

About Bedford Creative Arts

Bedford Creative Arts works collaboratively with artists and the people of Bedfordshire to create new art, new ideas and new communities.

We are a long established arts charity that works with artists to deliver a wide range of projects within the local community. We have recently re-structured our programmes so that we now deliver a single artist-led programme working solely with artists and partners who wish to collaborate with communities to make new work.

We aim to actively engage with people who are excluded from mainstream arts provision for reasons of disability, social, cultural or economic circumstances by seeking to make our programmes physically, intellectually, socially, culturally and financially accessible.

Bedford Creative Arts - current objectives

- To deliver high quality arts experiences for the people of Bedfordshire
- To develop the creative economy of Bedford through working with partners to establish opportunities for employment, training and workspace for artists
- To build strategic partnerships for local delivery for local communities through ConsortiCo charities consortium
- To extend our reach and impact in the community through developing sustainable funding and support for our work

Bedford Creative Arts structure

Bedford Creative Arts is a registered charity and a limited company staffed by a team of arts professionals who organise all our programmes. It is not an artists' run space. We have a voluntary Board of Trustees, who are listed on our website.

Bedford Creative Arts has a five year lease on i-Create Studios and we manage the studios on a one-year service level agreement from Bedford Borough Council, this identifies four targets to be achieved by April 2011.

- 1) Tenants secured in the building in order to work towards financial sustainability of the premises within 24 months.
- 2) 5 businesses created and demonstrating growth
- 3) 10 businesses assisted to improve performance
- 4) 10 referrals to mainstream business support

In this context businesses means artists registering as self employed with the Inland Revenue.

Who i-Create studios are for

Bedford Creative Arts offers subsidised studios to artists in any visual art form who share our desire to deliver high quality arts experiences and build the local creative economy. Artists with studios at i-Create should be able to demonstrate that they:

- Are committed to contemporary visual art practice
- Consider themselves to be professional artists

- Commit to at least 16 hours per working week (excluding weekends) to using their studios
- Are working professionally (or aspire to be) both in and outside of the region, nationally and internationally
- Are keen to constructively participate in an active artistic community
- Are willing to allow visitors to i-Create access to their studios (with notice)
- Are willing to participate in public relations opportunities to promote the studios and its activities, when appropriate

Who the studios are not for

Bedford Creative Arts provides affordable studio space to artists committed to contemporary art practice. It is not within our charitable objectives to support artists who carry out business of any description other than that of their artistic practice, from their studio. In addition the studios are not suitable for:

- Commercial artists
- People with other employment commitments that mean that they are not able to use their studios for at least sixteen hours per week, excluding evenings or weekends
- Amateur artists or hobbyists

Equal opportunities

Bedford Creative Arts will not discriminate against eligible applications on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic origin, gender, disability, religious beliefs, marital, family or economic status, social background, sexual orientation, sexual preference, age, accent, caring responsibilities, educational attainment, political affiliation and spent or irrelevant convictions.

Bedford Creative Arts will maintain a waiting list for studios and as they become vacant all studios will be advertised as widely as possible and artists will be selected by a panel comprising art world specialists, as well as Bedford Creative Arts curatorial team.

Sub-letting

Because i-Create is establishing itself as an active community of artists who will be selected on both the quality of their work and their commitment to being positively engaged in i-Create, sub-letting to other artists is prohibited. Where a joint tenancy has been agreed for a studio, these tenants together have the rights of a single tenant, for example they will have a single parking space - subject to availability. Each tenant will be jointly and severally liable. If one of the joint tenants leaves, or breaches the agreement the remaining tenants become liable. They cannot sub-let that space.

Licence period

Following initial grant of license, licences are renewed annually. In addition, there will be a review every six months and an annual appraisal. Studio licences will only be

renewed if artists are able to demonstrate their usage of the studio, ability to meet the license obligations, and their commitment to i-Create.

Professional development

Bedford Creative Arts will deliver a programme of training and professional development opportunities to all studio artists and for the wider artistic community of Bedfordshire; we aim to bring in a range of arts professionals to deliver this. In this way we hope that the wider artistic community will be able to benefit from i-Create studios. In addition our programming staff will offer critical feedback and mentoring sessions to all artists licensing studios at i-Create. This will involve at least two formal meetings – the annual appraisal and six month review – as well as ongoing advice on an individual basis. The purpose of this is to support all artists at i-Create in order that they can pursue and develop their professional careers.

The culture of i-Create

i-Create studios is a shared workspace designed specifically for professional artists use. The aim is to support artists to actively pursue their professional careers. As such we expect studio artists to take part in professional development and networking activities and to be supportive and considerate to their fellow tenants. We do not allow the playing of music in the studios, although the use of headphones is fine. The studios are communally based with shared front entrance and toilet facilities and artists must be responsible and considerate to other studio users when using the communal areas. All these factors are taken into account when allocating studios.

Licence termination

Bedford Creative Arts aims to avoid having inactive studios at any time. If an artist is unable to use their studio for the minimum weekly required time and is not positively interested in being part of i-Create, their licence will be terminated with one months notice as per the licence agreement.

This policy is DRAFT, dated June 2010

To be adopted by The Charity, Bedford Creative Arts' Board of Trustees in August 2010