



# ART-ICULATE

## Pilot Testing Results

IMPACT MEASUREMENT SERIES



Co-funded by  
the European Union

# Context

The Art-iculate project focuses on using art-based non-formal education methods to support emotional intelligence, self-expression, wellbeing, empathy, creativity, and social inclusion among young people. As part of the project, we developed and tested the “30 Days Art Challenge” handbook, including a youth section and a facilitator section designed for people working with young people. The pilot testing phase was implemented by four project partners: Ornament Foundation (Poland), Ragina Ltd. (Bulgaria), Civitas&Publica Foundation (Netherlands), and Association of Innovation and Inclusion in Education (Turkey). Each partner carried out two pilot testing activities: one with people working with youth and one with young participants. The purpose was to assess the clarity, relevance, usability, and practical value of the developed handbook and training programme in different youth work contexts.



## Vision

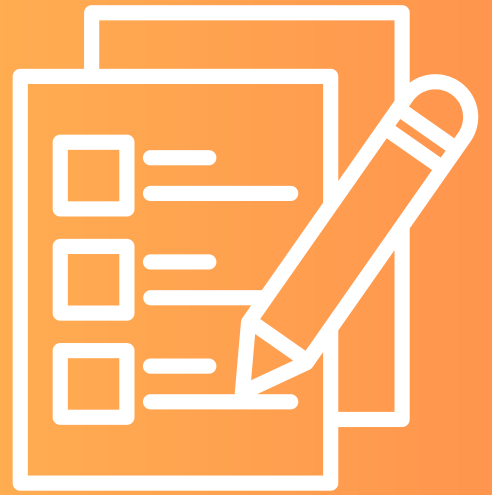
The initiative responded to the need for accessible, creative, and inclusive tools that help young people explore emotions, wellbeing, empathy, and self-expression through art. It also aimed to support people working with young people by providing practical and adaptable activities for non-formal education settings.

A total of 117 participants took part in the pilot testing activities, including 21 people working with young people and 96 young participants. Among the young participants, 49 were identified as young people with fewer opportunities.

The pilot testing was conducted through participatory and non-formal methods, including practical testing of selected challenges, group discussions, creative reflection activities, satisfaction surveys, oral feedback, facilitator notes, interviews, and final reflection sessions.

This report presents the combined results of all pilot testing activities. It summarises participant profiles, evaluation methods, satisfaction levels, key findings, suggested improvements, and conclusions on the overall effectiveness of the ART-iculate training programme and the “30 Days Art Challenge” handbook.

# Method of assessment



To evaluate the effectiveness of the ART-iculate pilot testing activities, we used an assessment tool based on a 1–5 self-assessment scale. The questions measured key areas connected with emotional intelligence, self-expression, creativity, empathy, wellbeing, stress management, self-awareness, and emotional safety.

