

Action Research Project Call Out:  
Artful Alliance | May 2023

# Blue Cabin

## Action Research Project Callout: Artful Alliance

### Virtual Schools and Creative Organisations action research project callout

Blue Cabin is looking for Virtual Schools and creative organisations to be part of a national action research programme, exploring cultural and creative education for care-experienced children and young people.

### Background

In April 2022, [Blue Cabin](#) was commissioned by [Artsmark](#) and [Arts Council England \(ACE\)](#) to carry out a creative consultation with care-experienced children and young people in the North East of England, to understand their views of the arts and creativity within their Virtual School experience. You can read more about that consultation [here](#). The consultation with children and young people was part of a wider programme led by ACE working with local partners and Virtual Schools in the East and West Midlands and London, looking at how Artsmark could be a beneficial programme for Virtual Schools across the country.

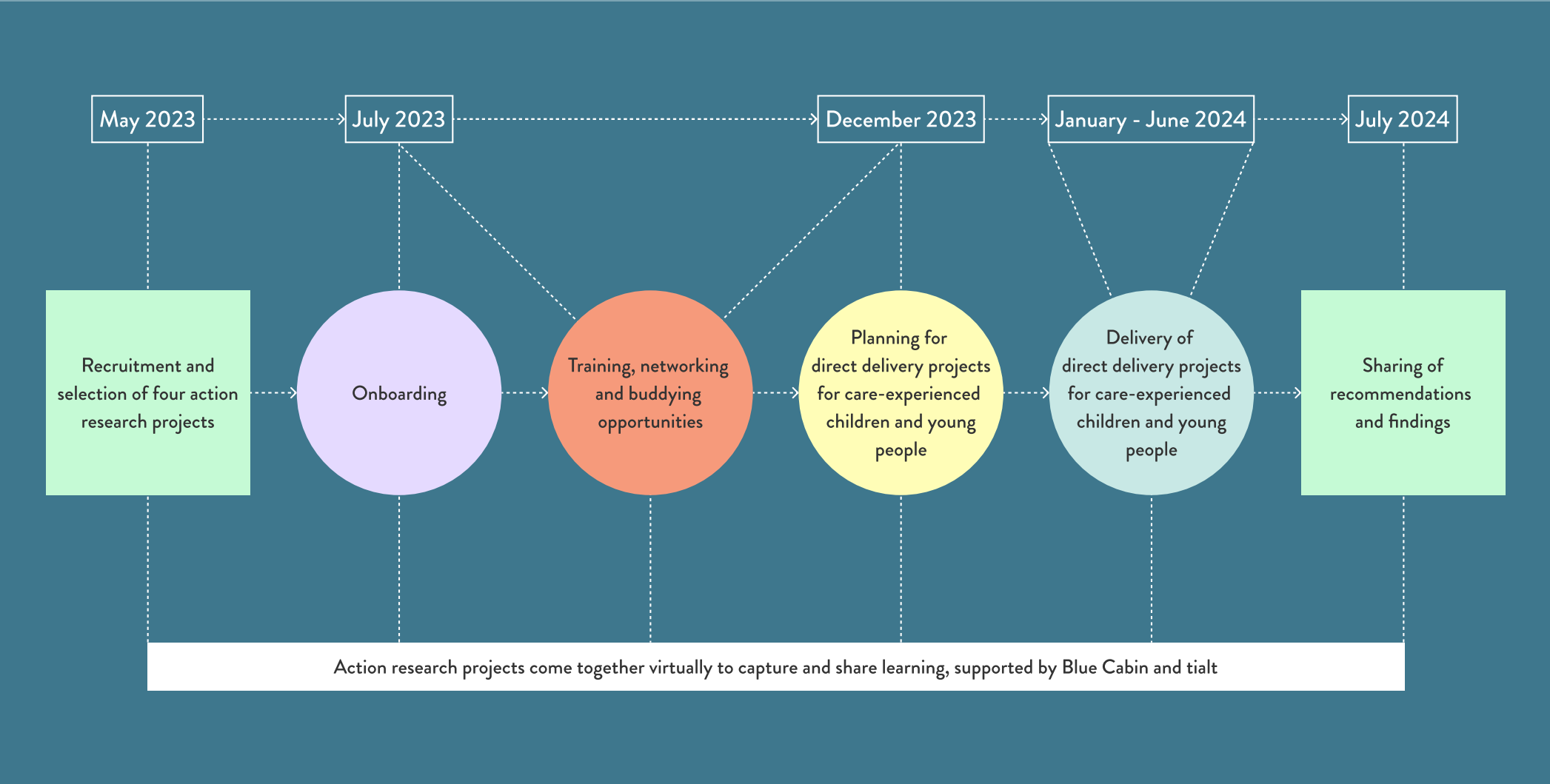
ACE is keen to better understand key issues relating to cultural and creative education for care-experienced children and young people and commissioned Blue Cabin to facilitate a national action research programme. Blue Cabin is

