Arts by the Sea Festival

CREATE! 2027 - Applicant Information Pack

January 2027



Supported using public funding by ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

What is it?

CREATE! 2026 is a **free course** for **early career producers, promoters and artists (18+)** who are **based in Dorset and BCP** (Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole) that would like to learn how artistic events are created from start to finish. Held in **January 2027**, the workshop days will take place in different spaces in Dorset and BCP.

With workshops led by experienced professionals in outdoors arts and creative events, the course will cover topics such as:

- What makes a great event?
- Building a network
- How do community-led projects work?
- Financing a creative idea
- Where can events happen?
- Identifying your audience
- What is risk management

Participants on the course will have an opportunity to prepare a pitch proposal and budget for a creative idea that they have which Arts by the Sea, b-side and Activate Performing Arts will provide feedback on. At the end of the course, you can choose to use this pitch document to bid for a pot of funding from the partner organisations that could help seed-fund your idea.

Deadline for applications: Monday 9th November 2026 at 5pm

What you will get from the Course

- All travel / food expenses during the course are covered by us
- A clearer understanding of how artistic events can be made
- An opportunity to pitch for a small pot of money to help make your creative idea a reality
- Networking sessions during and after the course
- Direct access to arts professionals
- Support and resources signposted directly to you
- A new peer network of like-minded early career creatives.

This is a course for those of any age (18+) who may have some experience in creating their own creative events, those who are wanting to step into the artistic industry but don't know how, and also those who have no idea how any of the creative world works but thinks they have a great idea they'd like to make a reality.

This is an experience for those who are wanting to grow as creative people, and it's been curated by three local leading arts organisations:

- Arts by the Sea
- Activate Performing Arts (Producers of Inside Out Dorset)
- b-side Festival

Arts by the Sea Festival

Key Dates and Venues

The course consists of **5 days**, all on **Fridays and Saturdays in January 2027**, consisting of **4 workshop days**, and a **full day of site visits**.

Venues are deliberately spread out across Dorset and BCP on different days, and we will cover your transport costs and/or organise transport. Lunch and refreshments on all workshop days will be provided but you will need to bring a packed lunch for the site visits day.

The days will run between 9am and 5pm, with breaks included.

Friday 8th January 2027

- Morning: Bournemouth Civic Centre - Bournemouth Civic Centre, Bourne Avenue, Bournemouth, BH2 6DY
- Afternoon: The Old Firestation - 36 Holdenhurst Road, Bournemouth, BH8 8AD

Saturday 9th January 2027

- North Dorset, venue tbc

Friday 15th January 2027

- Bridport Arts Centre - 9 South St, Bridport, DT6 3NR

Saturday 16th January 2027

- Full day of site visits, locations tbc

Friday 29th January 2027

- Nothe Fort - Barrack Rd, Weymouth, DT4 8UF

Arts by the Sea Festival

Access

Inclusion is at the heart of all three partner organisations.

We have an access budget which can be used on childcare costs, caring agency costs, assistance needs and more. This could range from scheduling in regular check-ins with you, to providing a BSL interpreter, documents in large print or different formats, or an access support worker to assist you e.g. take notes.

Each project partner is invested in curating an accessible course that can be catered to your individual needs from the point of application, up until the end of the course.

We will provide lunch and refreshments for all sessions (except for site visit day TBC) and are committed to catering for any allergies or dietary requirements.

Please feel free to contact Grace to discuss your access requirements and how we can make your time on the course easier on grace.king-turner@bcpcouncil.gov.uk or call Leigh Hayler Leigh Hayler on 01202 128121 (Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays) - or leave a message for the team.

Course Content

Each day will be split into 2 x workshop sessions, looking at big topics in an easy to digest way. These sessions will also be split up with plenty of breaks, and time for questions and answers at the end. Each workshop is participatory so that you're able to take every opportunity to ask the questions you want to, or feel free to use the time to sit, listen, reflect and take notes.

CREATE! is about you using the space to learn in a way you feel most comfortable, and where each participant is able to take what they need from the course. To further supplement your time on the course, we will be signposting resources that may be useful to you in growing your knowledge outside of the workshop space.

Workshop topic by day is subject to variation.

DAY 1 – INTRODUCTIONS AND BUILDING KNOWLEDGE

Introductions

- Who are we?
- Who are you?
- What makes a great event?

Building Knowledge

- Where can events happen?
- Identifying your creative motivation
- Building the initial idea into something real
- Working with people and building a productive team

An Introduction to budgeting

- Where is money spent on a project and how do you manage the budget?

DAY 2 – FINDING YOUR AUDIENCE, RISK MANAGEMENT & ACCESS

Marketing & Identifying Audiences

- What can audiences look like?
- How to market yourself
- Where to find an audience?
- How to get your community involved

Access & Risk Management

- Accessibility
    - Distilling a complex and important word into something simple
- Considering access and inclusion before, during and after production

- Identifying risk
- Why does safety make your events more fun?
- What happens when things go wrong and how do you plan for it?

DAY 3 – MAKING IT HAPPEN

Working in the Community

- What is a community?
- What is community-led work?
- Utilising the people and places around you to bring something special to life.

Money, Stakeholders & Funding Applications

- Different sources of finance and how to budget
- Where is the money?
- Funding applications and how we frame ourselves when writing them.

PITCHING & FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

This is an opportunity for you to use what you've learned on the course in order to pitch for a pot of money to help seed-fund your creative idea. Participants have time to return the (optional) pitch to the project partners for evaluation. This will be a written pitch, but should

you wish to submit the content in a different way (such as a video or audio recording), then you will be able to do so as long as the project partners can independently engage with it in under 5 minutes.