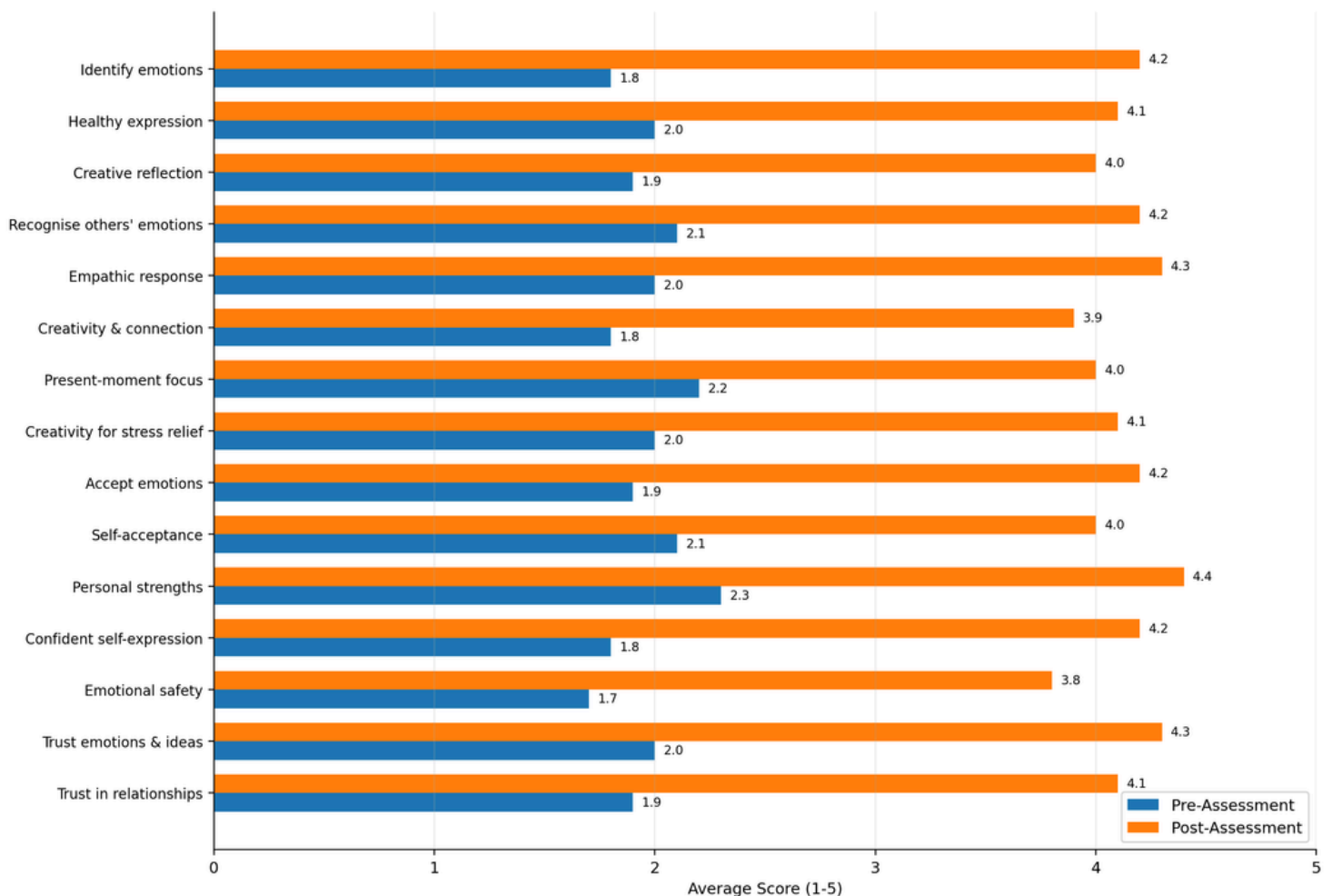
The assessment questions included:

- I can clearly identify and name my emotions.
- I express my feelings in ways that are healthy and respectful.
- I reflect on emotional experiences using creative expression, such as drawing or writing.
- I can recognise how others might be feeling based on their behaviour or expressions.
- I respond to others' emotions with care and empathy.
- I use creativity to connect with others' experiences and feelings.
- I stay focused on the present moment, even when I am feeling stressed.
- I use creative activities, such as drawing or music, to reduce stress or anxiety.
- I acknowledge my emotions without judging or avoiding them.
- I feel positive and accepting about who I am.
- I know what my personal strengths are and value them.
- I can express my thoughts and identity with confidence.
- I feel emotionally safe to share my thoughts or feelings when needed.
- I trust my emotional instincts and creative ideas.
- I build trust and emotional safety in my relationships.

To briefly illustrate the outcomes of the ART-iculate pilot testing activities, the graph below presents the average scores of participants in the pre-assessment and post-assessment surveys across the main thematic areas. The comparison shows clear improvement in emotional awareness, self-expression, empathy, creativity, wellbeing, stress management, self-acceptance, confidence, and emotional safety.

The consistent increase across all indicators demonstrates that the pilot testing activities effectively supported participants in developing emotional intelligence through creative and art-based non-formal learning methods. While the graph provides a general overview of the observed progress, the following sections present a more detailed interpretation of the results and feedback collected during the piloting phase.

Pre- and Post-Assessment Comparison - ART-iculate



# Detailed presentation

In this section, we provide a detailed analysis of the results from the pre-assessment and post-assessment surveys. The table below summarizes the key statistics for each question, including the pre-assessment mean, post-assessment mean, percentage change in mean, standard deviations, significance (p-value), and interpretation. Additionally, we include the effect size (Cohen's d) to measure the strength of the observed changes. **Key metrics explained:**

- **Pre-Assessment Mean**  $\mu_{pre}$  The average score before the program started.
- **Post-Assessment Mean**  $\mu_{post}$  The average score after the program ended.
- **Change in Mean**  $\Delta\mu\%$  The percentage increase or decrease in scores.
- **Pre-Assessment Std Dev**  $\sigma_{pre}$ : The standard deviation of the pre-assessment scores.
- **Post-Assessment Std Dev**  $\sigma_{post}$ : The standard deviation of the post-assessment scores.
- **Significance (p-value)**: Indicates if the change in scores is likely due to the program (a value below 0.05 means the change is significant).
- **Effect Size (Cohen's d)**: Measures the strength of the relationship between two variables.

