

Accumulate

The Art School for The Homeless



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Introduction

About Accumulate

Accumulate, [The Art School for the Homeless](#), uses creativity to empower and increase the wellbeing and mental health of people who are homeless, living in hostels and temporary accommodation, or with experience of homelessness. It works with hostels and housing organisations to deliver workshops in visual art, photography, fashion and other creative disciplines. Accumulate aims to target young people for its participants but does not exclude anyone due to their age.

Accumulate delivers its activities in partnership with leading cultural and creative institutions including *Saatchi Gallery*, *Film London*, *Autograph* and *The Barbican*. They also work with creative industry businesses such as *D&AD*, *AHMM Architects* and *Adobe*. The work of Accumulate's participants is showcased in an annual exhibition. Accumulate also provides scholarships for its participants to progress their creative education and embark on the one-year Access to Higher Education course at Ravensbourne University London or Morley College.

Context: Arts and Homelessness

The numbers of people experiencing homelessness continues to rise; as stated in our 2022 report, 1 in 58 people in London were homeless (Shelter, January 2023) by December 2023 this had risen to 1 in 51 (Shelter, December 2023)

These figures show an alarming increase, it is likely that the numbers are actually higher as they don't include unrecorded numbers of people who for example are sofa surfing.

The total number of people recorded as homeless on a given night across the UK is up 14% from 2022, by 11% in London.

Centerpoint states:

Regarding the causes of homelessness, while family breakdowns remain the primary reason for young people to be homeless or at risk, more than one in ten young people facing homelessness in England were forced out of their home due to domestic violence – an experience that is particularly prevalent amongst young women. Moreover, a higher number of young people were evicted in the last financial year, due, in part, to the lifting of the eviction ban in June 2021. What is most concerning is that behind these numbers there are thousands of young people in desperate need of support. Not having a place to sleep affects young people's physical and mental well-being and, subsequently, impacts on their educational and work outcomes.

Failure to Act: the Scale of Youth Homelessness in the UK 2023

The impact of Covid can still be felt on service provision and the reduction of activities available, this has included some closures Nationally. In this difficult landscape Accumulate continues to deliver an increased programme of regular creative workshops and courses, this is complimented by its Mentorship Programme for Accumulate Scholarship winners, Creative Futures workshops - created to break down barriers into creative industry employment, and the introduction and delivery of 2 MATTA (Make Art to Teach Art) courses.

Engagement in the arts and culture is included by the Office of National statistics as a measure of wellbeing.

Creativity is widely understood to be vital for improving health and wellbeing, making social connections, building skills and social circles, as well as improving confidence and providing a sense of belonging.

Participants are empowered and have a sense of agency, they see what they can do, progressing and gaining knowledge.

How Accumulate makes a difference

Through their work, Accumulate use creative learning and participation to develop skills, confidence and wellbeing for its participants whilst the engagement in the creative workshops themselves provide a sense of purpose, motivation and sense of belonging to a meaningful community. All of which works towards ending the combination of homelessness, depression and negative mental health for vulnerable people which can often spiral out of control and with no way out of what feels like an impossible situation.

The overall aims of Accumulate are to:

- empower and increase the wellbeing of young people who are affected by homelessness
- reduce negative stereotypes and misunderstanding about people experiencing homelessness
- help alleviate the ill effects of homelessness on individuals and communities

Accumulate does this through providing high-quality, meaningful, structured and purposeful creative activities that culminate in a focused goal and celebration. This has been the mission of Accumulate since its inception in 2013 and continues to be the cornerstone of their work today.



How Accumulate evaluated activity in 2023

The following sources of data fed into this report :

- Participant feedback – feedback forms completed by some participants
- Project documentation – reports to funders, photographs, videos, blog posts
- Media coverage – newspapers, magazines and online
- Project outputs – the photographs, books, podcasts, and other creative work generated by learners themselves
- Ad hoc feedback – correspondence between participants and Accumulate staff sent during or after the courses
- Participant and Creative Industry feedback from Creative Futures Activity

About the workshop, course and programme participants

When asked, learners that completed feedback forms reported that:

- 100% felt safe,
- 100% felt they were part of the group
- 100 % felt they received support guidance throughout the course

96% of learners that completed the feedback reported that they had achieved the goals they set themselves up.

