



So, one more time?

creative minds

CONFERENCE GUIDE

CREDITS



HOW TO PUT ON A CONFERENCE GUIDE

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HOW TO PUT ON A CONFERENCE GUIDE

Welcome to the *Creative Minds How To Put On A Conference Guide*. We hope that you enjoy reading about our work. The Guide was written by the Creative Minds Steering Committee – a group of artists, performers and film makers with learning disabilities. It is based on their experience of putting on a national conference and making the website that goes with it.

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CHAPTER 1

THIS IS WHAT CREATIVE MINDS IS ABOUT

1. WHAT IS CREATIVE MINDS?

Creative Minds is:

- Led by learning disabled artists, performers and film makers
- A discussion about how we know when art, performance and film made by learning disabled artists is of high quality
- A website that has a **Talking Area**, where people can share their ideas, thoughts and feelings about what we mean by quality in learning disability arts
- Conferences where people come together to talk and find words that feed into both the website and all of the discussions

2. WHO IS CREATIVE MINDS FOR?

Creative Minds brings together:

- Learning disabled artists, performers and film makers
- The arts organisations that support them

Creative Minds wants to bring us together with:

- Places where art happens, like theatres, art galleries, arts centres and cinemas
- Other arts organisations
- Art critics and the media
- Universities, colleges and schools

3. WHAT IS THE CREATIVE MINDS COMMUNITY?

- As we come together, we are calling ourselves the **Creative Minds Community**
- The things that we have listed below here are the things that we want to talk about

CHAPTER 1

THIS IS WHAT CREATIVE MINDS IS ABOUT



4. WHAT MAKES OUR ART GOOD?

- How we know when it is good
 - How other people might know when it is good
 - What we can do to help us grow and develop as artists, performers and film makers
-

5. WHAT WORDS CAN WE USE TO TELL PEOPLE THAT WE KNOW OUR ART IS GOOD?

- Ways in which we can explain what we mean by 'quality'
-

6. HOW CAN WE GET MORE PEOPLE TO SEE OUR WORK?

- Talk about the best ways we can tell people what we are doing
 - Find new ways to show people our creative work
-

7. HOW CAN WE GET MORE VENUES TO SHOW OUR WORK?

- At the moment lots of venues, galleries and cinemas show our work as part of their 'education' or 'outreach' work
- Hardly any venues, galleries or cinemas show our work as part of their 'mainstream' programme of shows or exhibitions
- We want to talk about ways in which we can get them to see our creative work differently

CHAPTER 1

THIS IS WHAT CREATIVE MINDS IS ABOUT



8. HOW CAN WE GET NEWSPAPERS TO TALK ABOUT OUR CREATIVE WORK?

- We have been told by some journalists that their editors prefer to show people with learning disabilities as 'victims' not as 'achievers'
- We want to talk about how can we can change this

9. HOW CAN WE GET ARTS CRITICS TO WRITE ABOUT OUR WORK?

- We would like to talk more to arts critics about our work
- We would like to invite more of them to see our work and ask them to tell us what they think about what we are doing
- When we do this we think that we can persuade them to write about our work in an equal way with the other arts work that they write about
- This will help more people learn about our creative work and take what we do seriously

10. HOW CAN WE GET UNIVERSITIES TO TAKE US SERIOUSLY AS ARTISTS, PERFORMERS AND FILM MAKERS?

- We would like them to do some research with us about our creative work and how we know that it is of a high quality
- This will help spread news about our work to other universities, to colleges and to schools
- We would like to talk to academics and to students about our work
- We could do talks and presentations at universities and at the conferences that they put on

CHAPTER 2

THIS IS WHY CREATIVE MINDS STARTED

1. WHAT IS THE IDEA BEHIND CREATIVE MINDS?

- Matthew Hellett, a learning disabled film maker and member of the Creative Minds Steering Committee, wrote this for the Creative Minds website www.creativemindsproject.org.uk

We think it is an example of why Creative Minds is important:

"Whilst we have been touring Oska Bright (the international festival of short films made by people with learning disabilities) all around the country and overseas, Sarah Watson and I heard people saying that the films were good and that everyone must have got a lot of therapy out of making them. We were angry that they saw the films as 'therapy'.*

"We think the films are of a high quality that should be seen by more people. We talked about this a lot and decided to get together with other artists and performers with learning disabilities to see what we could do about this.

"We want to change people's ideas and thoughts and the way they see us. When we began talking with other learning disabled artists, performers and film makers we found out that everyone had lots of different experiences of not being taken seriously as artists."

(*Sarah is a learning disabled film maker who runs Oska Bright with Matthew and others)

2. WHAT DO WE NEED TO CHANGE?

- We need to get away from the idea that lots of people seem to have that art is 'done' to people with learning disabilities, rather than us making our own art in our own unique and interesting ways - telling our stories



3. WHAT IS CREATIVE QUALITY?

How can we talk with other people about what we mean by 'quality' in learning disability led arts, performance and film? We decided that we need to:

- Find a way to make other people know when our work is good
- Make sure that people don't patronise us or 'look down' at us; this is like patting us on the back as if we are children
- Start to find words that describe what we mean by 'quality'

For example: If someone tells us what to do, ie "walk on stage, turn round, say hello and walk off", then we are not being creative. Whereas if we make our own entrance and find our own creative style to move across a stage, then we are being creative, we are being ourselves. We think we can tell the difference between these two, and we think audiences can too. We think that this might be a mark of quality in our art, performance and film work.

- When people 'own' their art we can see quality in the work they produce, as they tell their own stories in their own ways

For example: When Oaska Bright Film Festival started some of the films were not very good. This was because they were the first of their kind. By taking the Film Festival 'On The Road' and by running master classes, and making a **Film Making Guide** on the website, people have developed their skills and now the films entered into the festival are of a higher quality



4. WHAT DO OTHER PEOPLE THINK ABOUT YOUR ART WORK?

We think that it's good for other people to tell you what they like or don't like about your art work. We think it helps us to improve what we do and to think more about what we do and why we do it. Do you agree?

