

# What are the landmarks in a Community Music Project? The case of the Kithara Project

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# What are the landmarks in a Community Music Project? The case of the Kithara Project

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## **Abstract**

The “Kithara Project” is an international, non-profit community music programme serving the USA and Mexico. It focuses on a single musical instrument and genre, i.e., classical guitar, and is run by a collective of internationally acclaimed musicians. This chapter introduces the Kithara Project to the research literature and investigates the construction of project landmarks based on the successes and challenges identified by its practitioners. I discuss how the results support, complement, and challenge the existing conceptions in community music before offering practical implications for successful community music practice, including how to achieve a ‘symbiosis’ with the researchers’ world.

## **Keywords**

Kithara, guitar, classical, community, music, project

## **Introduction**

The *Kithara Project* (KP) is an international, non-profit community music (CM) programme specialising in teaching classical guitar. It was founded in 2015 by the guitar trio ‘The Great Necks’ as a US-based organisation. Its members, North American guitarists Adam Levin, Matthew Rohde, and Scott Borg, are internationally acclaimed, reaching the Billboard Top 10 charts in the Traditional Classical Category (Lipshutz, 2018). KP seeks ‘to improve the lives and opportunities of children and youth through the classical guitar’ (Kithara-Project, 2020) and has so far enriched the lives of over 400 children in underserved and economically deprived suburban communities across three locations: Boston, MA, where it is based;

Albuquerque, NM; and Iztapalapa in Mexico City. These stakeholders may participate in two types of weekly sessions: one-to-one guitar lessons lasting a minimum of 30 minutes and group lessons (organised according to musical skills) of at least one hour each.

This chapter is based on a case study and aims to introduce KP to the literature and investigate how the concept of ‘project landmarks’ is constructed from the practitioner perspective (i.e. to explore the project facilitators and administrators’ beliefs, in terms of attitudes, motivations, opinions, etc.). It first introduces theoretical conceptions and key empirical findings for CM projects before providing the relevant socio-cultural backgrounds for the case study. It then details the methodology and summarises the results before discussing them against the backdrop of other works and speculating on possibilities for further research. It also offers a list of practical implications for both academics and, especially, for practitioners seeking to develop a similar CM project.

## **Framework**

The following theoretical and research-based conceptions are not exhaustive. Rather, they draw upon representative positions in previous scholarly publications.

### *What is relevant for a CM project? A matter of definition*

The difficulty in defining CM rests in discerning the key aspects that distinguish it from all other kinds of music-making (Phelan, 2008). Epitomising this debate from a British perspective is Higgins (2012), who identified the roots for CM as ‘redressing the balance between musicians/non musicians, product/process, individual/community, formal music education/informal music education, and consumption/participation’ (p. 40). These opposite poles implicitly reflect the antagonistic traditions in the philosophy of music education: Music Education as an Aesthetic Education (MEAE) and Praxial Music Education (Praxialism). The imbalance towards the principles of Praxialism, based on Christopher Small’s (1977) seminal

conception of *Musicking*, has tacitly been considered a differentiating aspect of CM; for example, Cohen (2011) outlines how Small has historically been a framework for CM. However, this framework has been recently challenged for its diffuse boundaries between CM and amateur music-making (Kertz-Welzel, 2016). Moreover, Boeskov (2017) concluded that working in contexts with forms and rules outside of everyday social behaviours is also beneficial.

The relevance of developing musical skills is a pivotal aspect of this debate. The traditional view, represented by Mullen (2002) and Higgins (2012), advocates skill acquisition as a secondary role, thus prioritising ‘facilitation’ over skill development. More recently, however, Brøske (2017) argued that ‘the creation of a teaching model with emphasis on musical learning is crucial to ensure project sustainability and to achieve the goal of inclusion’ (p. 75). Furthermore, music education is seen as empowering the recipients of the sessions in a CM project, with Koopman (2007) advocating, ‘Don’t let us waste the chance to offer [them] music education, rather than short-lived musical kicks’ (p.161).

