

WESTON
JERWOOD
**CREATIVE
BURSARIES**
2020–2022

JERWOOD ARTS

Press release

For immediate release, Tuesday 07 March 2023

New Toolkit provides inspiration for arts and cultural organisations to advance socio-economic inclusivity in the arts



07 March Today, leading independent arts funder Jerwood Arts has launched a pivotal Toolkit to help drive socio-economic inclusivity across the sector. Jerwood Arts has been funding crucial interventions through the Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries programme for the past decade, and the new Toolkit foregrounds the experiences and voices of early-career creatives from working class backgrounds.

“It’s really easy for organisations to assume that they need to shake everything up overnight to show that they’re progressing, but actually, those of us that need these places to progress know how long it takes. Everyone is aware of the fact that change doesn’t happen overnight, and there’s nothing wrong with that. Persistent change and actual beneficial change take a while because foundations have to be laid.” WJCB Fellow, quoted in the Toolkit

The Toolkit “**(Team) Work In Practice: Collective insights, ideas, and challenges to drive socio-economic inclusivity in your organisation**” invites arts and cultural organisations to listen to the voices of people from low socio-economic backgrounds, and take to heart their insight and expertise on how to create a more inclusive working environment.

The Toolkit is wholly grounded in the authentic knowledge and experiences of Fellows and Alumni of the **Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries (WJCB)** programme. Over 2020-2022, the programme supported salaried jobs (or “Fellowships”) in 50 theatres, museums, galleries, arts centres, music venues and arts organisations across the UK for early-career creatives from working class/low socio-economic backgrounds.

Listening and learning from their feedback on ‘what works’ in creating an inclusive workplace, the Toolkit offers actionable ideas for creating an empathetic and inclusive organisational culture. From committing the time to get things right and carving out space for dialogue and support, to avoiding a one-size-fits-all approach, key takeaways are organised in five main sections addressing each stage of an individual’s journey with an organisation - from recruitment and induction, to support in professional development, and onward progression.

Candid comments shared in the Toolkit open up the Fellows’ lived experience and how it can be applied in practice:

“It’s about understanding the individual and tailoring based on what their needs are.”

“There was always a slight note of disappointment with people. They wanted someone who fit their image of what a working-class person should be. You don’t want to feel like you’re a token.”

“Organisations should be more open to sharing and learning when they get things wrong. That’s okay that you’ve got something wrong, as long as you can learn from it and you hold yourself to account.”

“Coming from a low-income background I have never been able to afford to pay for experience or access to facilities, and I can’t work for free. I don’t think anybody should work for free, regardless of whether they can afford it or not.”

The Toolkit was launched by six Toolkit Associates (all alumni of WJCB) at a national event at Sadler’s Wells in London today. They were joined by voices from across the cultural sector, including Sir Alistair Spalding CBE, Hilary Carty OBE and Baroness Bull CBE for panel discussions and a workshop. The event connected peers and sector leaders with inspiring stories of organisational change by guest speakers and Host organisations from WJCB.

Professor Dave O’Brien from University of Sheffield presented a new paper “**From social mobility to social justice: reflections on Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries 2020-2022**” underlining the policy shift from focusing on individual’s social mobility to making organisations welcoming for all, in line with the values of the WJCB programme.

Arts and cultural organisations will be able to access online and in-person workshops, based on the Toolkit and delivered by the Toolkit Associates throughout 2023. In person workshop venues will include Theatre Royal Plymouth, Derby Theatre, The British Library and Leeds Playhouse, with more details on dates and how to book announced shortly on the Jerwood Arts website [here](#).

