

## Syllabus VIII : Open Call for Guest Partner



Syllabus VII at Eastside Projects, August 2024

Wysing Arts Centre (Cambridgeshire); Eastside Projects (Birmingham); Spike Island (Bristol); Studio Voltaire (London); PS <sup>2</sup> (Belfast) and New Art Exchange (Nottingham), invite expressions of interest for a new Guest Partner for Syllabus VIII, a collaboratively produced alternative learning programme.

Syllabus supports ten artists a year through a roaming programme of gatherings hosted by the partner organisations and an online artist development programme.

A landmark grant from the Freelands Foundation has secured the future of Syllabus for the next ten years and has given us the opportunity to expand the programme with new partners and support for participating artists.

### **Our Permanent Partners bring:**

- Creative ideas for supporting artists through physical and online programmes.
- Knowledge or experience lacking from the current consortium of partners.
- A commitment to supporting emerging artists.
- A commitment to positive changes in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

## **Guest Partner**

While the above criteria are still important for the Guest Partner, we hope to accommodate a partner who would be unable to commit to Syllabus in the long term. This could include organisations without long term funding, organisations overseas, non-art organisations, biennials, festivals, studios, artist publishing organisations, and individuals - this is not an exhaustive list.

### **What is the new partner expected to commit to Syllabus?**

- To host one physical two day gathering or an online programme in 2025–26.
- To attend online planning meetings and a minimum of one physical gathering to meet the artists.
- To help promote the Open Call for artists in your networks and to participate in the programme evaluation.

### **What support will the partner receive?**

- Guest partners will have a budget of £2,000 towards the cost of programming a gathering collaboratively with Syllabus artists (costs include e.g. guest speakers / facilitators, food, materials). This does not include overheads (space hire, partner staff time etc.).
- All partners will have the support of a dedicated Syllabus Coordinator.

### **What benefits do partner organisations receive?**

- Opportunities to engage in shared learning e.g. best practices for evaluation processes and anti-racism training.
- Meaningful engagement with peer organisations, leading to shared learning.
- A supportive network of peer organisations with different specialisms and expertise.
- Curatorial development - working closely with a group of artists to support ideas and outcomes.
- The opportunity to research artists from partner organisation regions.

## **Application**

To submit an expression of interest to join as a guest partner, please follow this link to submittable:

<https://wysingartscentre.submittable.com/submit>

- 1. Why do you want to join the consortium of Syllabus partners?**
- 2. What can your organisation bring to Syllabus?**
- 3. What experience does your organisation have supporting emerging artists?**
- 4. What experience does your organisation have implementing anti racism practices?**

The deadline to submit an expression of interest is **Tuesday 5 November** at 12 midnight.

Applications will be reviewed by the Syllabus partners and shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview in the week beginning 18 November.

To arrange an informal conversation about Syllabus, please email Natasha Ruwona, Syllabus Coordinator, at [natasha.ruwona@wysingartscentre.org](mailto:natasha.ruwona@wysingartscentre.org)

## **Syllabus Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is Syllabus?**

Syllabus is a collaboratively produced alternative and independent learning programme that supports ten artists across ten months. Syllabus is led by Wysing Arts Centre, with consortium partners Wysing Arts Centre (Cambridgeshire); Eastside Projects (Birmingham); Spike Island (Bristol); Studio Voltaire (London); PS<sup>2</sup> (Belfast) and New Art Exchange (Nottingham).

### **What are the Key Aims of Syllabus?**

- To provide professional development and education opportunities to artists who are unable to access traditional postgraduate routes
- To diversify the arts sector
- To provide a strong peer network for artists
- To create a meaningful network of arts organisations that work together to share learning and promote best practice with regards to equality, diversity, and anti-racism.

### **Who does Syllabus support?**

- Syllabus supports ten artists each year from a range of backgrounds.
- We aim to establish a cohort that represents a diversity of cultural perspectives and artistic practices and welcome applications from a wide geographic spread across the UK.
- We look for artists who want to both develop their own work and actively contribute to the development of each year's programme.
- Participating artists **must** have been out of formal education (arts and non-arts) for at least 4 years. We are also keen to support artists who have not progressed through formal art training routes.

### **Participating artists benefit from:**

- The opportunity to rethink individual practices through an intensive programme of gatherings, hosted by the partner organisations.
- Working together to collaboratively shape and develop a reflexive, collective learning experience.
- Critical conversations about ideas and work in progress within a supportive, national network of artists, curators and organisations.
- Becoming part of a new network of artist peers.
- Introductions to, and connections with, arts organisations, communities and networks in cities across the UK and access to new networks, expertise and resources.
- Two 1-2-1 mentoring sessions with the Artistic Advisor over the course of the year.
- One 1-2-1 mentoring session with a partner organisation.