#### *Empirical research on key aspects in CM*

Empirical studies on the successes and challenges in CM are typically case studies investigating CM programmes in a specific country (e.g., Hallam, Creech, McQueen, Varvarigou, & Gaunt, 2016; Schippers & Bartleet, 2013). Across these studies, there are some concurrent findings that may be categorised as follows:

1. Engagement (in terms of social engagement) and the facilitators’ adaptation to CM participants are the two most common aspects across studies, though categorised differently; e.g. ‘Differentiation’ and ‘Maintaining engagement’ (Hallam et al., 2016), ‘Social engagement’ and ‘Dynamic music-making’ (Schippers & Bartleet, 2013), and ‘Flexibility and spontaneity’, ‘Acceptance and openness’ and ‘Empathy and attentiveness’ (Gande & Kruse-Weber, 2017).

2. Economic factors, regarding available resources or the socioeconomic context, are also a common aspect raised among studies (Hallam et al., 2016; Odena, 2010).

Several other challenging aspects are found linked to the context of each study. For example, Hallam et al. (2016), in the context of a UK-based elderly CM programme and from the viewpoint of facilitators, found challenges such as ‘Managing the participants’ (group leadership and tackling certain behaviours), ‘Repertoire’ (how far to expand participants’ knowledge-horizons), ‘Preparation’ (the time for designing and preparing the sessions), ‘Resources and accommodation’ (related to musical instruments and the physical conditions for teaching), ‘Recruitment of staff’ (finding experienced musicians) and ‘Size of groups’ (acquiring the competencies to manage large groups). In a geographically close context, concerning a CM project aimed at bringing together children from Protestant and Catholic families in Northern Ireland, Odena (2010) found additional challenges, including the participants’ different identities (in relation to musical stereotypes) and providing positive musical experiences.

In other contexts, several different challenges and paths to success have arisen. For example, in a CM project with refugees in Austria, Gande and Kruse-Weber (2017) found ‘Communication’ and ‘Collaboration’ to be challenging and stressed the importance of working with a supportive team on the project. In Australia, Schippers and Bartleet (2013) pursued the most extensive study to date by observing and interviewing approximately 400 individuals (plus surveying an additional 200), including both practitioners and stakeholders in CM projects. Nine domains towards success were identified in this study: ‘Infrastructure’, ‘Organisation’, ‘Visibility’, ‘Relationship to place’, ‘Social engagement’, ‘Support/networking’, ‘Dynamic music-making’, ‘Engaging pedagogy/facilitation’, and ‘Links to school’.

In conclusion, while the aforementioned case studies are context-bound and can thus only be understood in light of the unique characteristics of each CM programme, their high heterogeneity points out the need to extend the knowledge on the key aspects of a CM project.

### **The contexts of the Kithara Project**

KP is held at two different sites in Boston: the Josephine A. Fiorentino Community Center in Allston and the Oak Square Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) in Brighton. The project is run in partnership with Charlesview Inc., a local non-profit organisation that has provided the facilities for the project. The recipients of the sessions in Boston are generally at-risk youths and children from varied ethnic origins, mainly North-African, Middle-Eastern, Asian, and African-American.

In New Mexico, the project runs in cooperation with Valle Vista Elementary School, which primarily serves children (predominantly Hispanic) who live below the federal poverty level in Albuquerque's South Valley. This partnership provides both the recipients and the spaces to develop KP. The project also runs a teaching-mentorship programme at this site wherein high school music students from Albuquerque Academy can serve as volunteers.

In Mexico, the project is developed at *Yuguelito*, a small self-organised community in Iztapalapa. This is one of Mexico City's 16 municipalities in the southwest borough and has one of the lowest income rates in Mexico. Iztapalapa has high percentages of housing without water and high-poverty levels (Herrera, 2018; Connolly, 2013). The community of Yuguelito was founded in 2008 by approximately 500 families who moved to what was then a landfill (Vargas, 2015). Since then, they have built houses and developed basic utilities as there was no potable water, electricity, or sewage system in place. Furthermore, the community is only accessible by two different checkpoints to preserve its security. The project is currently

conducted in a shared space of a community building, while KP is building a brand new space dedicated for its activities.

