

Do you Believe in the POWER of Art Education?

It's a tricky time for cultural education in the UK. The number of teacher training courses for the arts has been reduced, and the proposed [EBacc](#) threatens to dramatically reduce the number of cultural education opportunities offered to pupils as schools focus upon the "core" subjects, yet the Cultural Industries fully acknowledge that a child's cultural educational experience directly impacts upon the fact that our creative industries are world-beaters – they contribute 6% of GDP (UK), employ two million people and export over £16 billion annually.

"The creative sector has huge growth potential. The digital and creative industries are a natural export strength for the UK, providing the UK's third largest export sector – only behind advanced engineering and financial and professional services." CBI, [Skills for the Creative Industries: Investing in the Talents of our People 2011](#)

And just as importantly, the impact a meaningful cultural education has on the individual has been demonstrated time and again:

"The skills, which children acquire through good Cultural Education, help to develop their personality, abilities and imagination. They allow them to learn how to think both creatively and critically and to express themselves fully. All of these skills are strong influencers on wider academic attainment in schools and help to grow a child's interest in the process of learning within the school environment." Review by Darren Henley, Cultural Education in England – [An Independent Review](#) by Darren Henley commissioned by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Department of Education

“Other subjects suffer in the absence of the arts. Schools that integrate arts into their curriculum also show improved student performance in maths, English, critical thinking and verbal skills. The arts have a primary role in a world that is now highly dependent on visual literacy. Engineers, designers and those employed in the media all have to understand through images as much as through words. Arts shouldn’t be seen as an optional extra, beyond the proper “academic” subjects. We need an education that is holistic and values the visual as much as numeracy and literacy. Students who engage in arts in school are twice as likely to volunteer and are 20% more likely to vote. Students from low-income families who take part in arts activities at school are three times more likely to take a degree.” [Nicholas Serota, The Guardian](#)

At the very time when we need to invest more resources to ensure we continue to build our creative economies, we seem to be applying the brakes. AccessArt has been working since 1999 to help support individuals working in the visual arts, particularly artists, teachers and facilitators who strive to nurture creativity in others, and now more than ever we need to remember that creativity cannot be switched on and off as a result of some political whim.

We believe that AccessArt has a unique part to play in helping to support teachers, learners and creative practitioners, AND in helping to create an appetite for art education, which in turn helps create a demand, which in turn creates new opportunities:

- AccessArt believes that there is no greater way to demonstrate the potential power the visual arts have on us as individuals, than by enthusing and inspiring. We only need to help sprinkle the seeds of ideas, images, outcomes... and the recipient will do the rest...
- AccessArt advocates sharing of high quality visual arts practice: by sharing skills, knowledge, experience and outcomes we can all work together to help raise

aspirations and standards in visual arts teaching and learning. AccessArt facilitates this sharing through it's website: <https://www.accessart.org.uk> which houses it's evolving and inspirational collection of resources.

- AccessArt aims to be as accessible as possible, and to connect and bridge practitioners, facilitators, teachers and learners at every level. AccessArt works hard to ensure it's audience feel able to communicate through the website, via Tutorial Groups, Courses and Online Participatory Projects.
- AccessArt works in partnership and collaboration. AccessArt recognises every collaboration starts with an individual; from an artist working alone in a studio to large organisations – we welcome collaboration.

AccessArt connects over 10,000 registered users and over 600 members across the UK and overseas (made up of teachers, artists, facilitators and home users). The AccessArt website has become a well-respected source of inspiration and communication – in the last year alone over 50,000 people used the AccessArt website to find inspiration – we can only imagine the total number of people who benefited from AccessArt when our audience of 50,000 spread our resources to their own audiences...

AccessArt is a small, independent, UK charity which receives no income from government or regular income from charitable trusts. We rely entirely on income from membership, courses and donations. Whilst we are an extremely cost-effective organisation, it still costs over £60,000 to deliver AccessArt to our audiences every year, and at the moment this is carried mostly via volunteers. We are extremely grateful for ongoing pro bono support from media, communications and technology legal firm [Olswang](#) to help make sure we operate in a correct and efficient legal manner.

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Show you Believe in AccessArt – and Benefit!

Please show you believe in the importance of the work AccessArt undertakes, and help play your part in supporting the community by making a donation to AccessArt. Any income we receive goes towards the costs of generating more resources to share with our audience, and developing new lines of communication which benefit our audience such as the AccessArt Tutorial Group. You can show your support in one of two ways – either way we'll make sure you benefit too!

[Join AccessArt – It costs just £42 a year. Explore all the benefits here](#)

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[Make a Donation to AccessArt](#) via the Big Give. If you donate via the Big Give you can automatically gift aid your donation. AND if you donate £42 or more, then pls email us and we'll make you a member for a year!