delighted to be working in partnership with [tialt // there is an alternative](#), who will support the evaluation and action research. Through the Artful Alliance we will explore:

- How cultural and creative partners can best serve care-experienced children and young people
- How can carers, social workers, designated teachers and the wider community of stakeholders around the child be fully engaged, to support their education and development?
- What is the relationship between the arts and creativity and social pedagogy? Can this be explored through Virtual Schools?
- How can Virtual Schools and mainstream schools work better together for the benefit of care-experienced children and young people?

# Programme approach and content

We are keen that at least two people from a Virtual School and two people from a creative organisation are part of each project team - **four** in total across the partnership. In our experience this helps with the motivation to take action between peer learning sessions. Ideally we would like a senior person from each organisation to be part of the team, and a practitioner involved in direct delivery.



## Overarching timeframe

Recruitment process: May 2023

Selection process: June 2023

Onboarding and training: July 2023 - January 2024

Direct delivery projects: January 2024 - June 2024

Sharing and celebration: July 2024

## Action research projects

We will recruit four action research projects to take part in the Artful Alliance programme. Each action research project will be co-led by a Virtual School and a creative organisation.

We are keen that at least two people from the Virtual School and two people from the creative organisation are part of each project team, meaning four in total across the partnership. We would ideally like a senior person from each organisation to be part of the team in order to support learning and impact across the organisation.

Whilst we recognise and support the importance of individual freelance artists in the sector, we can only accept applications for the Artful Alliance from creative organisations. This is to ensure that freelancers can practise safely and with the appropriate level of wrap-around support needed to process the emotional labour of this work. As a passionate advocate for and employer of freelancers, **we therefore welcome applications where the creative organisation works with artists as employees AND as freelancers.**

Together, the Virtual School and creative organisation will try out existing or new project ideas with care experienced children and young people and the trusted adults in their lives.

The Virtual Schools and creative organisation will develop and deliver these projects following a package of training and support.

## Budget for action research projects

Each project will have access to a budget of £4,500 in total to help fund direct delivery activity. The Virtual School and/or creative organisation partnership may also choose to invest additional budget into project delivery, if available, but this is not a programme requirement.

## Training and learning

Training will include trauma informed approaches, social pedagogy, attachment and recovery and will be facilitated by organisations including Blue Cabin, [Kazzum Arts](#) and [Therapeutic Life Story Work International](#).

Learning will be gathered and shared throughout the programme, supported by tialt. This will include reflection sessions, self-organised peer learning groups and an online learning space.

Ongoing opportunities for sharing learning and knowledge across local authority and creative sectors (and beyond!) will be explored and encouraged throughout.

We will also encourage participants to undertake self-organised peer learning in between more formal and informal online sessions.

## Key dates

The programme will comprise of a number of training and support dates between July 2023 and July 2024.

