

ARTS EMERGENCY

Mentoring Partner Pack

**“Arts Emergency made a huge difference to our students,
giving them opportunities they never would have had.”**

Kirsty Walker, City of Liverpool College



Our mentoring programme...

Arts Emergency provides 16-18 year olds with *free* mentoring, support and community to help them explore a creative career they're passionate about.

We offer eligible students a year of 1:1 support from a trained, volunteer mentor - someone working in the creative or cultural industries. Our mentors provide information, advice and guidance, supporting young people's next steps after school or college.

The mentoring programme is available to young people living in **Greater Manchester, London** and **Merseyside**. We engage underrepresented and under-resourced young people who most need the support of an Arts Emergency mentor.

After completing a year of mentoring, mentees remain part of our **Young Community** where they can continue to access networking and development opportunities until their 26th birthday.

As a mentoring partner, you will be kept up-to-date with your student's progress throughout the mentoring year.



For more information:
mentoring@arts-emergency.org

What does mentoring do?

Knowledge of routes into the creative industries

Experience and understanding of the creative industries

Confidence communicating skills, strengths and talents

Young people make better informed choices as they navigate higher education, vocational training, and early careers

“I'm more confident in knowing that my future will work out how it needs to, and that I'm allowed to explore my options in the meantime.”

2025 London Mentee

2025 in numbers...

98% of mentees would recommend Arts Emergency to their peers.

91% of mentees have been given opportunities they wouldn't have had otherwise.

98% of mentees now feel part of a creative community.

97% of mentees have a clearer idea of the path they want to take.

95% are confident they they can achieve their creative ambitions.

In Greater Manchester...

Arts Emergency launched in Greater Manchester in 2016. In that time, we have supported 414 young people to take part in more than 1,300 mentoring meetings.

Each year, we support 50 mentoring pairs across the region.

We have 10 partner organisations in Greater Manchester. Existing partner organisations include:

- Ashton Sixth Form College
- Winstanley College
- The Manchester College

We are kindly supported by and work in partnership with Manchester Metropolitan University and Altogether Otherwise.

Wren's Mentoring Journey...

Wren was 17, attending Ashton Sixth Form College, when they applied to get a mentor. Wren says, "I was torn between studying Creative Writing or English Literature, so I was hoping to get some direction of where to head in the future career-wise and what university to apply to.

I was paired with Billie - a writer and playwright so they were a good fit for me.

At first our chats were about my goals and what I wanted to achieve through mentoring, but over time our relationship changed and I saw the meetings as a time where I could talk about how I was feeling beyond university choices and career goals.

Billie helped me gain knowledge about the whole process of writing a script and how it becomes a final version.

I didn't know I wanted to go to Oxford, but talking to Billie made me decide I did - I applied and got in!"

In London...

Arts Emergency was founded in London in 2013. In that time, we have supported 1,687 young people to take part in more than 5,000 mentoring meetings.

Each year, we support 200 mentoring pairs across the region.

We have 31 partner organisations in London. Existing partner organisations include:

- Capital City College
- The Norwood School
- West London Free School

We are kindly supported by and work in partnership with UAL: Central Saint Martins, Royal College of Art and Southbank Centre.

God's Favour's Mentoring Journey...

God's Favour was 16, attending Christ the King Sixth Form, when she applied to get a mentor. "At the time of applying for an Arts Emergency mentor I was feeling quite uncertain and a bit panicked about what I wanted to do after college.

I was paired with mentor Kirsty, who is an architect. Kirsty invited me to her work place where I got to meet members of her team, see the professional work environment and talk to different people working in different areas of the industry.

I would definitely recommend the mentoring programme! Kirsty and I are still in touch. It's given me a real sense of what a career in architecture could be, I feel more confident networking, and it's allowed me to see that everyone is just on their own journey.

I now have an offer to study architecture at the University of Reading, and I'm even being considered for a scholarship."

In Merseyside...