- Most artists like to cause a bit of a stir - this is the same for learning disabled artists
- Most of our work doesn't get talked about or reported on because we think people might be afraid of hurting our feelings. We haven't been allowed to 'fail' or sometimes even to 'have a go'

We want to change this

- Maybe our work isn't seen as good quality because we're often given opportunities under venues 'education' or 'outreach' programmes - we're not engaged as 'quality' or 'professional' artists
- Lots of learning disability arts organisations are known for putting on very high quality projects. There are hardly any named individual learning disabled artists who have a reputation under their own names



CHAPTER 3

A BRIEF HISTORY OF PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

1. WHY DO YOU NEED TO KNOW A BIT ABOUT THE HISTORY OF OUR COMMUNITY?

- This is important to know because it gives you a background about where people with learning disabilities have come from and how society treats us
- This has affected our art, performance and film work because we haven't had the same opportunities as other artists, performers and film makers. For example, we aren't allowed to go to university and get an art degree
- It has also meant that people without learning disabilities haven't had a chance to get to know us and are a bit unsure of how to treat us. They just seem to see us as being a bit too different from them

2. WHAT ARE THE INSTITUTIONS THAT PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES WERE MADE TO ATTEND?

Until the early 1980s:

- Most people with learning disabilities either lived in large institutions called '**Mental Handicap Hospitals**', or at home with their families
- Most people with learning disabilities went to '**Adult Training Centres**' during the day time, doing things like packing things into boxes
- Children with learning disabilities went to '**Special Schools**'. These schools were different to the schools where children without learning disabilities went
- Some people say that our community was hidden away from the world because of these things
- This had a big effect on the way our community was seen, and a big effect on how we saw ourselves

CHAPTER 3

A BRIEF HISTORY OF PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM



3. WHY IS CARE IN THE COMMUNITY IMPORTANT FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES?

During the 1980s a thing called '**Community Care**' happened:

- There was a successful campaign to shut down '**Mental Handicap Hospitals**'
- They were shut down because people had very few rights or choices when they lived in them. Lots of people living in the '**Mental Handicap Hospitals**' experienced abuse from staff or from other people who lived there
- So the Government closed down the big hospitals. People were moved to live in places within the community. These were called things like:
 - Hostels
 - Group homes
 - Supported living places

4. HOW CAN YOU UNDERSTAND LEARNING DISABILITY A BIT MORE?

- It is important to know that there are two ways of looking at people with learning disabilities
- One way is to look at the '**Medical Model**' – this has been put together by people like doctors and nurses, sometimes called the '**Medical Profession**'
- The other way is to look at the '**Social Model**' – this has been put together by people with disabilities

CHAPTER 3

A BRIEF HISTORY OF PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM



5. WHAT IS THE 'MEDICAL MODEL'?

- The 'Medical Model' of disability sees the disabled person as the problem
- It says that disabled people need to be 'cured' or 'changed' so that they can fit more easily into the world as it is
- It wants people to be 'more normal'
- They talk about what we can't do – not about the support needs that we have
- They do lots of 'assessments' on us without including us in the decisions that they make and what they tell us to do
- It says that the power to change disabled people lies with doctors and nurses, sometimes called the 'Medical Profession' or 'Health Professionals'

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Medical_model_of_disability

6. WHAT IS THE 'SOCIAL MODEL'?

- The 'Social Model' is about the discrimination that disabled people have to live with
- Discrimination means being treated unfairly, for example not being given the support to go to an ordinary school or to live independently
- The 'Social Model' is about stopping the things that make discrimination happen
- It says that society must take into account the diverse needs of disabled people
- The 'Social Model' is led by disabled people themselves not by doctors and nurses
- The 'Social Model' is about the rights of disabled people to be equal with others

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_model_of_disability

CHAPTER 3

A BRIEF HISTORY OF PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM



7. WHY IS THE 'ARTS AND DISABLED PEOPLE – THE ATTENBOROUGH REPORT (1985)' IMPORTANT?

- In 1985, the Government asked a committee of important people in the arts to report on what was happening with arts and disabled people
- This committee was led by **Lord Richard Attenborough**
- When the report was published it led to more public money being given to arts projects led by people with disabilities and arts projects for people with disabilities
- This is important because it meant that some people thought that our work was good

8. WHY IS THE DISABILITY ARTS MOVEMENT IMPORTANT FOR LEARNING DISABILITY LED ARTS?

Since 1985 the **Disability Arts Movement** has grown:

- In the main this movement has been led by people with physical disabilities and deaf people
- People with learning disabilities haven't really been part of this movement – our work is often left out by the **Disability Arts Movement**

CHAPTER 3

A BRIEF HISTORY OF PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM



9. WHICH ORGANISATIONS SUPPORTED LEARNING DISABLED ARTISTS TO START?

This is a short list that doesn't give lots of information. It is meant to show that during the 1980s some arts organisations began to specialise in supporting people with learning disabilities to make and present their own art, performance and film work. This really began the learning disability arts movement

They include:

- Shape Arts Development Agency – all art forms
- Amici Dance Company
- Carousel – all art forms
- Corali Dance Company
- Mind The Gap Theatre Company
- Strathcona Theatre Company
- Firebird Theatre Company
- Art and Power – visual art
- Project Ability – visual art
- Action Space – visual art
- Heart 'n Soul – music and performance
- The Drake Music Society – music

There are other organisations too, but we can't list them all here. We are very sorry about that

CHAPTER 3

A BRIEF HISTORY OF PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM



10. WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW?

We think that it wasn't until the 2000s that artists with learning disabilities started to find their own voices – advocating for their own arts

