

# What's in a hyphen?

## Co-production methodology in community arts-based collaboration: Insights from the field

Susannah Cramer-Greenbaum and Eda Yazici

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# Outline

- What is the Open City project
- Co-production and arts-based methods
- Film project background
- Film
- Challenges
- Findings



# What is the Open City project?

- The Open City is an ESRC funded collaboration between the universities of Warwick, Oxford, West London and the Open University
- It asks:
  - “What makes a city open?” by exploring
    - Histories of welcoming in London
    - Residential churn and every day mobilities
    - Neighbourliness and connections to ‘elsewhere’ on London housing estates
    - Claims to the city by campaigning organisations and policy responses and welcoming others
- Creative Fellows
  - Among other methods, we have worked with three artists to explore openness through participatory arts-based methods



## Co-production and arts-based methods

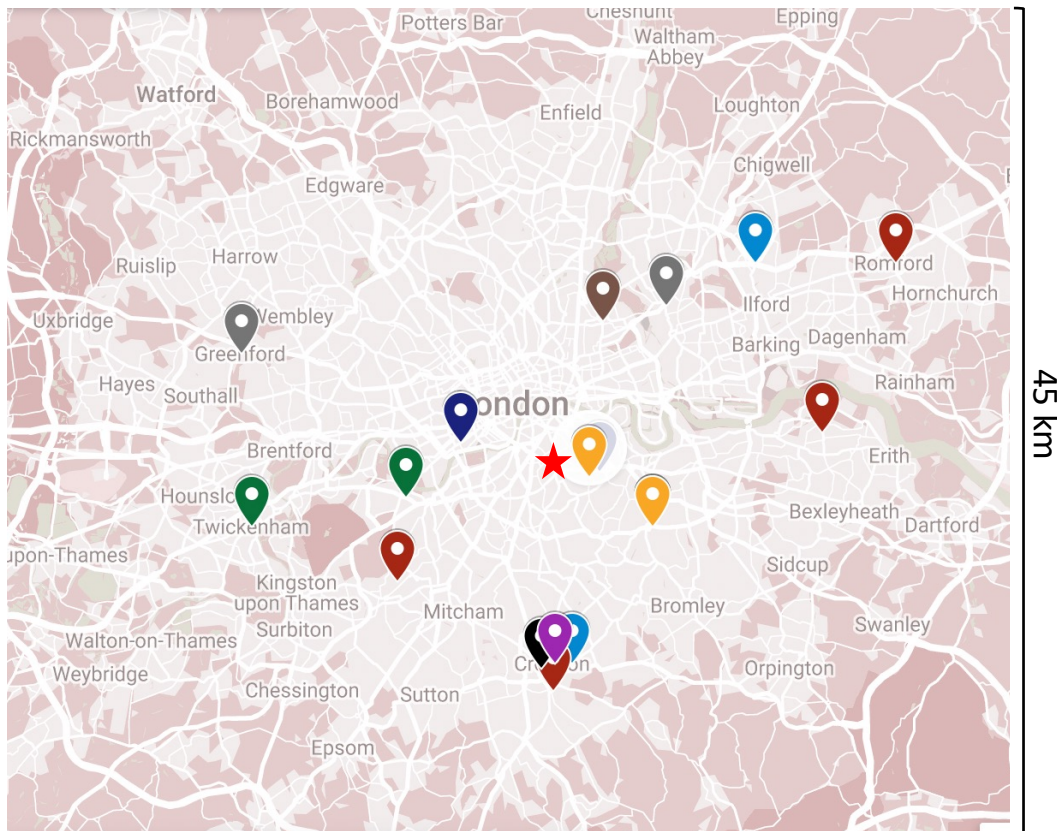
- Difference between the two often elided
  - Arts-based vs co-productive
- Negotiations of power and knowledge
- Conventional narratives of empowerment
- How inclusive?
- Mechanics matter
- Money matters too
- Process vs outcome



