

Towards Creative Inclusion in Adult Education

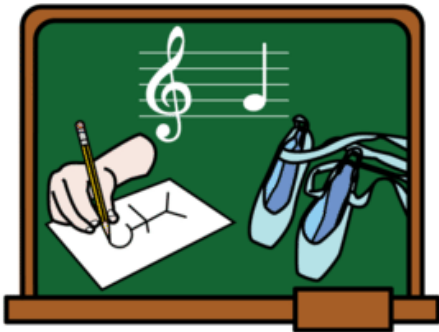
This is an easy-read document.





Arts education and art creation for people with disabilities is above all an enriching, heart-warming and amazing process.

It brings us to the power of art.



Words, images or movements reveal what cannot be said and give an audience to those who are not seen or heard.

And it is usually just great fun to do!



6 European organisations formed a partnership to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities in arts education and art creation.

The partnership consists of:

- Cope Foundation
- Associazione Scuola Viva Onlus
- ENCC- European Network of Cultural Centres -
- CIT - Cork Institute Of Technology
- EASPD - European Association Of Service Providers For Persons With Disabilities

With support of the Erasmus+ programme, these partners gathered promising practices from all over Europe.

CHAPTER 1. GETTING STARTED



Different partners, different worlds

The three major types of partners are:

1. parents, care workers, teachers, support staff
2. Partners from the world of the arts:
individual artists,
professional or amateur groups,
training programmes, studios...
3. community centres, cultural centres,
local authorities and services...

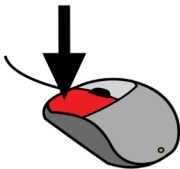
Often there is a personal link that connects these worlds: a care worker with a great passion for art or an artist with a family member with a disability.



Le Theatre du Crystal (France) is an inclusive theatre company with disabled and non-disabled actors.

Founded in 1989, they've created and performed over 20 plays in France and abroad.

The theatre company also organises a free, weekly theatre course where everyone is welcome

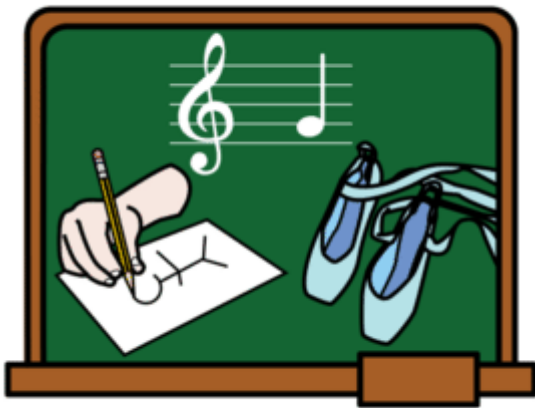


<http://www.theatreducristal.com/pole-art-handicap>



Creative or artistic languages and contexts allows people with disabilities to connect with others and to express thoughts and feelings.

Within the services provided for disabled people, the attention for art and culture is growing.



These days art is seen less and less as purely therapy and More as a means of inclusion.

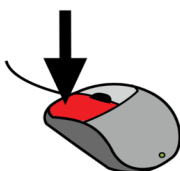
This increase in attention for art leads to more collaboration between artists and care facilities.

Spaces in which visual art, dance, theatre and music are created, offer care workers, clients and their environment new ideas for interaction and dialogue.



Art can also promote individual and critical thinking, as The Glucksman illustrates.

The **University College Cork** (Ireland) organises 'The Certificate in Contemporary Living' (CCL), a two-year education programme for people with learning disabilities.



<https://www.ucc.ie/en/appsoc/courses/contliving/>

www.glucksman.org



Inclusive art practice starts from an urge for greater social justice.

Everyone should get the chance to realise his or her artistic talents and ambitions.

But this in turn leads to a profound renewal of what art can be and who can create art.

Inclusive art practice fosters the curiosity and creativity of artists and offers them the opportunity to link a certain social added value to their work, if they wish to do so.



Art and culture connect people with disabilities with the local community.

Involving people with disabilities also makes society more aware of certain barriers they face and of what they take for granted.



If they tackle these barriers, other groups also benefit, such as families with young children or the elderly.

Artistic practices offer an open space in which people with a disability can express their own view and their own experiences

Some challenges and considerations when starting your own project

Artists are prepared and fully equipped to create an inclusive context, not by doing special things, but just by staying true to their talent. Artists are used to dealing with the deep uncertainty of an empty canvas, a new group or an empty stage.