DAY 4 – FULL DAY OF SITE VISITS

Participants will be taken on a full day of site visits, exploring locations and their potential as event sites. This will be an opportunity to practice in-person risk assessments and access consideration and put what you have learned into action.

DAY 5 – INDUSTRY Q+A, FEEDBACK & EVALUATION

- Checking In: Time to talk about how you found pitching your creative idea.
- Recap on topics/points participants would like more clarification earlier on in the course.
- Pitch feedback: Generic feedback will be offered to the group on their pitches, where the general strengths were and general areas for development. We will set aside time to be able to look at improving knowledge where we feel it to be necessary. Where pitches have not been successful, the partners will do our best to link you to other opportunities to help you make your idea a reality.
- Guest Q&A: A varied panel of inspiring guest professional creatives working in a range of roles within the creative industry will join the space to share insights into their own career path and how they work. We will hold a Q&A session for CREATE! participants with the panel.
- Evaluation: Evaluate CREATE! 2027 as a group and talking about where participants might go next. Keeping in touch and future get together opportunities.

How to Apply

If all of the above sounds good to you, and you'd like to get involved in CREATE! 2027, then take a look at the application instructions below and fill out the application form!

Please read the following selection criteria to help you with your application:

Essential criteria

- Based in Dorset or BCP
- Creative ability to come up with original ideas
- Genuine passion for creating artistic events
- Willingness to learn, curiosity for new experiences, and an understanding of what you want to get out of the course
- Less than 2 years working or volunteering in the arts sector OR less than 2 years since returning after a career break

Desirable criteria

- Able to work both in a team and solo

APPLICATION FORM: https://forms.gle/W8S1iL3k8mSqA2h46

If you would like this pack in another format such as Large Print, we will happily arrange this for you. If you have any questions, please contact grace.king-turner@bcpcouncil.gov.uk or call Leigh Hayler on 01202 128121 (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday) - or leave a message for the team to call you back.

If you would like to submit a video or audio application instead (max 3 mins), then please send it via Wetransfer to Grace via her email above.

The main thing we'd like to learn is why you would like to have a place on the course, how you want to develop, your creative idea, and a little bit about you as a person.
Key things to think about:

- A creative idea you'd potentially like to get off the ground at some point in the future
- What interests you about the course and what you want to learn
- The access support we can offer you if you are offered a place on the course.

Terms and Conditions

By applying for a place on the course, you agree that:

- You will be over the age of 18 either on or before Friday 8th January 2027.
- You must agree to attend all the sessions and dates specified in this document, unless mitigating circumstances arise.
- Participants on the course will be mindful of how they interact with others to help create a safe space for themselves and others during the course. We will make every effort to ensure that the working space is comfortable and an enjoyable place to learn and be.
- Participants will be expected to have a suitable level of engagement during the workshop days, so you can get what you need out of the course however you feel most comfortable (while engaging in the tasks and learning outlined during the course).
- Travel reimbursement will be paid to you after Arts by the Sea have received your receipts, unless we are organising your transport.
- We understand how necessary these opportunities are for emerging creatives and wish we were able to offer everyone a place on CREATE! 2027, however, we anticipate receiving a large amount of applications and will be unable to do so. By sending in an application, you agree that the Partner Organisations' selection of participants is final and cannot be challenged.

Equality and Diversity

- Arts by the Sea celebrates art, culture, people and place, delivering inspirational and inclusive experiences, rooted in our location and reflecting our communities.
- We have core values of respect, inclusivity and community
- If your experience falls outside this mission or these values, please get in touch. We want to hear from you so we can understand, learn and improve. Contact us at culture@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Who we are

Arts by the Sea

Arts by the Sea brings together large-scale spectaculars, diverse music, intriguing installations, dance, street theatre, participatory experiences and much more, in one unique and celebratory festival.

Originally launched in Bournemouth in 2011, Arts by the Sea's main event takes place in Bournemouth town centre, but the festival has also hosted activity in Christchurch and Poole. We also bring cultural activity out into neighbourhoods, working with schools and communities across the area. We value our talented local artists and creatives and provide a variety of opportunities to support their development. We feel privileged to bring you inspirational experiences in one of the most beautiful locations in the country and put inclusivity, diversity and sustainability at the heart of everything we do.

b-side

b-side is an internationally recognised and locally loved arts organisation that both embodies and enriches its place of origin – the Isle of Portland in Dorset. Portland is the beating heart that inspires b-side's work, but our projects and opportunities extend all over Dorset and beyond.

We work with and commission artists who are as excited by the bigger picture as the smallest detail. Our current 'Common Lands' programme regards Portland as a microcosm to explore relationships to and with land. We invite artists, residents, and researchers to create unique and inventive projects inspired by the themes of 'people' and 'place'. We host big discussions on topics that affect us both locally and globally and create art that exists in unusual and unexpected places.

Activate Performing Arts

For over 30 years, we've been promoting, supporting and producing some of the most exciting events in the UK. We're here to bring performing arts to as many people as possible. And give creatives the support they need to make outstanding work. We connect communities. We break down barriers. We celebrate our landscape. We pride ourselves on being open and working with others to make performing arts accessible for all. In everything we do, we have just two rules. Anything's possible. And everyone's invited. We are also producers of Inside Out Dorset which is an international outdoor arts festival that takes place across the county every two years. We celebrate Dorset and aim to promote our natural landscape and sense of place.