

What is Action Learning?

Action learning is a practical and powerful approach to professional development that offers a small group of peers a structured and reflective way to explore the issues they face. You can read more here: <http://www.actionlearningcentre.com/about-action-learning/>

It can support you in your professional development by:

- **Helping you to step outside of your day-to-day pressures, enabling you to reflect and view your work from a fresh perspective.**
- **Giving you the opportunity to develop ideas, see connections and hear about others' experiences.**
- **Using active listening, questioning and sharing feedback, with the group challenging and supporting you to tackle issues and come up with your own creative solutions to take away and act upon.**
- **Giving you an understanding of other practices and roles as an individual or organisation.**
- **Helping you and/or your organisation to build networks and partnerships across different parts of the arts and health sector.**



Credit: Imogen Harvey-Lewis Illustration

Participants in previous Action Learning sets shared how valuable it had been to talk, have time to consider issues more deeply and feel part of an artist network. As well as a shift in thinking and an increase in confidence for many of the group, it has resulted in changes in artistic and organisational development, from setting up a new theatre lab, to forming new collaborations and refocusing creative practice.

“I’ve loved the process and have really valued the time to sit back and reflect on my professional work. It’s challenged me to think about where I am heading and where I want to go”. (Action Learning participant)

“The peer support was really valuable in being able to tackle issues in my working practice, problem-solve and then act to address them. I would highly recommend it to other artists needing some support to build their art career/practice. (Action Learning participant)

Further information

Who we want to join

We are looking for up to 8 professionals – independent artists, makers, project managers, producers, employees of arts or health organisations, museums, libraries and music education hubs who work in the arts and health sector. You should live or work in Gloucestershire and have at least 3 year’s experience of working in this field.

How is the set put together?

The group will be made up of peers who have a similar level of experience or responsibility, based on the information you provide on your application form. Applications will be assessed by Create Gloucestershire and an independent Action Learning Facilitator.

Do I have to commit to all six sessions?

Yes. In order to build on shared learning and maintain trust, all members should be present for each Action Learning meeting. Poor set attendance impacts on the energy in the set because members do not participate in each other's presentations and are not there to feedback on actions. Especially when projects come to a head, or deadlines approach, it can be difficult to stick to a fixed date in the diary. However, the pay-off from taking the time to pause, reflect and plan with your set more than makes up for it.

How will it work?

The Action Learning set will meet together for a full day, every 6-8 weeks. The first day in November/December 2019 will be an introductory day to Action Learning and to Joanna Ridout, our Action Learning Set facilitator, a UK expert in this field. Joanna will facilitate the rest of the 5 sessions with the aim that, if participants wish, the set can become self-facilitating.

How to apply

As we expect demand to be high, individuals will be selected by **application** but we want to make this a simple process. We cannot guarantee a place for everyone who is interested – we will make judgements based on the right mix of people, commitment to working in the arts and health sector and your ability to commit to the six sessions, including the introductory day. Set members will agree dates for the following five set meetings at the introductory meeting. We will expect participants to contract for attendance on all of the six dates (i.e the introductory date given plus five more set with the group).

Timetable 2019-20

Applications open
Application deadline
Successful applicants notified by email
Introductory day

Friday 27 September
Tuesday 29 October
Monday 4 November
Friday 29th November or
Wednesday 4th December
January – July 2020 (TBC)

5 x follow on set sessions

Costs

This professional development opportunity costs over £600 per person. Create Gloucestershire (CG) has secured investment from the Great Place programme and Arts Council England to offer this at a heavily subsidised **cost of £60 for 6 full day sessions**. The cost includes an e-welcome pack, participant handbook, meeting space, AL facilitator fee and refreshments.

CG is committed to ensuring everyone has access to the arts and taking the next step in developing their creative career. The CG bursary scheme is designed to support individuals that may not otherwise be able to access professional training opportunities due to financial barriers. If cost is an issue, please read the **guidance sheet** about our bursary opportunity and apply as part of the application process.

Cancellation

The fee for all six sessions is payable in full in advance of the first introductory day. If you are not able to pay the full amount up front, please contact us regarding a two-installment payment option.

If you choose to opt out after the first session, you only pay for that one session. If you choose to opt out after that, we are not able to refund the fee, as it will be difficult to replace you once the set is under way.

Our aims for the Action Learning Set and eventual network

CG wants to grow a vibrant community of artists who feel nurtured and celebrated from first steps through to international careers. This underpins our manifesto aims, which you can read about here: <http://www.creategloucestershire.co.uk/our-manifesto>

CG is addressing this need through a combination of training, bespoke and peer support, aimed at sharing practice and learning. We think Action Learning sets are a great way to support artists, makers and producers to grow and develop their practice and to make new connections and relationships with others working in the sector.

If you have already taken part in Action Learning and want to develop your practice further, we would love to hear from you. CG will be recruiting individuals for a new, contemporary leadership programme in December 2019. More details to follow.

CG's commitment to diversity

CG recognises that there are people whose background and experience is under represented within the creative industries, both in Gloucestershire and nationally, including women, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people, disabled people and people who are deaf and neurodiverse. We believe that discrimination or exclusion based on these, or other characteristics or circumstances, such as age, caring or dependency roles, gender or gender equality, partnership status, religious belief, sexual orientation, socio-economic background or other distinctions represents a waste of talent and potential.

CG is also supportive of the Arts Council England's **Creative Case for Diversity** which explores how organisations and artists can enrich the work they do by embracing a wide range of influences and practices.

We would appreciate if you could fill in the **equal opportunities and diversity form** together with your application (which will be anonymised and separate from your application). This helps us to assess and understand how effectively we embed equality and diversity in everything we do and, where necessary, to plan and allocate resources to make positive changes to promote equality and diversity. The more people that fill this in, the better our understanding is! Thank you.

If you have any queries about Action Learning or the bursary opportunity please contact Louise Bardgett at Create Gloucestershire by email: louise@creategloucestershire.co.uk



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