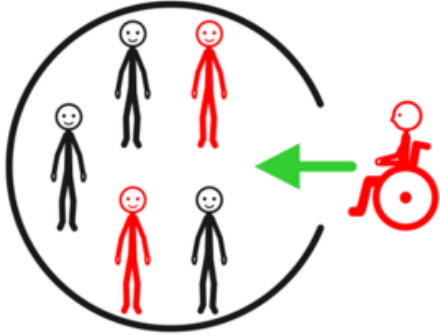
Neither does the supporting network have to worry.

Art and culture are an essential link in the social participation of people with a disability.

Everyone has the right to freely enjoy the art and culture and to become a full part of it.

That is a fundamental right of every citizen and is enshrined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons (2006).





We should not consider inclusive art practice as separate from the place of people with disabilities in our society.

Artistic passion and talent are equally divided among the population and therefore also present in people with a disability.



Setting up a project together is a good start.

This can be a series of lessons or workshops, possibly with a short presentation. Some people may want to focus on a creation

process that leads to a public presentation (a performance or an exhibition).



Local and national governments and private companies provide project resources for such projects.

When you start such a project, it is best to think carefully about accessibility in advance. Here are some areas to think about:





An increased audience is also essential for creating more support for inclusion in the arts.



The day-care centre of **LADAPT** in France aims at including their artists with a learning disability in mainstream arts events and festivals to share their work to a wide audience.

They have successfully managed to include the visual artwork of their participants in a fair for local artists.

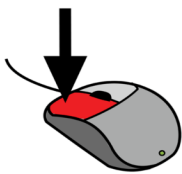


MUSICA, the music group of the day-care centre played at **Le Festival de Bandas** in France.

This participation took four years of preparation, with the participation at the festival as a focus point.

The regional branch of **LADAPT** in the north of France organises the **Festival Handy'arts**

promoting performing arts (theatre, dance, circus, choir...) and visual arts.



Montmorency: <http://www.ladapt.net/etablissement-service-ile-de-france-val-doise>

Festivals:

www.festivaldebandas.fr

https://www.facebook.com/festivalhandyarts/?tn-str=k*F



Compagnie Tadoo also organises the **Festival Hors Champs**. The festival aims at promoting inclusive dance practice, giving the opportunity to young companies, amateurs and artists with or without disabilities to present their work.

www.codex14.com



LABELLING



There is a broad discussion about labelling and the process of inclusion and exclusion of people with a disability in the arts.



Some organisations or companies proudly mention that they include people with disabilities. It forms an important part of their identity.

For many artists, their disability is an important part of their identity and their work.

Many people with disabilities see an impairment as something positive.

The Arts can change the social perception of impairment and disability.

CHAPTER 2 METHODOICAL CHOICES

In this chapter, we will give you a lot of options that can help you to make your own choices and to convey them clearly in words.

What is the focus of your project?

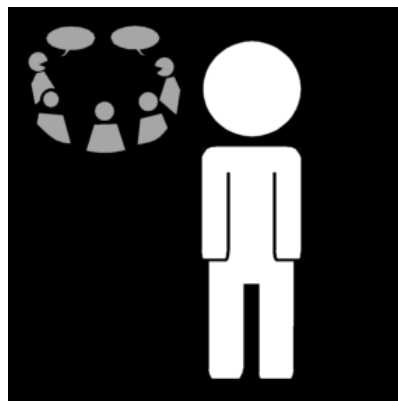
Artistic

Try to connect the creative exploration of the ideas and feelings of the players to be suitable for a contemporary audience.

Participation and Engagement

Your project is about finding and connecting people.

It is possible that the process will become more important here than the end result, but that does not necessarily have to happen.





Collaboration and partnership

Good collaboration is not only functional, but also a value in itself. You connect and reinforce the interests of the various project partners.

Co-ownership

It can also be your goal to put the project into the hands of people with disabilities, as individual artists or in groups.

.In addition to a dancer, player or creator, people with disabilities can also take on the role of director, choreographer and/or teacher.

