

From Canvas to Community: EmpowerArt Workshop as a Recovery-Centred Catalyst for Work Rehabilitation

Bridging occupational therapy, meaningful work, and
community participation in mental health rehabilitation

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Why This Matters

Recovery-oriented mental health care should create **meaningful roles**, not only symptom reduction.

Limited Participation

Service users often have few real-life work opportunities during their recovery journey.

Meaningful Occupation

Purposeful activity strengthens self-esteem, personal identity, and hope for the future.

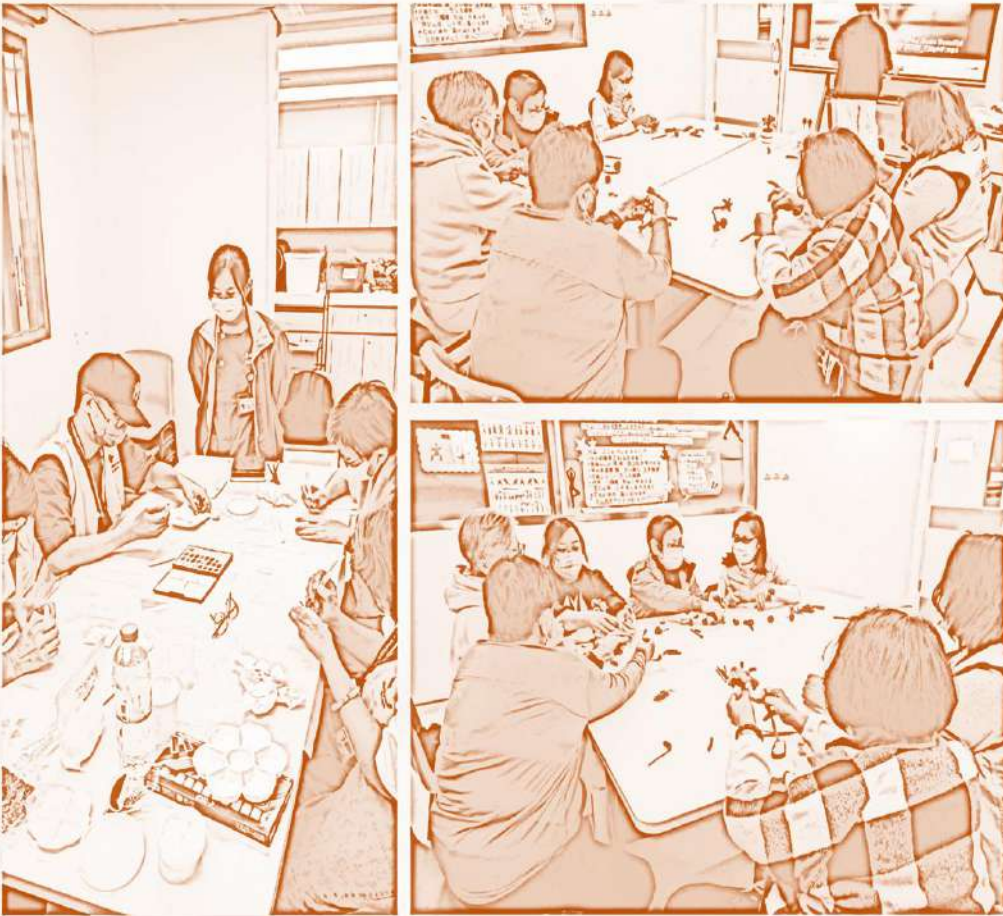
HA Alignment

Client-centred, value-based service direction.



Programme Overview: Innovation in Action

An OT-led, art-based, work-focused model that transforms creative expression into meaningful work experience and tangible recovery outcomes.