Participants must be able to commit to attending all dates as part of their commitment to the programme. We appreciate that this is a significant time commitment for both organisations. We encourage applicants to consider this carefully, before applying.

Day	Date	Time	Description
Wednesday	5 <sup>th</sup> July 2023	13:30 - 15:00	Welcome Session (online)
Monday	11 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	09:30 - 12:30	Attachment Training - Richard Rose (online)
Wednesday	27 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	13:30 - 15:00	Action Research Intro - tialt (online)
Tuesday	3 <sup>rd</sup> October 2023	10:00 - 13:30	Trauma Awareness - Kazzum (online)
Thursday	19 <sup>th</sup> October 2023	10:00 - 13:30	Trauma Awareness - Kazzum (online)
Thursday	9 <sup>th</sup> November 2023	14:00 - 16:00	Social Pedagogy Training (online)
Monday	11 <sup>th</sup> December 2023	09:30 - 12:30	Trauma Training - Richard Rose (online)
Monday	15 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	09:30 - 12:30	Recovery Training - Richard Rose (online)
Wednesday	24 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	14:00 - 16:00	Reflection and Refining Project Plans (online)
Tuesday	27 <sup>th</sup> February 2024	13:30 - 15:00	Action Research - tialt (online)
Wednesday	27 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	13:30 - 15:00	Action Research - tialt (online)
Wednesday	26 <sup>th</sup> June 2024	13:30 - 15:00	Action Research - tialt (online)
Tuesday	9 <sup>th</sup> July 2024	13:30 - 15:00	Sharing and Celebration (online or face to face TBC)

NB: In addition, buddying with artists and therapeutic supervision will be arranged.

## Recruitment process

We would like Virtual Schools and creative cultural organisations to apply together. We are keen that the successful four action research projects cover a range of experience, geographic areas, settings, and scale – this range will help to inform our learning and understanding.

Virtual Schools and creative organisations making the joint application may have already worked together before, or may be applying to the Artful Alliance as a way to begin a new and exciting partnership.

Our selection criteria will take the following into account so that we can have a diverse mixture of projects:

- Position, role and seniority of people who will take part in the programme
- Geographical location in UK, with a mix of urban and rural
- Scale and size of Virtual Schools and creative organisations
- Level of experience, expertise and knowledge in this work
- Length of partnership between Virtual School and creative organisations (brand new and well developed)

## Recruitment timeline

Day	Date	Time	Description
Wednesday	10 <sup>th</sup> May 2023	13:30 - 14:30	Online briefing for Virtual Schools/ Creative Organisations wanting to find out more
Wednesday	31 <sup>st</sup> May 2023	17:00	Application Deadline
Thursday	8 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	-	Applicants informed as to whether they will move forward to interview stage
Thursday	15 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	10:00 - 17:00	Online Interviews
Tuesday	20 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	-	Applicants informed as to whether they have been successful or not
Wednesday	5 <sup>th</sup> July 2023	13:30 - 15:00	Online Welcome session

## Application Form

We have created an application form as a word document which can be accessed by visiting this webpage: [www.wearebluecabin.com/project/artful-alliance](http://www.wearebluecabin.com/project/artful-alliance).

Section one of the application form can either be completed by writing up to 1,000 words on the Word document, or, you might prefer to share a short film or audio recording of no more than five minutes covering your responses to the questions. If you would like to submit a video or audio recording as part of your application, please email it to [amy@wearebluecabin.com](mailto:amy@wearebluecabin.com) (we recommend using WeTransfer to transfer large files). Sections two, three and four must be completed on the Word document.

If you have any questions, we encourage you to sign up to the briefing session detailed above. We look forward to hearing from you.

## The Artful Alliance Team

You will be supported through this programme by people from both Blue Cabin and tialt. Blue Cabin have been working with Darlington Virtual School since 2016, and have developed a regular programme of work with them. You can find out more about some of the work we do together [here](#).