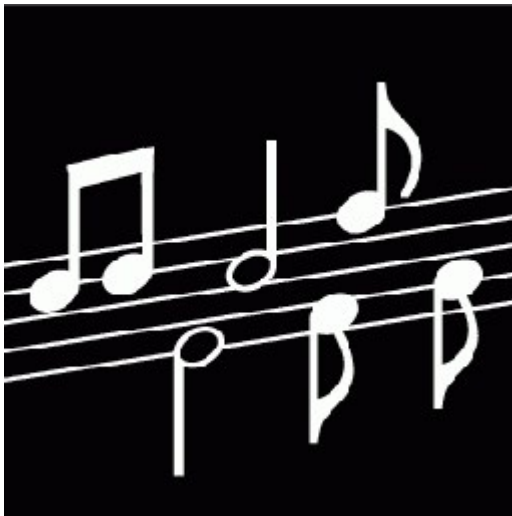
Well-being and Health

Artistic projects can be a turning point to increase self confidence and restore self-image.

It can lead to a change in living habits, making new connections with the local community or with support services.

ARCIL is an Occupational Centre for adults with disability from Portugal. They organise music workshops where disabled (young) adults work together with children and youngsters from the local community. They learn to make music together and work towards an annual performance.

More info about ARCIL: <https://www.facebook.com/arcillousa> and www.arcil.org.pt.



You can learn more about the opportunities of digital music making for disabled people on:
https://www.heartnsoul.co.uk/category/artists/details/the_sound_lab

Stand up for Social Justice



Artistic processes can support people with disabilities to turn their ideas and feelings into words, images and/or movements, bringing these to the attention of others.

Art can serve as a megaphone for social change.



La Compagnie du Savon Noir

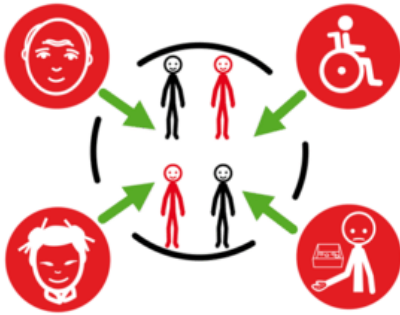
creates performances and launches artistic projects addressing social issues.

They organise workshops, collective writing sessions and debates on various social matters such as well-being at work, diversity and discrimination, end-of-life care

For further information:

<http://www.ciedusavonnoir.fr/ateliers/amour-sexualite-handicap/>





Who do you include in your Art Practice?

A movement is growing to involve people with disabilities as much as possible within the existing art world and to discuss with them topics other than just the (experience of) disability.

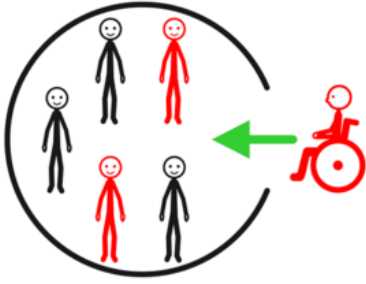
In practice, the term **inclusion** is used for this.

The term inclusive is often used to indicate that everyone can participate.



The term inclusive is also used to indicate that there is a collaboration between people with and without disabilities.

For some, this means that a mixed group - whether or not balanced - participates in, for example, a workshop or is on stage together.



Finally, the term inclusive can also refer to the quality of the interaction.

Inclusive then means that people with disabilities fully belong.

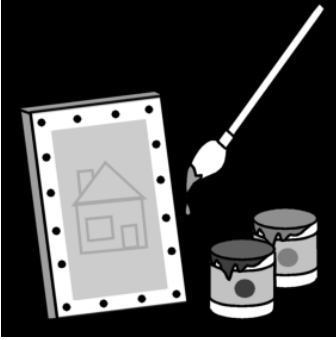
They can fully participate.

They are co-owners in the creative process, but can also take decisions with regard to the organisation and the design of the process.

Equality is a key concept here.

Collaboration between people with and without disabilities always walks a fine line.

There is no such thing as the perfect inclusive project. There are always times of exclusion and inequality.



The **Kilkenny Collective for Arts talent** is an **example of an inclusive practice.**

KCAT strongly believes that everyone, regardless of background, age, gender or ability should have access to a creative world – as students, participants, artists or audiences.

KCAT offers a wide selection of learning opportunities so that everyone can be involved in the arts.

Their courses are for everybody. They are thoughtfully designed in such a way that they are accessible to people of all races, genders, abilities and ages.



<https://www.facebook.com/kcatarts/>



WHERE AND WHEN DO YOU WORK?

In order to maintain a low barrier, some people set up artistic projects in a familiar environment where people with a disability live or stay.

