Food Junctions Evaluation Report

Report prepared for UCL Public Engagement Unit

by Francine Solley
(f.solley@ucl.ac.uk)

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Executive Summary

REVEAL was a ten day festival taking place in Kings Cross, London, from 22nd April to 2nd May 2010. Organised by Create KX, a creative and cultural development agency, REVEAL was a programme of cultural events and activities. The festival aimed to bring together a range of groups and organisations to celebrate the areas' unique cultural identity and reveal its rich creative history.

The UCL Public Engagement Unit (PEU) collaborated with Create KX to organise a 'REVEAL competition', providing up to £20,000 to deliver a project during the festival. During January 2010, the PEU funded a consortium of UCL staff and students to provide UCL's contribution to REVEAL – Food Junctions. Food Junctions was a series of events and activities (including art workshops, discussions, wine tasting, films, tours, readings, performances, art installations) targeting a range of audiences (e.g. local residents, community groups, festival attendees, local organisations).

One hundred and fifty UCL students and staff at all academic levels were involved in delivering Food Junctions, alongside a further 100 contributors from outside UCL. Over 1500 members of the public attended Food Junctions over the two week programme and the events were all well received with on average 26 people attending each activity.

As this is the first time a UCL public engagement programme has been co-ordinated within a large festival environment, this evaluation hopes to identify key findings from the activities and make recommendations for future events.

From the primary research collected before, during and after the Food Junctions programme, a number of emerging themes were identified. In terms of one of the project's objectives to 'exchange information and share learning between UCL departments' Food Junctions was highly successful, transforming from 16 events planned in the original project proposal to a staggering 60 events across 27 academic departments. The mushroom effect of this activity meant that Food Junctions was redefined as 'a festival within a festival'. A fundamental strength of Food Junctions lies in the diversity spanning across the project team; in terms of discipline, career level, skills and experience. The resulting project became less an academic intervention and more a series of creative conversations, seeking greater learning opportunities, application and understanding of their disciplines.

From the monitoring data collected, the demographics of the festival audience were mostly young white British, with a balanced gender split. However there were a high number of people who had not heard of UCL before, or knew about its public engagement programmes which shows opportunities for reaching new audiences.

The legacy of Food Junctions that is already evident indicates that the project team met the initial objectives they set out to achieve. Learning took place both within and outside of UCL, and networks and partnerships are emerging , with individuals and groups who are keen to initiate further projects related to food.

For the Food Junctions team it is now about what they do, not only to continue their own knowledge exchange and personal development but also to build on the next step for public audiences to continue their learning.

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1 Introduction

Food Junctions: where 'nature meets culture'

With a mission to 'empower participants to become living artists through tailor-made events that help us understand, reflect and take action to reshape our relationship with food', the Food Junctions project was an ambitious undertaking created by a multi-disciplinary team of students at all levels of university life. A true reflection of UCL and its networks captured in one programme, this report seeks to not only identify how far the project objectives set by the Food Junctions team were achieved; but to also try to understand the process and perspectives of different partners involved. Through an evaluation of the individual events and activities that took place as well as visitor impressions through feedback and questionnaires and interviews with key stakeholders this report seeks to explore how far Food Junctions stimulated interest and engagement among its local audiences.

The aims and objectives of the Food Junctions project, as laid out in their bid for funding, were to:

- Raise awareness of the significance of food and empowering people to take actions
- Reinforce artistic practice as a public forum
- Develop researchers' skills, enhance knowledge and increase understanding of public engagement
- Exchange information and share learning between UCL departments
- Develop recommendations for the policy agenda and implementation towards sustainable food practice

1.1 Project Summary

- £18,164 awarded by the UCL Public Engagement Unit to support UCL's contribution to REVEAL

- 16 events planned in the original project proposal, which transformed into 60 events. These were organised within the Camley Street Natural Park, the Calthorpe Project and surrounding areas in Kings Cross over 5 days across the two weeks of the REVEAL Festival from Saturday 24th April – Sunday 2nd May 2010

- Over 20 stakeholder partners were involved, including:

  Create KX
  Camley Street Natural Park
  Calthorpe Project
  Alara Wholefoods
  Global Generation
  City Leaf
  Brockwell Bake
  Urban Bees
  Camden Council
  Choc Star
  Letchworth Garden City

Bompas and Parr
Food Cycle
Urban Wines
Poet in the City
You and I Skills
Hare Krishna
Organic Lea
Art and Architecture
Beeja (Dance)

- 150 UCL students and staff at all academic levels were involved plus a further 100 contributors from outside UCL

- 27 UCL departments participated

- Over 1500 people attended Food Junctions events over the course of the two week period programme (statistics received from Camley Street Natural Park)

- Food Junctions was promoted mostly through relationships with community groups like the Calthorpe Project. Also leaflets and programmes were distributed throughout the local area. A Food Junctions website and Facebook page was created which gained 151 fans, and Food Junctions also received press coverage including a small feature in the London Evening Standard. Food Junctions was also promoted on the UCL website and through UCL contacts and networks. The project was also signposted via the REVEAL festival promotion, which included leaflets, posters and media coverage.

2 Evaluation Methodology

As many events were attended as possible, by the author, and evaluated using a sensory observation form, which sought to capture the essence of each overall experience by looking at what was happening in terms of all five senses. This was felt to be particularly important and also reflective of the key subject area of Food. A visitor questionnaire was handed out during the festival, and information gathered through informal, semi-structured discussions with participants. A copy of the interview schedule, participant questionnaire is given in the Appendix together with the Sensory Observation form.

In order to try to understand the perspectives of the key stakeholders involved in this project, interviews were conducted with Marina Chang the Food Junctions Project Coordinator, a member of Create KX (the organisers of the REVEAL Festival), and a member of UCL's Public Engagement Unit. Feedback was also received from a sample of festival participants.