## **Methodology**

Based on the case under study, I addressed the following research question:

How is the concept of ‘project landmarks’, in terms of project development milestones already reached (project successes) and those still to come (project challenges), constructed from the perspective of project facilitators and administrators? This is addressed by distilling “a consensus construction” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 111) on these milestones. In other words, I aim to synthesise multiple subjectivities in the contexts of this project and in line with the enquiring paradigm of constructionism (Holstein & Gubrium, 2008).

I conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews with practitioners (i.e., project facilitators and project administrators,  $n = 7$ ) working on the project during March and April 2021. Four were working in the Boston site of the project, two in the Mexico site, and one in the New Mexico site. The inclusion criterion was for interviewees to have been working for at least a month in the project; all the participants except for one had indeed been working at KP for several years. The interviews were held via recorded video conferences lasting between one and two hours each. During the interviews I explored several aspects of KP, including feelings and beliefs about the project. For example I asked ‘*Which were the main challenges or impediments that you found?*’ and ‘*Do you remember any special moments?*’ and followed them up with additional probing questions depending on the flow of the conversation. I then transcribed each interview verbatim and pursued a thematic analysis based on Braun and Clarke’s (2006) protocol. Codification and thematisation were performed from an open stance, i.e., with no predefined assumptions on codes or categories. The analysis sought the emergence of codes and categories by a constant comparison methodology (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). As I

sought to provide rich results to gain insights into the specific case and issue investigated, this study thus bridges intrinsic and instrumental case studies (Stake, 1995). In the following section, the specific names of individuals or places in the excerpts are substituted by XXX to preserve anonymity. In addition, the respondents' names are also substituted with labels from A to G.

## Results

Table 1 summarises the codes and themes resulting from the analysis. I discuss these results below in light of the interviewees' perspectives.

*Table 1. Summary of codes and themes. The numbers in brackets represent frequencies. Only codes with frequencies higher than 1 are represented.*

<i>Primary Themes</i>	<i>Secondary Themes</i>	<i>Codes</i>
<b>Beliefs related to project recipients</b>	<b>Dealing with students' characteristics</b>	Working with students with functional diversity or impairments (2) Dealing with diversity among students (2) Dealing with students' life events (2)
	<b>Students' development</b>	Particular cases of success (9) Providing skills for life (8) Students' musical progress (5) Students' engagement (5) Participants take ownership of the project (4) Behavioural changes (2)
<b>Beliefs related to the community</b>	<b>Engaging the community</b>	Families' involvement (6) Communities that care (4) Engaging volunteers (3) Get community's trust (3)
	<b>Influencing the community</b>	Fostering sense of community (6) Becoming part of the community (4)
<b>Beliefs related to the specific project model</b>	<b>Project goals</b>	Project assessment/evaluation (7) Expanding (5) Having dedicated spaces (5) Giving concerts is a must (5) Sustainable project (5) Student retention (3) Doing excursions and exchanges (3) Based on classical music (3) Unified curriculum (3) Offering residences within the project (2) Scalability/replicability (2) Student attraction (2) Achieving quick results is challenging (2)
	<b>Project funding</b>	Funding's difficulties (15) Dealing with donors is complicated (2)
	<b>Project management</b>	Difficulties in launching the project (5)



	COVID-19 pandemic associated challenges (5) Recruiting competent practitioners (4) Convincing others of the value of the project (4) Making it compatible with personal life (4) Acquiring the role of project management (3)
<b>Conditions for teaching</b>	Providing comfortable/safe moments (2) Teaching students online is challenging (2)