Sometimes, the mobility of people with disabilities is so limited, that art has to be brought into the institution.

Edos (Milan, Italy) provides residential care to disabled adults with physical disabilities and/or learning disabilities.

They run a programme called **Inside Art Life** (IAL) offering individualised artistic training themselves, even if people are admitted to high health care departments.

The activities take place in the resident's rooms and in dedicated spaces.



Not all artists with disabilities can have a studio space at the moment they feel like it.

They may depend on others for transport to and from the rehearsal room.

This can limit their freedom.

It is therefore important to think about this beforehand and to make any arrangements.

Inclusive art practice occurs within different contexts: in care settings, within arts and culture education, amateur arts, cultural centres and arts organisations.

This ranges from one-off projects, permanent work groups to professional inclusive companies.

Which activities do you want to set up?



In every art form, there are many examples of inclusive art practice: visual arts, video art, poetry, theatre, dance, music, rap, performance, circus etc.

New forms of art, such as Digital Art also offers different approaches for artists with a disability.

The **Centre de la Gabrielle** (France) organises:



‘**Couleurs et Création**’, a day-care unit for 20 people with learning disabilities aged 45 years old and more. It forms a transition between professional life and retirement.

“Couleurs et Création” participates in exhibitions, theatre and dance performances and artistic workshops

More information :

www.centredelagabrielle.fr

<https://www.inorchestra.eu/>



HOW WILL YOU WORK?

Many common processes, methods and techniques in arts education and creation are useful when you are working with people with disabilities.



Within dance, specific exercises or techniques are developed.

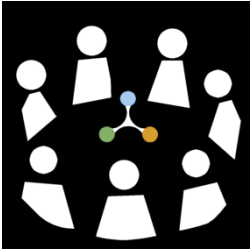
Within music, there are different ways of composing and creating music like sound-painting.

For more information:

<http://www.idancenetwork.eu> and

<https://inclusivedance.eu>

<http://www.soundpainting.com>



CHAPTER 3 - CO-OWNERSHIP

People with disabilities are citizens, with rights and obligations. They do not have to be integrated into society, they are part of it by definition.

However, they are entitled to support to be able to participate equally in ordinary society and to make a contribution of their own.

When people with disabilities study or create art, they deserve the necessary support to make their own contribution.

This (co-) ownership is made concrete in five key concepts:

- **Control**
- **Freedom of Choice**
- **Independence**
- **Self-Awareness**
- **Empowerment**



Increasing (co-)ownership in the creative and educational process

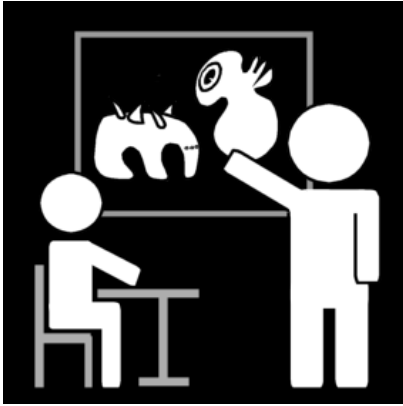


Orientation

During the orientation process, the basis for (co-)ownership is laid.

In the orientation phase of the process, the makers can connect social and artistic goals and from there go on an exploration together.

The quality of the interaction also plays an important role



In their daily lives, people who live in an institution or who depend on others often have to comply with the goals and agendas of others.

They have only limited freedom. An artistic process often offers much more freedom than daily life, but then artistic facilitators have to step out of a steering role.



For example, they can teach basic techniques, but after that, the joint artistic quest should start.

Finally, it is important at this stage to launch a theme that triggers the rest of the process.



Preliminary Stage

The idea of freedom and choice that is part of a creative process needs to be established.



Zig Zag (Vauréal, France) is a centre for theatre practice run by professionals from the worlds of art and care.

Based on their experience with circus and clowning, they have developed their own working method of **“accompanied improvisation”**.

In this method a person with a disability comes on stage and is invited to play and to express himself.

An actor/clown comes on stage to support the disabled person in this exploration.

More information: <https://www.zigzag-theatre.com>





Research phase

In the research phase, the theme is explored and deepened in every possible way.

