

projectart works

VOLUNTEER WORKSHOP GUIDELINES

Project Art Works values the input and support of volunteers. The guidelines below establish a framework for working with people with complex needs in a collaborative workshop. Volunteers are provided with support and guidance throughout their time working with Project Art Works.

When first entering the workshop:

- When first introduced to the workshop setting find a suitable place to watch. Do not immediately approach participants.
- Give yourself time to settle into the workshop, take time to think about the space that you are in and watch how the artists approach and work with participants. Consider the dynamics within the group and how the participants respond to each other and the artist team.
- The role of artist in the workshop is to support another person to make an artwork, not to do it for them. The volunteer's role is to observe and support as guided and led by the artist team.
- After a period of time, an artist may find a natural 'way in' to introduce a volunteer and enable you to work alongside or directly with a participant.

When working 1:1 with a participant:

- Be conscious of working alongside the participant. Take time to watch how they interact through eye contact, movement, gesture and vocalisation.
- Give time for trust to develop between you and the participant. This might not happen immediately– remain alert, aware and responsive, moments of interaction may be very subtle. There are no right or wrong ways of making work together (but do avoid hand-over-hand drawing/painting and similar over-directive actions).
- Be sensitive to the space you occupy with a participant. Be aware of how much personal space a participant might need. This might range from a slight distance to very close up. Observe how the closely the artist team sit or stand next to each participant. Never stand over a participant always try and be with them on their level.
- Note what captures a participant's attention. Be led by the person you are interacting with.
- Don't direct for the other person (i.e. don't paint for a person). It's unnecessary. Gentle interaction is a good way into sharing communication – also in some cases humour and games. Let the participant you are working with guide you as to how they want to work with you. Sometimes this will happen by purely being present with a person, working alongside them or turn taking on the same artwork.
- Ask the artist team if you feel unsure.
- Key points to remember are to be **relaxed, non-directive** and **responsive** and to **enjoy** the experience.