

# Creative Producer Development Programme 2026

## Frequently Asked Questions from Q&A webinar

### Eligibility

#### **Do I need to already be a freelancer to apply?**

No, you can apply whether you are freelance or currently employed. The programme is designed to support people who are interested in developing a producing career in the future.

#### **I don't have a portfolio or website yet — is that a problem?**

Not at all. You just need to be able to share some evidence of producing work you are currently doing or developing.

#### **I'm working on an immersive/combined arts experience for next summer — is that kind of work eligible?**

Yes, producing across live performance-based artforms is welcome.

#### **Is this open to producers outside the UK?**

No, the programme is only open to producers based in Greater Manchester.

#### **How much producing experience do I need to have?**

We are looking for people who have some practical experience of producing (even at an early stage), and a clear interest in building a career as a producer. This might include supporting one project, taking responsibility within a group, or leading a small-scale event.

#### **Does experience in group projects count?**

Yes, producing within a collective or small team absolutely counts. You don't need to have worked entirely solo.

#### **What if most of my experience is in a related area (e.g. film, design, technical roles)?**

Transferable experience is very welcome, you just need to show how you're beginning to move into producing or taking on producing responsibilities as part of your work.

#### **Would this be a useful course for someone producing community arts or engagement projects?**

Yes, the programme is relevant across performance-based arts contexts including community, young people's work, festivals, theatre, combined arts and more.

#### **I don't yet have credits, a portfolio, or a website — can I still apply?**

Yes, if you can talk about the producing work you're doing now or developing, that's enough. We do not expect a full producing CV or website at this stage.

#### **Does immersive, multidisciplinary or combined arts work count?**

Absolutely, the programme welcomes producers from all artforms, including live performance, audio-based work, festivals, film crossovers, and more.

**I'm currently employed on a fixed-term contract and want to move into freelance producing — can I apply?**

Yes, we welcome applicants who are planning to transition into freelance producing. You don't need to already be freelance.

**I only have university-level producing experience — is that acceptable?**

Yes, academic or student-led producing experience counts, as long as you can demonstrate the responsibilities you took on and your motivation to grow.

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## **Programme Structure & Learning**

### **Can you share more about the content and delivery style?**

Workshops will include:

- Producing skills and processes
- Access and environmental sustainability
- Budgeting, contracting & logistics
- Fundraising and writing grant applications
- Building collaborative relationships
- Self-management & sustaining your work
- Marketing yourself and finding opportunities
- Sessions will be in-person, interactive, practical and discussion-based, with guest speakers and case studies

### **Will we be required to produce an event at the end of the course?**

No, there is no required event or final production. The focus is on skills development and confidence-building.

### **Is there work to do outside the workshops?**

There may be light, optional reflective tasks between sessions, but nothing compulsory. Participants will also be able to book optional 1-to-1 support sessions with project partners.

### **Is the programme specifically designed for freelance producers?**

No, the programme is for creatives interested in producing (whether freelance or working for an organisation or individual). The training aims to equip you with skills in self-management, professional practice and sustaining a career, including finding opportunities.

### **Does the programme cover fundraising or writing grant applications?**

Yes, we will cover the basics of applying for funding (including Arts Council England), alternative sources of fundraising, with practical tips for navigating the process.

### **Will the programme help me connect with artists or venues afterwards?**

Yes, a big part of the programme is about helping you build professional networks. We will support you to make introductions and find new opportunities, but we cannot guarantee placements or funded projects.

#### **How are previous participants supported after the course?**

- Alumni have access to:
- Continued contact with the programme team
- Recommendations and introductions where appropriate
- Invitations to industry events or networking opportunities
- Ongoing updates about producing opportunities across the partner venues

While we can't guarantee paid work, we aim to continue championing and supporting producers as they develop.

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### **Fees & Capacity**

#### **Is there a fee to take part?**

No, the programme is free to all participants.

#### **How big will the cohort be?**

We expect the cohort to be around 15 people, to ensure a supportive and focused learning environment.

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### **Miscellaneous**

#### **Will there be self-directed work?**

You may be encouraged to reflect on your own projects between sessions, but this is not compulsory.

#### **Will there be travel support?**

A small financial contribution will be available for each participant which can be used for travel expenses or other costs that ensure you can take part in the programme. This is separate to access support which will be discussed with individual participants.

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If you have a question not listed here, please get in touch with Isah at Z-arts.

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