Creative Foundation

Structured art production as therapeutic engagement – service users as active creators



Work Simulation

Quality checks, pricing, packaging, display and promotion – real workplace tasks in a safe environment



Community Participation

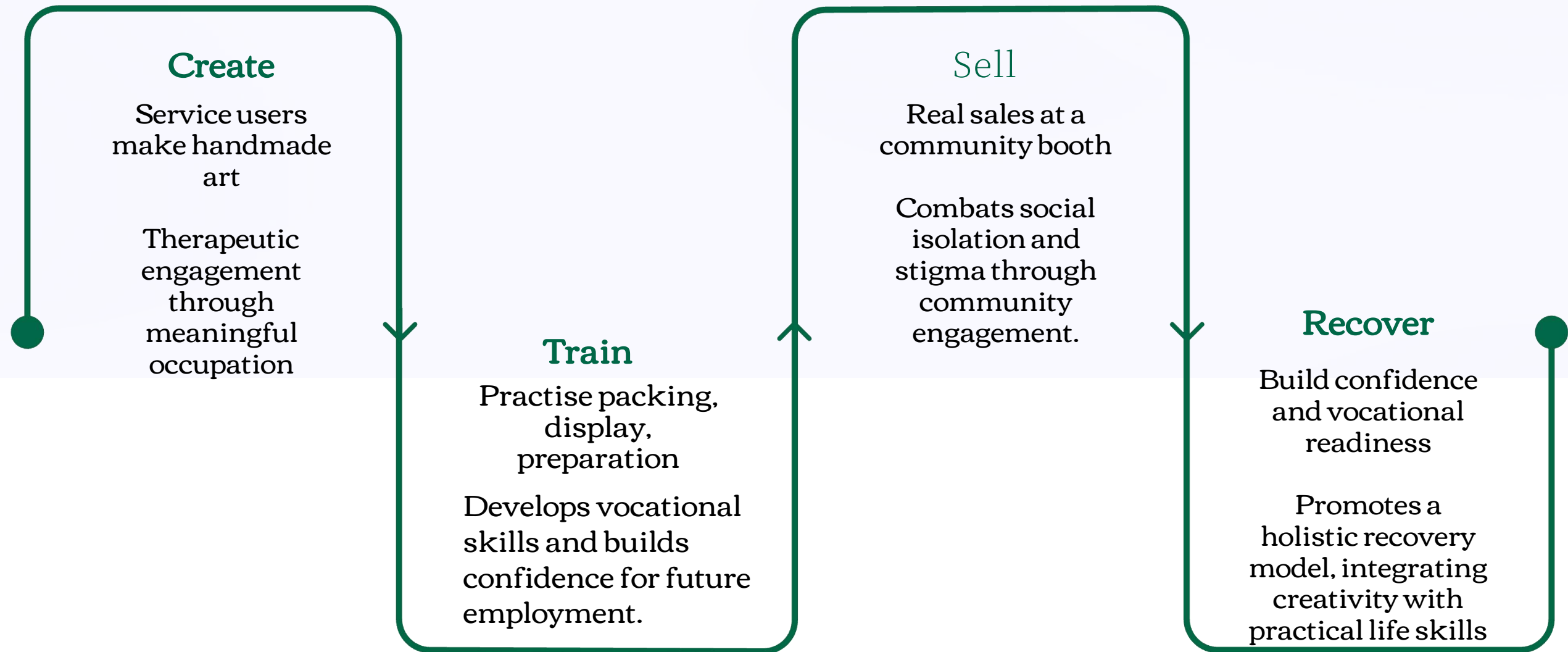
Real sales via volunteer-led marketplace – participants as vendors, not patients



Recovery Outcomes: Enhanced self-efficacy, psychological well-being, and work readiness through authentic occupational participation.

Program Overview - **Create** → **Practise** → **Sell**

This **three-stage model** uniquely combines art therapy, work training, and genuine community participation—creating a clinically grounded yet innovative pathway to recovery.



Each stage is purposefully designed to build confidence and transferable workplace skills within a safe, therapeutic environment.