When asked, learners that completed feedback forms:

- 81.5% reported that they had achieved higher self confidence
- 60% reported that they had achieved and improved new skills and knowledge
- 85% reported an improved health and well being
- 78% reported an ability to progress to the next step

When asked what learners intended to do after their course had finalised:

- 54 % Attend another course with Accumulate
- 36 % Work and or study with another provider
- 10 % Destination Unknown

Participants rated the courses as follows:

- 71 % as excellent
- 29% as good

So a total of 100% of attendees thought our courses were either excellent or good.

Participants rated the quality of teaching as follows:

- 71 % as excellent
- 29 % as good

So a total of 100% of attendees thought the quality of teaching was excellent or good.

Age range

30% of respondents were aged 18-30
46% of respondents were aged 31-44
22% of respondents were aged 45-60
2% of respondents were aged 61+

Gender

42% of the respondents were female
54% of the respondents were male
4% of the respondents marked rather not say/ other

Ethnicity

24% White (including white European and white other)
19% Black/ Black African/ British
21% Black/ Black Caribbean/ British
11% Asian/ Asian British - Indian
6% Asian/ Any other Asian
8% Mixed/ Mixed/ Multiple Ethnic Group
11% Other Ethnic group

Government support

89% of participants received government support, including Universal Credit and PIP - Personal Independence Payment
11% of participants did not get support

Disabilities and/or mental health condition

57% reported experiencing a disability or mental health condition.
16% reported not experiencing any disability or mental health condition.
27% preferred not to say or did not respond

Progression Routes



This report includes examples of the impact for participants of attending Accumulate workshops, courses and programmes.

Along with its creative education programme, Accumulate is also committed to the creation of opportunity and access routes into the creative industries for people with lived experience of homelessness, this includes paid roles within Accumulate.

Since participating in MATTA (Accumulate's creative workshop leadership training programme for people with experience of homelessness) and leading a session for our MATTA participants in class, a graduating participant has now taken her skills and experience to deliver external paid workshops. Deon delivered a creative workshop for the Arts & Homelessness International group. As well as gaining valuable practical experience in leading a creative workshop, the success of this workshop led to Deon being offered the opportunity to deliver paid creative workshops at libraries across Surrey in late summer 2023. She was an Accumulate workshop helper for the Accumulate ceramics classes and has a paid role as workshop and in person Accumulate Mentorship facilitator.

Crystal an Accumulate scholarship recipient and Creative Futures participant in 2022 is now a Trustee as well as facilitating the online Mentorship sessions and providing Accumulate admin support.

Angie a MATTA graduate helps to facilitate Accumulate workshops.

Nikol, an Accumulate scholarship recipient and Creative Futures 2022 participant) was an inspirational speaker at Creative Futures 2023. Nikol is also employed to create work for a beauty product company and also by Pink Banana production company as a runner and is in discussions with them about producing a film about her life story. In addition, Nikol is a member of the Accumulate Production Company and receives paid work as an events photographer.

A number of Accumulate participants were paid helpers at the Accumulate Wonderland exhibition.

Other participants have gone onto training and employment in non creative sectors.

Accumulate Activity 2023

"Am super excited I really really appreciate everything accumulate has done in my life & not just the opportunities it's truly a family to me & that is so important & that is why I will forever be apart of accumulate" Nikol