Arts Emergency launched in Merseyside in 2020. In that time, we have supported 234 young people to take part in more than 750 mentoring meetings.

Each year, we support 50 mentoring pairs across the region.

We have 12 partner organisations in Merseyside. Existing partner organisations include:

- Birkenhead Sixth Form College
- Carmel College
- City of Liverpool College

We are kindly supported by and work in partnership with National Museums Liverpool, Liverpool Everyman & Playhouse and DoES Liverpool.

Andy's Mentoring Journey...

Andy was 17, attending Broughton Hall Catholic High School, when they applied to get a mentor.

“Arts Emergency came into school to give a talk about the mentoring programme. It immediately interested me because I want to be a costume designer. I have all the passion, I've been sewing since I was in Year 6, but I don't have any connections in the industry so I didn't know what would be the best route to take after I leave school.

My mentor was Faye, who works as a visual artist and fashion stylist in Liverpool. We set goals, researched university courses and worked on my portfolio. Faye introduced me to lots of people in her network, I got connections and learned how to sell myself to get work experience.

Faye really helped me make my portfolio, and with her support I've been accepted to study Costume with Textiles at the University of Huddersfield! I'm still in touch with Faye and planning to meet up again soon.

Recruiting young people...

Recruitment

In September, applications for young people to get a mentor open and we'll share all the information you might need to inform students about the application process. This will include a link to our online applications.

Our regional mentoring officers can arrange visits to talk with your students in-person.

Throughout October, we conduct interviews with young people in-person at your venue or online via video call. Interviews are informal, kind, and are designed to help us get to know the young person better.

We might not admit a young person to the mentoring programme if we feel they do not fit the eligibility criteria or their interests are outside of our remit.

Once matched, we inform parents/guardians/carers about their young person's participation in the mentoring programme.

The mentoring programme is definitely something I wouldn't have done myself if it wasn't provided by my college.” 2025 Merseyside Mentee

Timeline

July	Deadline for Partner Agreements to be submitted
September	Applications to Get a Mentor Open! Visits & talks with partner organisations
October to November	Mentee Interviews
November to December	Mentoring officers match mentoring pairs and confirm young people's participation in the mentoring programme
January	The mentoring year begins with in-person and online introduction events
January to January	Ongoing support from Arts Emergency's mentoring team, alongside Young Community events & opportunities.

Our mentees...

What do we look for in a mentee?

1. A curiosity to explore their chosen creative career area e.g. architecture, fashion design, theatre making. They do not need to know exactly what they want to do yet, but they do need to be curious about learning more.
2. A commitment to meeting with their mentor once a month over the course of a year.
3. A personal background that meets Arts Emergency's eligibility criteria.

Each young person is considered contextually, but we do use evidence-based eligibility criteria to reach those most in need of our support.

71%

Mentees from a lower socioeconomic background

52%

Mentees from an ethnic minority background

38%

Mentees with a disability or special educational need

Eligibility Criteria

We ask that all mentees meet at least one of these three criteria:

1. They are from a lower socioeconomic background (any of the below:
 - their main household earner has a 'working class' occupation (i.e. a technical or craft occupation; a routine, manual, or service occupation; or is long-term unemployed)
 - none of their parents or carers have studied at university;
 - they have been eligible for free school meals, or are receiving the 16-19 bursary)
2. They are from a minority ethnic background
3. They have a disability or special educational need

Young people who meet multiple eligibility criteria are likely to be prioritised, along with those who display clear curiosity and commitment.

Our mentors...

Who are the Mentors?

Arts Emergency mentors are volunteers from a variety of professional backgrounds across the creative and cultural industries. We aim to match their expertise with the interests of the young people we support.

Mentors are trained in goal-setting, working with young people, and understanding safeguarding procedures. All mentors must agree to our Code of Conduct, undergo a reference check, an enhanced DBS check, and a one to one meeting with the mentoring team before mentoring can commence.