We know that:

- Artists, performers and film makers continue to work with the support of specialist arts organisations
- This is because people with learning disabilities continue to need support with being in control of the art, performance and films that they create
- There are only a few people with learning disabilities that have **broken through** as artists that work independently

Here are some of the people we know about:

- Jez Colbourne – musician and actor
- Sarah Gordy – actor
- Donna Levine - actor
- Lester MacGoogan – visual artist

CHAPTER 4

SETTING UP AND SUPPORTING THE STEERING COMMITTEE TO RUN CREATIVE MINDS

1. HOW DID YOU START THE STEERING COMMITTEE?

- Our first step was to find other artists, performers and film makers with learning disabilities who were interested in joining us to set up a **Steering Committee** to plan and run our conference
- It was very important to find people who like both sitting on committees and having discussions about art work. Make sure that everybody likes being on committees and working together with other people
- To find committee members we spoke to lots of different arts organisations that support learning disabled artists, performers and film makers
- We had **7 committee members** – all working in different art forms
- 5 committee members were supported by learning disability arts organisations (**Action Space, Carousel, Corali and Rocket Artists**) and 2 committee members were independent artists

2. HOW DID YOU MAKE SURE THAT YOU HAD THE RIGHT SUPPORT?

- Together as a committee we needed support to plan and put on the conference
- We had support from 2 people without learning disabilities from arts organisations to plan the committee meetings with us, and to help us with the administration and event planning

CHAPTER 4

SETTING UP AND SUPPORTING THE STEERING COMMITTEE TO RUN CREATIVE MINDS



3. HOW DID YOU DECIDE WHAT THE CONFERENCE WOULD BE LIKE?

- We decided that the theme of the conference would be 'Quality'. We wanted to talk with other people about how we know when work by learning disabled artists, performers and film makers is very good
- We had to think about what kind of conference it was going to be – just talking, or showing different kinds of art work, or a mixture of both
- At Creative Minds in Brighton we decided that we wanted to show **performance, exhibitions and film** to start off our talking about 'Quality'. We thought it was important that there were a lot of different art forms that we could talk about during the conference

4. HOW DID YOU CHOOSE THE RIGHT BUILDING FOR THE CONFERENCE TO TAKE PLACE IN?

- We had to find a suitable accessible venue. It had to be easy for people to get around
- It had to be big enough for 250 people to fit into easily, with space to move around without squashing together and feeling claustrophobic
- There had to be a **quiet space** where people could go to have a break during the conference if it all got too much for them
- We had to think about the **physical access**; things like hearing loops and access for people using wheelchairs
- We had to plan and do things in a certain order in the run up to the conference date so that everything could happen to make it a successful day

CHAPTER 4

SETTING UP AND SUPPORTING THE STEERING COMMITTEE TO RUN CREATIVE MINDS

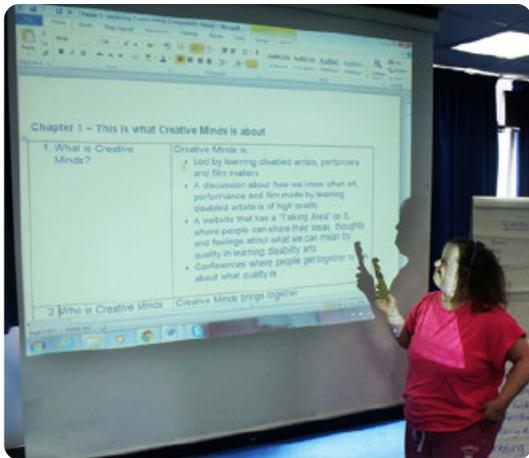
5. WHAT WERE THE JOBS THAT YOU HAD TO DO AS A COMMITTEE?

- We agreed together the jobs we had to do to make the conference happen
- Our jobs are listed in **Chapter 5**
- Certain jobs needed to be done by a certain time and date, so we asked our support staff to help us to plan this out



6. WHAT WERE YOUR MEETING AGENDAS LIKE?

- We had 'Easy Read' agendas for each meeting that covered the things that we needed to decide at each meeting
- **Chapter 6** gives you an example of one of our agendas
- Having an agenda with timings on it really helps you when you get stuck on a difficult subject
- At the end of each meeting we decided what would go onto the agenda for our next meeting



7. HOW LONG WERE YOUR MEETINGS – DID YOU HAVE BREAKS?

- You will see from our agendas that we had a structure to our meetings
- We needed the structure because it helped us to remember everything we had planned and the decisions that we'd made
- We met from 11am until 12.15pm
- From 12.15pm we had lunch until 1pm
- The last bit of our meeting was from 1pm until 2pm
- We had to make a lot of difficult decisions at each meeting, and we had to focus a lot
- It was hard work, and after each meeting we were very tired
- The meetings could not have been any longer

CHAPTER 4

SETTING UP AND SUPPORTING THE STEERING COMMITTEE TO RUN CREATIVE MINDS



8. HOW DID YOU MAKE THE MINUTES FROM EACH MEETING?

- At the start of each meeting we looked through the minutes from our last meeting and checked that everything had been done
- Writing meeting minutes or notes was not accessible to all of us. Instead we used film to record all of our decisions, we used a **flip-cam**
- This is what a flip-cam looks like (see picture on the left). They are very easy to use
- Then our support staff uploaded our films to tumblr here: <http://qualitycarousel.tumblr.com/> – so that we could look back at them at each meeting to remember what we had done
- This also meant that we could feedback to all of the arts organisations in the **Creative Minds Partnership** and other important people about what we had done

9. WHAT DID YOU TALK ABOUT?

- During this time we had some interesting discussions about what we thought quality was (see **Chapter 7** for some of the activities that we did together)
- We looked at reviews by critics in newspapers, magazines and on TV and talked about what they said or did not say (see **Chapter 7** for a description of how we did this)