### *Beliefs related to the project recipients*

In terms of the students' characteristics, different skill levels in music, their personalities, and the ways of behaving at sessions were identified as challenges by respondents of all three project sites, especially during the first few sessions. The inexperience of practitioners in dealing with particular functional diversities, such as Autism or Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), was also highlighted as a challenge, although the practitioners expressed how they adapted the sessions to suit these recipients and asked for help. The respondents also observed their successes and impacts on the recipients' lives:

With this boy, it was difficult at first because he has ADD, and it is impossible for him to learn guitar with three children at the same time. So at some point, I already stopped everything with him. I put him in half an hour that I teach only to him (...) and he has advanced. It is not that he plays many melodies, but with the melodies that he plays, I am satisfied with [them] because I have managed to allow him to concentrate, and that, I insist, can be useful for school. (D)

However, the impact is considered reciprocally, particularly for the impact of life events on sessions. Developing long-lasting links with the project is thus the main challenge raised in relation to these events:

I did see a girl who got pregnant very young. She was one of the most talented girls at the beginning of the project (...). There are kids who have had to stay away from the project (...) It is about [maintaining] the link with the students, despite the great problems they may have at the social and family level. (D)

Regarding the theme ‘Students’ development’, the practitioners prominently identified providing life skills as crucial, with giving a direction and structure to children’s lives serving as the main benefit. Specifically, the way that one learns a musical instrument, sustained by a structured practice was identified as a skill that can transfer to other activities:

The benefits of influencing the overall structure of student lives is a major benefit of joining [the] Kithara Project. That is an impact. You are realigning, redesigning, creating an infrastructure of an organised life, like how to take something from zero and take it to 1-1 or to .5 or to the finish line (...) Forget [the] Kithara Project, just music, in general, you are giving them these mini-projects that they can accomplish, that may first [be] seen as obstacles, but that they can overcome, so you are giving them this tool bag of ways of accomplishing, of succeeding in this world. (A)

Moreover, some respondents observed behavioural changes in the sessions from better attitudes to increased engagement. This is usually associated with improving musical skills, in a way described as ‘amazing’ or ‘surprising’. One of the respondents attributed these changes to the behaviour modelling of long-term participants in the KP:

One thing that has really helped (...) is that there is a generation of students that I have that are getting a little bit advanced and are now artists doing really cool things, and I think that when their younger and less experienced peers see them doing these cool things, that is very inspirational for them. (B)

The successes in having long-term participants are typically depicted within the codes ‘Student retention’ and ‘Student engagement’. The students ‘taking ownership of the project’ is an aspect commonly associated with these successes across the project sites, e.g.:

That the students themselves can teach each other (...), that they can help their classmates (...) In the community, many of them are family members. We have brothers who have been working for many years, and now their cousins are coming, and they can teach them. (D)

*Beliefs related to the community*

Both engaging and changing the community are dominant topics under this theme. Engaging others besides the project recipients, including families and external volunteers, is a key aspect for practitioners at the three project sites, while the cultural exchanges resulting from these engagements are commonly highlighted. Illustrative examples of these beliefs include:

The family has to know how important it is for the kid to practice, if not every day, at least some days a week. They have to support them. They have to know how important it is to take care of the guitar or to show up every week. So we have really made an effort to reach the families, and I think that many have really listened and taken us seriously.

(B)

I also would have to say that some of my favourite moments while teaching were seeing my older volunteers (...). I started off with one helper (...). So, seeing the connections between him and my other helpers who make connections with the younger children was, I would say, one of the most special moments in teaching, just drawing connections between [high school students who volunteer in KP] who come from a higher socioeconomic background and having them connect in a caring and supportive way with the kids at XXX, who most of them come from families who are, you know, first-generation immigrants and whose first language may not be English and just seeing that connection between XXX's helpers and the kids in the Kithara Project. That is, for me, one of the most gratifying things. (C)

Awakening the community's interest in the project is also seen as crucial across the three sites of the project. However, the challenge of gaining the trust of the community is particularly highlighted in the Mexico site, as the community at the beginning was suspicious about the project. There are common feelings of being a guest in that community:

