

“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

# Mentoring Partner Pack

for Schools, Colleges & Youth Organisations



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

Kirsty Walker, City of Liverpool College

## ARTS EMERGENCY

## Key information (one pager)

Arts Emergency is a free support programme for under-served young artists, creatives, thinkers and activists who want to contribute to the culture they live in.

We would like to offer your eligible 16-18 year olds a year of one-on-one mentoring with a creative professional that matches their interests. Our Young Community offers ongoing support for young people until they turn 26 to help them thrive in the creative and cultural industries.

As a Mentoring Partner, you will be kept up to date about the joys and successes of the programme throughout the year and beyond. We will need your support with the recruitment and application process. We will also stay connected to resolve any pastoral or safeguarding concerns which arise with your young people.

To get started, get in touch for a chat, and then complete a **Mentoring Partner Agreement** which needs to be seen and understood by key members of your leadership and safeguarding teams.

Can you think of a young person full of potential who needs support to break into these areas?



## About Arts Emergency

Since 2013 we've helped thousands of young people without connections flourish in higher education and navigate their way into creative and cultural careers.

We provide 16-18 year olds in Greater Manchester, London, and Merseyside with a trained volunteer mentor working in their field of interest who they meet on average once a month for a year to:

- gain a better understanding of the routes into industry,
- gain broader experiences of work,
- and grow in their self-confidence and ability to articulate their interests and skills.

After mentoring, we provide ongoing support through our wider professional network until that young person is 26.

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 on between 5-10 young people per partner, but there is no pressure on you to supply this many.

Taking part is **free** and from you we'll simply need a designated contact, a safeguarding contact, assistance with recruitment of the young people, and help with any pastoral issues.

## Who are the Mentors?

Arts Emergency mentors are volunteers from a variety of professional backgrounds. We aim to match their expertise with the interests of the young people. They 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 our staff before mentoring can commence.

Our mentors come from a range of established organisations including the V&A Museum, Netflix, Royal Opera House, The Economist, Financial Times, Manchester International Festival, BBC, Tate, Columbia Records, Royal Exchange, Contact Theatre, 20 Stories High, the Royal College of Art, and various universities.



## What do we look for in a mentee?

1. A curiosity to explore their creative areas of interest e.g. architecture, theatre, design... 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 their mentor once a month over the course of a year.
3. A personal background that meets Arts Emergency's eligibility criteria (see below)

## Eligibility for the programme

At Arts Emergency, we work with young people who aren't already able to benefit from their parents' university experience and professional networks. The criteria below helps us to make sure we work with young people who will benefit most from having a mentor.

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

It is important to note that we tend to be over-subscribed each year, so young people who meet multiple criteria are likely to be prioritised, along with those who display clear curiosity and commitment to the programme.





# Timeline



## Recruiting young people

In September, we will send you information about the programme and the application process. This will include a link to online applications and a video that can help your young people understand the programme and how to apply. We will let you know the deadline for applications.

All this information will also be here:  
**[arts-emergency.org/get-a-mentor](https://arts-emergency.org/get-a-mentor)**

Once we have received applications we will check eligibility and then share the shortlisting with you to help us make sure we're reaching those who can most benefit from the support of a mentor.

Throughout October and into November, Arts Emergency conducts informal interviews with these young people in-person at your venue, or via video call. The meetings are casual, kind, and are predominantly to help us get to know the young person better so we can provide them with a good mentor match.

Once matched, we approach parents / carers / guardians to let them know about the programme and ask them to contact us with any questions or concerns about their child participating.

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

## Matching

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

They will be invited to meet their mentor at an Introduction Event in January. This event will give mentees the chance to introduce themselves, learn more about their mentor, swap contact details, schedule their next meeting, and network with other professionals. We endeavour to have these events in-person wherever possible, but they could happen online if the young person or mentor prefers, or they can't attend the in-person event.

## Mentoring

Most mentoring pairs arrange to meet once a month in a public place where the young person feels comfortable and they will discuss goals for the year and how to achieve them. Some pairs will prefer to meet online, or a mixture of online and in-person. Some pairs meet at their school/college if the young person has specific support needs.

The content of these 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. Mentors often offer additional assistance during UCAS application season.

We provide mentee handbooks at the beginning of the year which helps guide young people through mentoring, from scheduling meetings and communicating with their mentor to setting goals. Our regional mentoring officers provide support to mentor pairs throughout their mentoring year.

## Post-Mentoring

Through our Young Community, Arts Emergency will continue to support young people by offering information, advice and guidance, access to cultural events and bespoke opportunities until they turn 26 to help them thrive in the creative and cultural industries. They can join a Community Discord to network with over 1,000 past mentees, and they have the opportunity to join Arts Emergency's Youth Collective.



# Safeguarding young people

Arts Emergency has Designated Safeguarding Team, trained by the NSPCC, and all our staff and volunteers are trained and DBS checked.

**You can read our Safeguarding Policy:**  
[arts-emergency.org/safe](https://arts-emergency.org/safe)

Arts Emergency recognises your expertise and will pass on all concerns to the school. Parents / carers of young people are informed about the programme.

Mentors and mentees are both made aware that meeting in person must take place in public spaces and advised on how to safely conduct mentoring online if required. Mentoring meetings are monitored through mentor reports and regular contact with mentees.

All mentors are:

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



## The impact of mentoring

**Arts Emergency has been running since 2013!**

This can be a life-changing opportunity for young people without connections to flourish as they take their first steps out of school or college. If you use the Gatsby benchmarks of Good Career Guidance, our programme contributes to five out of eight of them.

In our 2024 mentoring programme:

- 94% of mentees felt they could make better informed choices as they navigated higher education, vocational training and early careers.
- 91% of mentees indicated a good level of knowledge of the routes into the creative and cultural industries.

We check in with mentees regularly and we will share highlights and achievements with you. Visit [arts-emergency.org/stories](https://arts-emergency.org/stories) to read about our young people's successes.

### Maya's story

Maya Dhokia was a Manchester mentee in 2019 and wrote this in her initial application: *"I think Arts Emergency would help me to make connections with people and improve my overall social confidence"*.

Pictured right, Maya performed a series of her own poems at Arts Emergency's 10th birthday party. You can watch a video featuring a poem written by Maya at [arts-emergency.org/OurWorld](https://arts-emergency.org/OurWorld)



# What we need from you

We will ask you to read and complete 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 this 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 your Designated Safeguarding Officer, and they will receive a copy of the agreement once you complete the form.

**In short we're asking you to provide:**

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

## Get in touch

Website: [arts-emergency.org](https://arts-emergency.org)

All queries: [mentoring@arts-emergency.org](mailto:mentoring@arts-emergency.org)



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