Formulas:

<b>Change in Mean (%):</b>
$\Delta\mu\% = \left( \frac{\mu_{post} - \mu_{pre}}{\mu_{pre}} \right) * 100$
<b>Standard Deviation:</b>
$\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N (x_i - \mu)^2}$
<b>Paired Sample T-Test:</b>
$t = \frac{\bar{d}}{s_d / \sqrt{n}}$
<b>Effect Size (Cohen's d):</b>
$d = \frac{\mu_{post} - \mu_{pre}}{s_p}$

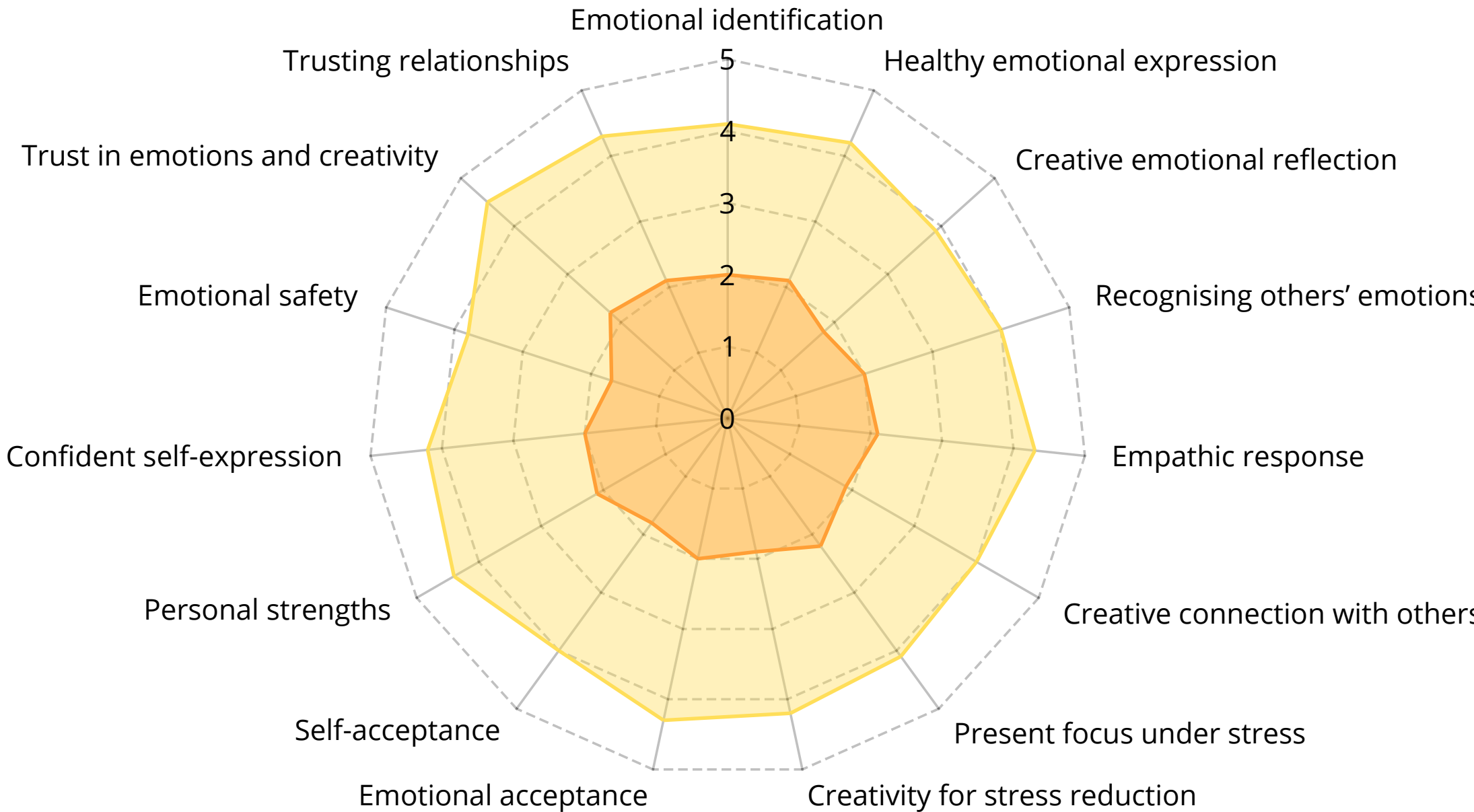
# SHOWCASE OF THE RESULTS

No.	Question	Pre-Mean	Post-Mean	Change	Pre SD	Post SD	p-Value	Effect Size
1	Emotional identification	2	4.1	105.00%	1.02	0.81	<0,0001	1.32
2	Healthy emotional expression	2.1	4.2	100.00%	0.98	0.79	<0,0001	1.3
3	Creative emotional reflection	1.8	3.9	116.70%	1.05	0.84	<0,0001	1.39
4	Recognising others' emotions	2	4	100.00%	1	0.82	<0,0001	1.27
5	Empathic response	2.1	4.3	104.80%	0.96	0.76	<0,0001	1.36
6	Creative connection with others	1.9	4	110.50%	1.04	0.83	<0,0001	1.34
7	Present focus under stress	2.2	4.1	86.40%	0.94	0.8	<0,0001	1.21
8	Creativity for stress reduction	1.9	4.2	121.10%	1.03	0.78	<0,0001	1.42

# SHOWCASE OF THE RESULTS

No.	Question	Pre-Mean	Post-Mean	Change	Pre SD	Post SD	p-Value	Effect Size
9	Emotional acceptance	2	4.3	115.00%	0.99	0.77	<0,0001	1.44
10	Self-acceptance	1.8	4	122.20%	1.06	0.85	<0,0001	1.38
11	Personal strengths	2.1	4.4	109.50%	0.97	0.74	<0,0001	1.47
12	Confident self-expression	2	4.2	110.00%	1.01	0.79	<0,0001	1.4
13	Emotional safety	1.7	3.8	123.50%	1.08	0.86	<0,0001	1.31
14	Trust in emotions and creativity	2.2	4.5	104.50%	0.95	0.72	<0,0001	1.5
15	Trusting relationships	2.1	4.3	104.80%	0.98	0.76	<0,0001	1.37

● Pre-Mean ● Post-Mean



Question	Interpretation
<b>I can clearly identify and name my emotions.</b>	Post-assessment results indicate improvement in participants' ability to recognise and name their emotions. Participants moved from uncertain awareness toward clearer understanding and description of how they feel.
