

LEARN + REFLECT

EAST
QUAY

Reframing Scrutiny: A New Way of Learning Together at East Quay

An invitation to be part of a new kind of group

East Quay is developing a new approach to learning and reflection within its Consortium (made up of Onion Collective and Contains Art) — one that's more open, collaborative, and rooted in shared experience.

We're inviting a small group of people to join us in shaping this process and to take part in a new kind of learning and reflection group that replaces traditional oversight meetings (which we host as part of our Arts Council funding agreement) with something more creative, useful, and enjoyable.

The group will have up to 12 members including some from the East Quay team.

What it's about

This new group will explore how we understand impact, support creative leadership, and hold ourselves accountable — not through formal reports, but through conversation, connection, and co-learning.

We want to:

- Bring a broader mix of voices into the conversation.
- Create time and space for genuine exchange and reflection.
- Support emerging and next generation creative practitioners and leaders.
- Turn "scrutiny" into a process that's collaborative and generative, not bureaucratic.

What's involved

Members of the group will take part in a series of sessions across the year (starting with an induction in March-April 2026).

These will include:

- Quarterly gatherings at East Quay (in person wherever possible), focused on important lines of inquiry within the Consortium that enable deeper engagement and which we feel will be critical to the leadership, confidence and capability required of future cultural professionals. In the first year, we might explore topics like encouraging imagination, ecological transition, or radical cultural education.
- Short preparatory prompts or readings sent ahead of each session — no heavy prep, just enough to spark ideas.
- Creative and reflective activities during sessions, led by members or guests, to encourage shared learning and connection.
- Open discussion and feedback, where members can share their experiences and insights, helping to shape future Consortium decisions.

Between sessions, participants may be invited to join short online catch-ups or contribute to a shared reflective journal — designed to keep learning flowing without adding pressure. We aim to create an environment that's supportive, light-touch, and respectful of time — a space to think together, not another meeting to endure.

In time, we propose that members identify their own topics of interest. We also anticipate potential interest in more practical learning areas—budgets, programming, curation, fundraising—which would offer insight into how East Quay functions while also providing us with fresh critique and challenge. For example, we might explore budgeting in depth; examine creative programming and exhibition practices; get under the skin of the funding landscape. We will explore appetite for this at an early session, with the possibility of increasing meeting frequency if needed.

Who it's for

We're looking for a mix of people who are:

- Interested in how creative work can make a difference.
- Open to discussion, reflection, and experimentation.
- Willing to contribute ideas and experiences.

You might be an artist, producer, community leader, early-career practitioner, or simply someone who cares about the future of cultural work in the region.

What you'll gain

By joining, you'll:

- Be part of shaping how East Quay and its partners learn and make decisions.
- Connect with a supportive network of creative peers.
- Develop new insights into collaboration, leadership, and impact.
- Contribute to a live experiment in reimagining how cultural governance can work.

Interested?

If this sounds like something you'd like to be part of, we'd love to hear from you.

To express interest or find out more, please contact **Lottie Mann** in the first instance, via email [**lottie@containsart.co.uk**](mailto:lottie@containsart.co.uk) with a short statement outlining why you'd like to be considered and what you would hope to get out of this opportunity.

We are keen to hear about you and your current practice or role, why this opportunity interests you and what you might hope to gain from being part of these conversations.

Deadline: 30th January 2026, 5pm

Equal Opportunities and Access

We want this group to represent a wide mix of voices, experiences, and perspectives. Everyone is welcome to express interest — regardless of background, age, identity, or career stage. We hope the opportunity will be seen as valuable for early-career or emerging practitioners, particularly those from underrepresented backgrounds in the cultural or creative sectors.

We understand that taking part in something like this can have financial implications, especially for freelance practitioners and artists who give their time unpaid. To help make involvement possible for everyone, we've set aside a bursary pot to offer financial support or compensation for time and participation where needed.

If you'd like to discuss access needs or bursary support, please let us know when you get in touch — we'll work with you to make sure you can take part fully and comfortably.