Project Objectives

Recovery Outcomes

- Assess changes in self-esteem, recovery orientation, and mental well-being

Work Readiness

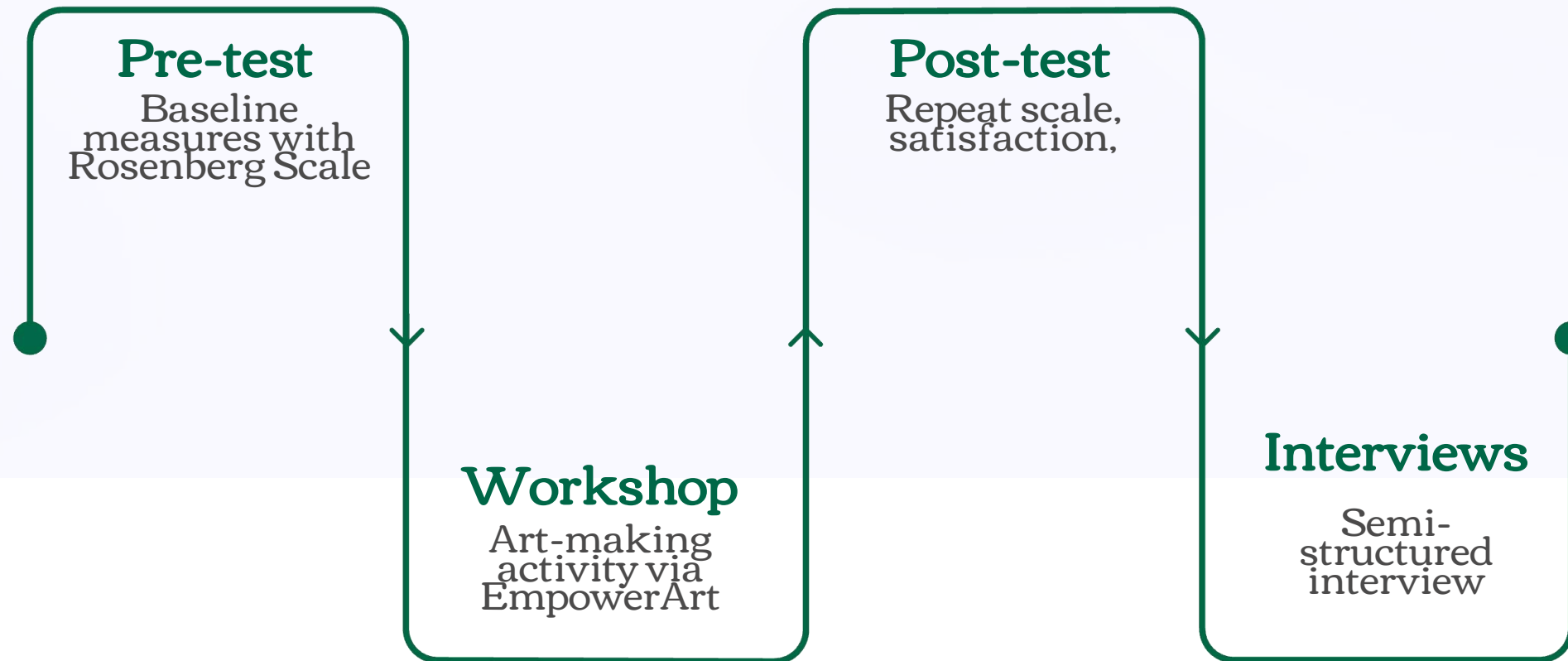
- Explore how art-making and sales participation influence self-efficacy and vocational confidence.

Service Implications

- Identify practical enhancements for mental health services across HA settings.

Methodology

A **mixed-method pre-post evaluation** was used to strengthen scientific rigour and capture both measurable and lived outcomes.



The evaluation moved from baseline measurement, through participation in EmpowerArt, to post-test outcomes and participant interviews.

