our content to YouTube. That's our main output in terms of bringing the programme. Mainly the chats, we don't put the music on."*

Person 11: *"The only thing I think about trello. I've tried to use it years ago and it didn't work. We are just trying to introduce it to a small part of our team. But unless everybody is using it and is on it all the time, it's not really useful. So I think for a big network it might not be as useful if you're not checking it. So it's not like a facebook group."*

Person 11: *"Maybe we need to work out what we want to talk about and what we want to do. Because I think content sharing definitely makes sense. Because we would love to share content. Across the Network."*

Person 9 *"How many of these things can you take up. And some things just get lost. I know I'm using that one and I hope we get better at it, but I've never heard of some of these other ones. But that doesn't mean we shouldn't use it. It can get a bit overwhelming."* (talking about the tech suggestions)

Person 12 *"Because Computers can take over your life."*