



Arts Mentoring

Frequently Asked Questions

This document is intended to give you further information about the Prison Arts Foundation arts mentoring scheme and seeks to answer the following relevant points:

- What is the overall aim of the project?
- What are the project's goals?
- What is mentoring?
- What are the PAF's mentoring pathways?
- Could I be a mentor with the project?
- What kind of arts are you interested in?
- Do I need to have any experience in teaching to apply to train as a mentor?
- Who would I be mentoring?
- What will being a PAF Mentor involve?
- What will a typical mentoring session consist of?
- How much time will I need to commit to the project?
- What will I get out of being a mentor?
- What do mentees get out of participating in the project?
- What support and training will PAF provide?
- What will I be paid?
- Will my expenses be reimbursed?
- Will I need to reveal my personal contact details?
- What security checks will be needed and how long will it take?
- I am an ex-offender; can I volunteer to be a mentor?
- Who should I contact if I have more questions?

What is the aim of the arts mentoring scheme?

To deliver arts input shaped to the needs of individual offenders that empowers them to continue with their arts based activities.

What are the project's goals?

To support people who have been involved in the criminal justice system to sustain and develop their artistic interests

To ensure that the offenders needs are met holistically by integrating the arts mentoring with other resettlement services

What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is a relationship between two people with the goal of professional and personal development. The "mentor" is an experienced individual who shares knowledge, experience, and advice with a less experienced person, or "mentee."

Mentors become trusted advisers and role models – people who have "been there" and "done that." They support and encourage their mentees by offering suggestions and knowledge, both general and specific. The goal is help mentees improve their skills and, hopefully, advance their careers.

This relationship is typically developed at a time of transition in the mentee's life, and lasts for a significant and sustained period of time. For people with an offending background the role also includes communicating with other support services both statutory and non statutory.

What are PAF's mentoring pathway?

Our mentoring programme will offer unique and bespoke support to people who have been involved in the criminal justice system and who would like to continue with their arts based practice. All mentees will be matched with a mentor who will work with them on a one-to-one basis to identify the goals they would like to achieve in the arts and have regular mentoring sessions to realise these.

First Step mentoring - this pathway is open to anyone who has been involved in the criminal justice system – regardless of whether they have previously won a Koestler or Listowel Award or have an existing body of work.

The mentor will help the mentee identify what specific support they would like to get from the mentoring scheme e.g. applying to further education, finding their way around their local arts community, and with the support of The Prison Arts Foundation, decide upon a timeframe and number of mentoring sessions through which they can achieve these goals. Mentees can receive 2 – 7 mentoring sessions and will plan the frequency of these sessions with their mentor.

Creative Futures mentoring - this pathway is designed to support either Koestler Trust and/or Listowel Award winners who would like to develop their practice in the community or in custody and those who have an existing body of work.

Mentees will seek the support of a mentor in developing their skills e.g. building their portfolio, identifying with other arts opportunities, disseminating their work. Mentees commit to having 10 mentoring sessions with their mentor over a 12 month period.

Could I be a mentor?

To be an Arts Mentor you must have:

- Experience of arts practice as either a professional or a committed amateur.
- A thorough knowledge of current practice, resources and available opportunities in at least one field of the arts.
- An ability to identify and access arts amenities in the mentee's local community.
- An ability to give constructive feedback to mentees about their artwork.
- An ability to plan imaginative and engaging activities which will encourage the mentee's involvement in the arts.
- Excellent interpersonal skills that balance warmth and clarity, as well as good listening and communication skills.
- An ability to keep accurate records and to strictly follow guidelines and procedures.
- Excellent time-keeping and ability to make travel arrangements.
- A strong commitment to the aims of the mentoring project and to the principles of equality and inclusion as laid out in the PAF's equal opportunities policy.

What kind of arts are you interested in?

Art forms can include but are not limited to:-

- Ceramics
- Craft
- Drawing
- Fashion and Beauty
- Fiction
- Graphics
- Film
- Magazines
- Music composition
- Needlework
- Painting
- Performance

- Photography
- Play writing
- Poetry
- Sculpture
- Story telling

Do I need to have any experience in teaching to apply to train as a mentor?

Mentors are not required to have any specific formal qualifications although training in the arts, education, counselling or other relevant fields may be an advantage.

Who would I be mentoring?

To be eligible to become a mentee participants must:

- Have had some involvement with the criminal justice system in Northern Ireland. They may be
 - currently serving a sentence in any of the Northern Ireland Prison Service's prisons; HMP Maghaberry, HMP Magilligan or Hydebank Wood College, or
 - have been sentenced to probation supervision with the Probation Board for Northern Ireland.
 - have previously served a custodial or community-based sentence in Northern Ireland.
- Demonstrate a talent and motivation to further their interest in the arts. We will seek to support creative mentees who might like to participate in arts activity in the community – either as a regular leisure pursuit, or those who might have a reasonable possibility of undertaking training, education, volunteering or employment in the arts.
- Have enough practical and social support in the community from family, friends or other services to be able to make use of arts mentoring without being overwhelmed by more pressing needs such as homelessness or drug use.
- Be willing and enthusiastic to participate in the project, and to commit to meeting their mentor for regular mentoring sessions. The number of sessions will be dictated by whether the mentee receives mentoring under the First Step or Creative Futures pathway. The commitment levels will be agreed on an individual basis with the mentee.

All mentees who participate in the project will be doing so voluntarily.

What will being a PAF Arts Mentor involve?

