



# Milton Keynes Arts Centre

Hello, and welcome to the Milton Keynes Arts Centre's team.

We look forward working with you to facilitate an inspiring range of creative activities across our programme. In this handbook you will find some useful information and guidelines for what you expect when running creative activities with us.

## About Milton Keynes Arts Centre

Milton Keynes Arts Centre was established by Milton Keynes Corporation in 1974 and incorporated as a limited company (No. 02618453) in 1991. A registered charity (No. 1007409), the Arts Centre's legal purpose is to provide opportunities for people in Milton Keynes to work with artists, to experience and participate in art activities, with the object of improving people's quality of life, to promote social equality and to advance education.

Since its establishment, the city Milton Keynes Arts Centre was created to serve has changed radically. Today, MK is one of the fastest growing towns and the third most successful economy in the UK. 12 areas in the city are amongst the country's 10% most affluent. Yet, 9 are amongst the 10% most disadvantaged. Increasingly, the Arts Centre's work has focussed on supporting people who are left feeling marginalised or vulnerable in this rapidly changing city. Working in partnership with artists, community groups and other cross-sector organisations in the city, we specialise in co-developing projects that are designed to address, through creativity, the local and global issues affecting people's lives: from climate change to poverty, loneliness and social mobility; and through this to support environmental responsibility, social cohesion, wellbeing and skills development.

In 2018, Milton Keynes Arts Centre's work was rewarded when we were invited into Arts Council England's National Portfolio of Organisations and were offered an annual grant towards our programmes of activity. In 2022 we successfully applied for a continuation of this funding, which is in place until 31 March 2027.

This funding comes at an exciting period in the Arts Centre's evolution. For the past five years, we have been revisioning and restructuring our organisation in order to:

- Focus our resources on the organisation's core charitable purpose: ensuring that our work prioritises MK communities in greatest need of support.
- Ensure that Milton Keynes Arts Centre is a key agent in MK Council's ambition to 'harness the transformational power of culture' in addressing future challenges – locally and globally.
- Develop more ambitious, higher quality projects with artists and communities, which leave a lasting positive legacy on people's lives.
- Enable us to go out to MK communities, rather than relying on them coming to us, so helping to overcome geographic, economic and social barriers to cultural engagement and ensuring that our work is relevant and fully reflects the diversity of MK.
- Reduce our carbon imprint through an innovative reinterpretation of what an arts centre is and can be.
- Make Milton Keynes Arts Centre more resilient and sustainable for years to come.

In May 2025, Milton Keynes Arts Centre left its former site in Great Linford in order to increase the breadth and reach of its work across Milton Keynes. Our vision is of an Arts Centre not bound by buildings or geographical location; but one that is future-looking, dynamic and fleet-footed: able to respond to need across MK and to invest its resources where they have greatest impact whilst reducing our own negative imprint upon the environment.

Our Artist Associates have a pivotal role in working with Milton Keynes Arts Centre and visiting artists in both leading and supporting programmes of work at our base in Great Linford as well as across Milton Keynes: programmes designed to engage diverse people of all ages in the arts from all areas of the city.

## Useful Contacts

## **The Milton Keynes Art Centre Team:**

Our current office hours are Monday – Friday 10 am – 5pm (Closed Bank Holidays).

During office hours, the team can be reached on 01908 608108 or on at the following email addresses:

Fiona Venables      Director  
fiona@miltonkeynesartscentre.org

Zoe Cheng Website and Digital Marketing Coordinator  
zoe@miltonkeynesartscentre.org

If you need to reach someone out of hours, please refer to the Event Summary for an emergency contact.

# Terms of Engagement

The following information is provided to support you in working with Milton Keynes Arts Centre. Our team is happy to answer any queries that might not be fully answered below.

## Preparation for workshops/projects:

- Artist Associates invited to design and deliver workshops or programmes of activity will be contacted by our team. Generally, Artists will be approached a minimum of 10 weeks in advance of any activity.
- Artist Associates must provide a full list of the materials required no less than 8 weeks in advance of the activity. Any potential risks should also be identified by this date for discussion with the team.
- Milton Keynes Arts Centre can provide some basic materials. Any additional materials required must be agreed with the Arts Centre according to available budget. The Arts Centre encourages Artists to consider the environment in the choice of materials – to buy locally wherever possible from ethical suppliers, to use recycled and recyclable or biodegradable materials, to avoid single-use plastic and to minimise waste. Unless otherwise agreed, orders for materials will be made by the Arts Centre.
- Events are usually confirmed a minimum of 8 weeks in advance to allow adequate marketing time. By this date, we will require information likely to include an event title and description, the event's aims and proposed outcomes. We also require good quality images that are licensed for our use in promoting the activity and that help bookers to understand its nature. Image guidelines can be provided by MKAC.
- Closer to the date, a more detailed workshop plan may be required from the Artist. Milton Keynes Arts Centre will provide the Artist with an event summary with times, locations and contact details.
- It is the responsibility of all Artist Associates to provide a current DBS check. If the activity involves working with children and/or vulnerable adults, an enhanced DBS check may be required; the Arts Centre can assist with applying for this.
- It is the responsibility of the Artist Associate also to have Public Liability Insurance (PLI) in place for up to £5 million. This can be obtained through a-n's Artist +AIR membership for practicing artists.