The approach to evaluation in summarised below, this mixed methodology was agreed with UCL's Public Engagement Unit and the Project Coordinator of Food Junctions:

- 21 sensory observations completed;
- 3 semi-structured interviews undertaken with the project team;
- Written feedback from festival participants;
- 27 questionnaires completed with audience members.

As this is the first time a UCL public engagement project has been co-ordinated within a large festival environment, this evaluation hopes to identify key findings from the activities and make recommendations for future events.

This evaluation forms part of a wider study as part of a Masters in Cultural Policy at City University, and has been undertaken working alongside the Public Engagement Unit, with guidance and support from UCL's Evaluation Officer (Public Engagement).

2.1 Evaluation limitations and constraints

Despite our initial intentions, it was not possible to utilise the team of Food Junctions volunteers to complete the sensory observation forms for each of the planned activities that they were invigilating. This meant that under half of the activities could be observed.

Due to adverse weather conditions on Sunday 2nd May, there was a poorer turn out for the activities and it was difficult to approach people to complete questionnaires.

Limitations also arose when attempting to collect feedback from participants particularly in response to the project team's food comments and recipe sheets. Linking to the notion that knowledge transfer and engagement exists at the participatory moment, few people were subsequently willing to sit down and translate their experiences into words and these were better captured through film and photography.

If there had been more time, further interviews post-festival would have been conducted with local community groups and also a focus group with participating lecturers. A larger sample of questionnaires from festival attendees would have also been desirable.

3 From conception to fruition: Food Junctions from the beginning

UCL's Public Engagement Unit collaborated with Create KX to organise a 'REVEAL competition', providing up to £20,000 to UCL students and/or staff to deliver a project during the REVEAL festival. 16 applications were received from across the university; these were reviewed by a panel, including UCL staff and a representative from Create KX. The project awarded was Food Junctions.

A fundamental strength of Food Junctions lies in the diversity spanning across the project team. Coming from a variety of different academic disciplines in UCL and also at different stages of their academic career, these factors enabled learning to begin to be shared at the moment the group was formed. Project leader, Marina Chang comments that '*one of the ideas was to cross borders, to try to include as diverse a community as possible from undergraduates, postgraduates and PhD students. We also wanted to cover different disciplines because we think the university plays a critical role in bringing people together in terms of public engagement'* (Marina Chang 2010).

The group was formed through personal networks and conversations within UCL and these networks were further extended using the universal theme of food to connect with areas of interest in other academic departments:

'*At the very beginning, I talked to people who I already knew – so geography, anthropology, Bartlett architecture, planning. This is at the planning stage so after we got the funding we thought it nice to have a core team. The university is so big and diverse we thought to outreach. Then we tried to find out two or three different departments and different aspects. In my role as a co-ordinator we try to balance different aspects of food because food is so accessible and has a big role to engage the people in the community. That is the commonality, so for healthy diet, healthy eating that is public health. Cultural aspects that value identity and also how you relate to food and taboo that is also performative art. We tried to think systematically to plot out the framework in order to miss as little as possible'* (Marina Chang 2010).

During the planning of the festival, in January 2010, an email was sent out to all staff and students within UCL to raise awareness of and seek contributors in the project. This generated institutional interest in the project. Institutional interest was also generated through contacts and networks established by members of Food Junctions team members.

It was felt, by the project coordinator Marina Chang, that the structure provided by the festival programme helped to attract contributions from UCL staff and students, as they could be involved in the project as much or a little as they liked.

Volunteers from other schools with UCL also chose to connect with this project by offering their skills and time in other creative ways that were apart from their academic studies such as a photographer who is a Pharmacologist and an Economics student who is a keen web-designer.

The original project proposal '*came out of a frustration that we as students often feel our studies do not directly impact upon society and of our yearning for actually doing something to transform this reality'* (Marina Chang 2009). The resulting project became less an academic intervention and more a series of creative conversations, seeking greater learning opportunities, application and understanding of their disciplines.

Primary reasons given for being involved were the strength of the relationships with other members of the team together with the collective enthusiasm and creativity of the group. Overall, 27 UCL departments contributed to this project at all academic levels with a total of 150 student and staff members involved as well as 100 further volunteers from outside UCL in partner organisations. The value of networks across UCL and beyond is clearly a key factor towards enabling the scope and imagination of Food Junctions.

A launch party was held at UCL for Food Junctions on 22nd March 2010, to bring together the organising team and potential contributors. This was attended by approximately 50 people, all of which were planning to participate in the festival.

The notion of UCL as a place for experiments and where risks can be taken was a common theme and something that excited and engaged the project's participants. This is also a positive reflection on the core philosophy of UCL's Beacons of Public

Engagement programme. '*I think the beauty of university is that they allow you to make mistakes, allow you to do some experiments Food Junctions is driven by curiosity and by experiments. It's great because within UCL we have the space that can balance different aspects'* (Marina Chang 2010)

Building and developing relationships both internally and externally was a key element to the success of this project and enduring connections will undoubtedly remain a constant theme. '*What is fascinating is the networks that have been established, and the sharing through the project, and that's really hard to capture, yet ultimately has more of an impact on the things that are actually achieved'* (Gemma Moore 2010)

Participant lecturers were enthusiastic about being involved and considered it '*part of my job to discuss ideas. Also, (I got involved) because it looked interesting for me to do, as well as great in terms of internal and external advocacy'* (UCL Lecturer).

'*I got involved because I thought it would be a good opportunity to present aspects of my work to a wider audience and I'm keen to interact with the public'* (UCL Lecturer)

Responses to the presentations from local audiences were considered well received although the audience for a festival was initially seen as being rather an unknown entity. Therefore the challenge was to provide sufficient information so that those audiences who might have no prior knowledge of the subject could grasp the context of the subject:

'*For Food Junctions, it was difficult to profile the typical audience member who would have chosen to go to the event and difficult to judge the correct level for communication. As it happened, the audience was very open to discussing ideas'* (UCL Lecturer).