1

Quantitative

- Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (pre & post)
- Structured questionnaire: demographics, frequency, satisfaction
- Paired-sample comparison and descriptive analysis

2

Qualitative

- Semi-structured interviews with 5 participants
- Thematic analysis of lived experience

Participants & Setting



- 20 participants joined the EmpowerArt programme at OT Psychiatric ambulatory setting between July and December 2025.
- 14 with mood disorder, 5 with ASD, 1 with schizophrenia

50

Sessions completed

11

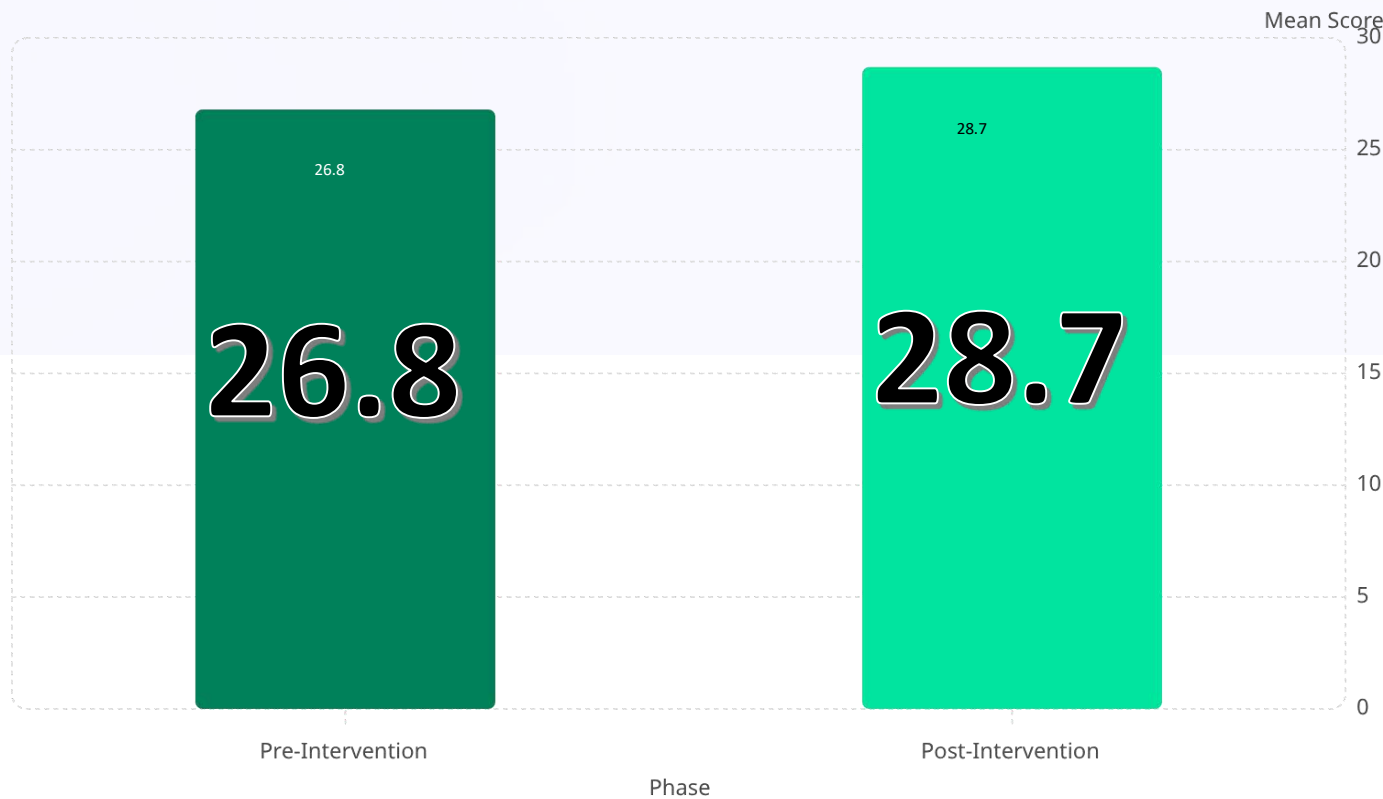
Completed pre & post scales

5

Participated in interviews

Quantitative Results

Self-esteem improved significantly, as measured by the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale.



Key Findings

Mean Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale score rose from **26.8** to **28.7** – a mean improvement of **1.9** points.