To become an Arts Mentor with PAF you must:

- Undertake specific training relevant to becoming a PAF Arts Mentor.
- Commit to a set number of mentoring meetings with your mentee
- Complete a Session Report after each meeting with your mentee
- Complete a Record of Contact form and your Mentees Personal Development plan
- Agree to participate in regular individual and peer support sessions.
- Engage in project evaluation activities, which will involve being interviewed and completing questionnaires.
- Adhere to the projects policies regarding confidentiality, personal safety and boundaries and follow PAF's 'Good Practice Guidelines.

What will a typical mentoring session consist of?

The first mentoring session may take place while the offender is still in custody so that the mentor can help him/her include arts activity in his/her plans for release, or it may take place in the community. The mentor and mentee will confirm where the mentee will be getting practical and other support, so that the PAF work can focus on the arts. The mentor will also make absolutely clear the time-limits and other boundaries of the relationship.

The following mentoring sessions can last up to half a day each, but will be generally about 2 hours at a mutually agreed meeting place such as a community centre or arts venue. In planning the content of the sessions, within the behavioural and time boundaries agreed by the project, mentor and mentee can be as flexible and imaginative as they like, and the project will give the mentors a small budget to pay for some activities. The mentor may:

- give feedback on the mentee's latest artistic creations;
- suggest new forms or inspiration;
- work jointly with the mentee – e.g. both drawing the same subject or both carrying out a writing exercise together;
- suggest reading, websites and other resources;
- give information about events, courses and other opportunities
- introduce the mentee to other local artists or groups;
- accompany the mentee to arts events – e.g. an exhibition, a performance or a poetry reading;
- accompany the mentee to open days or interviews for courses;
- encourage the mentee to submit work to competitions or for publication.

How much time will I need to commit to the project?

A mentor will spend time:

- Attending three full days training prior to being accepted as a mentor.
- Attending regular support and supervision sessions.
- Preparing informative and engaging mentoring sessions.
- Carrying out up to ten mentoring sessions over a twelve month period

What will I get out of being an Arts mentor?

- You will be doing something meaningful, enjoyable, constructive and challenging
- You will develop coaching and counselling skills that are transferable to your personal and professional life
- Mentoring can revitalise your interest in your current work - and you inevitably get a greater understanding of key issues through reflection with your mentee
- Mentoring can be rewarding as the person you mentor develops and progresses
- Mentors will be automatically invited to PAF events such as exhibition and sale previews, workshops and conferences
- PAF will provide you with a reference detailing the work you have undertaken as a mentor

What do mentees get out of participating in the project?

We hope that, through arts mentoring, the mentees will:

- Develop their self-confidence and self-esteem
- Continue their enjoyment and engagement in the arts
- Learn to reflect on their work and the ways in which they learn best
- Develop a range of employable skills
- Gain access to art's networks not otherwise available
- Receive practical advice and information
- Feel less isolated

What support and training will PAF provide?

The Arts Mentor Training Course is delivered as three consecutive day's initial training and a fourth day consolidation work later on which allows for mentors to meet with their mentee in the interim period.

The Arts Programme team offer a range of support and supervision services to mentors including: one-to-one reviews, small group meetings with other mentors and other opportunities for mentors to contribute to the learning and development of the mentoring scheme.

What will I be paid?

Payments to Mentors will be at the rate applicable at the time work is allocated

Eligible costs are:

- Preparation and planning time - £15 per hour
- Delivery time - £30 per hour
- Administration associated with any project, including completion of PAF required documentation etc - £15 per hour

If these rates are reviewed at any time all registered Mentors will receive the new rates in writing.

When a Mentor has completed an agreed mentoring session to a Mentee and returned the Session Record to PAF they may then submit their invoice/expense claim form. ***No payment can be made to a Mentor if any documentation is outstanding.** Payments will be made to Artists directly into their bank account by BACS method

Will my expenses be reimbursed?

Money will be available for participating in artistic activities such as purchasing materials/equipment, costs involved with holding an exhibition, visiting a gallery or attending a play etc. A small subsistence allowance is allowed per mentoring session. The Mentor is required to get permission from the Arts Programme Coordinator during the contract before deciding on any artistic activity. The Prison Arts Foundation shall reimburse the Mentor for any out-of-pocket expenses reasonably and properly incurred by the Mentor in the provision of the Services on presentation of a claim form and such additional supporting receipts as we shall require.

Will I need to reveal my personal contact details?

Participants on the mentoring scheme may use email and the telephone to communicate in between face-to-face meetings. It is up to the mentor and mentee to agree a contact method that is mutually convenient and acceptable. It will not,

however, be necessary for mentors to give their mentee their home address or home phone number. Mentors will be given a Prison Arts Foundation email address though they must have a separate mobile phone for their work with us.

What security checks will be needed and how long will it take?

All mentors need to have a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check - these checks normally take between 4 to 6 weeks. In some situations, a mentor may also be required to undertake additional clearance if they are visiting their mentee in prison. This will be discussed individually.

I am an ex-offender; can I volunteer to be a mentor?

The experience and understanding that an ex-offender will be able to bring to the role of Arts Mentor will be invaluable. We therefore, welcome applications from ex-offenders. However, since the role will require working with vulnerable adults some serious offences and/or any sentence completed less than one year ago may preclude you from becoming a Mentor. It should also be noted that the project will involve working in co-operation with the Prison Service and Probation and that we will seek their views on appropriate matches between mentors and mentees.

Who should I contact if I have more questions?

If you have any more questions regarding the scheme please do not hesitate to contact the Adele Arts Programme Coordinator at The Prison Arts Foundation.

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