However, mechanisms were built into project planning phases to assist with communicating and presenting to a new audience. All contributors were invited to a training session on 'speaking to a non specialist audience', run by the Public Engagement Unit. Seven speakers attended this training, held in April 2010. Notes from the session, including key guidelines to speaking to a public audience, were circulated to all contributors following the training. This included tips on: timing, signposting, structure and stimulating discussion.

Organisers of REVEAL Festival, Create KX, were also excited about working with UCL and starting conversations with a view to developing networks and new paths into learning. However the challenges faced by a smaller organisation in making those connections with a larger institution such as UCL were also identified:

'*We have wanted to work more closely with higher education for some time. We've had links into UCL but they are such massive bodies it's quite difficult to navigate from outside your own direct relationship. Getting into other departments can be quite tricky. It would be great to be able to work on routes into vocation for local people and how they might be able to access not necessarily full time long term courses but short term vocational courses'* (Sian James, Create KX, REVEAL Festival 2010).

4 Results

4.1 Event Observations

21 out of 60 events were observed and evaluated using the sensory observation forms, which were used as a framework to capture the experience and nature of each event.

Food Junctions was a series of events and activities, but was no ordinary festival: events included hands-on gardening and cooking sessions, debates and film screenings. Activities ranged from skip gardening to discussing urban sustainability and the consumption of pets.

The events were all well received and well attended as people stayed throughout the day to attend different talks and participate in the activities located around the park. An average of 26 people attended each event. Some participants expressed difficulty in locating a number of events because they were not well sign-posted within the park. Access problems in getting to the big top tent for older audience members and in entering the tee-pee for disabled people were also raised.

Particularly over the last weekend which had a lot of events occurring, many activities and lectures were time-tabled at the same times so there were clashes and people had to choose what to see rather than have the opportunity to be able to go to several things. Some of the events over-ran too, which meant people arriving late to their next lecture. Events that took place over the lunchtime period (such as the Love Food, Hate Waste workshop on Saturday) were also considerably less well attended as people flocked to the pizza making area so perhaps this needs to be considered for future events to allow a gap in the programme.

Participatory activities such as the Bread and Pizza Making, Bee workshop with honeycombs and Kitchen studio were very popular with families and young children. Adults mostly attended the lectures and presentations. The free breakfast samples provided by Alara and the different foods served at Final Harvest Celebration were popular with everyone!

The lectures and presentations were well attended and it was noted how respectful and interested the audiences were, with people being silent during the course of the lectures and some even making their own personal notes. Most people stayed the duration of the lecture, rather than coming and going. Audiences contributed freely to the talks at Q&A time, and particularly in the smaller events genuine and passionate debates took place over the subject topics.

It was interesting to note that despite the natural park environment and festival context, lectures were still set up in a formal classroom style which may or may not have always been appropriate. In the main cabin room, when lectures began both doors leading in and out of the room were closed discouraging new arrivals to enter freely (and people to leave) exactly as with a traditional lecture at university. However, some audiences requested that the doors leading into this room were closed. If you want to encourage people to participate and engage with new subjects, new approaches to engagement and learning must be explored such as with the Thrifty Gardening workshops where audiences gathered more casually on

benches. Not everyone is familiar with or feels confident interrupting a classic academic style environment.

4.1.1 Saturday 24th April

Build your Own Garden Box (at the Calthorpe Project)

With no sign posting for Food Junctions or the different activities available at the Calthorpe Project, this beautiful community garden was rather hidden away. Although the helpers at this activity were very informative about planting and how to look after the herbs that people could plant in their garden boxes, visitors did not know what to do or that they could get involved and then take their garden box away for free. Lots of people arrived but they were mostly regular visitors to the Calthorpe Project. There was a mixture of cultures and ages taking part, lots of mothers with their children and a large community of Latin American ladies.

When we walked to Camley Street Natural Park with our garden box that we had made with our herbs planted in it, several people wanted to know where we had done that and where they could go to do the same activity.

Bread and Pesto Making

This was a lovely idea of making food outdoors and then cooking and eating it but there were barriers to getting involved if you are outside of the original community group of Latin American ladies and children. We weren't sure if the community group who were doing this activity were told that they need to help people get involved with the cooking and pesto making. It was difficult with the language barrier too, as most of the older ladies could not speak English only their native Spanish. But if you were prepared to get stuck in and could speak a little Spanish, the group were very knowledgeable, friendly and helpful and it was a lot of fun.

We cooked with delicious fresh ingredients that were grown in the Calthorpe Gardens and learnt about mojo sauces and how you use them with cooking and also made spinach filled bread. It might have been a better idea for the breadmaking to take place at the beginning because many people had left before the bread had been cooked. It was a shame not more people knew about these events as this was a real insight into a different community within Kings Cross.

4.1.2 Saturday 1st May

Free Healthy Breakfasts

A very popular stand especially in the morning when people arrived and it was a nice introduction to the festival being based near the entrance. A selection of organic muesli, different milks, fruits and juices were available for people to taste. A lot of people didn't realise it was free to try and the volunteer at the stall did not know about the products when we tried to talk to her about them. It was a shame someone from the brand could not have been there to tell people more about how the muesli were made, or a dietician to advise on the importance of breakfast.

Thrifty Gardening

This was a really good interactive workshop that was relaxed and friendly. The presenter encouraged people to speak with one another and to share their stories and knowledge on diverse topics that were both interesting and practical. A hands-on demonstration was made and people could plant seeds that were given out for free in their own little boxes, which were also provided and that they could take home. A few people commented that more people came to this event than the allocated number which meant that it was very busy and some people found it intimidating to ask questions particularly when the audience seemed to be quite advanced gardeners so perhaps a beginner's class would have also been beneficial.

