



**COLLECTIVE
ENCOUNTERS**

**TRUSTEE
INFORMATION
PACK**

Who are we?

Collective Encounters is an arts charity established in 2004, specialising in Theatre for Social Change. We use creativity to build power within people and communities who are directly affected by poverty and inequality, and who experience barriers to inclusion, mainly in Liverpool City Region. We co-create participatory theatre and research to bring people together, tell stories that are often ignored, and provoke action towards positive change. We strengthen professional practice through a local and national training and development programme for artists, activists and academics.

We define change as:

Personal: reduced isolation and increased confidence, self-esteem, creative and other skills of the people who take part in our workshops, training sessions and performances.

Social: strengthened communities where differences are celebrated, stereotypes and discrimination are challenged, barriers to participation are removed, solidarity is built between those with direct experience of poverty and inequality, and there is an increased awareness about their experiences amongst the local community and general public.

Political: new networks and structures are established enabling more people to challenge the current systems and work together for change; local and national policy is influenced by the people it affects; and there is a greater understanding and application of theatre and arts for social change among artists, activists, academics and decision makers

Each year Collective Encounters enables 2,000 people to take part in high quality arts activities including regular Theatre for Social Change workshops, school holiday programmes, one-to-one sessions and mentoring, masterclasses, creative participatory research, and conferences. Participants are diverse and include care experienced children and young people, refugees and asylum seekers, women facing social and emotional barriers, adults with mental health issues, people in recovery, disabled people and people with long term health conditions, parents and carers from diverse backgrounds, people with experience of the criminal justice system, people living in areas with few opportunities for creative activity, and artists, policy makers and academics. These activities have developed skills, built confidence, and inspired communities.

Collective Encounters produces at least one theatre performance annually, bringing to the fore issues and themes such as health and wealth inequality, homelessness, rise in hate crimes against vulnerable people, mental health, climate change, racial justice, and women's rights.

Our staff and board

Our core team comprises Tessa Buddle (Executive Director), Abi Horsfield, Michelle Richards, Aidan Jolly and Marianne Matusz (Co-Artistic Directors), Patrick Hughes (Programme Coordinator), Eleanor Kilroy (Youth Participation Producer), Joanne Tremarco (Associate Lead Artist), Heidi Robinson and Em Wills (Creative Support Workers).

Our current board members are: Valeria Guarneros-Meza (Chair), Kate Elder Fuller, Cat Foley, Fabio Negro, Jo Schweier, Anya Winful

Our funders and networks

Collective Encounters is supported by Liverpool City Council's Culture and Arts Investment Programme (CAIP) and currently has core/multi-year grants from Garfield Weston, Swire Charitable Trust, PH Holt Foundation, BBC Children in Need and Youth Music. Project funders include Arts Council England, Holiday Activity and Food fund, and Liverpool Charity and Voluntary Services.

We are members of the Independent Theatre Council (ITC), Culture Network LCR, and ArtWorks Alliance. We are also members of research consortia and multi-agency networks including ReCITE and Best for Baby Too.

Our current projects include:

[Arts Adventures](#)



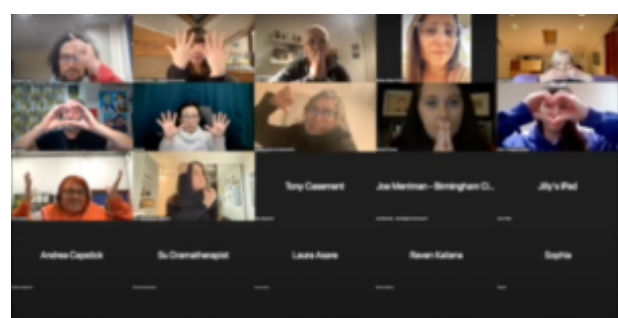
[Women in Action](#)



[Creative Communities](#)



[Creative Development](#)



Visit www.collective-encounters.org.uk to find out more



Collective Encounters' manifesto

We are Collective Encounters and we make theatre for social change.
We are artists and activists, thinkers and doers, researchers and connectors.
We are informed by our diverse experiences and we challenge social inequity.
We are rooted and networked in communities, committed to telling stories that need to be told and heard.
We are kind, accessible, and welcome all.
We reflect on our practices and are constantly evolving our work.

The time to change is now.
In a society with increasing violence, hate, and prejudice,
With an increase in the divide between the haves and have nots,
We believe that theatre has a part to play in spotlighting social justice
And highlighting choices for fairer better ways.

Theatre and creativity are powerful tools.
We bring people together to share their stories and ideas,
To recognise and celebrate diversity, find connections and grow empathy.
We co-create theatre to challenge the system and redress the inequalities of our times;
To entertain, engage, excite and delight,
To spark debate and facilitate difficult conversations,
To expose realities that are often ignored,
To champion human rights,
To imagine alternatives, rehearse change and play out new possibilities.
We make theatre as a call to action.

We are collaborative, collective and caring.
We work across creative disciplines, sectors and communities,
To share our practices, learn from our peers, to foster new thinking.
To extend our reach, deepen our impact, affect change and find solidarity.
We are collective encounters and we demand a brighter future.