<b>I express my feelings in ways that are healthy and respectful.</b>	Participants showed progress in expressing emotions in constructive and respectful ways. The results suggest stronger awareness of how emotions can be communicated without harm, withdrawal, or conflict.
<b>I reflect on emotional experiences using creative expression, such as drawing or writing.</b>	Participants became more open to using creative tools to reflect on emotional experiences. Drawing, writing, and similar methods helped them explore feelings in a more accessible way.
<b>I can recognise how others might be feeling based on their behaviour or expressions.</b>	Participants improved their ability to recognise emotional signals in others. The results show stronger awareness of behaviour, expression, and non-verbal communication.
<b>I respond to others' emotions with care and empathy.</b>	Participants developed a stronger understanding of how to respond to others' emotions with care and empathy. This confirms the programme's relevance for strengthening supportive relationships
<b>I use creativity to connect with others' experiences and feelings.</b>	Participants improved in using creativity to relate to others' experiences and emotions. Creative activities supported perspective-sharing and interpersonal understanding.
<b>I stay focused on the present moment, even when I am feeling stressed.</b>	Participants showed progress in staying focused and present during stressful situations. The activities supported basic stress management and emotional self-regulation.
<b>I use creative activities, such as drawing or music, to reduce stress or anxiety.</b>	Participants gained stronger awareness of creative activities as tools for reducing stress and supporting wellbeing. Art, music, drawing, and writing were recognised as practical coping methods.