Brockwell Bake with the Real Bread Campaign and Make your own Pizza

Proved extremely popular at lunchtime! Lots of books available to look at and children were taking part in grinding flour and making pizza dough. People were talking while enjoying the food and questions were being asked about how to make bread. There was a clear message about why fresh bread is better than supermarket loaves.

Urban Bees

This was a very good, insightful talk on bees and bee keeping. People of all ages were listening and lots of questions were being asked. There was honey and honeycomb available to taste, and lots of children were enjoying that part! People were encouraged to touch the honeycomb and dummy beehive. There were books available and posters.

Urban Agriculture

A popular presentation that was very topical, looking at subjects like guerilla gardening. Attended by all adults and conducted in a formal lecture-style.

Love Food, Hate Waste

This was a fun, informative and relaxed session from Camden Council. Poor show out of 13 people because of the lunchtime 1pm slot and also clash with the Alara tour. All adults attended. The presenter was a good communicator, easy going and humorous, encouraging lots of audience interaction and giving out props to handle. Prizes and goodie bags provided for quiz winners and people were making notes of the practical tips mentioned. The smaller group actually meant that a gentle banter/debate was started in the presentation and people were speaking up, laughing and it became more of a friendly conversation with the presenter.

Urban Grow Your Own!

Crowds of people gathered around the presenter on the patio as this practical activity began. People were able to come and go during the talk. Props were used to illustrate examples of grow your own. A hands-on workshop which had people working in groups, planting seeds etc. Messy hands were a good sign! Engaging presenter, lots of information provided but also discussion stimulated as he knew people in the audience and asked them to share stories. Audience members during the activity ate pea shoots.

Why aren't we eating our cats?

More of a traditional talk but the speaker was very enthusiastic and the style of delivery relaxed and friendly. Provoking slide show pictures got reactions and laughs. Plenty of audience interactions, the speaker asked the audience to react to certain slides of food by shouting 'yuk' or 'yum!' that worked well. There were lots of questions at the end on what was a funny and engaging subject. The discussion could have gone on for longer and provided food for thought about our eating habits which could have been a future debate opener. The speaker gave a strong 'take home message' which was good. Free cakes were provided in the room from an earlier session, which were popular.

Eating, Dieting and Body image behind the iron curtain

A good, educational talk on an unusual and specialist topic. Conducted more in a lecture style, whilst being academic and niche it was really interesting.

4.1.3 Sunday 2nd May

The English Breakfast: An Anthropological Biography

This lecture that was held in the big top tent was popular with a wide range of adults from 20-65. The speaker was very engaging and humorous; her talk was accessible with lots of interest. She made it relevant to today by taking us through history to where we are now. She was one of the only presenters who concluded her talk by telling the audience that if they wanted to learn more about this subject there was a free evening event happening on 27 May at the British Museum on Feasting: We are what we Eat.

Collecting women's narratives on food, love and emotional nurturance

An interesting and very topical subject dealt with sensitively. Some of the terms used were perhaps a little academic like 'suicidal ideation'? At this lecture, what was interesting was that someone in the audience stood up at question time and brought up something she had learnt from the last lecture on the English breakfast, relating it to this lecture indicating she was already linking new knowledge together.

This presenter was the second lecturer at Food Junctions to tell the audience what they could do next if they wanted to engage more with this subject – she held a focus group with some of the audience post presentation.

When this lecture began both doors to the room were closed which made it less accessible, difficult and uncomfortable for people to arrive late or equally leave.

Ministry of Food Propaganda in the Second World War

A smaller turn out for this talk, and it was noted that over a quarter were UCL volunteers. Humorous, but with little direct interaction with the audience instead relying on slides and film.

Eating Qi: Food Identity and Inheritance

An alternative approach to thinking about food. This lecture was interesting and unusual, lots of photos and video clips were used. Again, very little audience interaction. Two people were making personal notes.

Food within the bigger system, relationships with sustainability

There was a small turn out for this group that proved to be an enjoyable participation workshop in two stages. Group work and lots of audience interaction including an audience debate but the speaker needed to help overcome some people's fears of getting involved and participating.

The Gastronomic Brain

This was a fun, engaging talk, which got the whole audience involved in a taste experiment involving jellies that everyone seemed to enjoy. Excellent speaker and lots of audience interaction and questions.

Beeja Dance

This was a good closing event. Located in the teaching room, it felt rather cramped but the poor weather meant it needed to be held indoors. Music and dancing encouraged audience participation and there was a relaxed feel to the event as people came and went to get food. There was a mixture of music, talk and performance. The link to food was not entirely obviously but explained by the dancers. It was a nice way to finish the day.

Final Harvest Celebration

This was thought to be a great idea, and a perfect way to conclude Food Junctions. Everyone was talking with each other about the different kinds of food, and there was real sense of community there. It was a shame the weather was not nicer. There was plenty of free food for everyone who came, and a lot of people had large meal sized portions. We would have liked more information on the different foods served, perhaps printed up as large posters as there were lots of people wanting to eat and it was hard to speak to the people who had made the food.

