



# ARTS MENTORING PROGRAMME INFORMATION

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## **About the Prison Arts Foundation**

The Prison Arts Foundation's (PAF) purpose is to assist the rehabilitation of people who have offended in Northern Ireland using a range of art forms including writing, drama, visual art, craft and music. We engage professional artists and practitioners to teach and enthuse and give inspiration to those serving custodial and community sentences. The geographical reach of PAF's residency programmes extends across all three prison establishments in Northern Ireland: HMP Maghaberry, HMP Magilligan and Hydebank College. We also have a series of community based programmes across Northern Ireland.

PAF artists and practitioners adopt an innovative approach to teaching, as opposed to more formal scholastic approaches that can often alienate people who have offended, many of whom have had a bad experience of traditional educational methods. This enables PAF artists and practitioners to gain the trust of offenders, who do not regard them as part of the 'system', which is essential to the development of a good working relationship.

In our approach we are building on 20 years experience of working in prison environments. PAF's role within the criminal justice system is unique. Our art interventions are a catalyst for rehabilitation. PAF's work has the potential to have wide ranging effects on people who have offended whose lives can be profoundly transformed; on internal relationships within prisons, between prisoners and between prisoners and staff; and externally, between people who have offended and their families and communities.

Participation in PAF workshops is often the first step towards someone engaging more widely with formal education and PAF has close links with education and vocational training services in the prisons. The ultimate aim of PAF is to help those in custody and those coming out of prison to develop new skills, aiding personal development, rehabilitation and employment prospects upon release.

### **Mission**

To inspire creativity and encourage personal and social change in offenders within the criminal justice system, through the arts

### **Vision**

Our vision is of a criminal justice system where all its stakeholders value PAF's work as a crucial element of the rehabilitation process and everyone has the opportunity to positively channel their creative energies and talents through the arts

### **Values**

The following values underpin all aspects of PAF's work. All staff, artists and trustees are expected to uphold and promote these values:

1. Excellence - All our activities should be carried out to the highest ethical and professional standards
2. Capacity for Change - Everyone has the capacity for change. The arts are a powerful tool for change
3. Respect - Everyone should be treated with dignity and respect

4. Responsibility - Each person is responsible and accountable for their own actions. PAF artists are honest in all their dealings with prisoners and promote responsibility for their actions.
5. Focused - Arts programmes should respond effectively to the needs, interests and talents of participants. PAF's role is to support participants in their unique creative journey
6. Collaboration - The PAF is much more effective when working in close partnership with its key stakeholders

## **The Mentoring Project**

In 2016 the Prison Arts Foundation will pilot an innovative form of support to address the transition from custody into the community in Northern Ireland through our arts mentoring for people who have offended scheme. Building on the success of this mentoring programme, we wish to provide continued support to people who have been involved in the criminal justice system and who have an interest in the arts.

PAF Mentors will be experienced artists, writers, producers and craftspeople who are trained to provide support to someone who has been involved in the criminal justice system.

We will have two different mentoring pathways offering 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.