I would be the new entity of the place, so the community observed me. They did not only leave the children, but they even watched me closely. It is a pity that this was the case,

but it is completely understandable that the community reacts with that degree of care, particularly for children. (D)

I think it has been very important from the very beginning to understand and respect the fact that in a place like XXX, I am a guest. So I think I have, from the very start, [approached] my teachings here with a lot of humility, just to be able to listen a lot and to embrace the community [on] their own terms. (B)

The respondents aimed to both engage and be engaged in the community, foster a sense of community, and extend the project beyond their own community. The reciprocal engagement between the practitioner and community was attached to two benefits: a meaningful experience for the respondents and the successful engagement of the childrens' families. The following example is representative of this category:

I have had a relation with the families beyond the project. It has been meaningful from a personal level and also very helpful for the project. About family involvement, the better my relation with them, the more they are going to support their children, and push their children to practice and to attend class and to do all the things that they should be doing. (B)

#### *Beliefs related to the specific project model*

This theme comprised the highest diversity of codes, including the subthemes 'Project goals', 'Project funding', 'Project management', and 'Conditions for teaching'. The high frequency of the codes 'Project assessment/evaluation', 'Having dedicated spaces', 'Giving concerts', and 'Sustainability' suggests that these are seen as important aspects of 'Project goals'. Project assessment/evaluation is particularly seen as challenging, given the size of the project and the difficulties in measuring impact and attracting donors. Regarding the contents of such evaluation, there are discrepancies among respondents on whether musical skills should be a part of the assessment or not. Developing a curriculum specifically for this project is seen as an important contribution to facilitating the assessment of musical skills, particularly for the

practitioners who also assume administrative duties within the project. The interviewees tended to understand this ‘curriculum’ as a systematisation of the repertoire to supply the practitioners with scores that are levelled in terms of musical skills. However, one respondent strongly advocating for this type of assessment prioritised the process over the product, stressing that this was a requirement ‘imposed’ by the project funders and, as such, was mainly useful for showcasing the project. The following answer typifies some of these opinions on assessment:

The idea that we should be able to prove really, empirically, the benefits that the kids have gotten for music is very challenging for an organisation that is small to do, you know (...) We do surveys, we are doing jury-forms, but [donors] want real scientific numbers between how much, and it is really hard to say how much the kids have learnt discipline, or just how much the kids have felt like [KP is] a good place to go and express themselves for this entire year. (F)

Sustainability was also frequently raised across the three sites in terms of retaining and empowering stakeholders who might share ownership over the project, and attracting funders. In addition, sustainability was seen as vital for continuity beyond specific practitioners:

There is obviously a very important financial aspect. But also, if you don’t have a consistent group of kids that is going to stay with you for many years, it does not matter if you have consistent funding (...), like our current students taking over their teachers. I love the idea of eventually walking away from the program in XXX and see it continue with the same sort of energy that it has now. Sustainability also means, for me, not having a programme that depends on any one person or personality but has sort of an internal momentum and a spirit that goes beyond any of us. (B)

While serving as many communities as possible is a consistent goal, respondents agreed that it was challenging to do so without compromising quality. In addition, raising instruction time and delivering a qualitatively enriching experience to the projects’ stakeholders was seen as proof of quality, whereas funders instead were seen as seeking to accentuate quantities (e.g.,

participants, sites, achievements, etc.). Moreover, the funders' pressure to accomplish quick results over long-lasting effects was disappointing for some respondents:

Many organisations and individual donors, they want to see results now. They want to see quantitative results because they want to see where and how their money is going to work. That is disappointing. There is such an inherently intrinsic value in music... the fact that we have to substantiate that and support that with numbers is disappointing. (A)

Some aspects of the project model, however, were seen as particularly successful: the established links with other institutions, having a model that is easily scalable/replicable, creating new job opportunities, giving flexibility to the projects' facilitators, combining group and individual sessions, recruiting competent practitioners, and offering residences to musicians within the project. By contrast, relevant challenges included the connection among different sites of the project, supporting the practitioners, selecting stakeholders, having only part-time practitioners, and having classical music as a main genre. However, the views on this genre were varied, with the interviewees advocating and opposing it regardless of the project site:

