

## FailSpace: The Five Facets of Failure interviews

### PROFILE TRANSCRIPT

Liam ([00:02](#)):

It was sort of very much a sort of... it was similar to the Olympics, probably similar to another kind of cultural mega event, very much media-oriented mega events. And they have to be successful. By definition, the Olympic games are regarded as a failure if the head of the IOC at the end of each edition of the Olympic Games doesn't say that this Olympic games have been the most successful ever. So he basically has to say that otherwise it's regarded as a failure. And I think there was a little bit about culture in this project, but it meant that there was an impossibility of failure, this kind of constant self-congratulation, and it squeezed out dissent and the opportunity for learning. So we maybe got carried away with our own narrative of success.

Liam ([01:02](#)):

I mean, we do try to be honest about our failures. That said, we're in competition for commissions, for funding, and we are a high-risk proposition for an awful lot of funders. So we do need to be careful. So yeah, whilst our transparency is a vital part of us and our acceptance and recognising of failure is too, we also need to keep control of the narrative so that our failures are not the reason why we become defunded in what increasingly is a culture war about who should get money and who shouldn't.

Christine ([01:48](#)):

I think sometimes maybe we do gloss over things that weren't actually that good. I think, you know far more learning could be obtained if we were actually able to say, well, for this to have been the workshop that I wanted it to be, I would've needed A, B, C, and D. But I don't know how much room there is for people to be able to say, well, actually, there were some things that weren't good enough, and that will have had an impact on the experience. It could have been better. I think I often feel like I need to be positive because I guess I worry that saying anything less than that is just going to rebound on me the next time I go to that organisation for work.

Diane ([02:38](#)):

There's no accountability, none. And if there is accountability, it's going to be poodle accountability. All the organisations I have ever worked with, they all have governing bodies or trustees, but they're pretty much poodles. You'll go along with what the management will say. So any complaints, anything like that about senior management will be squashed or put to one side. So there might be some phony accountability, but it's accountability and name only.

Diane ([03:21](#)):

We lie on evaluation forums all the time. There's the doubling that goes on where you double the number of people you attended your event or activity. Everyone does it. So you sort of have to do it too, otherwise you look bad. I've known exhibitions where the person on the door with the clicker clicks every time someone crosses the room, even if it's the same person, an employee maybe six or seven times.