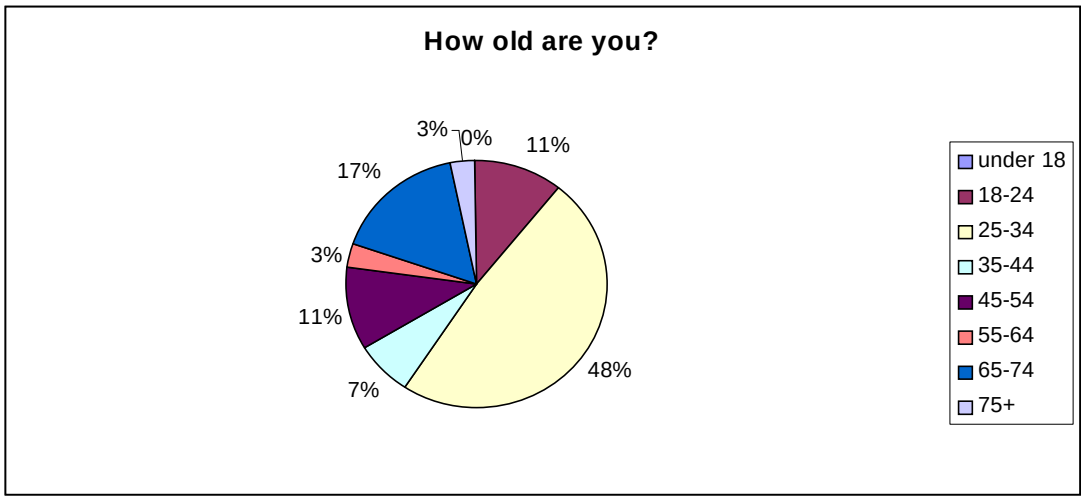
4.2 Audience Questionnaire

27 audience questionnaires were completed over the last weekend of Food Junctions, the key findings were as follows:

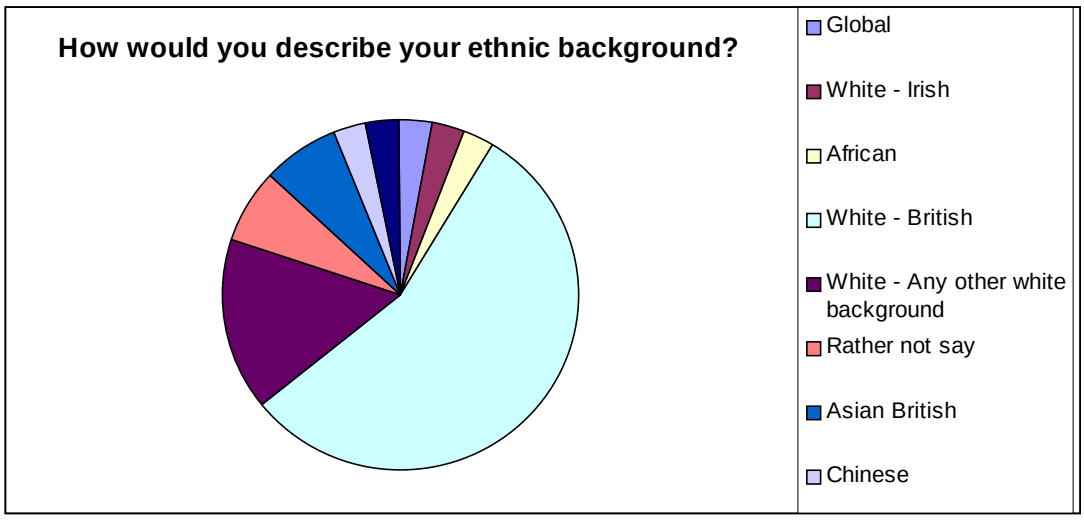
4.2.1 Audience Demographics

Out of these responses 52% were male, 48% female.

Everyone questioned came from London across all areas with just over half of people hailing from local North London (52%). The age range of those sampled is shown in the chart below.



The majority of people (55%) described themselves as White-British.



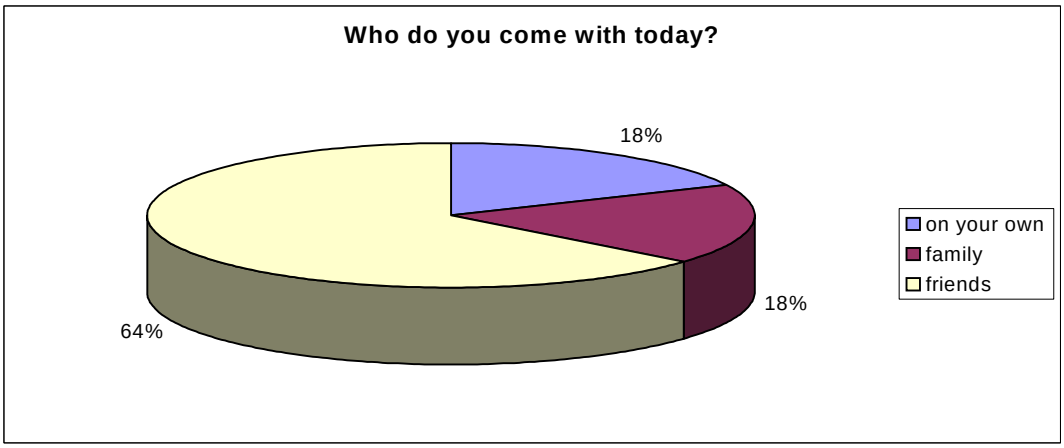
When asked why they had decided to come to Food Junctions most people expressed an interest in learning more about a particular subject or lecture that was to be held that day. There were a lot of people especially interested in gardening and food growing.

However nearly half those we spoke to (48%) did not know UCL or their involvement with public engagement activities. Interestingly 13% of people came to Food Junctions through a connection with University College London Hospital.