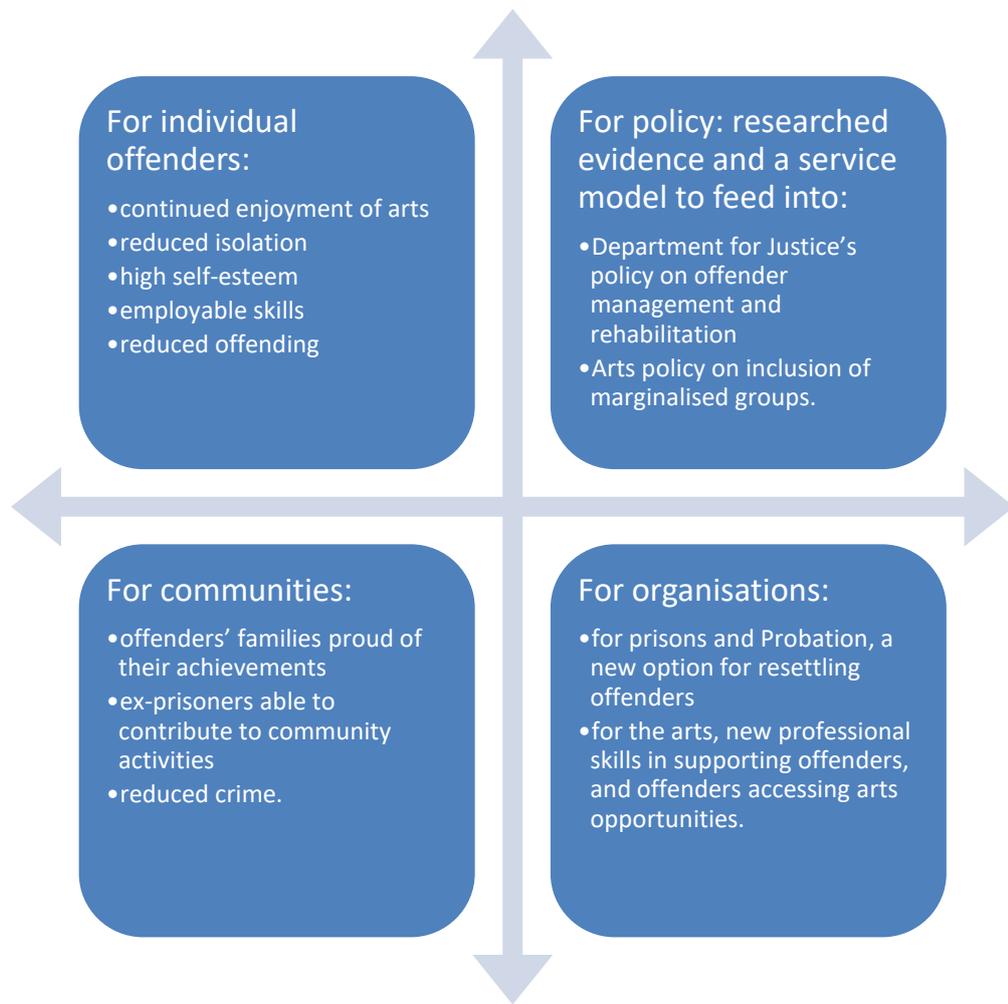
**First Step mentoring:** this pathway is open to anyone who has been involved in the criminal justice system.

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 or Listowel Award-winners who would like to develop their practice in the community or in custody or 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.

## Potential Benefits



## How the Scheme will operate

### Aims:

The mentoring scheme seeks to deliver arts input, shaped to the needs of individual offenders, that empowers them to continue with their arts based activities.

### Project objectives:

- To deliver a high-quality, replicable model of arts mentoring for offenders.
- To recruit mentors from different arts fields trained in supporting individual offenders.
- To engage a reasonably representative sample of offenders in the arts mentoring.
- To ensure that the offenders' needs are met holistically by integrating the arts mentoring with other resettlement services.
- To focus the mentoring on continued participation in the arts, while also supporting wider benefits.
- To commission a thorough independent evaluation of the project.
- To disseminate the findings to contribute to improved policy and practice.

### The Mentees

In order to be considered for mentoring by the Prison Arts Foundation, applicants need to:

- 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 prisons; HMP Maghaberry, HMP Magilligan or Hydebank 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. We will include offenders with some high levels of need – partly because such needs often lead to some dynamic artistic creativity. We will do this through partnership with other resettlement services that can meet offenders' social needs while the PAF mentor focuses on the arts. But we don't want to set the mentees up to fail. There will be some artistically talented offenders who cannot make use of the mentoring because they pose too much of a risk to themselves or to others, or because their lives are simply too chaotic.
- To identify these offenders, the PAF staff will seek references from either the Prison Offender Supervisor or Community Offender Manager, or another professional referee who has worked with the mentee.

- 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 Future pathway. The commitment levels will be agreed on an individual basis with the mentee.

## **The Mentors**

We will design and deliver training to our mentors with the help of an experience training provider. The Arts Mentor Training Course will be delivered as 2 consecutive day's initial training and a third day consolidation work two months later which allows for mentors to meet with their mentee in the interim period.

Mentors will work to a strict set of policies and procedures specifically developed for the project, to ensure that mentors and mentees work within agreed parameters. These policies will set out clear boundaries, so that mentors do not get over-involved with the offender they work with or create a dependency relationship.

All Mentors will be Access NI checked, or CTC clearance and two written references obtained for them. They will be required to attend one-to-one supervision sessions with PAF staff and also have access to group support meetings with their fellow mentors.