It was completely my responsibility to explain to these kids, who had no background in classical music, why it should matter to them, and that is a tough thing sometimes. I think that even if I have a really good connection with my students, they are not always interested. (B)

Learning classical guitar is much more structured than learning other genres [on] the guitar. There are strategic pathways that you are pushed down in order to achieve ends, and I think that having this formal structure will allow students, regardless of whether they stick with [the] Kithara Project or not, and go doing whatever; it will open them up to many different pathways in music, many different genres. (A)

Funding was the most frequently identified challenge and was usually addressed in connection to other issues, such as the initial difficulties in launching the project, having to

come up with new ideas for fundraising, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and making fundraising-work compatible with one's personal life. The most frequent issue in fundraising, though, was learning the new roles of managers and salesmen. Specifically, having to convince others of the value of something obviously valuable to the respondents was often frustrating, as expressed in the following:

When you, before a crowd of people, express yourself as sincerely and as heartfelt as possible, and then you walk away with maybe less resources than you expected... That is disheartening. It hurts! How can I jump up and down and do spins and circles, like in a circus, and yet we were only able to raise this amount of money? That is disappointing when people do not see at the same level as you do, you know, or in another way, when you have donors who are very supportive but do not understand it in the same way as you do. (A)

### **Discussion, implications, and possibilities**

While there is no consensus on the many definitions of CM (Veblen, 2004), this case study is closer to that of Koopman (2007) by simultaneously meeting and defying its three key requirements:

- a) The project fosters collaborative music-making by giving recipients the opportunity to engage in musical activities collectively through regular group classes. Codes like 'Combining group and individual tuition works great' or 'Doing excursions and exchanges' confirm the relevance of this aspect to practitioners. However, KP fulfils this requirement differently, as 'typically, music-making is not directed at the reproduction of fixed musical works' (Koopman, 2007, p. 153).
- b) The project aids developing communities, which can be clearly appreciated in the themes: 'Engaging the community' and 'Influencing the community'. Within these themes, codes

like ‘Engaging volunteers’, ‘Families’ involvement’, ‘Fostering sense of community’, or ‘Reaching out of the community’ appear to be means of developing social cohesion.

c) Besides its social aims, the project may contribute to the personal growth of the recipients as well. This is evidenced in the theme ‘Students’ development’, particularly by the codes ‘Developing self-learning’ and ‘Students’ musical progress’. Furthermore, part of this development is clearly intended to go beyond learning music, as reflected in the codes ‘Behavioural changes’, ‘Providing skills for life’, and ‘Participants take ownership of the project’. Interestingly, care for the development and well-being of the practitioners is not a common trait described in the CM literature. This care was instead found in several challenges coded within the theme ‘Project goals’; such as ‘Supporting the teachers’, ‘Creating new job opportunities’, ‘Offering residences within the project’, and ‘Facilitators learning new languages’.

Although KP shares the consistent use of classical music with ‘El Sistema’ (Creech et al., 2014), in the case of KP, this is explicitly recognised as both a defining and beneficial aspect. Given that classical (western) music is not the cultural environment in which KP recipients are traditionally embedded, this project challenges some of Higgins (2012) and Small’s (1977) ideas. Accordingly, the results support a nuanced understanding of Christopher Small’s (1977) concept of ‘Musicking’ in the context of CM. In line with Boeskov (2017), the traditional conceptualisation of ‘Musicking’ may be an ‘idealistic’ understanding in CM that oversimplifies the meanings experienced in or by music-making. The mere existence of a CM project with as much time devoted to one-to-one sessions led and delivered by concert musicians in classical music has a clear implication: if this project is further investigated and found to have a positive impact on the community, it would necessitate a more nuanced view of the traditional conceptions about the transformative power associated to ‘Musicking’ in CM, particularly as this power may lie not only in the fact that the practice is situated in a social and



cultural context (i.e., ordinary life) but also in that it is separated from it. In other words, it is ‘an extra-ordinary event that disrupts the flow of life in significant [and possibly beneficial] ways’ (Boeskov, p. 89).