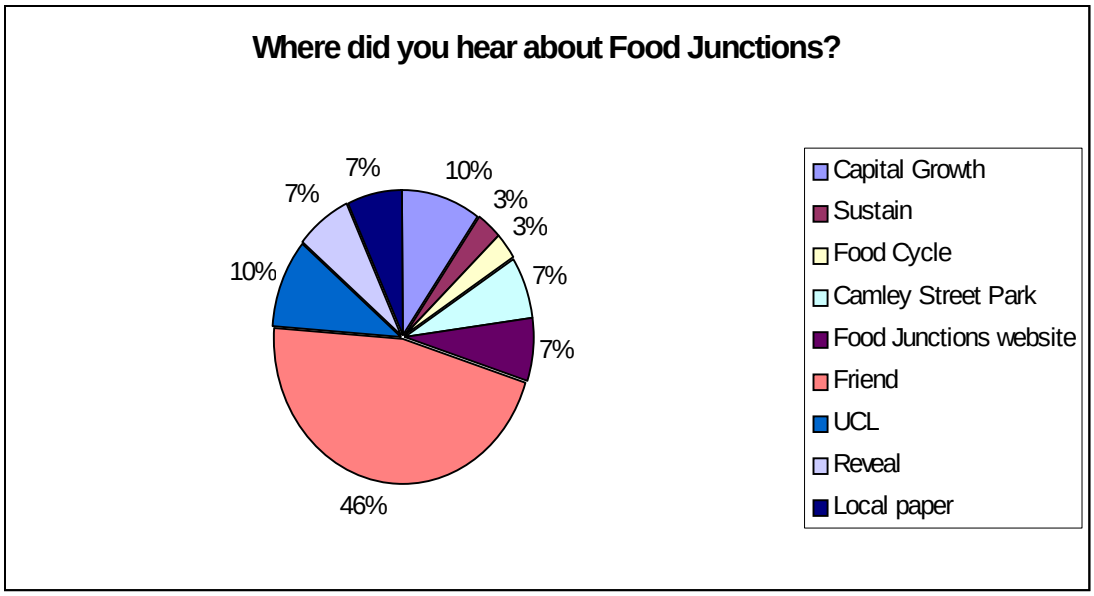
Participatory workshops and activities such as the Food Walk were very popular, and 80% of people questioned participated in at least one activity whilst they were at Food Junctions. 86% also said that they would be more likely to visit cultural events more often if there were activities to take part in

4.2.2 Food Junctions Publicity

Most people came to Food Junctions with their friends.



When asked where they heard about Food Junctions, nearly half responded that it was also through their friends (46%). Word of mouth was a important means to promote the festival, particularly amongst community networks. However a wide variety of other sources were also recorded. Surprisingly there weren't as many people who had heard about the events via the internet as expected even though Food Junctions has its own website and Facebook page which highlights the importance of utilising partner networks and our own connections in spreading the word.



People were asked what they enjoyed most and least about Food Junctions. The most popular parts of Food Junctions were the interesting range of talks and activities, the free food and friendly, relaxed environment. People also expressed how much they liked the interactive element, at being able to get involved, participate in workshops and speak to academics that they otherwise would not have access to.

'*the interaction, you get to meet people at festivals'* (male 25-34)

'excellent panel discussion' (55-64 male)

'food growing and gardening tips' (65-74 female)

'the indoor-outdoor element' (25-34 male)

'informative presentations and talks' (45-54 female)

When asked which part of Food Junctions, they had enjoyed least just under half of people (48%) said nothing at all. A lot of people we spoke to on Sunday commented on the weather because of all the rain as they felt it had 'impacted upon the spaces used'. Problems with trying to find events due to lack of sign posting and timetable clashes were also raised.

People also suggested they would like to see more activities, live music and also to be able to buy food at the Park as there was not much available.

We asked 'What will you remember most about today?' and most people responded that they enjoyed the food and also the overall experience of a being outdoors at a festival within a beautiful park. Many people said they had never been to Camley Street Natural Park before. Others stated:

'fruit carving' (female 18-24)

'very good garden setting and variety of events, talks' (female 45-64)

'generosity of the different voluntary organisations that are participating' (female 45-54)

'I found out about superfoods' (female, 25-34)

'mixing soil' (male, 75 and above)

4.3 Key Findings

From the audience questionnaire, completed with 27 respondents, it was revealed that almost half of those surveyed did not know UCL, realised that UCL were involved in this project and/or did public engagement work. It was identified that some people were definitely attracted to the involvement of UCL, yet for some it might mean nothing and some people might be put-off or intimidated by knowing that UCL are behind the event because of pre-conceived ideas about higher education institutions. More research needs to be completed in this area to seek out public perceptions of UCL.

For many however, the presence of academics across a variety of disciplines was seen as very important, lending gravitas to the festival. Many people were excited that they could have the chance to listen to their talks and ask them questions. Audiences were very respectful of the presenters, keeping silent during the

presentations and were also respectful of each-other when sharing their views during moments of feedback such as Q&As at the end.

The presentation and talks that included some audience interaction, debate or participation generally, seemed to be better received than the other more formal lectures. It is important that academic lecturers engage more with their audiences and use different means of stimulating debate and reactions rather than a one-way dialogue.

The Food Junctions volunteers and team members worked hard to get people to attend presentations and events during the festival; many attendees were happy to come in and stay at events. However, to encourage more people to drop into presentations, the lecture areas need to be kept as open and welcoming as possible. Try not to arrange the room in a typical classroom style and keep doors open so people feel comfortable about coming in and not like they might get scolded for arriving late.

Camley Street Natural Park was a excellent choice of venue for the festival; due to its central location, the picturesque scenery and its pre-existing audience (with events coinciding with Camley Street Natural Park 25 year anniversary event). When planning events in multiple locations, more publicity needs to occur at the individual locations to promote the other events such as the Calthorpe Project at the Camley Street Natural Park. People were not aware other activities were also taking place on that day only a few minutes walk away. Equally, many of those questioned did not realise that Food Junctions was part of the larger REVEAL Festival and when asked whether they were aware that there was a developing cultural quarter in Kings Cross, 44% said no.

Difficulties were experienced in encouraging people to complete the Project Coordinators feedback forms (recipe and comment sheets) especially when there were more tantalising activities that they could take part in. Perhaps an alternate way of gathering this information, through filming or vox pop mini-interviews would have been more user-friendly and for the volunteers to be involved in this activity. Many of the events were filmed by a Food Junctions team member.

5 Next steps

It was recognised that Food Junctions is still living on through the relationships built and like a 'ripple effect' new sister projects are forming as a result of Food Junctions; '*there is no end point its very open'* (Gemma Moore 2010). '*When we talk about legacy, I don't know how to set the boundary'* (Marina Chang 2010). For the team at Food Junctions it is now about what they do not only to continue their own knowledge exchange and personal development but also to build on the next step for public audiences to continue their learning.