2023 Accumulate Creative Workshops:

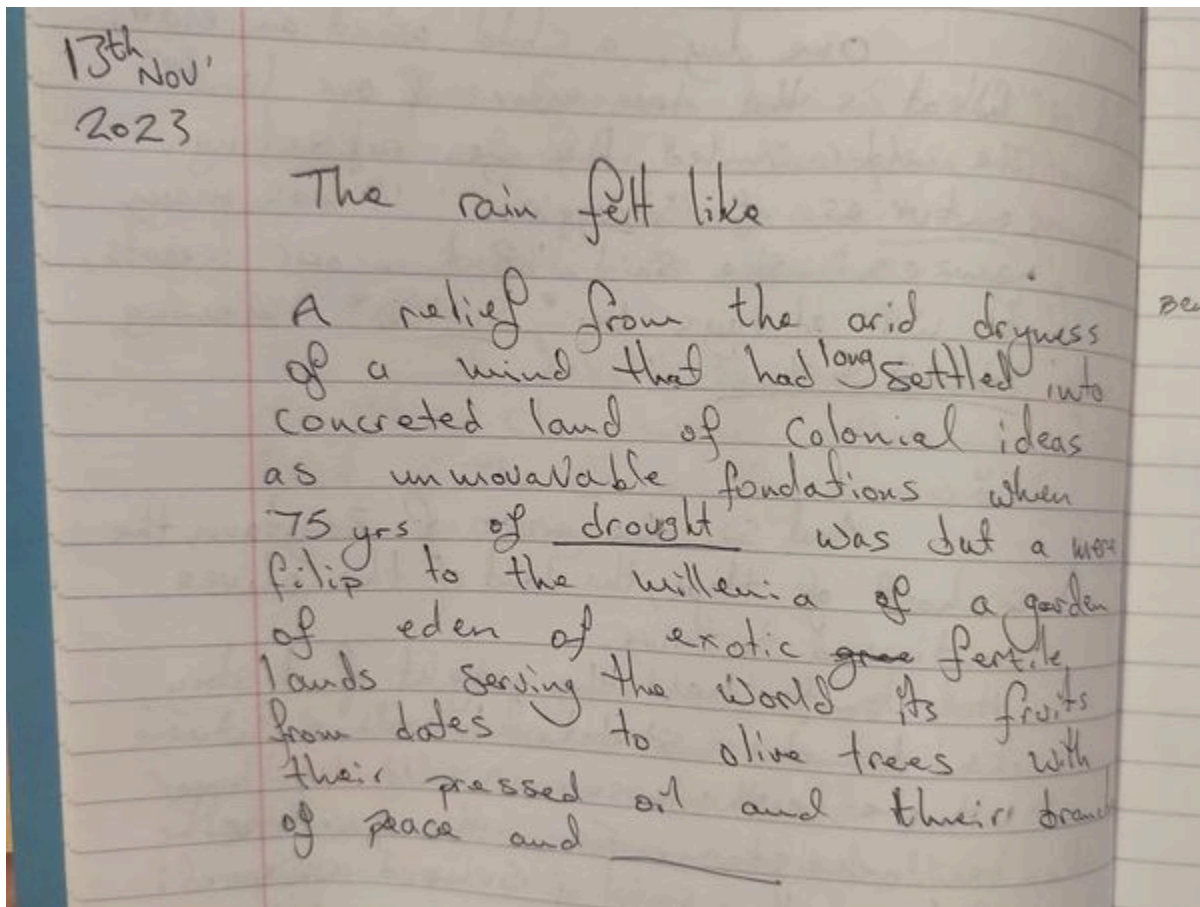
Workshop	Venue/ Partner	Dates
Drawing and Colour	The Barbican	2 - 29 Feb
Lawkena x Accumulate	Audible	24 Feb
Make a Sweatshirt Fashion	Wallace Collection	7 - 17 March
Pottery	Space Studios	20 Mar - 17 April
Street Art	Saatchi Gallery	11-13 April
Mobile Film Making	Film London and Autograph	17 - 21 April
Art as Fashion (hat making)	Autograph	25 April - May
Mono printing	David Games HE College	20 - 24 April
Analogue Photography	Autograph	May
Build a DJ booth	The Barbican	2 - 16 June
Creative Writing	Pace Gallery	26 September
Pottery	Central St Martins in collab with London Design Festival	19 - 20 September
Pottery	The Potting Shed	5 Oct - 9 Nov

Creative Writing	The Barbican	20 Oct - 18 Dec
Making Origami Sculptures	The Barbican	6 Nov
Create a Collage	Pace Gallery	7 Nov
Learn Magic Tricks	Autograph	21 Nov
Drawing workshop	Pace Gallery	5 Dec
Life Drawing	The Courtauld Gallery	12 Dec

Programmes /activity:

Creative Futures	D&AD	18 - 25 Jan
MATTA (Make Art to Teach Art)	University of the Arts London	22 Mar - 26 July 2023
MATTA (Make Art to Teach Art)	University of the Arts London	4 Oct 2023 - 17 Jan 2024
End of year annual exhibition: Wonderland	One Crown Place	6 July
Accumulate Scholarships awarded		for 23/24
Mentorship programme for scholarship recipients		Nov 2022 - June 2023,
Mentorship programme for scholarship recipients		Nov 2023 - May 2024

Creative Writing



This course participants worked with Maame Blue a Ghanaian-Londoner, creative writing tutor and author of the novel *Bad Love*, which won the 2021 Betty Trask award, and was shortlisted for the Betty Trask Prize. Her short stories have been published in *Not Quite Right For Us* (Flipped Eye Publishing), *New Australian Fiction 2020* (Kill Your Darlings), and *Joyful, Joyful* (Pan Macmillan).

