



22 likes

hayleyduffyfitness I have had the pleasure of collaborating with the fantastic Manbassador project over the last year in aid of male mental health in Leeds. Sadly, the project has officially

LEEDS  
ARTS RESEARCH  
CENTRE

KEF

LIZZIE COOMBES

MANBASSADORS POEM

PORTRAITS

# KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE FRAMEWORK DATA COLLECTION

February 2023

The University's Research & Enterprise Service has requested information on knowledge exchange and engagement with the public and communities. Please complete the form below and return it to Professor Simon Morris ([S.DC.Morris@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:S.DC.Morris@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)) and Dr Tina Conkar ([t.conkar@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:t.conkar@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)) by **21 February 2023**.

Many thanks for your support with information gathering for this submission.

<b>Name:</b>	Lizzie Coombes
<b>Job Title:</b>	Senior Lecturer (0.6)
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<b>School:</b>	Leeds School of Arts

Please use the template below to detail information on all projects you have undertaken since 1 January 2019 that involved public and community engagement. Please use one form per project.

<b>Project Title:</b>	Manbassadors Poem Portraits
<b>Project Date(s):</b>	
<b>URL Link to Project:</b>	<a href="https://space2.org.uk/manbassadors-2/">https://space2.org.uk/manbassadors-2/</a> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/ManbassadorProject/">https://www.facebook.com/ManbassadorProject/</a> <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CdsweANK_9v/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CdsweANK_9v/</a>
<b>Brief Description of Project</b> (250-1000 words max.) In the field below please give a brief outline of the project and what it entailed.	
<p>In March and April 2021, artist/photographer Lizzie Coombes and writer Peter Spafford completed a set of 'Poem Portraits' for the Manbassadors project. The ground-breaking Leeds project, Manbassadors, reaches out to isolated people to support their mental health with a simple intervention of bite-size support on a local level. It wanted to celebrate two years of success with a Poem Portrait Exhibition led by Space2 on lampposts across Harehills in East Leeds. Six Manbassadors took part in a Street Art project and are local business owners trained to identify signs of isolation and potential self-harm or suicide in their customers and who can provide information and signpost to support from a range of organisations.</p>	

Exhibition locations.

D-News, 448 Harehills Lane, Harehills, LS9 6HJ.

East Leeds Health Centre, 78A Osmondthorpe Lane, Osmondthorpe, LS9 9BL.

The Gym Leeds, York Road, Leeds, LS9 9AH.

Imaan Pharmacy Harehills, 262-266 Harehills Lane, Harehills, LS9 7BD.

Ollies Fisheries, 8 Easy Road, Leeds, LS9 0AZ.

W2 Barbershop, 131 Easterly Road, Leeds, LS8 2TP.

<p><b>Organisations Engaged with:</b> Please list the names of any organisations engaged with, such as Schools or Community Groups.</p>	<p>The Orion Consortium of Feel Good Factor, Space2 and Zest started the Manbassador Project in East Leeds with funding from the Male Suicide Prevention Fund.</p>	<p><b>Total participants:</b> Please give an approximate figure for the number of people who engaged with your project.</p>	<p>Six portraits were taken but numerous people saw the work on the lampposts.</p>
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<p><b>Knowledge Exchange Outcomes:</b> If relevant, in brief, please describe any knowledge exchange outcomes such as new approaches to working with a community.</p>	<p>Active dialogue between the photographer, writer, the subject and the viewer is at the heart of the practice, with focus placed on a public community-based exhibition. Exhibiting work on the lampposts outside the Manbassadors shops kept the work public yet local to the project. It also provided an opportunity to highlight and celebrate those individuals.</p>
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**Quotes**  
In the field below please include any relevant quotes that you would like to share which evidence the knowledge exchange and engagement your project received.

'I love the openness and honesty within each of these poems, all so ably and creatively assisted by writer Peter Spafford & photographer Lizzie Coombes'  
[https://www.instagram.com/manbassador\\_project/?fbclid=IwAR3vrqwf2\\_IUHfa2Sazp5etyqNEwzTKmAfLwfJvsMJm8TaOAYXfBC8hHiVM](https://www.instagram.com/manbassador_project/?fbclid=IwAR3vrqwf2_IUHfa2Sazp5etyqNEwzTKmAfLwfJvsMJm8TaOAYXfBC8hHiVM)

Peter Spafford said: "I've never had poems on lampposts before – that's new for me. Sometimes in the past, we've [Lizzie and I] worked in a community centre and put all the portraits hanging on a washing line. People recognise others in their community and learn something about them that they didn't know before.

“The fact they’re in public view is a way for people to realise that’s not just somebody who’s a face, they have a life and strong feelings about things, a conviction about the way they work. It’s a way for people to connect. It’s very rare that you see a poem so big on a building or a lamppost. It’s something to stop people in their tracks and maybe bring a bit of light relief, a bit of a spring in their step.”

<https://www.yorkshireeveningpost.co.uk/news/people/harehills-lamppost-poems-celebrate-manbassadors-mental-health-volunteers-3190078>

### Images

In the field below please include any relevant images you would like to share.




MANBASSADOR  
**RICHARD**  
Local Barber

**Never mind the ebbs and flows of fashion.  
I see lives change.**

**Boy in the chair, now he's a teenager,  
then you're at his wedding.  
Holy crap, he's a dad, small boy sitting there.  
Happens so fast, like high speed dubbing  
on a 90's ghetto blaster.**

**The quiet conversation that happens in the chair;  
you can talk a guy through his divorce  
and never know his name.**

**Guys are brutal. No whingeing!  
Pain? Run it under the cold tap, don't ask for help.  
But it takes its toll; go home, have a drink.  
Lockdown's been hard. Maybe I'm just as  
dependent on my customers as they are on me.**

**Suffer in silence? Sign me up, coach,  
for openness and honesty.**

Poem by Peter Spafford / Photo by Lizzie Coombes



**LOCAL BUSINESSES  
LOOKING OUT FOR LOCAL MEN**