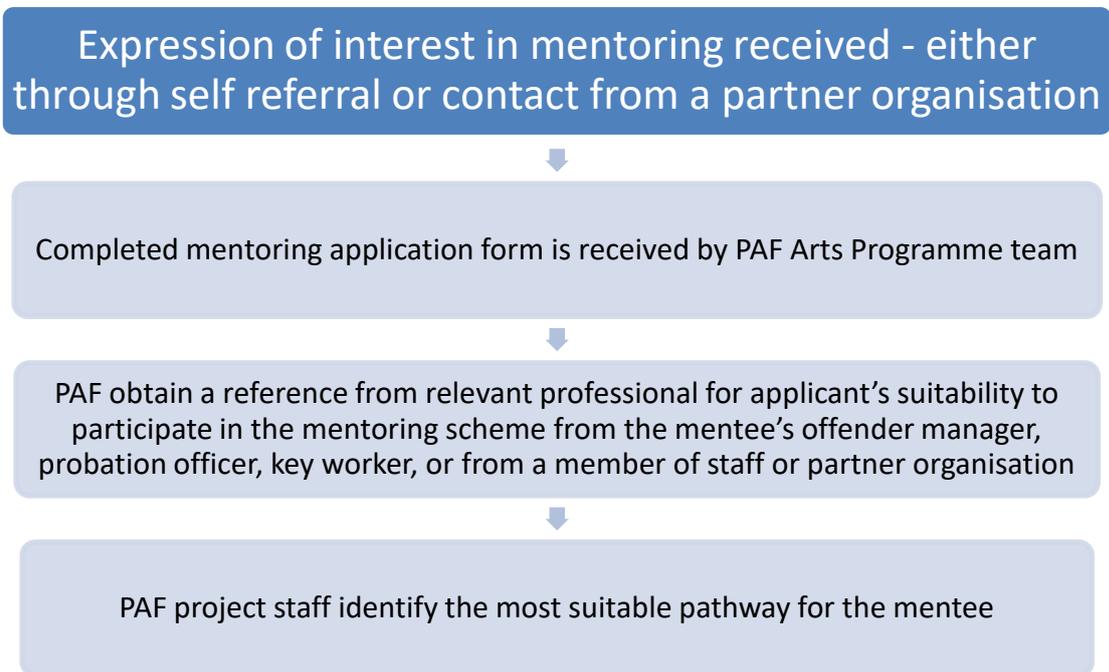
## **Matching**

In the matching of mentees and mentors, PAF staff will also consider some additional factors:

- Age - We have no upper or lower age limit for mentoring.
- Art form – We will recruit a wide range of mentors across a variety of art forms. However, there may be times when we are unable to support a mentee's artistic development in a niche category.
- Gender & ethnicity - It is unlikely that mentees will form a cohort exactly representative prison population diversity, but we endeavour to ensure that a proportion of the mentees are women or from minority ethnic groups.
- Geography – we work across Northern Ireland. Depending on the location of the mentors, it may be necessary to place further limits on travel time and expenses.
- Length of sentence – We hope to be able to work with anyone who has been involved in the criminal justice system, regardless of the length of their sentence.

## The Mentoring Journey

The below table is designed to show you each of the different stages of the mentoring relationship.



# First Step Mentoring

Short list potential mentees and match to mentors based on artform and geography

Mentor receives a copy of the mentees application form, referral and examples of their work

Mentee receives a copy of the Mentee Handbook and signs the Contact Agreement

PAF introduces the mentee to the mentor and assists in arranging the first mentoring meeting

## **First Step**

At the first mentoring session, the mentee and mentor will sign the Confidentiality Agreement. Together they will decide upon a Personal Development plan – and agree how many mentoring sessions (between 2 – 7) they will have over a fixed time period

Mentee creates an entry for Koestler or Listowel Awards – this can be across any of the Awards categories

Further Mentoring sessions between mentee and mentor, supported by project staff. Mentors write a brief report at the end of each meeting which is sent to project staff and keeps a record of all contact.

Final Mentoring session and evaluation completed as required

# Creative Futures Mentoring

Short list potential mentees and match to mentors based on artform and geography

Mentor receives a copy of the mentees application form, referral and examples of their work

Mentee receives a copy of the Mentee Handbook and signs the Contact Agreement

PAF introduces the mentee to the mentor and assists in arranging the first mentoring meeting

## **Creative Futures**

At the first mentoring session, the mentee and mentor will sign the Confidentiality Agreement. Together they will decide upon a Personal Development plan for the year of mentoring.

Mentee creates an entry for Koestler or Listowel Awards – this can be across any of the Awards categories

Further Mentoring sessions between mentee and mentor, supported by project staff. Mentors write a brief report at the end of each meeting which is sent to project staff and keeps a record of all contact.