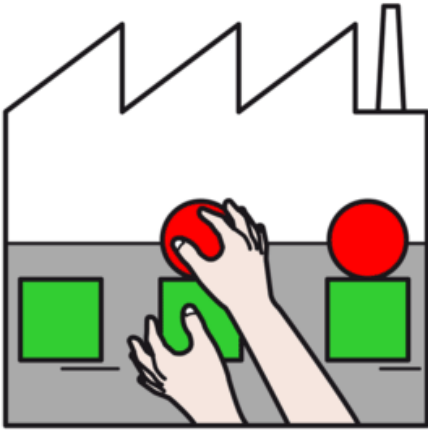
Improvisation can also be used in the visual arts as 'Jamming' illustrates:

Jamming (Czech Republic) is an experimental art project in which artists with learning disabilities and artists who are 'handicapped by an art school education' work with one another.



The main concept behind the project is to bring the idea of group improvisation – jamming, common in music – to painting.

More information: www.jamming.cz



Creation Phase

In this phase, the director or choreographer can take on ownership more strongly. He or she gets to work with the material generated by the participants.



Scuola Viva onlus (Rome, Italy) is a non-profit, non-governmental rehabilitation centre. One of their main activities is a daycare centre for people with intellectual disabilities.



The art workshop forms a major part of the day care centre.

The artists enjoy a number of painting techniques and applications: on glass, canvas, paper, walls and ceramics.

Another interesting point is the learning/teaching of specific skills.

For some, learning the necessary skills is an essential element of developing (co)ownership.



MARGARITA is a vocational training centre for people with learning disabilities in Greece. They use **theatre therapy** in their work.



The Spanish visual artist **Jesús Placencia** organises **inclusive drawing workshops**, providing training to persons with and without disability.

The main aim of the workshops is to develop the individual ability of expression and communication in every participant



In the **presentation** phase, the participants embody the performance.

Afterwards, the participants discuss, and reflect upon the process and the performance.



People with a (learning) disability can also acquire (co-)ownership:

- ◆ in the development of the organization
- ◆ in their own artistic development
- ◆ in their fees, property rights and copyright



Chapter 4 - Developing and discovering talent

Discover talent

For us, talent is more about passion and drive than about technical perfection. It concerns personality and individuality, storytelling and poetry.



Even if our guidelines are for Adult education, we advise to start young.

Young children quickly pick up a feeling for the arts, and they have that for the rest of their lives.

Pick up signals and recognise talents



There are a number of signals that can tell you a lot about the involvement of people, even if they cannot speak or have difficulty speaking.

These can be facial or physical expressions that indicate approval or enjoyment of the activities.



Cope Foundation is a non-profit organisation supporting children and adults with intellectual disabilities and autism in Cork, Ireland.



“Suisha Inclusive Arts”, a community based arts initiative, focuses on arts education, staged productions, exhibitions and creating opportunity across all art forms.

Suisha Inclusive Arts is a partner in many local and European events promoting the participation of people with disabilities in the arts.

More information: www.suisha.ie
<https://www.facebook.com/Suisha.Inclusive.Arts/>



Identify and overcome barriers

To develop talent, you need to identify and overcome a lot of barriers:

Barriers that are linked to the personality or perception of the participant or their environment.

Informative barriers ensure that people with disabilities are not informed or do not have incorrect information.

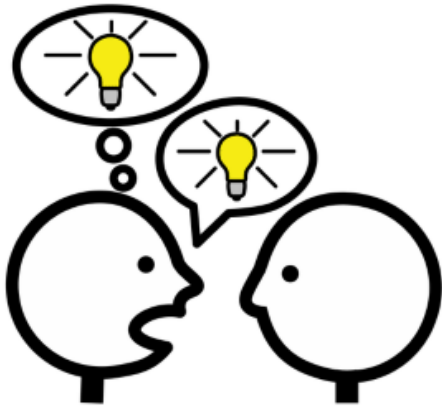


Institutional barriers are barriers at an organisational level that make access for people with disabilities more difficult.

These views create a **vicious circle**, because they lead to barriers for mainstream training opportunities.

This means that fewer artists with disabilities move on to the professional companies and venues.

Break down the vicious circle



Break out and expand your network

People who are active within the arts can contact care facilities, schools for special education, day centres, parents' associations, home counselling services or leisure organisations.

People who work within care settings can make contact with individual artists, directors, choreographers, galleries and studios, specialised museums...

Inclusive Mindset



In order to realistically develop and nurture talent for people with disabilities in the arts, a shift in thinking seems to be necessary.

We have to look more broadly and recognise the value of different practices that can exist alongside and in collaboration with each other.