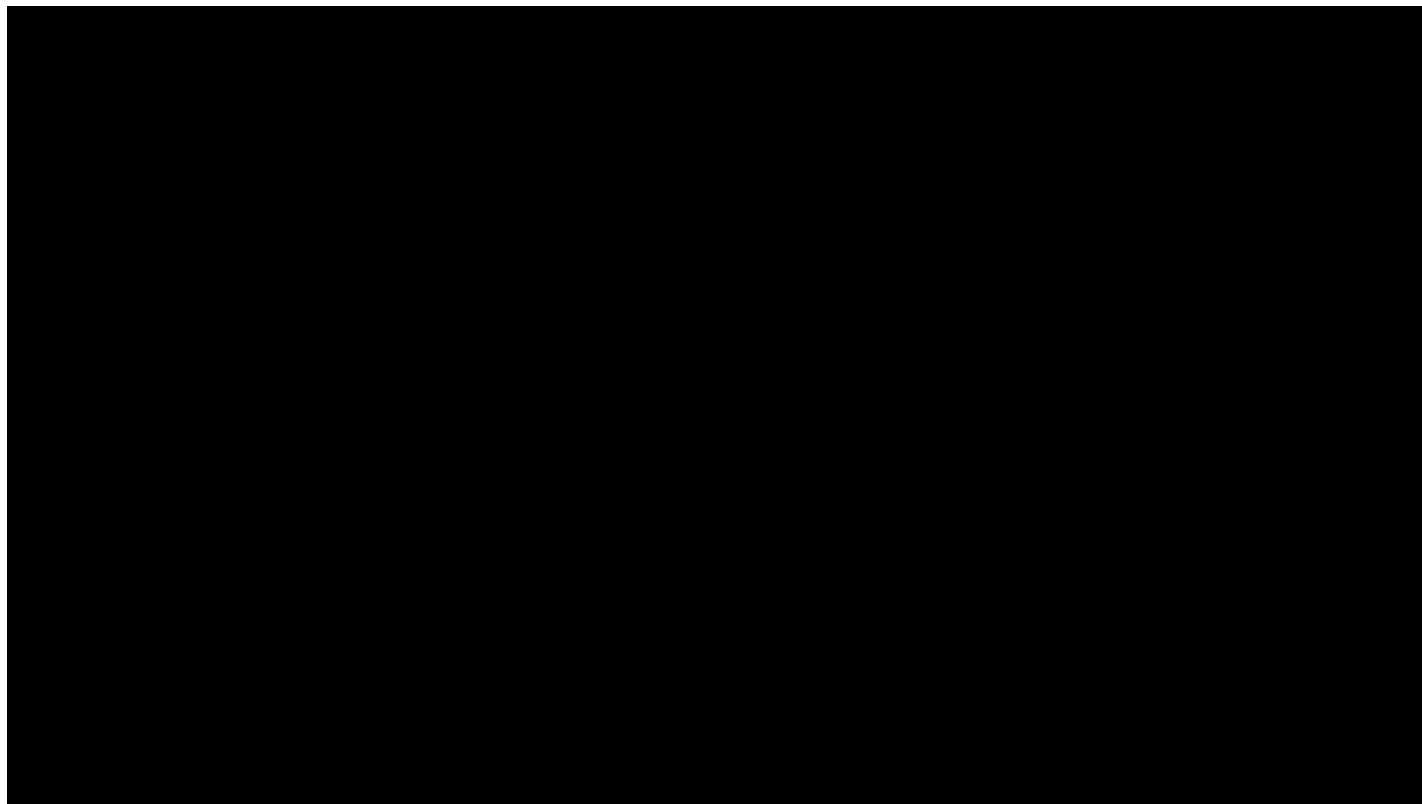


## Film project background

- The Bike Project
- London context
- The artist
- The women
- The process
  - 5 workshops across London
  - Pedal Power observations
  - Final film production



## Film (short version)



<https://opencitywarwick.co.uk/home-2/collaborations/cycling-visibility/>

# Challenges

- Collaboration
  - Four constituencies involved
    - TBP, participants, researchers, artist
    - Collaborating but also conflicting agendas
- Asymmetries of power, input, age, background
- Logistics!
  - Valuing time
  - Providing appropriate participant support



## Findings

- The hyphen in co-production can flatten the asymmetries of the method, or produce/imply a false equivalence
- Recognizing these asymmetries is critical - They are deeply embedded in all aspects of the project, from the logistics of money and contracts to the social interactions and artistic production
- Outcome not production? - Instead of focusing on co-production, we need to focus on types of extracted value. How and where is value produced and for whom?



# Thank you !

[opencity@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:opencity@warwick.ac.uk)

[www.opencitywarwick.co.uk](http://www.opencitywarwick.co.uk)

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Project Team: John Solomos, Michael Keith, Steve Pile, Karim Murji,  
Eda Yazici, Susannah Cramer-Greenbaum