## When leading a workshop/project Artist Associates should:

- Arrive a minimum of 30 minutes beforehand to set up materials. Please advise if a longer set up time is required.
- Report to the named contact and to the address detailed on the Event Summary.
- Welcome all participants at the start of the session and thank them at the end.

- Ensure evaluations are completed by participants and passed to MKAC as and when requested. For programmes of work, the Artist may also be asked to provide a diary of the sessions, providing informal feedback on the activities.
- Ensure the venue is left clean and tidy after the session and that all materials and equipment are returned in a clean and orderly fashion to MKAC.
- Observe both Milton Keynes Arts Centre's and any venue's Health & Safety, Safeguarding and Equal Opportunities policies and codes of conduct at all times.
- Use appropriate content and language and behave with due consideration to the group you are working with.

### **Pay and Conditions for Associate Artists**

- Artist Associates are employed on a freelance basis. Milton Keynes Arts Centre pays artists £30/hr. The rate of pay for bespoke or commissioned projects and residencies may vary depending on the duration and nature of the work. These will be agreed on an individual project basis.
- Unless otherwise agreed, Artist Associates will not be paid for travel time or reimbursed for travel costs; nor will they be paid for preparation time.
- You will be liable to make all tax and national insurance payments to HMRC and we will need proof of your employment status before processing invoices (this is usually provided as a tax return).
- You are required to supply us with an up-to-date digital DBS disclosure form, a copy of your PLI and evidence of your right to work in the UK (generally a passport).
- If you are claiming personal fuel costs associating travel to the venue (and this has been agreed in advance), you are also required to provide us evidence of your car insurance being covered for Business Use.
- When agreeing to undertake paid freelance work for MKAC you are therefore agreeing to the full 'Terms of Engagement' outlined in this Guide (updated August 2023).

### **In order to secure payment you must:**

- Sign MKAC's 'Terms of Engagement' Form and return it to Milton Keynes Arts Centre with any documentation required.
- Invoice for your agreed fee.
- Include all the original receipts for any materials or expenses as agreed in advance

## **Communications**

Milton Keynes Arts Centre encourages open exchange and sharing between Artist Associates, audiences and participants. In order to maximise the potential of these exchanges, the Arts Centre requests that you kindly follow these guidelines when posting content online:

- Internally, Milton Keynes Arts Centre may refer to itself as 'MKAC' or 'the Arts Centre'. In any external communications however, please refer to us as 'Milton Keynes Arts Centre' in full.
- In line with GDPR Artist Associates must never take, store, or share either personal contact details or images of session participants on personal phones, cameras or devices. All Associate Artists are free to share photos and videos posted by Milton Keynes Arts Centre on social media. Images must be credited to Milton Keynes Arts Centre and link back to [www.miltonkeynesartscentre.org](http://www.miltonkeynesartscentre.org).
- Artist Associates are responsible for presenting the Arts Centre in the most positive light and communicating with the public as representatives of the organisation. This means being the first point of contact between the Arts Centre and participants and fielding all enquiries in a professional, friendly and positive manner and under no circumstances bringing the Arts Centre and its work into disrepute.
- When blogging or posting content to social media, please ensure that it is clear that you are posting as an individual rather than on behalf of the Arts Centre. Please do not take or use images of participants.

## **Documentation & Evaluation**

- Artist Associates may be asked to document sessions on behalf of the Arts Centre (where appropriate). This may be in the form of photographs, video recordings or voice recordings using Milton Keynes Arts Centre's equipment. The Arts Centre reserves the right to store and use this documentation for future press/media publicity and promotional purposes in compliance with GDPR regulations.
- Permission to document must be gained from participants before any form of documentation takes place. Artist Associates may be asked to explain this at the point of welcoming participants and ask that they provide consent prior to joining the session. You may be required to obtain written consent from participants and/or parents using forms supplied by the Arts Centre.
- A video camera, digital camera and dictaphone are all available for use by Artists Associates. Please specify your requirements in your workshop plan if needed. Images of children must never be taken or stored on personal equipment.
- Milton Keynes Arts Centre may provide Artist Associates with evaluation forms for completion, which should be returned to the Arts Centre. From time-to-time Artist Associates may also be asked to support the Arts Centre with conducting surveys of participants.