Notably, the context in the different project sites does not seem to exert a great influence on the practitioners’ beliefs. Hence, their beliefs may be understood in the greater scope of the underlying project philosophy rather than in the socio-cultural aspects of each of the communities where it develops. Accordingly, their scarce discrepancies may be understood as stemming from the background and socio-cultural characteristics of each practitioner rather than from those of the project participants in each site. However, a differential challenge was identified in sole relation to the Mexico site regarding feelings of being a guest and gaining the trust of the community - this belief may be explained by the specific context in Mexico, the comparatively most isolated of the three sites in which the project is delivered.

Regarding the relation of the results to the previous literature, the views discussed in this study are partly coincident, partly divergent, and new to those in previous studies. For example, the views on engagement, inclusive practice, and differentiation are similar to the ones described by Hallam et al. (2016) in their study of community music-making with older learners. The views related to work overload and problems with transportation, as well as the potential of music education, are fully aligned with those found by Odena (2010) in the author’s research of cross-community music projects in Northern Ireland. Likewise, the present results are coincident with those of Grande and Kruse-Weber (2017) in aspects such as accepting the stakeholders’ different attitudes and engagements, views on flexibility, the importance of a supportive working team, and developing empathy and attentiveness. Furthermore, this study is in agreement with that of Schippers and Bartleet (2013) regarding the identification of the ‘ingredients of successful practices’ and, in particular, the tensions between focusing on the product versus the process in facilitation. However, Schippers and Bartleet (2013) found

significantly more dissimilarities in the views among participants across different CM projects at different sites than those in the present study. I suggest two possible explanations for this discrepancy: a) this being evidence of a well-outlined and concrete underlying philosophy in the case of KP, which leads to a better consensus among practitioners; and/or b) similarities in the profiles of the practitioners, who in this case are all concert guitar players with international careers. Moreover, the views stated in the present research partly contradict the necessity of Schippers and Bartleet's (2013) 'inspired individual' as the project cornerstone. Indeed, some practitioners at KP think that a signal of success for a CM project would be somehow the opposite: seeing how the project remains if/when they leave it. This conception is expressed in connection with another key aspect identified in the present study: empowering project participants to take ownership of the project for its long-term sustainability. Therefore, the present result may be interpreted as limiting the relevance of the role of Schippers and Bartleet's 'inspired individual' only to an initial or medium-term phase of a CM project.

Regarding other divergent results from extant studies, in comparison to the case studied by Hallam et al. (2016), the recruitment of staff is viewed as a success rather than a challenge. Furthermore, socioeconomic factors, in relation to the children's families, are not regarded as a key aspect, in contrast to the study by Odena (2010). To better understand these inconsistencies among studies, future empirical research and cross-case studies would help determine the role of the context, participants, or research methodologies in these discrepancies.

In addition, the present study identified important aspects that are not often discussed in previous empirical works, such as the challenges of working with beginners, dealing with functional diversity, and dealing with the children's life events (for an example of a methodology to study children's life events see the chapter by Rodriguez, Odena and Cabedo-Mas in this book). Moreover, in the case of the beliefs related to the specific project model,

some of the aspects raised by the interviewees were particularly salient to this study, e.g., giving flexibility to the facilitators, the necessity of having full-time practitioners, or the importance of a unified curriculum.