Our mentors come from a range of established organisations including the Manchester International Festival, Arts Council England, Royal Opera House, Financial Times, Liverpool Biennial, BBC, Tate, Columbia Records,, the Royal College of Art, and various universities.



Matching mentoring pairs...

Matching Mentoring Pairs

We aim to match each young person to the most appropriate mentor, based on their ability to support individual needs. We pay attention to the young person's interests, aptitudes, and any special educational needs. If a young person's interest is in writing, we would try to match them with a writer.

Young people will be invited to meet their mentor at an Introduction Event in January. These events give mentees the chance to introduce themselves, learn more about their mentor, swap contact details, schedule their next meeting, and network with other professionals, supported by Arts Emergency's mentoring team.

“My mentor has a lot of insight into different careers I have been interested in so I have gained a lot of knowledge I normally wouldn't have access to.”

2025 Greater Manchester Mentee



The mentoring year...

Mentoring

Most mentoring pairs arrange to meet once a month, for about an hour, in an appropriate public space where the young person feels comfortable. Some mentoring pairs will prefer to meet online, or a mixture of online and in-person. Some mentoring pairs meet at school/college if the young person has specific support needs.

Mentoring pairs will discuss goals for the year and how to achieve them. Mentoring meetings will differ depending on the mentee's interests. For example, a mentor pair with a focus on photography might meet and discuss portfolios one month, but then the next month they might do something more practical like a photo-shoot. A pair focused on journalism might review their writing in one session, but visit a newspaper office in the next.

We provide mentee handbooks at the beginning of the mentoring year which can help to guide young people through mentoring, from scheduling meetings and communicating with their mentor to setting goals.

Our regional mentoring officers provide support to mentoring pairs throughout their mentoring year.

Young Community

Our Young Community will continue to support young people by offering information, advice and guidance, access to cultural events and bespoke opportunities until their 26th birthday to help them thrive in creativity and culture.

“I have gained more confidence in myself and my ability to create art due to meeting so many great people within the Arts Emergency community.” 2025 London Mentee

Safeguarding young people...

Arts Emergency has a Designated Safeguarding Team, trained by the NSPCC. All of our staff team and volunteers are trained and DBS checked.

Arts Emergency recognises your expertise and will pass on all safeguarding concerns to school / college.

Parents/guardians/carers of young people are informed about the mentoring programme.

Mentoring pairs are made aware that in-person mentoring meetings must take place in an appropriate public space, and are advised how to safely conduct meetings online, if required. Mentoring meetings are monitored via mentor reports and regular check-ins with mentees.

All mentors are:

- trained to recognise signs of abuse
- trained how to report any disclosures or concerns
- put through an enhanced DBS process
- required to have reference checks
- required to agree to our Code of Conduct



To read our Safeguarding Policy:
arts-emergency.org/safe

What we need from you...

We will ask you to submit a **Mentoring Partner Agreement** which outlines our shared understanding of the responsibilities and commitments that we both hold to ensure the safe and successful delivery of our mentoring programme.

We acknowledge that you will have different pressures, priorities and processes to us, and so we will work hard to reduce any burden on you, and hope that you will do the same with us.

The Mentoring Partner Agreement needs to be seen by a member of your Senior Leadership Team and a Designated Safeguarding Officer, they will receive a copy of the agreement once you submit the form.

“This is an amazing opportunity for students to gain real-world insight into creative careers through caring and supportive relationships.”

Katharine Tolladay, Sir George Monoux Sixth Form College

We have a limited capacity of young people each year which we try to divide between different local authorities in your region. We can usually take between 5-10 young people per partner, but there is no pressure on you to supply this many.

In short we're asking you to provide:

- A designated contact for Arts Emergency
- Assistance with recruitment of young people, including promotion, selection and setting up interviews
- Safeguarding support - if an issue is brought to our attention, we will promptly pass this on to school / college
- Support in reaching mentees if they stop communicating with their mentor

For more information:

www.arts-emergency.org

To get in touch:

mentoring@arts-emergency.org