Statistical significance confirmed:
p = 0.023

Qualitative Findings - the Human Voice

Participants described meaningful gains across four interconnected themes of recovery.

Psychological Well-being

Enhanced sense of accomplishment and positive emotional experience through creative expression.

Self-Efficacy

Recognition of personal strengths and growing confidence in one's own capabilities and strengths

Vocational Readiness

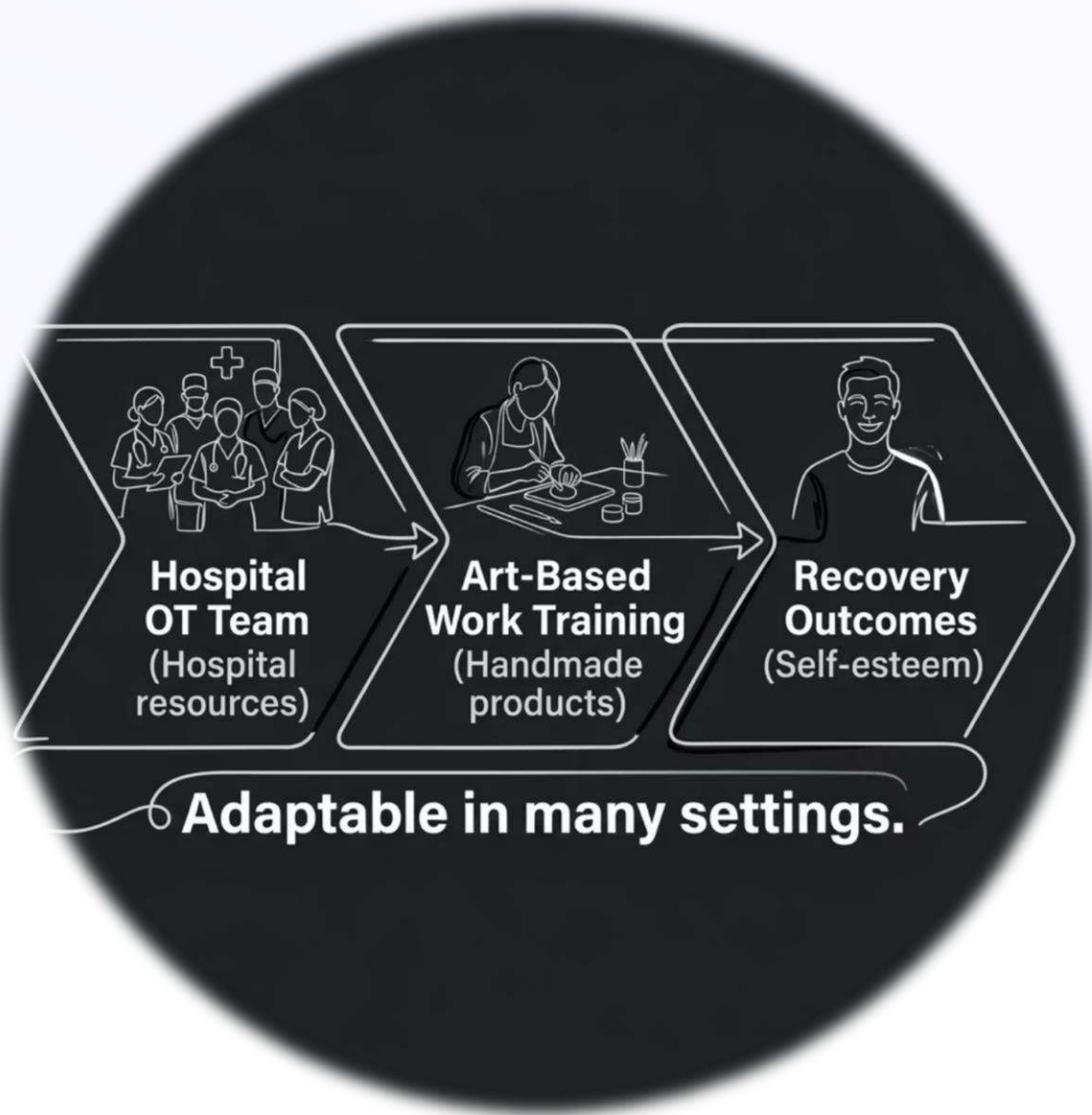
Tangible growth in interpersonal skills, task management, and the confidence to re-engage in work

Social Connectedness

Deeper peer bonds and mutual appreciation fostered through shared workshop participation.