CHAPTER 4

SETTING UP AND SUPPORTING THE STEERING COMMITTEE TO RUN CREATIVE MINDS



10. HOW DID YOU COME UP WITH THE CONFERENCE NAME?

- We made a list of all of the different words that we thought described what we were doing
- We put some of these words into groups
- Then we thought about it for a month inbetween our meetings
- Then we had a talk together about what we thought of the names
- Then we made a shortlist
- After that we voted on our favourite name
- There was a clear winner – ‘Creative Minds’

11. HOW DID YOU MAKE SURE THAT THE PEOPLE COMING TO THE CONFERENCE WOULD STICK TO TALKING ABOUT ‘QUALITY’?

- To help people stick to the subject at Creative Minds we thought it would be good to have some questions that would break down the discussions a bit
- During the committee meetings we had lots of discussions. These discussions helped us to write the questions that we wanted people to talk about at the conference
- These questions were made to help us all think about what quality is in learning disability arts, performance and film – they gave us a place to start with our talking
- **Chapter 8** shows you the questions we used to start the discussion in our **Break Out** groups. We asked the artists who presented their work to answer these questions first, then we had a **Question & Answer session** that was run by a **chair person** to keep the talking going

CHAPTER 4

SETTING UP AND SUPPORTING THE STEERING COMMITTEE TO RUN CREATIVE MINDS



15. DID YOU MAKE A NEW WEBSITE?

- We worked on making the **Creative Minds website** with a web designer that we picked from lots of people that applied for the job
- He ran three workshops with us to get an idea of what we wanted
- He then showed us some ideas that he had worked on after these workshops
- After that, we set up a sub-committee of people to work with him in London
- This was a good way to work and meant that those people on the committee who had a special interest in websites could do this work

16. HOW DID YOU PLAN THE CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS?

- We did this last of all, after we had planned everything else
- We thought it was important for us, as the learning disabled artists who planned this project, to give the **main speeches** at the conference
- This was important because it showed everybody that we were in charge
- We wanted the voice of learning disabled artists, performers and film makers to be heard to be in charge at the conference
- We wanted the speeches to be serious but fun, so we did some comedy acting to break the ice right at the beginning
- We used **Power Point presentations** because this was accessible for us as speakers
- We think Power Point is also accessible for people to see at conferences because it gives words and pictures to support talking
- We rehearsed our presentations during our meetings



CHAPTER 4

SETTING UP AND SUPPORTING THE STEERING COMMITTEE TO RUN CREATIVE MINDS



17. HOW LONG DID IT TAKE TO PLAN THE CREATIVE MINDS BRIGHTON CONFERENCE?

- It took us two years
- We met every month
- We met more often as we got closer to the time of the conference
- At each meeting we gave jobs to the **Committee Support Staff** to do and asked them to report back at the next meeting

18. WHY DID YOU HAVE CONFERENCE GROUND RULES?

- At the conference we knew there would be discussions about what people thought was good and bad art
- Because learning disabled artists, performers and film makers would probably not have had their work talked about in this way before we decided that we needed to suggest some **Ground Rules** to make people feel safe at the conference
- We thought these were very important
- Have a look at **Chapter 10** for the **Ground Rules** we used at the **Creative Minds Conference in Brighton**

19. WHAT DID THE BRIGHTON CREATIVE MINDS CONFERENCE LOOK LIKE?

- You can see what the **Brighton Conference** looked like by looking at the film on our website: [/www.creativemindsproject.org.uk/events/](http://www.creativemindsproject.org.uk/events/)

1. HOW DID YOU GET THE RIGHT COMMITTEE SUPPORT?

Make sure that the people without learning disabilities who support your committee provide you with the right kind of support:

- Make sure they do not take control of the project or take over at meetings
- Make sure that they know that you are in charge
- Make sure that they know that their role is to support your decision making
- Make sure that they respect your decisions
- Make sure you get support from people who enjoy art, not people who say they don't like it
- Your support staff don't have to be artists themselves, but they could be

2. DO THINGS THAT ARE WRITTEN ON PAPER OR ON A SCREEN NEED TO BE WRITTEN IN A PARTICULAR WAY?

- Use easy to understand words
- Write the words you use in a clear type face (like the one called Arial or Open Sans that we are using in this writing)
- Use a big font size – no smaller than 16 point in Word
- Use pictures or clear photographs to support the words that you use
- Use whole words – do not shorten them
- Do not put capital letters instead of the real words
For example: instead of writing T.B.A. you should write To Be Agreed

CHAPTER 5

COMMITTEE JOBS AND MEETING RULES



3. HOW DID YOU GET MONEY TO PUT ON YOUR EVENT OR CONFERENCE?

- Getting money is not an easy job
- Have a person working with you who can take the lead on getting money for the event or conference
- Make a plan together to get money
- If you go to meet funders face to face, go with support
- Have a planning meeting before you go, so you know what you are going to say when you are there



4. GETTING PRESS AND PUBLICITY

- Getting the press to write about your conference is not an easy job
- Employ a lead person who knows about the press and how to get publicity, marketing and social media
- Make a plan together for the publicity, marketing and social media
- Set realistic targets
- If you go to meet journalists or TV people face to face, go with support
- Have a planning meeting before you go, so you know what you are going to say when you are there