Final Mentoring session and evaluation completed as required

## The mentoring sessions

Participants on the First Step mentoring pathway will not have a specified number of mentoring sessions that they should complete with their mentor. Instead their mentor – on consultation with the Prison Arts Foundation Arts Programme Coordinator, will set out a timeframe for the length of their mentoring relationship, the regularity of contact and the number of mentoring sessions. Mentees will usually be offered between 2 – 7 mentoring sessions, lasting 1-2 hours each.

We have innovated this variable length of mentoring relationship so to:

- respond to the needs of individual mentees;
- make the mentoring scheme accessible to a wider range of people
- the mentoring is geared at integrating the mentee into arts activities and other resources in his/her local community, and does not lead to long-term dependency on external support
- mentors can move on and support more mentees;

Participants on the Creative Futures mentoring pathway will receive 10 mentoring sessions over a 12 month period. Mentees and mentors will agree to this commitment prior to their first meeting. This model of support is based on our previous experiences working in Prisons.

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 PAF's work can focus on the arts. The mentor will also make absolutely clear the time-limits and other boundaries of the relationship.

The mentor will not set goals for the mentoring, but support the mentee to set some realistic goals for him/herself – e.g. to visit 2 art galleries, to finish 2 sculptures and to submit one of them to a local art competition. However, we will expect the goals to be centred on:

- participation in the arts, aiming to build the mentee's confidence and skills;
- activities which are local and accessible enough for the mentee to continue with them after mentoring has ended.

Whenever appropriate to the offenders' needs and views, the mentors encourage further training, education, voluntary or paid work in the arts, as these are known to be factors that can help prevent re-offending.

After the first meeting, the following mentoring sessions can last up to half a day each, but will be generally about 3 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 materials/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.

At or before the last mentoring session, mentor and mentee will reflect on how far they have achieved their goals, consider the next steps for the mentee, and complete evaluation forms.

## Partner organisations

For the Prison Arts Foundation's mentoring to be able to focus on arts activity, it is crucial that the mentees' practical, social and emotional needs are met largely from elsewhere. It is not possible to secure this help from one agency, because the provision is extremely varied across Northern Ireland. We will assess the needs and support available for each potential mentee on a case-by-case basis.

At the planning stage we expect there to be 3 main points at which the scheme will seek to identify mentees' non-arts needs and ensure that they are met:-

- I. Selection of mentees. Information from a referee - where applicable this should be an offender supervisor or probation officer, but can be completed by any other professional the applicant proposes. The reference will confirm one of the following:-
  - that the offender poses too great a risk to him/herself or to others to participate in the mentoring – in which case PAF will not pursue;
  - that the offender is not receiving any special professional input (i.e. s/he has strong personal resources and good family or community support) – in which case PAF can proceed directly to offer arts mentoring;
  - that the offender needs particular services to help him/her resettle – in which case PAF will offer the mentoring, making clear it will be planned and provided in close partnership with the other support services.
- II. Planning for resettlement. The PAF staff will ensure that the art mentoring is included in the plan and will contact the other service providers, to explain PAF's role and to agree on procedures for communication and joint working. In complex cases, project staff may attend a meeting with the offender and the other professionals prior to matching. Where the statutory resettlement system is unable to provide enough support, PAF staff may refer directly to other agencies to seek support for an applicant. The mentoring will go ahead only when Project staff is satisfied that the mentee's non-arts needs can be met.
- III. During the mentoring. Once the mentoring begins, responsibility for communication with partner agencies will usually transfer from the Project staff to the mentor. From the resettlement plan, the mentor will know the other agencies involved in the case and will keep in contact through regular phone calls and emails, or in complex cases through review meetings, e.g. to avoid clashes of appointments, to hear of any changed circumstances, and to report on progress or concerns. At the end of the mentoring, the mentor and/or the Project staff will produce a brief written report summarising the outcomes for the mentee and his/her future plans for participation in the arts.

Training of the mentors includes grounding in how to recognise major non-arts needs – e.g. around housing, drug use or mental health – and where to seek help. Mentors also have regular support and supervision from Project staff to help them monitor mentees' progress holistically. In these ways, the mentors are equipped and supported to deal with any non-arts needs that emerge after the initial planning.

## How the project is staffed and managed

The Mentoring Scheme is operated by the Prison Arts Foundation staff team

- Fred Caulfield Executive Director  
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## How the Mentoring activities are funded

In 2016 the charity received funding from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation to develop the pilot mentoring scheme. The National Lottery have also supported the pilot through the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