She teaches creative writing for literary organisations including City Lit, Spread the Word, Arvon, Guardian Masterclass and Faber Academy.

Over the course participants learnt how to develop characters, Maame shared her formula when beginning to create; as a starting point, she initially writes about herself as one of the characters of her book, and then develops it into a fictional character.

The [Barbican Centre](#) exhibition *RE/ Sisters: A Lens on Gender and Ecology* provided inspiration, the various different photos and films examined the relationship between

gender and ecology, highlighting systemic links between the oppression of women and the degradation of the planet.

Participants focused on a key question “What stood out the most?” they shared their thoughts in a group discussion, and then generated two pieces of writing.

Memory and nostalgia fed into the writing process along with sensory experiences, connecting with recollections of a memorable meal and place.

‘Thanks everyone for a wonderful session. It was lovely to see a few new faces today. I can really feel the development happening already. We focussed on how to develop a setting, which “tickled a few minds” down memory lane when we were asked to reflect on a particular place of our past. For Kenny, it even evoked the scent of a place when he was a young boy.’ Angie course facilitator

The [Barbican Centre](#) hosted the course & @culturemileBID supported the funding of this course.

MATTA



‘MATTA changed my perspective of everything about my future and this course must be continued’ Bruno

2023 saw the delivery of 2 rounds of MATTA in partnership with University of Arts London and funded by Deutsche Bank.

MATTA - Make Art to Teach Art provides targeted training for Accumulate graduates who have completed our creative workshop courses to gain the required knowledge, skills and experience to become creative workshop facilitators and leaders. MATTA provides routes into employment for people affected by homelessness whilst generating a cohort of people who can supply creative workshops to their own community, becoming role models and bridging the shortfall for workshop leaders with lived experience of homelessness. Regular conversations and feedback from our workshop participants and scholarship winners told us there is a need in local support services to provide a transition between learning experiences and paid working opportunities.

Benefits and outcomes for MATTA participants and graduates:

- Attaining work related skills, experience and knowledge that will lead to
- employment; Paid work experience in creative education field;

- Increased financial awareness and planning ability;
- Improved mental wellbeing and sense of purpose.

Benefits for MATTA participants and graduates and wider community:

Breaking down systemic barriers;

- Generating a cohort of skilled creative tutors with lived experience of homelessness; Fulfilling sector need for expertise;
- Building strong relationships across communities.

A key component to delivering the MATTA course was finding someone with facilitation experience and lived experience of homelessness. This person became a role model to participants, shared learning through relatable examples and acted as a positive aspirational element to the project.

Feedback from Participants of MATTA 1 led to the creation of a handbook for the second cohort. [See film](#)



MAKE ART TO TEACH ART

Accumulate

Empowering homeless people through creativity



Do you want to start teaching your own workshops?

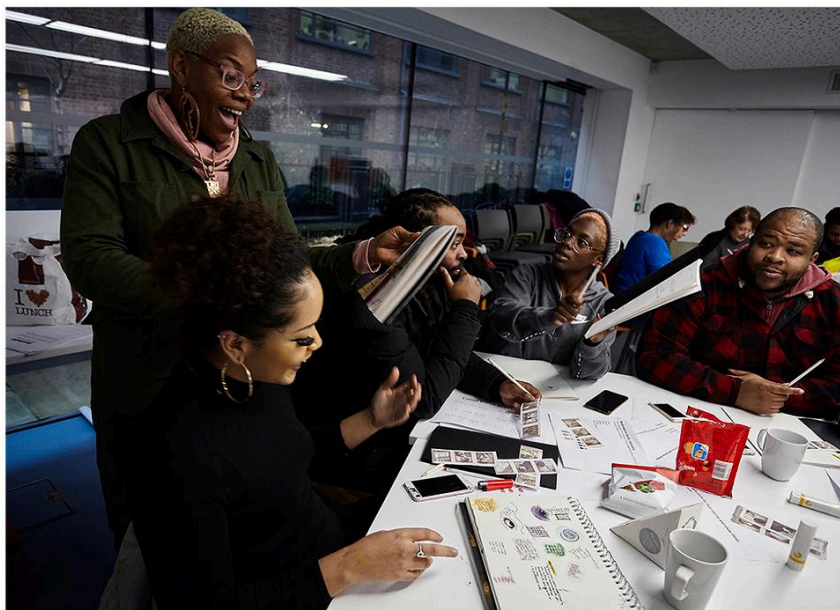
At Make Art to Teach Art you will be taught by professional artists and tutors, and then get to use that knowledge to lead your own workshops and make money from your creativity.