CHAPTER 5

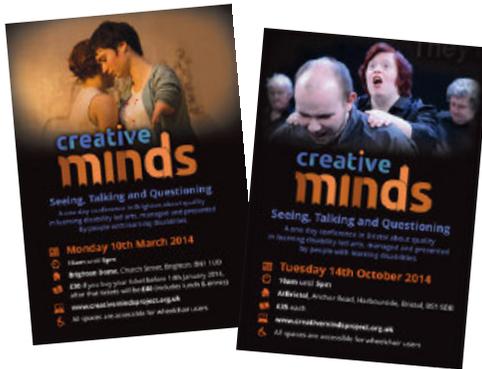
COMMITTEE JOBS AND MEETING RULES

5. THESE ARE THE COMMITTEE JOBS:

DESIGNING THE PUBLICITY

This might be:

- Flyers that advertise the conference
- Postcards that give people information about Creative Minds
- The information that you hand out to the people who come to the conference when they come on the day



MARKETING

- Telling people about all of this work so that they come to your conference

PUTTING ON THE CONFERENCE

- Planning everything that you need to do before, during and after the day of the conference



FUNDING

- Getting money for the conference to happen



CHAPTER 5

COMMITTEE JOBS AND MEETING RULES



TALKING TO LOTS OF PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS ABOUT YOUR CONFERENCE

These people might be:

- Other arts organisations
- Art critics
- Funders – people who give money to make sure the arts happen
- Universities, colleges and schools
- Places where art is shown like theatres, arts centres, galleries and cinemas



EVALUATE AND FEEDBACK

Ask lots of people to give you feedback about your conference like:

- The people who came to your conference
- People who performed at your conference
- People who spoke at your conference
- Conference stall holders
- The staff you employed



6. THESE ARE OUR GROUND RULES THAT WE USED FOR OUR COMMITTEE MEETINGS



One person speaks at a time, so that we can hear what everyone has to say

Use simple words, so that everyone can understand what you are saying

Ask for help if you don't understand what someone has said



Give people the time to explain things



Make sure that mobile phones are off or on silent

Work together with one another

Respect what other people say



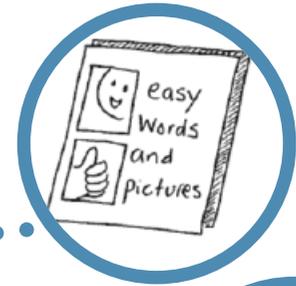
USE A TALKING STICK

A talking stick is a piece of wood

When you hold the talking stick you can speak and everyone has to listen to you

You pass the talking stick around so that everyone has a chance to have their voice heard in the meeting

If you aren't holding the talking stick then you can't speak



CHAPTER 6

CREATIVE MINDS AGENDA

THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF A CREATIVE MINDS SOUTH EAST STEERING COMMITTEE AGENDA

Write an easy to read version of this **agenda** on a **flip chart** before each meeting for everyone to look at during the meeting

1. AGENDA FOR TODAY

Talk through the agenda on the flip chart so everyone knows what it is

2. ALL OF OUR NAMES

Go round the group and everyone say their own **name** and the **Arts Organisation** that they are from. (Everyone says their name to the **flip-cam** – an accessible video camera – so this can be uploaded for the minutes)

3. GROUND RULES

Talk through the list on the wall

4. HOUSEKEEPING

Say where the **toilets** are and what the **fire escape** plan is

5. THIS PROJECT

The theme for our project is 'Quality' and 'How we know our work is good'

It is about 3 things:

1. Putting on a **conference** in Brighton in 2014, with 2 other conferences – one in **Bristol** and one in **Essex**
2. Making a **Guide** showing other people how to put on a conference like ours – this is the list of things that we will put in the Guide – we add to them during our meetings
3. Making a new **website**

CHAPTER 6

CREATIVE MINDS AGENDA



6. OTHER CREATIVE MINDS CONFERENCES FEEDBACK

Bristol Creative Minds Conference

The Arts Organisations are:

- The Misfits Theatre Company
- The Open Storytellers
- JUMPcuts
- Firebird Theatre
- Artists First

Here is the feedback from these groups so far

Essex Creative Minds Conference

The Arts Organisations are:

- Zinc
- Razed Roof Theatre Company
- Suffolk Artlink
- ActOne ArtsBase
- Thalia Theatre Company
- Actability
- Dance East

Here is the feedback from these groups so far

7. READ THROUGH OUR JOBS

Today doing Job 1 and Job 7

CHAPTER 6

CREATIVE MINDS AGENDA



8. CREATIVE MINDS CONFERENCE PLAN

Read through it from the wall

9. MINUTES

Look through our **blog** from the last meeting – read the words, no time to play films

11.20AM

10. QUESTIONS

Look at the **questions** so far and the question about **Quality** that we started to do last time. Carry on talking about these

(Tell the **flip-cam** about what we have been doing)

12PM mid-day

11. TWEETS

Write some more tweets that we can use to publicise the conference

(Tell the **flip-cam** about what we have been doing)

12.10PM

CHAPTER 6

CREATIVE MINDS AGENDA



12. FILM

Talk about the **film** and the plan for a **soundtrack** to it
(Tell the **flip-cam** about what we have been doing)

12.15PM LUNCH until 1PM

13. GOODIE BAGS

Last time we thought about:

- Linen bags with the Creative Minds logo on it
- Pencils
- Arts Council England postcard
- Badges
- Sweets

• We could put flyers into the goodie bags and charge people £5 to do it?

Decide on what we want for **Creative Minds Brighton** so that we can order stuff now.

(Tell the **flip-cam** about what we have been doing)

1.10PM

14. 'WHAT NEXT?' PART OF THE CONFERENCE

Look at the **plan** on the wall

- Talk about what we have planned so far
- We have not planned the **What Next?** session yet
- Let's start talking about what we can do

(Tell the **flip-cam** about what we have been doing)

1.45PM

CHAPTER 6

CREATIVE MINDS AGENDA



15. MARKETING

Talk about what has been going on with **marketing** this month
Is there any news from our **press** person?