Service Enhancement Through Low-Cost, High-Impact Rehabilitation



Why It Works at Scale

- Leverages existing **OT expertise** and **hospital resources**
- Converts routine therapeutic activity into structured work rehabilitation without extra cost
- Generates mutual benefits:
 - ✓ For **patients**: improved outcomes and engagement
 - ✓ For **service**: enriched therapeutic milieu and positive image to visitors and staff

Service-wide Applicability: Replication Across Settings

Replicable Framework

- Art and craft production for different diagnostic groups
- Works across day centres, wards, and ambulatory settings

Flexible

- Adapts to client ability with stepwise task grading
- Fits inpatient, day hospital, and community settings
- Supports festive sales, hospital events, and charity campaigns

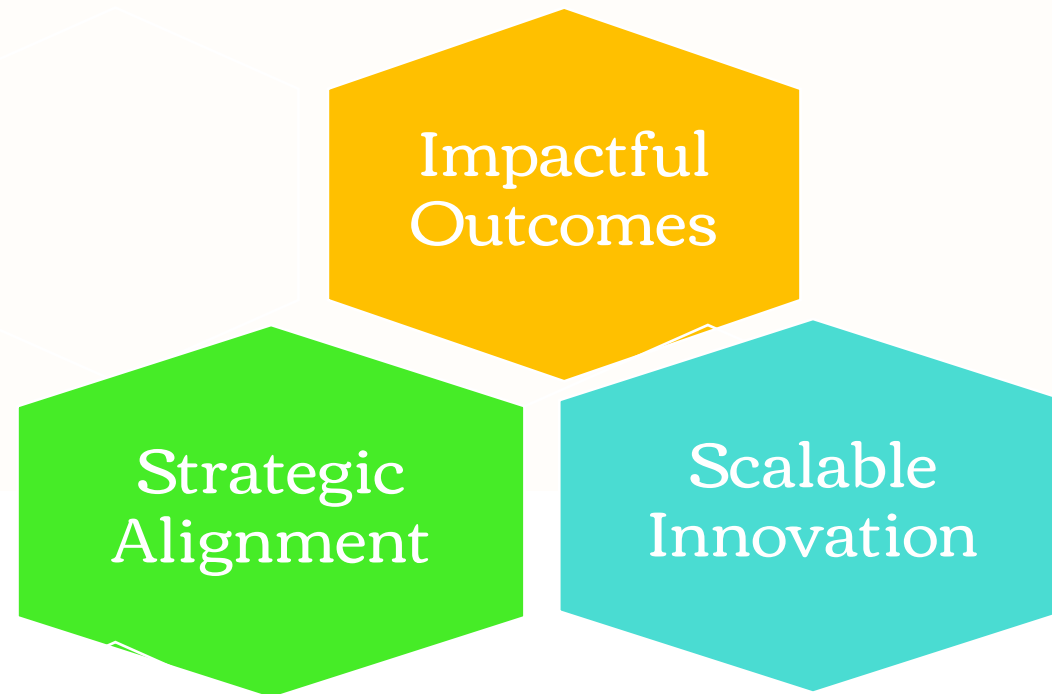
Integration Potential

- Links with supported employment pathways
- Partners with NGOs and community groups for broader inclusion



EmpowerArt Workshop

From canvas to community – empowering recovery through occupation.



Acknowledgement

Thank You

With sincere appreciation to all service users involved, colleagues, supervisors, and clinical staff who supported EmpowerArt from conception to completion.