Lilli Geissendorfer, Director of Jerwood Arts, said:

“All the suggested actions in this Toolkit arise directly from Fellows and Alumni of the Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries programme: it is full of their words and expertise. Responding to the ambitions of the 2020-22 Fellows encouraged us to work with them to design a resource that could articulate in real-life detail what ‘inclusivity’ does and doesn’t look like up close, day to day, throughout their journey in an organisation. It’s easy to say ‘there is no one-size-fits-all approach’, but what that means in practice is much harder to describe. Our hope is that people working in arts organisations across the UK will dip into the Toolkit and use it as a starting point for wider reflection and discussion on what inclusivity could look like within their own context.”

Jodie Cole, Toolkit Associate, said:

“The Toolkit is important as it has given me the gift of standing tall and speaking the truth to serve progress in an elitist sector. This has developed my leadership skills, impacted my work opportunities, and it leaves a legacy for the working class creatives that come after me. To discuss the Toolkit with us, and listen to how we think you can make change, and we can all move forwards together, is a significant moment.”

Download your free copy of the Toolkit [here](#).

Download Professor Dave O’Brien’s paper [here](#).

Find more details about upcoming Toolkit workshops and how to join [here](#).

The recording of the launch event will be available soon at jerwoodarts.org.

ENDS

For interview opportunities and further information please contact Four Culture:

Nadia.Mladenova@fourcommunications | 020 3103 9516
Caroline.Jones@fourcommunications.com | 07881 912 849

Notes to Editors:

Toolkit Workshop Programme

The following online workshops are available to book now:

- 29 March 10am-1pm
- 26 April 10am-1pm
- 12 May 10am-1pm

The following in person workshops are available to book now:

- 19 May at The British Library, London

Upcoming workshops will take place in the venues and locations below:

- Derby Theatre, May
- Theatre Royal Plymouth, May
- Glasgow, Scotland
- Cardiff, Wales

Dates and details on how to join to be published on jerwoodarts.org.

Launch Event for (Team) Work In Practice: Collective insights, ideas, and challenges to drive socio-economic inclusivity in your organisation

Speakers included:

- Baroness Deborah Bull CBE
- Hilary Carty OBE CCMI, Executive Director of Clore Leadership
- Jodie Cole, Toolkit Associate
- Kate Danielson, Director of Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries
- Pippa Frith, Executive Producer of Fierce Festival
- Lilli Geissendorfer, Director of Jerwood Arts
- Ink Asher Hemp, Toolkit Associate
- Della Hill, Toolkit Associate
- Deborah Keyser, Director of Tŷ Cerdd
- Professor Dave O'Brien, University of Sheffield
- Louis Palfrey, Toolkit Associate
- Helen Pheby, Associate Director, Programme of Yorkshire Sculpture Park
- Daniel Poole, Deputy Director of NN Contemporary Art
- Lou Bartley Sophocleous, Toolkit Associate
- Sir Alistair Spalding CBE, Artistic Director & CEO of Sadler's Wells
- Kyle Stead, Toolkit Associate
- Melissa Wong, Toolkit Project Manager

The recording of the launch event will be available soon at jerwoodarts.org.

Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries

Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries has been the leading UK-wide programme focused on socio-economic diversity in the arts since 2010. Over four editions it has created 173 year-long jobs for early-career creatives from working class/low socio-economic backgrounds, alongside producing practical Toolkits on inclusive employment to drive organisational change.

The Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries 2020-2022 programme was designed and delivered by Jerwood Arts, supported by people make it work, Professor Dave O'Brien, and Annabel Jackson Associates Ltd. It was funded by Arts Council England's Transforming Leadership Fund, Garfield Weston Foundation, Art Fund, Arts Council of Wales, Creative Scotland, British Council, Jerwood Arts, and PRS Foundation.

Jerwood Arts

Jerwood Arts is the leading independent funder dedicated to supporting early-career artists, makers, curators and producers to develop and thrive across the UK. We are committed to supporting artistic freedom of expression and being as inclusive as possible across all our work. We collaborate with organisations across art forms, disciplines and genres to create transformative opportunities and a more sustainable sector, supporting imaginative awards, fellowships, residencies, projects, programmes, bursaries and commissions. jerwoodarts.org

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