## Blue Cabin



### **Amy Armstrong, Programme Coordinator:**

**Amy** is a project coordinator with skills built up over 20 years working in various different arts, education and community settings. During her career she has led on the coordination and delivery projects ranging from a children's choir to adult residential training weekends, and has been privileged to work with some wonderful people in some inspiring venues such as London's Barbican Centre and the Sage Gateshead. Amy is a keen swimmer and cyclist, and also has a passion for gardening, all of which have developed as a complete surprise in adult life! Amy is also a musician at heart, and enjoys finding opportunities to sing and play the flute wherever possible. Amy is a Blue Cabin employee who works part time (four days per week).



### **Dawn Williams, Strategy Lead:**

**Dawn** is a highly experienced facilitator and trainer with over 35 years' experience of working in the cultural sector. Dawn is passionate about the power of arts to transform lives. Founding member of Riverside Associates, she regularly collaborates with other colleagues to design and facilitate global, national and regional learning programmes, company away days and workshops. Dawn is a lead trainer and licensed provider of ToP Facilitation Training for ICA:UK. She creates an atmosphere where the focus is on participation, and where everyone can bring their own experience and

have their voices heard. Dawn is an employee who works part time (one day per week) for Blue Cabin. Dawn also works as a Blue Cabin freelance Associate on certain projects.



### **Jane Gray, Associate:**

**Jane** has worked in the arts for over 20 years, beginning her career at The National Theatre in London. She specialises in participation with children and young people, and loves seeing their skills and confidence develop through the arts. She is an Arts Award Trainer and Moderator with Trinity College London, and is part of the Support Panel for Arts Award Advisers in the North East. She also works with Customs House and Culture Bridge North East, supporting their Arts Award Strategic Programme. She loves gardening and a good period drama. Jane is a freelancer and leads on a number of projects including **Creative Aid** and **Arts Award**.



### **Jenny Young, Director:**

**Jenny** is the Founder and Director of Blue Cabin. She has over 20 years of experience in working in both Local Authority and cultural sectors and has extensive knowledge and interest in care-experienced communities. Jenny led on the creation of the Beyond the Mainstream national strand of Sing Up, the national campaign for primary aged singing. She also led on developing the accessible learning strand of Sage



## Blue Cabin (cont.)

Gateshead's Creative Learning programme before setting up Blue Cabin in 2016. Jenny is proud to be from the North East and is passionate about connecting people, communities and organisations to find new ways to build relationships, placing creativity at the centre of this process. She is a proud mam and is most happy walking with her dog, or in the garden. Jenny is a Blue Cabin employee who works full time.

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### **Dougie Lonie, Co-Director:**

Dougie is co-founder and co-director of tialt, which believes that by focussing on methods, tools and approaches that invite people to look at the world from a different angle we can understand this world, and each other, a bit better. tialt works with organisations to enable them to take more creative and empathy-based approaches to their work.



### **Rosie Priest, Artist and Researcher:**

Along with working at tialt Rosie is currently writing up her PhD thesis which explores collaborative visual art projects impacts on young people. Her research is participatory and creatively focussed. It often centres on young people with chaotic and complicated lives. She also explores her own stories and artistic enquiries through her research work.

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## A commitment to safeguarding

Blue Cabin believes that all children and young people have the right to grow up in a safe and caring environment, which includes the right to protection from all types of abuse. They have the right to expect that adults in positions of responsibility do everything possible to uphold these rights.

## Equality, diversity and inclusion

Blue Cabin is committed to encouraging equality and diversity and promoting a culture that actively values difference and recognises that people from different backgrounds and experiences will bring valuable insights to the workplace and enhance the way we work. We aim to be an inclusive organisation, where diversity is valued, respected and built upon and aim to recruit and retain a diverse workforce that reflects the communities we serve.



[www.wearebluecabin.com](http://www.wearebluecabin.com)

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