Your food and travel costs will be covered and there will be opportunities to get paid to help on or lead a creative workshop!

When: 4 October 2023 - 17 January 2024

Where: Chelsea College of Art (Pimlico station)

Contact rossanne@accumulate.org.uk to apply.



ual:



Deutsche Bank

The London
Community
Foundation

Creative Futures



“The chance to speak with all the guests was absolutely amazing!...Talking to people from creative industries helped me gain ideas of how I can improve my work” Julia.

Creative Futures January 2023 (funded by the National Lottery) was a free 3-day workshop that breaks down the barriers for people affected by homelessness to enter the creative sector, build networks and have access to opportunities. It took place at D&AD offices in Shoreditch. Creative Futures is a real game-changer that is completely new, led by industry and aimed to overturn the systemic challenges that exist in the creative industries. The primary role of Creative Futures is to break down the entry route barriers to getting work related opportunities in the creative industries – a sector well-known for being highly network driven, educated, experience led and hard to get into. This is even more poignant for Accumulate participants (as well as other “non traditional” groups) who may have the talent but lack the credentials to get any work related opportunity that the sector may offer.

Our Learning: How Creative Futures July 2022 informed our project.

We initially held a focus group of Accumulate participants (all people with experience on homelessness). We asked what they would like to see from Creative Futures - this was essential as it prevented us from making assumptions and also ensured that Creative Futures was user led.

- How to present themselves, how to talk about themselves and their work were areas they highlighted, as well as actually having the opportunity to meet people working in the creative industries.

These barriers to progression - lack of confidence to lack of networks pivoted into the tangible objectives of Creative Futures - increase in employability confidence and increase in proactive networks

We used feedback from Creative Futures participants and creative industry professionals involved in the workshops to evaluate Creative Futures 1. As a result we decided we would extend the duration of Creative Futures from 2 days to 3. This allowed us more time to inform and prepare participants of the running of the day, gave us more time for deeper engagement with creative industry professionals on the days and gave more opportunities for participants to take a break to avoid feeling overwhelmed.

Portfolio Reviewers: Creative Industry Professionals involved:

- Arena Illustration
- Grey Agency
- Handsome Frank
- Jacky Winter
- Mother London
- Various freelancers in Design, Illustration and Creative Content

Creative Industry Businesses involved, offering work-related opportunities:

- Audible
- Adobe
- GEM Creative Design
- Grazia
- JKR Agency
- Kurt Geiger Kindness Foundation
- No Fixed Abode
- On the One PR Agency
- Page and Page Advertising
- Penguin Publishing
- The Digital Fairy

Project Impact

The immediate impacts of Creative Futures for participants include:

- Increased confidence
- Professional input and advice on their artwork
- Practical steps on how to network and how to create a portfolio
- Meet networks in the creative industry
- Understand more about the industry and that it is not closed to them.

The long term gains for participants are significant and include:

- Gaining an insight into creative industries
- Meeting new contacts which could lead to future opportunities.

This can be seen with participant, Amalia who after taking part in job shadowing at Penguin Publishing was encouraged by staff to apply for their internship programme.

- Experience what a day in the office could look like, and get experience in following a work routine
- Planning and organising their time.
- Provide a sense of belonging with fellow participants as well as belonging in the creative industry

These gains can be life changing - having others believe in you and believing in yourself is huge for the group of participants. This experience could be the catalyst that leads to future employment opportunities or skills uptake, eventually leading to an increased independence.