To date, fifteen individual event invitations and initiatives have resulted from the Food Junctions project including:

- A recipe book, bringing together the stories and recipes from Food Junctions
- An invitation from Camden Council to present at Camden Green Fair
- Calthorpe Project arts and craft workshop for the elderly
- Community film with the Calthorpe Project

- Volunteer Group Fruit picking event in Brent using jam and cake making promoting less wastage of food
- Partnership with Food Policy Department at City University and SOAS for community collaboration with DEFRA
- Urban Bees and Foodcycle now have an ongoing relationship with Camley Street Natural Park

That is the legacy created, and it is now the responsibility of the university to build upon this knowledge exchange, initiating new projects and taking on new artistic challenges. As noted by one stakeholder:

'*It's the tangible projects that keep going and the sustained conversations that start during the programme. It's keeping those conversations going, and those relationships going'* (Sian James, Create KX, REVEAL Festival 2010)

6 Conclusion

Food Junctions was recognised as being a huge success by all those who attended over the two weekends. It was rated highly in terms of educational and entertainment value and several people were keen to find out if it would be happening again the following year.

According to monitoring data collected, the demographics of the festival attendees were mostly young white British with a balanced gender split. However, observations undertaken by the author and the Food Junctions project team, indicate that the events were attended by a diversity of people, from range of ethnicities, ages and socio-economic backgrounds. There were a high number of people who had not heard of UCL before, or knew about its public engagement which shows opportunities for reaching new audiences.

The legacy of Food Junctions that is already evident indicates that the project team met the initial objectives they set out to achieve with learning taking place both within and outside of UCL, and networks and partnerships are emerging now who are keen to initiate further projects related to food.

7 Recommendations

- Include volunteers in event evaluation and incorporate responsibility for this in their role to ensure evaluation is embedded in the heart of the project and more primary data is able to be collected

- Introduce more participatory activities as these were popular with all age groups and provided a good balance with the more formal-style lectures, also encouraging more two-way dialogue

- Co-ordinate event timetable to prevent fewer direct clashes and allow a natural pause in the day for people to have lunch so as to avoid poorly attended talks

- Hidden costs must be acknowledged. One of the key learning points emerging from discussions with the project coordinator is how the public engagement activities have 'hidden costs' to the individuals involved – time, effort, energy and

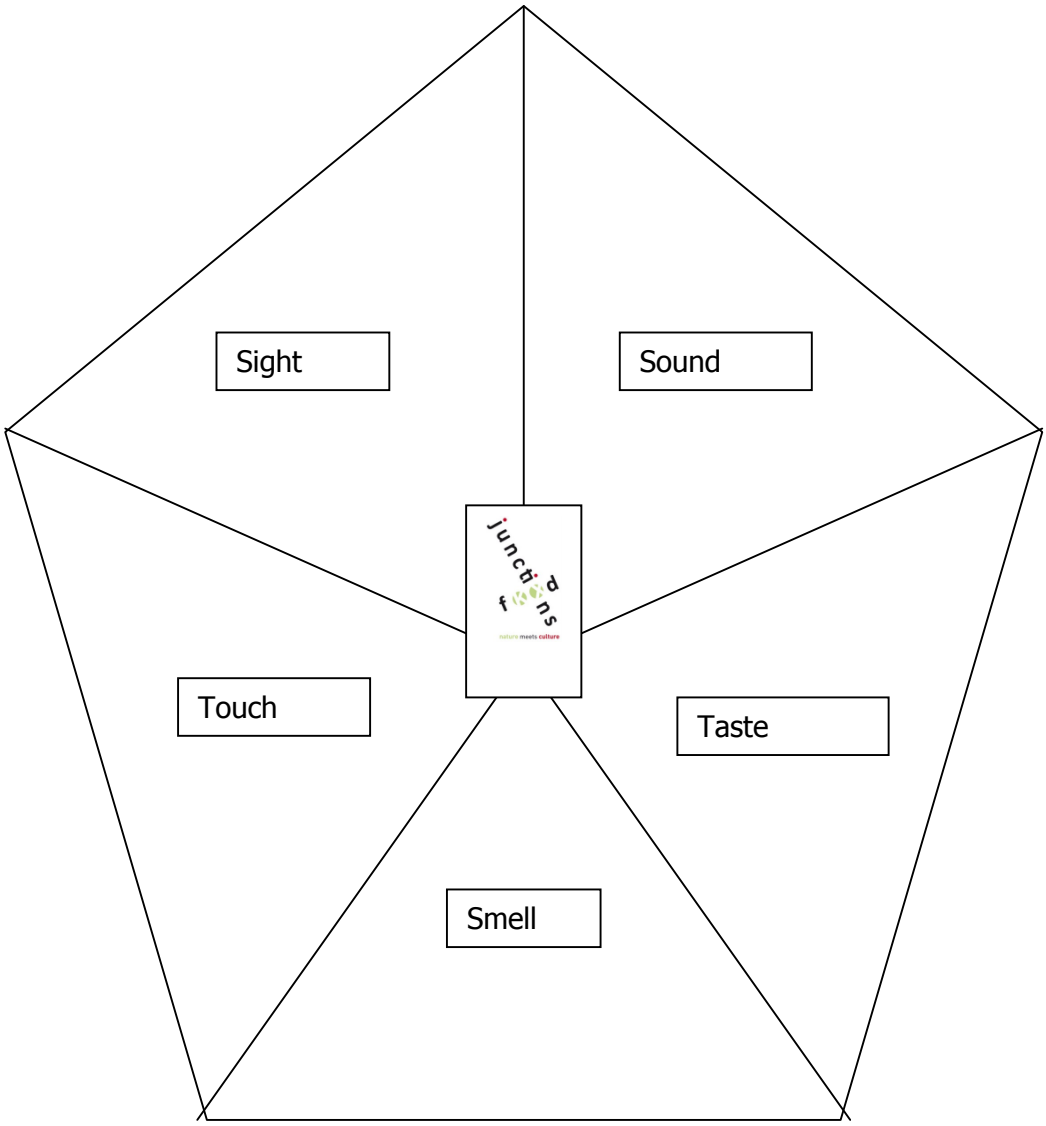
finances are needed to plan and set up the project. These costs can be incredibly demanding on students