## **Who contributes to Syllabus already?**

Key organisations and individuals include:

- Wysing Arts Centre: Natasha Ruwona and Rosie Cooper
- Eastside Projects: Ruth Claxton and Gavin Wade
- Spike Island: Carmen Juliá and Saphia Abrahamovitch-Venner
- Studio Voltaire: Dot Zhihan Jia and Efea Rutlin
- PS<sup>2</sup>: Jane Morrow and Ciara Hickey
- New Art Exchange: Michael Radford
- Artistic Advisor: to be appointed
- Programme Evaluator: Ruth Melville

Previous iterations of Syllabus have involved contributions from a wide range of artists, writers and curators and applicants to Syllabus VI will have the opportunity to access similar networks. Contributing practitioners have included Larry Achiampong, Ruth Beale, Marvin Gaye Chetwynd, Celine Condorelli, Adam Farah, Nav Haq, Nadia Hebson, Anthea Hamilton, Andy Holden, Evan Ifekoya, Shama Khanna, Lady Kitt, Pil and Galia Kollektiv, Mark Leckey, Richard Long, Modern Clay, Sofia Niazi, Katrina Palmer, Florence Peake, Holly Pester, Rory Pilgrim, Morgan Quaintance, Nicola Singh, Tai Shani, Rosalie Schweiker, Cally Spooner, Linda Stupart, Richard Wentworth, Jonathan P. Watts, Keith Wilson, DM Withers, Rehana Zaman and Andrea Luka Zimmermann. We have received additional input and support from John Akomfrah, Benedict Drew, Kathy Noble, Eddie Peake, Marinella Senatore, Yinka Shonibare and Mike Sperlinger and have arranged visits to Documenta Athens and Glasgow International. Artists Barby Asante, Jesse Darling, Sonya Dyer, Andy Holden, Jade Montserrat, Milly Thompson, Harold Offeh and curators Helen Nisbet, Amanprit Sandhu, Louise Shelley and George Vasey have led the Syllabus as Artistic Advisors in previous years, engaging with and supporting participating artists over the course of the programme.

## **What is the programme structure?**

Each year's Syllabus programme is built around a series of co-produced intensive gatherings, which the ten selected artists attend. During the first retreat at Wysing, Syllabus artists, individuals connected to the partner organisations the Syllabus Coordinator and the Artistic Advisor collaborate to identify broad themes for the programme. These form the starting point for an evolving, responsive curriculum that will support individual and collective artistic development and provide access to networks and knowledge across the ten months of the programme. Subsequent weekend gatherings are hosted at partner venues.

The Syllabus artists and Artistic Advisor and Syllabus Coordinator work with individual organisations to shape each retreat, which in addition to responding to the interests of the Syllabus artists, reflects the research interests and specialisms and the location of the various partner organisations. Planned activities may include workshops led by the organisations' alumni artists; visits to local arts organisations, network events with local artists etc. Syllabus concludes with a final gathering at Wysing, which is usually held in March.

Between the gatherings, discussions are continued remotely with an online programme of workshops, mentoring and crit sessions, with texts and reading lists uploaded onto a shared drive to support these discussions and enabling them to be continued remotely.

### What is the Programme timeline?

Tuesday 5 November	Open call closes (midnight)
Tuesday 19 November	Interviews
Friday 22 November	Applicants notified of outcome
December	Artist open call goes live
2025	
Monday 10 February	Artist Open call closes
Monday 10 Feb – Friday 21 Feb	Review applications
Friday 21 Feb (afternoon)	Meeting with Partners to discuss applications
19-22 June 2025	Syllabus VIII gathering 1: Hosted by Wysing, 4 days onsite. Focussed on getting to know each other, identifying key themes and sharing practice.  Partners to attend one day.
August 2025	Syllabus VIII gathering 2: Offline. Host TBC

September 2025	Syllabus VIII gathering 3: Offline. Host TBC
October 2025	Online Programme. Host TBC
November 2025	Syllabus VIII gathering 4: Offline. Host TBC
December 2025	Online Programme. Host TBC
January 2026	Syllabus VIII gathering 5: Offline. Host TBC
February 2026	Online Programme. Host TBC
March 2026	Syllabus VIII gathering 6: Hosted by Wysing. Partners to attend one day.
April 2026	Evaluation and reflection

## Partner Biographies

**Wysing Arts Centre** is a thriving cultural campus of ten buildings across an 11acre rural site in south Cambridgeshire which hosts experimental residencies for UK and international artists, and delivers a critically acclaimed public programme of commissions and events including conferences, symposia, workshops and music events, alongside an ambitious youth-led learning programme.

<http://www.wysingartscentre.org/>

**Eastside Projects** is an artist run multiverse, commissioning, producing and presenting experimental art practices and demonstrating ways in which art may be useful as part of society. Eastside Projects provides vital infrastructure, supports best practice and works to expand the role of the artist run space.

<https://eastsideprojects.org/>

**Spike Island** is more than just a building; we're a public space where people can discover and connect with art, feel inspired, and learn something new or unexpected.

We celebrate the very best of international contemporary art in our museum-scale gallery spaces, while also supporting artists to develop, produce and present innovative work throughout their careers.

We want to make Bristol a great place to see and make art. That's why Spike Island provides a home to a community of over 70 artists, designers, makers, artist-led organisations and creative businesses, right in the heart of the city. <https://www.spikeisland.org.uk/>

**Studio Voltaire** is one of the UK's leading not-for-profit arts organisations. Placing great emphasis on risk-taking and experimentation, our pioneering programmes of exhibitions, collaborative projects, artist development, live events and offsite commissions have gained an international reputation.

<https://www.studiovoltaire.org/>

**New Art Exchange** is a ground-breaking, award-winning and internationally recognised creative space in the heart of Hyson Green, Nottingham. We are dedicated to promoting excellence in culturally diverse contemporary arts through our exhibitions, events and engagement

As an artist-led organisation, PS<sup>2</sup> fulfils two functions:

As a studio-resource and network provider, offering affordable, adequate and longer term working space for currently 10 professional artists and 3 one yearlong residency programmes for: curator/s; critical writing and a collective.

As an organiser and initiator of an engaged and year-round arts programme in our project space or at outside locations and neighbourhoods. Our project space is seen as an extension of the studios and offers an open, temporary workspace and showroom for invited or selected project artists, enabling encounters for the general public to see, enjoy and participate in art.