Accumulate scholarship recipient and participant in Creative Futures (July 2022), Nikol also spoke to the group about her Creative Futures experience. After Day 1 of Creative Futures in July, Nikol used her newly gained networking skills and confidence to network with an organic hair company and she was offered to create one-off social media content for them. This has now turned into a monthly paid retainer for Nikol who has become the company's social media officer. This is all a result of Creative Futures and the impact it has made.



Wonderland – Art Exhibition and Scholarship ceremony



Wonderland Exhibition – July 2023. Patrick Fry amazing graphics!

Sponsored by [MTD Group](#) and hosted by [Conductor London](#), [One Crown Place](#) and [Sun Street Hotel](#) in the City of London, we celebrated the creative achievements of all our participants.

The exhibition was filled with a diverse range of art, all produced by Accumulate participants during the programme of creative workshops throughout the year. The exhibition included ceramics, visual art, fashion, film and photographs. All created by people affected by homelessness.

The exhibition was interactive, with live screen printing workshops run by Nicole Line as well as drawing workshops led by Joshua Beatty. There was a DJ booth, designed, built and painted by a group of participants along with [Poor Collective](#).

Participants Sam and Deon spoke to the audience about their own Accumulate experiences. Sam, as a participant and scholarship winner in 2022, and Deon about taking part in the MATTA programme, inspiring creativity in others. Listen to their stories in their own words via our Instagram posts. Sam's is [HERE](#) Deon's is [HERE](#)

As part of the celebration Chair of Trustees Michelle Sally presented the scholarships to each winner along with their sponsor. They will study, fully funded, on Access to Higher Education courses in Fine Art, Design and Digital Media and Fashion at either Ravensbourne University London or Morley College for Adult Education.

The evening closed with a fashion show of participants all modelling the incredible headpieces they created in our series of workshops 'Wearable Art as Fashion'. The show was led by previous Accumulate scholarship winner Nikol .

Video of the show [HERE](#)



Scholarships



2023 Accumulate Scholarship Winner Ya'esh

The Accumulate Scholarships have been set up to close education barriers and open up learning opportunities.

Everyone should be able to pursue their education, study and be able to plan and prepare for a better future. Unfortunately, for the Accumulate participants that life choice is often not available. Funding, bad experiences at school, mental health and lack of family support all stand in the way of them being able to have the same choices as other people of their age, ability and aspirations.

Accumulate has overturned that barrier by fundraising and providing scholarships for Accumulate participants to be able to study for the Access to HE certificate in Art and Design courses at Ravensbourne University London and Morley College for Adult Education. They still need to apply to the course and be accepted, but through the

Accumulate scholarship initiative, they get the financial support they need and something, which may have seemed unachievable, is now theirs.

The Accumulate scholarship changes lives, gives opportunities and helps people to start their creative careers. People receiving scholarships have moved out of the hostel and into independent accommodation, are now regular students, with a sense of purpose and new friends and enjoying all that education has to offer.

2023: 6 participants became Access students, 4 went onto a degree, 1 graduated

In total since the scholarship programme began:

32 scholarships awarded, 17 have progressed onto degrees.

Mentorship





The Mentorship programme was introduced for Accumulate Scholarship recipients, in response to an identified need for additional input and advice during their access courses and to help them overcome challenges connected to studying and (re)entering education..

The aim of the mentorship programme is to provide targeted support, guidance and expertise for our Scholarship recipients, and for the mentees to have someone with related experience to encourage them and respond to issues and challenges.

Mentors and mentees meet once a month either in person or online, from Nov - May. Mentors are from a range of creative industries, including Design, Fashion, Visual Art, Illustration. Mentors are selected to match the specific areas of study and skills of the mentees.