## **Safeguarding and Personal Safety**

Milton Keynes Arts Centre is committed to the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm.

Artist Associate Artists will be provided with our full Safeguarding Policy to read and retain on file for future reference. In addition, Artists must supply the Arts Centre with an original up to date DBS certificate. It is a condition of contract that Artist Associates comply with all instructions designed to safeguard individuals – be that when working at Milton Keynes Arts Centre or elsewhere.

Artist Associates are required to carry out activities with due regard to the health and safety, not only of themselves, but also others who might be affected. If Artist Associates come across any process or practice which they consider to be unsafe, or a situation which is likely to prove hazardous to themselves or participants they should immediately report this to Milton Keynes Arts Centre.

## **General Health & Safety, Fire Safety and Accident Reporting**

Milton Keynes Arts Centre is committed to providing a safe environment for all staff, artists, volunteers and participants working with us. Please pay particular attention to the following:

- Artist Associates should feed into event Risk Assessments by highlighting all safety issues and the appropriate measures taken when submitting their workshop plan.
- All appropriate safety measures should be in place prior to the session.
- Artist Associates should ensure all electrical equipment not owned by Milton Keynes Arts Centre and required for use in a session is safe to use and carries a current PAT tested certificate/sticker. The person setting up equipment is responsible for checking it is not damaged or shows signs of being faulty. If required, the Arts Centre can support Artists in getting equipment PAT tested.
- Ensure all cables leading from any electrical equipment being used for the session have been secured to the ground, and do not create a trip hazard.
- All accidents, incidents and near misses (however minor) should be reported formally to Milton Keynes Arts Centre and recorded in the Accident Book.
- Artist Associates should set up the session with due consideration to the space, participants and others using the space.
- Artist Associates should familiarise themselves with fire exit routes and protocols before any session, especially if working in a venue unfamiliar to them. In the event of a fire alarm, Artist Associates should follow the venue's protocols in evacuating the space, leaving possessions behind and staying with participants.

## **Security awareness**

Please be aware of your own and others' security whilst working for Milton Keynes Arts Centre. A Risk Assessment will be completed before any event or activity, which should be read in advance to ensure you are aware of all protocols in place. Please keep personal belongings with you at all times and advise participants to do likewise. Milton Keynes Arts Centre cannot accept responsibility for them.

## **Dealing with complaints and raising concerns**

If a complaint is made to you directly; if you have a concern about the conduct of any member of the Arts Centre staff, another artist or volunteer; if you have a complaint, or are the victim of bullying or harassment, you must notify a member of the Arts Centre staff. If there is a Safeguarding issue, Milton Keynes Arts Centre has a formal policy and procedures, which must be followed at all times.

## **Code of conduct**

Milton Keynes Arts Centre is an inclusive charity and through our work we aim to provide:

- a space that is inclusive of people from all backgrounds
- that does not tolerate any behaviour or actions that are disrespectful of others
- that makes space for others to join the conversation
- and stands up against intolerance
- to make MKAC a safe and strong community
- in which equality and respect is demanded for ourselves and others

Fighting, bullying, swearing and discrimination will not be tolerated by paid or unpaid employees of the Arts Centre; nor by participants. In the event of a participant behaving in an unacceptable manner, that participant may be politely asked to leave by the Artist. Such incidents should be immediately reported to the Arts Centre.

If the Artist Associate is witnessed behaving in an unacceptable manner, to be working under the influence of drugs or alcohol; or to have made a serious health and safety breach, Milton Keynes Arts Centre reserves the right to immediately terminate the engagement without further payment to the Artist.

## **Cancellation Policy**

In the event of Milton Keynes Arts Centre cancelling a session 7 days or more prior to the date of the session no fee will be paid; if cancellation occurs between 1 and 6 days prior to the date of the session (unless the session can be rescheduled at a time that suits the Artist) 50% of the agreed fee will be paid. In the event of cancellation on the day of the session (unless the session can be rescheduled at a time that suits the Artist), 100% of the agreed fee plus any travel and materials costs incurred will be paid. Please note that in the event of the session being cancelled by the Associate Artist leading the session, for example due to sickness or lack of availability, no fee will be paid.

## **Milton Keynes Arts Centre Policies**

All Artist Associates should familiarise themselves with the following policies:

- [Safeguarding Policy](#) ([link](#))
- [Health & Safety Policy](#) ([Link](#))
- [Equality Policy and Diversity & Action Plan](#) ([Link](#))
- [Environmental Policy](#) ([Link](#))

### **Agreement**

I agree to Milton Keynes Arts Centre's 'Terms of Engagement'.

Signed,

NAME:

DATE:

Please return a signed copy of the Terms of Engagement to Milton Keynes Arts Centre.