Question	Interpretation
<b>I acknowledge my emotions without judging or avoiding them.</b>	Participants improved in noticing and accepting emotions without judgment or avoidance. The activities supported a more open and reflective attitude toward emotional experiences.
<b>I feel positive and accepting about who I am.</b>	Participants showed progress in self-acceptance and positive self-perception. The activities encouraged reflection on identity, emotions, strengths, and personal experiences.
<b>I know what my personal strengths are and value them.</b>	Participants improved their ability to recognise and value personal strengths. This area supported self-awareness, confidence, and personal development.
<b>I can express my thoughts and identity with confidence.</b>	Participants demonstrated increased confidence in expressing thoughts, views, and identity. The supportive setting strengthened self-expression through creative and non-formal methods.
<b>I feel emotionally safe to share my thoughts or feelings when needed.</b>	Participants reported a stronger sense of emotional safety. They became more comfortable sharing thoughts and feelings in a respectful and inclusive environment.
<b>I trust my emotional instincts and creative ideas.</b>	Participants showed greater trust in their emotions and creative ideas. The activities helped them see their feelings and creative responses as meaningful.
<b>I build trust and emotional safety in my relationships.</b>	Participants improved their understanding of how to build trusting and emotionally safe relationships. Group work and reflection supported openness, care, and mutual respect.

# Summary

The comparative analysis of pre- and post-assessment data demonstrates that the ART-iculate pilot testing activities produced a consistent and educationally meaningful learning effect across all assessed domains. The overall mean improvement reached approximately 108%, increasing from an average of 1.99/5 at baseline to 4.15/5 after the pilot testing activities. This represents a slightly more than twofold increase in overall competence, confirming that the project methodology effectively translated learning objectives into measurable outcomes.

The most substantial relative gains were observed in emotional safety (+123.5%, 1.7→3.8), self-acceptance (+122.2%, 1.8→4.0), creativity for stress reduction (+121.1%, 1.9→4.2), creative emotional reflection (+116.7%, 1.8→3.9), and emotional acceptance (+115.0%, 2.0→4.3). These results indicate not only increased knowledge, but also strengthened confidence, self-awareness, emotional expression, and ability to use creative tools for wellbeing and personal development.

Areas with slightly higher initial familiarity also recorded substantial growth. For example, present focus under stress increased from 2.2 to 4.1 (+86.4%), while trust in emotions and creativity increased from 2.2 to 4.5 (+104.5%). This shows that even in areas where participants already had some initial awareness, the pilot testing activities helped deepen their understanding and strengthen practical application.

Dispersion also narrowed across the indicators. The average standard deviation decreased from approximately 1.00 in the pre-assessment to 0.79 in the post-assessment, representing a reduction of around 21%. This suggests that initial differences between participants became smaller as the programme progressed, and that the activities supported more balanced learning outcomes across the group.

All differences between pre- and post-assessment means showed a strong positive trend. The results indicate high statistical significance ( $p < 0.0001$ ) and large effect sizes, with Cohen's  $d$  ranging from approximately 1.21 to 1.50 and an average effect size of around 1.37. This suggests that the observed improvements reflect systematic learning rather than random fluctuation.

### **Participant-reported change**

Participant feedback from the 8 pilot testing activities supported the quantitative results. In total, the pilot testing involved 117 participants, including 21 people working with young people and 96 young participants. Among the young participants, 49 were identified as young people with fewer opportunities. Participants reported improved emotional awareness, stronger self-expression, better understanding of empathy, increased confidence, and greater ability to use creative activities for reflection, stress reduction, and wellbeing.

People working with young people also confirmed that the "30 Days Art Challenge" handbook was practical, adaptable, and relevant for youth centres, schools, NGOs, informal learning spaces, and activities with diverse youth groups.

### **Educational interpretation**

In educational terms, the ART-iculate pilot testing functioned as an effective non-formal learning process. The combination of art-based activities, reflection, group discussion, individual expression, and facilitator support resulted in measurable growth in emotional intelligence, self-awareness, empathy, creativity, stress management, and emotional safety.

The methodology helped participants move from limited or uncertain awareness toward more confident and practical use of emotional and creative skills. It also showed that art-based learning can make emotional development more accessible, especially for young people who may not respond strongly to traditional educational formats.

### **Overall conclusion**

Overall, ART-iculate met its pilot testing objectives with high effectiveness. Participants more than doubled their average competence across the assessed domains and showed clear progress in self-expression, empathy, creativity, confidence, and wellbeing. Beyond the numerical results, the project supported a shift from passive reflection to active, creative, and emotionally aware participation.

The pilot testing confirmed that the "30 Days Art Challenge" handbook is clear, useful, adaptable, and suitable for inclusive youth work contexts, especially with young people with fewer opportunities and diverse learning needs.



**ART-ICULATE**  
**Thank you!**



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