- '*There should be a platform to help people continue their learning journey'* (Marina Chang 2010). Make people aware of other associated events that are coming up, what they can do next both in terms of activities run by UCL and partner organisations. People were interested in finding out more about these different subjects, such as attending more lectures and workshops. Promotion of other events at the festival for instance at the end of each talk or activity would have been a good idea to engage new local audiences. '*We do need to think about if there was an audience what else they would want to come to. If people have a thirst for saying what's next, we should try push that for those audiences*' (Gemma Moore 2010).

Appendix

Food Junctions: Sensory Observation Form

We are particularly interested in your experience of each event and we would like you to think about how all your senses experience these activities within the festival



Date:

Event Name: No. of Participants:

Your Comments:

Participant-Observer Name:

Food Junctions: Sensory Observation Form

We wish to capture and understand all the events happening within the Food Junctions programme. As our eyes and ears, we are asking all participants-observers to keep a log of each of the events/activities you attend so that we have a record of how each one is experienced. Either during or immediately after the event/activity please complete this sheet; you can use the questions below to help guide your observations if you wish…

Sight

How would you describe the look? Are there any significant visual experiences?

Describe the audience - is it mostly families, young people, a mixture?

Are people sitting through the whole event or coming and going?

Sound

How would you describe the sound of the event? Are they any significant sounds?

Is the lecturer engaging with the audience? Can they be heard?

Did the speaker have a clear message about their subject?
Was this successfully communicated to the audience?

Is there audience interaction? How much?

Touch

How would you describe the feel? Are there any significant associations with your sense of touch or how you feel?

Was the event hands-on? How many of the audience are actively participating?

What are people doing?

Taste

How would you describe the taste of the event? Are there any significant associations with your sense of taste? Or taste can refer to culture, good/bad taste

Smell

How would you describe the smell of the event? Is there any significant smells?

General Impressions…

What is your overall opinion of what's happening here? Is it worth doing?

Is it adding value to the overall Food Junctions programme?

Food Junctions: Visitor Questionnaire

1. How would you describe the Food Junctions programme here this weekend?

2. Where did you hear about this event?

3. Why did you come here today?

4. What have you enjoyed most about Food Junctions?

5. What have you enjoyed least? What would you like to see?

6. What will you remember most about today?

7. Did you get involved in any of the activities here? Yes/No

8. Do you regularly go to other arts and cultural events? Yes/No

9. If no, why?

10. Did you know that there is a developing cultural quarter in Kings X? Yes/No

11. What do you know about UCL? Are you affiliated with UCL in any way?

12. Are you here: on your own with family with friends

13. Where have you travelled from today?

14. Are you male/female?

15. How old are you?

Under 18	18-24	25-34	34-4
45-54	55-64	65-74	75 and above

16. How would you describe your ethnic background?

White – British	Pakistani
White – Irish	Bangladeshi
White – any other white background	Any other Asian or Asian British
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African	African
Mixed – White and Asian	Any other Black or Black British
Any other Mixed background	Chinese
Indian	Any other Ethnic group
I'd rather not say	

17. Would you visit cultural events more often if there were activities to take part in?

18. What attracts you to a festival rather than say a gallery?

Food Junctions Event Attendance and General Comments

Date	Event Name	No. of People who attended	General comments
Sat 24 April	Build your own Garden Box (at Calthorpe Project)	24	Popular and enjoyable but not publicised enough so low attendance of mostly Calthorpe members
Sat 24 April	Pesto & Bread making	17	Fun activity. Language Barriers to getting involved and engaging with local community group who spoke little english
Sat 1 May	Free Healthy Breakfasts	50+	Very popular but it was a shame the volunteer did not know about the products she was serving!
Sat 1 May	Urban Bees	25	Very good insightful talk
Sat 1 May	Thrifty Gardening	33	Excellent interactive workshop. Very popular.
Sat 1 May	Make your own Bread & Pizza	32	Extremely popular hands on activity. Especially at lunchtime!
Sat 1 May	Love Food, Hate Waste	13	Informative and relaxed. Lunchtime slot meant small turn out.
Sat 1 May	Urban Agriculture	29	Very topical
Sat 1 May	The War of the Vegetables	20	No audience interaction. Serious lecture.

Sat 1 May	Eating, dieting and body image	18	Good educational talk
Sat 1 May	Getting the most out of chocolate	16	Pace and level of discussion really good. Props used
Sat 1 May	Why don't we eat our cats	35	Funny, engaging, stimulated thought
Sat 1 May	Urban Grow your Own	35	Flexible approach. Practical session
Sun 2 May	The English Breakfast	26	Humourous, engaging and pitched at the right level
Sun 2 May	Ministry of Food Propaganda in the Second World War	16	Interesting detailed talk no engagement apart from Q&A
Sun 2 May	Eating Qi	18	Unusual approach to food, thought provoking
Sun 2 May	Collecting women's narratives on food, love and emotional nurturance	21	Again, an unusual subject, very relevant. Some terminology used not recognised.
Sun 2 May	The Gastronomic Brain	30	Fun interactive talk with jelly tasting
Sun 2 May	Food within the bigger system	12	Highly participative workshop, getting everyone involved
Sun 2 May	Final Harvest	40	Great idea, would have liked more information on the foods served
Sun 2 May	Beeja Dance	40	Good final event