The way the interviewees expressed themselves is also interesting to discuss. In this sense, I recall the seminal article by Mullen (2002), a leading figure in the British CM landscape, entitled 'We don't teach, we explore: Aspects of community music delivery'. Specifically, Mullen advocated for 'facilitators' instead of 'teachers', whose practices he described as 'anti-teaching'. Paradoxically, all participants from KP referred to themselves as 'teachers' rather than 'facilitators' and always used the term 'students' instead of 'participants' to designate the recipients of the project activities. This suggests that the theoretical perspectives opposing education to facilitation can be defied by CM practices and thus depict a diffuse frontier, at times indistinguishable, among the fields of CM and education. As we live in a world that transcends strict binaries, drawing lines to separate the fields of education and CM may partially facilitate scholarly analysis but would not match well the complexities of reality. Even within the field of education, the ultimate aim may reside in transforming individuals rather than solely in developing competencies in a certain subject. Therefore, I theorise that, if an aspect should be outlined to differentiate CM and (music) education, it might simply be stressing the balance towards affecting personal/community development over knowledge development.

The main limitation of the present research, as in other case studies, is the impossibility of discerning how much the findings are context-bound. Further works on the discussed topics may shed light on the stated question. However, I can contribute several practical implications to extend the literature on this topic and hypothesise strategies for a successful CM practice based on the present results. As my intention is not to draw generalisations from a single case

study, I advise that the following implications may only apply to similar cases by naturalistic generalisations (Stake, 1995):

- Even experienced practitioners tend to raise concerns about dealing with diversity among project participants. Hence, including pedagogical support to practitioners seems relevant: This support could well be given as counselling from researchers in the fields of music pedagogy and CM, who would first study the particularities of a specific project and thereafter provide research-based, particularised advice. Moreover, this pedagogical support would help in building a curriculum for a CM project that could embrace integral aspects of community music (such as methodologies, aims, evaluation tools, etc.) in addition to those identified by the practitioners in this case (i.e., a levelled repertoire, resembling an order of contents to teach and doing exams to test content acquisition). In this curriculum, a plan to evaluate the success of the project may well encompass the assessment of its impact beyond the mere acquisition of musical skills.
- In close relation to the aforementioned aspect, having a solid, detailed underlying philosophy, even a curriculum, may be crucial for the practitioners in a CM project. Offering the practitioners opportunities to meet with each other and discuss hindrances, successes, and possibilities instead of leaving them to find their own way as the project develops would thus be beneficial. This could well be articulated in the form of focus groups guided by someone acquainted with this methodology. However, this action should not limit the practitioners' flexibility in acting, as their freedom and flexibility are also key aspects, but should serve as a way to foster a conscious CM practice.
- According to the present results, sustainability entails the following dimensions: retaining students, attracting funders, maintaining quality, and empowering

practitioners in the communities to allow project recipients to take ownership of the project. These critical challenges should thus be addressed in any plan for creating a successful CM project.

- A successful plan also lies in creating a scalable and realistic project model, i.e., one that may be replicated in other contexts with ease. However, the replication of the project should not compromise its quality, which is a difficult balancing act according to the practitioners in this case.
- Given the importance of letting the recipients take ownership of the project, designing a long-term strategy for this to happen might be an essential part of the CM project plan. This would also positively contribute to the inspirational benefit of behaviour modelling (i.e., having peers as models), identified by the practitioners.
- Social engagement was conceptualised as a two-way street in KP, both in engaging the community and in engaging oneself with the community. In this sense, practitioners could think of themselves as being similar to an ethnographer. By having shared dilemmas with ethnographers, practitioners could also benefit from learning and reflecting on the ethics and methods in ethnography.
- Developing an identity as ‘salesmen’ is seen as challenging for project administrators. Therefore, training on marketing strategies should not go amiss.
- Caring about the workers in a CM project and giving them opportunities for professional development may also be a part of a successful plan.

In conclusion, emerging crosswise from several of the aforementioned implications and suggestions, I would like to highlight how a close collaboration between the research and practice worlds in the field of CM would mutually benefit each other. Their symbiosis could provide increased chances for the success, sustainability, and visibility of a project and aid in the sustained development of community music as a research field. Likewise, having an open-

mindful stance on the frontier between CM and music education would also benefit the research field.

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