

EXPLORERS NETWORK MEETING 24.05.23

FOLLOW UP NOTES AND ACTIONS

The following notes based on the meeting agenda items give some context for the direction of the Network. The statements below were starting points for discussion and were generally agreed upon, although no votes were taken. A number of actions and follow-ups came from the discussion.

Its purpose or goal

- To advocate for neurominorities and people with intersecting disabilities/complex support needs within the arts, as contributors and consumers

ACTION:

The need for artists to be able to self-advocate was discussed and seen as very important. It was agreed that the role of the Network could also be as a body to represent neurodivergent artists (i.e. in the manner of a union or professional organisation). It was also acknowledged that some people may still need another person to advocate on their behalf

Generally agreed:

- To help organisations and institutions to better understand neurodivergent people
- To be a hub for sharing best practice and resolving problems encountered by artists, supported studios and institutions
- To be a powerful voice for rights and representation within and beyond the cultural sector
- To build connections between the social care sector and the art sector
- To make connections between artists and organisations easier
- To help increase opportunities for artists

Who should be part of it?

Generally agreed:

Membership is open but focused on neurodivergent artists and their allies among arts professionals, in arts institutions, social care organisations and supported studios.

ACTION:

Signing up or committing to follow a set of mutually agreed values was agreed as a good idea – PAW to share a suggested ‘manifesto’ – RADICAL THINKING AND DOING

ACTION:

To be discussed further:

Should the Network just be for the visual arts, or welcome all artforms?

How does the network deal with disagreements and grievances?

Formation of a Steering Group to make the Network work most effectively for its members

Although this was not agreed explicitly, there were no objections to the suggested format of the steering group.

- The Steering Group will consist of up to 12 members, chosen by members nominating themselves and if necessary, conduct a ballot, managed by Project Art Works
- The Steering Group would be able to meet more frequently (i.e. monthly?) to agree direction, policy and agenda items for the full meeting
- The group would be split between artists/care-givers and arts professionals

ACTIONS:

*We will look into financial support for unwaged/freelance steering group members
Proposed Steering Group members to be agreed at the next meeting:*

- Ashok Mistry
- Ellie Page (Outside In/Venture Arts)
- Naoibh Mcnamee
- Anna Farley
- Jasmine Moreton
- Tobias Roedl (BDKS Germany)
- Kyla Craig (Art Riot Collective)
- Becky Waite (Blue Room)
- Chris Miller (Submit To Love Studios)
- Martin Swan (Project Art Works)

How should future meetings take place: how frequently and in what format – online, in person, etc.

Generally Agreed:

- Meetings take place online, every 2 months until the end of the project – July, September, November, January
- November meeting could alternatively be an in-person meeting as part of the EXPLORERS final event at Baltic, Gateshead 28-29 November

Some members were keen for localised events and meet ups, and there were many invitations to visit different studios, and requests for potential sub-groups for Supported Studios, Research and Artist Mentoring/Peer review were suggested

ACTIONS:

Set up subgroups for Research, Supported Studios and Artists

What the Network is (and is not)

Generally agreed:

- The network is specifically focused on the lived experiences of neurominorities and/or people with intersecting disabilities
- The network will be organised and run by its members, not Project Art Works
- The network is Informal (i.e. no formal application process) but with a recognized structure, including a steering group