(Tell the **flip-cam** about what we have been doing)

1.50PM

16. AGENDA FOR THE NEXT MEETING

Let's make a list of what we will be talking about at our next meeting
on 7th January 2014

Need to add:

- Keep on planning the **What Next?** section
- Starting to write a **script** for the opening part of the conference
- Re-cap on **questions**
- Think about **evaluation**

(Tell the **flip-cam** about what we have been doing)

Our next meeting will be here in Brighton on **7th January 2014** at Carousel.
After that our meetings are going to be every two weeks until the conference



BYE

2PM

CHAPTER 7

THINGS TO TALK ABOUT AT THE CREATIVE MINDS STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

We used these to help us talk a lot about **quality** in learning disability led arts, performance and film during our planning time. They helped us choose the key conference questions that we used for **Creative Minds Brighton** that are written here in **Chapter 8**

1. ACTIVITY 1 – TALKING ABOUT QUALITY AND WHAT IT MEANS

Go round to each person on the committee, one by one each person says:

- What art forms you do (for example: performance, dance, film, visual arts)
- What company you work with
- Tell everyone about some work that you've made recently that you really enjoyed and thought was good

Now, as a group, answer this question:

"How do you know when the art, performance or film that you have done is good?"

Make a list of the things you talk about

Here is a list of some of the things that came up in a Creative Minds discussion:

- Bringing **'myself'** to my performances
- Influencing others
- Things that happen in my life that I can use in my art
- Work of high standard
- Professionally presented
- Inspiring ideas
- Showing your skills
- Turning everyday experiences into art
- Enjoyment and lighting me up
- Living and breathing things that link you with your art

CHAPTER 7

THINGS TO TALK ABOUT AT THE CREATIVE MINDS STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS



Now, ask yourselves:

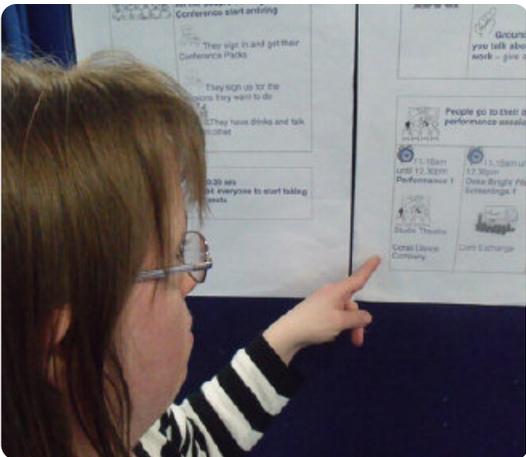
“How do you know when art and performance by other people that you see is good?”
Talk about this together, and make notes about things that come up

Here is a list of some of the things that came up at Creative Minds Brighton planning meetings:

- You get that buzz
- You can get involved with the art
- It is about trial and error

Things from talking together here might come up that you can use as part of an activity for your Creative Minds Conference

Keep a note of everything in an accessible way so that you can come back to look at it later



CHAPTER 7

THINGS TO TALK ABOUT AT THE CREATIVE MINDS STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS



2. ACTIVITY 2 - TV AND FILM CLIPS ABOUT LEARNING DISABILITY ARTS WORK

Work with your support staff to source some films that talk about learning disability arts work. A good place to look is **Youtube**. Perhaps one of the organisations that you are working with has had a local TV company come in to do a short film about one of their recent performances or exhibitions

Here are some links about **Oska Bright** if you can't find any other ones:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=IUWca23CrPk

and <https://vimeo.com/96699755> password = creativeminds

1. Start by looking at the film together
2. Then ask yourselves these questions and talk about your answers together. Make key notes on a flip chart to help you make any action points for you to record onto your flip-cam for the meeting minutes:
 - Did they take the work seriously?
 - Did they understand the work? How do you know this?
 - Did they say anything that wasn't good about the work? How did that make you feel?
 - Not everyone will like the work – in the same way that you don't like everything that you see. When people talk about what they don't like, it helps us to learn, doesn't it?

Make notes as you talk – some things that you talk about might be part of your conference activities

CHAPTER 7

THINGS TO TALK ABOUT AT THE CREATIVE MINDS STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS



3. ACTIVITY 3 - LOOKING AT YOUR OWN WORK

Talk together as a committee about **Quality** and what we mean by that in **performance** and **art work**. Remind yourselves of some of the conversations that you've had together so far by looking at the filmed minutes and/or at written notes from your meetings

Now, ask yourselves:

"Is there a performance or some art work that you have done that you think could be done better?"

Now, together as a committee, have a general discussion and see what points come up that could feed into your conference

When the Creative Minds Committee in Brighton did this, they brought along a film that one of the committee members had made. The committee watched this together and then gave some critical feedback as to how this could be developed

The committee member who had made this film found it hard to hear the feedback, and that is when the committee realised how important **Ground Rules** are in supporting artists to hear feedback about their creative work

So they created the **Creative Minds Conference Ground Rules**

CHAPTER 7

THINGS TO TALK ABOUT AT THE CREATIVE MINDS STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS



4. ACTIVITY 4 - LOOKING AT NEWSPAPER & MAGAZINE REVIEWS

Looking at **newspaper** and **magazine reviews** helped us to think about what **arts critics** have been saying about learning disability arts over the years

Ask your support staff to help you find any reviews, newspaper and magazine articles, TV news items and stories about learning disability art exhibitions, performances and films. There aren't many of them, so don't worry if you only find a few

Together with your committee members spread them out across the table so you can see them. Read them out to each other, or have your support staff read them out

Then ask yourself these questions:

1. Did the reviewer mention that the artists, performers or film makers have learning disabilities?
2. Was there any negative feedback (things that pointed out that some parts of the work weren't very good or needed improving)?
3. Was there any good feedback?
4. Did the reviewer tell you what they thought about the work, or did they just describe what was going on?