Project Partners and Funders

<p>ual:</p>	 <p>Supported using public funding by ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND LOTTERY FUNDED</p>	 <p>Kurt Geiger Kindness Foundation</p>
<p>MTD</p>	 <p>CONDUCTOR</p>	 <p>ONE CROWN PLACE</p>

Feedback:

What people say about working with Accumulate

Participants:

- “It was wonderful! The gallery's collection and to create using pastel! Hearing the artist's playlist! It's so impressive! Thanks” 🥰😊
- “The exhibition tour was great. Making art while listening to the artists playlist was wonderful. Thank you”
- “The tour was great and the tutors were helpful and encouraging and gave lots of information and very welcoming. I agree the music was great to get into the spirit of the artist and the exercises were easy to follow. 10/10”
- “It was my first time doing life drawing, and I must say I thoroughly enjoyed the session. Our visit to Claudette Johnson Exhibition was an added bonus” 🙏😊
- “It was a wonderful tour. The drawings were very beautiful and inspiring. I loved how the transition from drawing the board to drawing each other was very enjoyable”.
- “Everything was good exhibition and drawing every time it's different I love it!! Thanks” 🙏👍❤️❤️

Industry:

- *“Thanks again for involving us in such a great event, and so many talented people!” - Alex Curran, Audible*
- *“It was great to meet so many participants and loved the format and have told a few colleagues at different agencies about the initiative so will be sharing this far and wide. So please do keep me posted on future happenings as we’d love to be involved” - Grace Tankard, Portas Agency*

- *“Thank YOU so, so much for letting us borrow the brilliant Accumulators yesterday! It was truly magical hosting the attendees that came to the workshop and the day was just filled to the brim with laughter, creativity, fabulous ideas, new editing skills, and lots of Tiktok videos. Me, Celeste and the entire Adobe gang truly enjoyed sharing the afternoon with the group, and really hope they got the most out of the day and learnt some new tips and tricks” - Malin Persson, Adobe, after leading their Creative Futures opportunity: a session on using Tik Tok with Adobe software*



Learning and Challenges



Creative Futures:

Responding to the evaluation and feedback from participants about their experience of Creative Futures in 2022, we saw the need to extend the programme to 3 days. This gave participants time to receive and process information and assisted in our event scheduling. A total of 51 opportunities were offered to our 15 participants.

Overall response was that the event was successful and rewarding for both participants and for the creative industries involved.

For the next course delivery we aim to extend Creative Futures even further, to 10 sessions to provide more support and skills acquisition before participants meet with creative industry professionals.

Mentorships:

Proving to be a valuable support network and skills learning tool for our participants. Positive feedback from mentees and mentors.

Workshops:

Demand for our workshops is high, reflected in feedback and our increased output. The aim now is to keep and expand this output within a challenging financial and funding environment.

The second MATTA programme was an opportunity for us to provide paid opportunities for selected MATTA graduates to take on work for Accumulate. This includes administration work and assisting in our workshops and has become part of the MATTA objectives to ensure that Accumulate can provide paid work opportunities to its graduates..

Conclusion

Accumulate continues to deliver high quality and diverse arts workshops, courses and programmes; in response to demand and supported by partners the offer across the year has increased. Workshops are very popular, demand often exceeding capacity.

Participants feedback and learning from course delivery, informs the creation of new programmes and the development and evolution of the core provision.

The development of MATTA and Creative Futures gives participants a route and the necessary knowledge to progress from workshops participants, to move onto college courses and into the creative industries, equipped with confidence, self belief and the skills needed to succeed. The mentoring programme provides additional support for Scholarship recipients.

An increasing number of participants are directly influencing the programming of Accumulate activities and also getting paid roles within Accumulate.

Accumulate inspires participants, partners and funders, the energy, positivity and commitment translating into motivated workshop attendees and commitment from cultural partners. Funders are proud to be part of the success of Accumulate.

The quality and range of delivery partners contributes significantly to the realisation of Accumulates aims, the provision of such a high quality offer, makes participants feel valued and as recipients of professional art workshops they are able to grow, gain and improve skills and progress with confidence.

Challenges for Accumulate in 2024:

- Securing funding for the high quality Accumulate offer at a time when this is an increasingly difficult and competitive fundraising landscape.
- Building and maintaining existing partnerships to support their work.
- Continuing to meet demand for and to deliver professional quality workshops, including employing tutors and contributors from shared, lived experience.
- Combining capitalising on the investment potential and support from funders and industry professionals, whilst delivering high-quality creative learning experiences to participants who often lead hectic and chaotic lifestyles.
- Making time for Accumulate staff and trustees to reflect, learn from experiences and enjoy successes.



Creative workshop at Pace Gallery with Accumulate participants and Pace Gallery staff.