Our priorities for 2026-2030

Neighbourhood Arts for Social Change

Working in key neighbourhoods where participation in culture and democracy are low, we aim to empower people to participate in decisions about their lives and communities. We will work with partners in Bootle, Birkenhead, Knowsley, and Speke to co-create exciting participatory programmes and performances that connect local people with decision making structures.

Imagining Health Futures

Our work will support mothers from diverse backgrounds, care experienced families, families with experience of the criminal justice system, people with adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), and other communities experiencing health inequality to use creativity to advocate for improvements in healthcare and other public services.

Transforming Care-Experienced Lives

Our school holiday 'Arts Adventures' programmes will reach more young people than ever, building the confidence, social skills, and health of care-experienced young people in Liverpool, Knowsley and Sefton. We will work with care leavers to nurture creative skills and navigate independent living with confidence, while extending our practice into the children's services workforce to provide training that improves trauma-informed practice and advocates for young people's needs.

Brave Spaces

Through our programme of regular creative groups and performances, we will co-create intentional spaces that bring people together, bravely tackle difficult issues, and build solidarity and strength within and across struggles for equity. This will include the provision of a weekly Women in Action group, a fortnightly Adult Theatre for Social Change group, an online group, and a series of Social Change Cabarets.

Responsive Research for Social Justice

We will advance new research in response to emerging needs, centring lived experiences and co-creating knowledge within the communities that are affected by the research. Our Radical Researchers group will co-lead investigations, using creative methodologies to build understanding about fundamental issues such as economics, power, and the climate, while exploring important histories and finding new ways of disseminating knowledge.

Continuing Creative Development

Our high quality offer of training and networking events provides skills development, discussion and debate around key current themes in participatory arts, as well as providing bespoke opportunities to learn Theatre for Social Change methods among participatory arts professionals, voluntary sector groups, and frontline workers in public services. Our targeted programme will address underrepresentation within arts and social justice movements, creating clear progression routes for our participants to move into leadership roles and paid careers.



More about being a Trustee

We are looking for new trustees to join our board. We would like to hear from **anyone who shares our values and has the passion and commitment** to support our development. We have vacancies for people with professional experience of **creative leadership** and/or knowledge of **accounting and finance**, but please get in touch even if you don't have these specific skills.

We are particularly interested in welcoming trustees who:

- Live in Liverpool City Region;
- Are previous or current participants of Collective Encounters; and/or
- Share characteristics with those who benefit from our programmes, including women, disabled people, people with mental health challenges, people who are care-experienced, parents and carers, and people who experience racism or other types of discrimination.

General requirements:

- Anyone from 18 years old can be a trustee.
- There are no formal qualifications or levels of experience that you must gain before you join a charity board. But you do need passion and commitment.

Trustees are:

- Responsible for ensuring that the organisation fulfils its charitable objectives and lives up to its manifesto.
- Generally appointed between 2-4 years, but it can be extended.
- Responsible for the performance of the charity and its culture and ensuring that Collective Encounters complies with all legal and regulatory requirements.
- Guardians of the charity's assets, both tangible and intangible, taking all due care over their security, deployment, and proper application, and ensure that the organisation's governance is of the highest possible standard.
- Strategic leaders of the organisation, using their skills, backgrounds, and contacts to assist the organisation in continuing to make a real difference and ensure its sustainability.

Time Commitment

- A 90 minute online board meeting every three months
- A half hour governance pillar meeting every three months
- An hour or so each month to review paperwork and keep in touch
- Coming along to Collective Encounters' workshops and events when you can.

Expenses

- This is a voluntary (unpaid) role
- Out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed such as childcare and travel to allow you to attend meetings and events.

Registration and Induction

On becoming a trustee, you will:

- Receive an induction pack, which includes key governance policies, finance and strategic plan. You are expected to familiarise yourself with their content.
- Be allocated a trustee 'buddy' to help you navigate the protocols (first 6 months in post)
- Have the opportunity to attend external training on the roles and responsibilities of a charity trustee

You will be given some forms to complete, including:

- Declaration of willingness to serve
- Declaration of material interests
- Application for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check if you do not already have one
- Trustee details including your contact details and someone we can contact for a reference

You will become a registered Director of the company with Companies House, and a registered Trustee with the Charity Commission. Your name, address, date of birth, nationality, and occupation will be shared with these bodies, but only your name will be made public.

How to apply

To express an interest in being a Collective Encounters Trustee, please send an email or video to admin@collective-encounters.org.uk explaining why you are interested in the role and a little more about you. Let us know the aspects of the organisation you are particularly interested in. If you have a CV send that in too.

If you require this information pack in an alternative format, or have any other questions about the role, please email admin@collective-encounters.org.uk or call 0151 345 6266.

Deadline for expressions of interest: Monday 8th June, midday

Interviews: June tbc, via Zoom

Expected start date: Flexible





Collective Encounters

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Registered Charity: 1105790

Company Number: 5062035

Image credit: Joanne Roberts