Now, together as a committee, have a look at what you found out from the talking that you have just done

CHAPTER 7

THINGS TO TALK ABOUT AT THE CREATIVE MINDS STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS



Do this activity again, but this time with reviews, newspaper and magazine articles, TV news items and stories about the art exhibitions, performances and films you find in the press that are put on by people without learning disabilities

Now – compare these 2 lists by asking yourself these questions:

1. Which companies got a critical review?

This means an opinion about what was good and what was bad in the work

Sort the reviews into 2 piles – one pile that got a critical review that talked about good and bad things and one pile that didn't mention any bad things

When we did this, we found that one pile had no reviews in it and the other pile had lots in it – what have you found out?

2. Are you surprised about what you found? Why?

Talk about this and make some notes. This will help you think about the questions you would like everyone to talk about at the conference that you are going to put on

3. How could we help the press to see the work more equally?

Talk about this and make some notes. This will help you think about the questions you would like everyone to talk about at the conference that you are going to put on



CHAPTER 8

CREATIVE MINDS CONFERENCE QUESTIONS

CREATIVE MINDS CONFERENCE QUESTIONS FOR HELPING US TALK ABOUT QUALITY IN LEARNING DISABILITY ARTS, PERFORMANCE AND FILMS

1. How do you develop your work to make sure it is of a good quality?
2. Why do you think that your work is more than therapy?
3. What do you want the audience to get from your work?
4. What have people said about your exhibitions, screenings or performances?

(In this question we are not asking you to prove the quality of your work – just to talk about what people have said whether it's good, bad, childish or other things)

We want to hear about different experiences so that we can learn from one another and find a way forward

These people might be:

- Funders
- Audiences
- Critics
- Others



CHAPTER 9

CREATIVE MINDS CONFERENCE TIMETABLE FOR THE DAY

This is the timetable for the conference that was in Brighton on 10th March 2014

10AM SIGN IN AND GET YOUR PACKS

Drinks and networking by the Conference Stalls



10.45AM WELCOME

Welcome to the conference by the Creative Minds Steering Committee



11.15AM MORNING BREAK-OUT GROUPS

This activity included seeing work by artists, performers and film makers for 20 minutes, hearing them answer the questions that the committee set them about quality for 20 minutes, and then a **Question & Answer** session about quality with the whole audience for 30 minutes



- Corali Dance Company in The Studio - Follow the **Yellow** cards
- Action Space and Rocket Artists in The Founders Room - Follow the **Red** cards
- Oska Bright Films 1 in The Corn Exchange – Follow the **Green** cards



12.30PM LUNCH IN THE CORN EXCHANGE

CHAPTER 9

CREATIVE MINDS CONFERENCE TIMETABLE FOR THE DAY



1.30PM AFTERNOON BREAK-OUT GROUPS

This activity included seeing work by artists, performers and film makers for 20 minutes, hearing them answer the questions that the Committee set them about quality for 20 minutes, and then a **Question & Answer** session about quality with the whole audience for 30 minutes.

- Face Front Theatre in The Studio – Follow the orange cards
- StopGap Dance Company in the Foyer Bar and then in The Founders Room – Follow the blue cards
- Oska Bright Films 2 in The Corn Exchange – Follow the white cards



2.45PM DRINKS BREAK



CHAPTER 9

CREATIVE MINDS CONFERENCE TIMETABLE FOR THE DAY



3PM TALKING CARD GAME IN THE CORN EXCHANGE

The 250 people at the conference broke up into smaller groups of 10 each, and sat together around the tables. Each group had some discussion cards with statements written on them, so that they could continue talking about quality in small groups. Each group was facilitated by a member of the Carousel steward team

The questions included:

1. Learning disability arts never get reviewed in national newspapers. Why?
2. My local theatre/art gallery doesn't put on work by learning disabled artists or performers. Why?
3. People without learning disabilities don't come to see our work. Why?
4. People from universities never ask us to talk about our work at their universities. Why?
5. We never get accepted to be on arts or performance degree courses at university. Why?
6. People say that my art must be good therapy for me. Why?
7. We never see programmes about learning disability led arts, film or performance on TV. Why?
8. We never hear learning disabled artists talking about their work on the radio. Why?
9. People see our arts work as leisure and a way of keeping us occupied. Why?

CHAPTER 9

CREATIVE MINDS CONFERENCE TIMETABLE FOR THE DAY



3.25PM MAKING AN ACTION PLAN IN THE CORN EXCHANGE

Everyone stayed in their small groups and was given a set of blank postcards, and asked to make an **Action Plan** that they could take back to their work places and make happen. They were asked to use the talking that they had just finished in the **Talking Card Game** to help them think about this.

We then collected these cards and have since put some of the comments up on the Creative Minds website in the **Talking Area**:
www.creativemindsproject.org.uk/category/talking-area/

3.45PM WHAT NEXT? IN THE CORN EXCHANGE

Closing comments by the Creative Minds Steering Committee

4PM NETWORKING IN THE FOYER BAR

4.15PM

Listen to **Beat Express** rock band in **The Founders Room**
Or you can stay networking in **The Foyer Bar**

5PM GOODBYE

Don't forget to write on the Creative Minds Talking Pages:
www.creativemindsproject.org.uk/category/talking-area/



1. GROUND RULES FOR TALKING ABOUT LEARNING DISABILITY ARTS, PERFORMANCE & FILM AT THE CONFERENCE

- These help us talk about quality in learning disability arts
- These are important because most artists, performers and film makers with learning disabilities aren't told truthfully whether their work is good or bad, and we want to support people to hear feedback in a positive way
- People can get very passionate about their art, and when we do that we find it very hard to take criticism or make constructive criticism
- These rules give us a framework so that we can hear both good and hard to hear comments in a supported space
- All of the comments we hear will help us to '**develop**' in our creative work as artists, performers and film makers (by '**develop**' we mean getting better at what we do)
- You have an emotional reaction to the art, performance and films that you see. This can result in strongly worded discussions – but this keeps us alive and buzzing and having fantastic reactions. This has got to be a good thing
- The same thing is true of us as artists, and this is what makes it difficult for us sometimes to hear negative feedback

2. GROUND RULES FOR TALKING ABOUT PERFORMANCE, FILM OR ART WORK

- Talk respectfully about other people's work
- Listen to what other people say in an open way
- Try not to take things personally
- When we talk about someone's work, we will end with a positive thing
- This is how to say something you don't like: "**I find your work difficult to like because...**"



1. HELP US TO KEEP GOING WITH THE CREATIVE MINDS DISCUSSION NOW IT HAS BEGUN

You can do this by:

- Joining us in the Creative Minds Talking Area online at: www.creativemindsproject.org.uk/category/talking-area/
- Going to a conference event: www.creativemindsproject.org.uk/events/
- Putting on an event using the Creative Minds Guide: www.creativemindsproject.org.uk/the-guide/
- Getting your organisation to join the Creative Minds Community: www.creativemindsproject.org.uk/community/

2. THE FUTURE

- Together we can be amazing
- Help us to change attitudes about learning disability led arts



GLOSSARY

WHAT SOME OF THE WORDS IN THIS GUIDE MEAN

CHAPTER 1 – This is what Creative Minds is about

- **UNIVERSITY** – a place where people go to learn about lots of different kinds of things, including arts, theatre and film
- **MAINSTREAM** – we have used the word in this Guide to mean arts, theatre and film that is seen and liked by lots of different people
- **JOURNALIST** – a person who writes things for newspapers, magazines, radio or television
- **EDITOR** – a person who runs the newspaper or magazine. They are in charge of what gets put into the newspaper or magazine
- **ART CRITIC** – someone who writes about things like exhibitions, dance, drama and film. The words they write tell us if they think that what they have seen is good, bad or okay

CHAPTER 2 – This is why Creative Minds started

- **UNIQUE** – something that is a bit different. Something that is one of a kind
- **PATRONISE** – when someone treats you as if you are a bit stupid or not clever
- **VENUE** – we mean a place where you can go and see exhibitions, dance, theatre and films
- **PROFESSIONAL** – someone who is known to be very good. They are paid for their work as an artist, performer or film maker

WHAT SOME OF THE WORDS IN THIS GUIDE MEAN

CHAPTER 3 – A brief history of people with learning disabilities in the UK

- **INSTITUTIONS** – big places where people with learning disabilities are kept away from the rest of the community. Buildings like '**Mental Handicap Hospitals**', '**Hostels**' and '**Special Schools**' are the names of some institutions
- **SPECIAL SCHOOLS** – schools where only children with learning disabilities go. A school where they are separated out from other children because they have higher support needs
- **DISCRIMINATION** – when someone is treated in a bad way, or a way that is different from most other people
- **ADVOCATING** – this means speaking for yourself. People with learning disabilities often need training and support to learn how to do this. It is sometimes called '**Self-Advocacy**'

CHAPTER 4 – Setting up and supporting a committee to run Creative Minds

- **STEERING COMMITTEE** – a group of people working together on a project to make sure that it happens
- **CLAUSTROPHOBIC** – when people feel as if they are squashed in somewhere and can't get away from what is going on
- **MINUTES** – these are the words we write down or film to make sure we remembered what we agreed during our Steering Committee meetings
- **LOGO** – this is a picture that goes with a project to make it stand out more

GLOSSARY

WHAT SOME OF THE WORDS IN THIS GUIDE MEAN

CHAPTER 4 – Setting up and supporting a committee to run Creative Minds

- **FLYER** – a piece of paper that tells you about an event that you might want to go and see, this might be something like a film or a dance
- **SUB-COMMITTEE** – a small group of people from the Steering Committee who get together after the meetings to get a job done
- **GROUND RULES** – rules you have to help you stay safe and work in an equal way with other people
- **FUNDERS** – organisations that like what you are doing and that give you money so that you can make your arts, performances and films
- **EVALUATION** – getting feedback from lots of different people about the project that you have worked on. People might fill in forms to give you their feedback, or they might tell you when you film them. This helps you to learn from your mistakes and to get better at what you are doing
- **FONT** – this is the word for the writing you see on computers
- **PUBLICITY** – things that tell people about what you are doing. For example the piece of paper that tells you about a show or an exhibition. This is sometimes called a **'flyer'**
- **MARKETING** – what you do when you try and tell as many people as possible about what you are doing. You might do things like ask newspapers to print a story or see if you can go and talk on the radio
- **SOCIAL MEDIA** – this describes the things that happen on the internet, like Facebook and Twitter. It is lots of people sending each other messages from their computers, ipads or mobile phones

GLOSSARY

WHAT SOME OF THE WORDS IN THIS GUIDE MEAN

CHAPTER 6 – Creative Minds agenda

- **AGENDA** – this is a list of the things that you want to talk about at your Steering Committee Meeting
- **TWEETS** – when you use the social networking site called **'Twitter'** you send out little bits of information using words. These are called **'tweets'**
- **SOUNDTRACK** – when you look at a film everything you hear is called sound. So a soundtrack is the things that you hear on a film – you will hear things like people talking and music playing

CHAPTER 9 – Creative Minds Conference Timetable for the day

- **FACILITATOR** – a person who is in charge of explaining what is going on to a group of people and who can support everyone to join in
- **NETWORKING** – talking about what you do and what you think with other people and other organisations

CHAPTER 10 – The Creative Minds Conference Ground Rules

- **FRAMEWORK** – a way of working together that tells you what you can do and what you cannot do
- **DEVELOP** – getting better at what you do