



Flow Observatorium

A Neurodivergent Arts Manifesto 2017

We believe

Neurodivergent artists experience and document the world differently which can be a great contribution to a vibrant, diverse arts sector and culture;

Neurodivergent artists are at present invisible and their abilities remain hidden in the current arts landscape;

If you want to experience new and differing work, commission people who experience the world differently but change the ways you work with them;

The time is right to initiate a social chain reaction supporting neurodivergent artists to vocalise and address equity, enabling fair play and inclusivity in every aspect of the arts world;

In the need for pluralistic neuro-diversity not neuro-adversity - Include us, watch our 'brain dancing' as there is strength in our difference.

We want to:

Increase the visibility, understanding and confidence of neurodivergent artists in the current arts landscape;

Provide 'safe spaces' in which to support neurodivergent artists experiment, make work, collaborate, share and strengthen their engagement with the cultural sector;

Enable and support neurodivergent artists through bespoke and tailor made pathways, and open them up to creative opportunities nationally and internationally;

Create a neurodivergent led hub, enabling the artists to connect with each other, creating both a network and resource to become a leading national 'go to organisation' for advice, opening doors for arts organisations to engage with neurodivergent artists;

Connect and collaborate with research institutes where creativity and neurodivergence is championed and identify advocates and patrons to help promote and lobby for the project both nationally and internationally.

We know this to be true:

Neurodivergent artists are compelled to create work regardless of money and opportunity, which means that they can often be taken advantage of or not apply for opportunities they should. They tend to work in isolation and miss out culturally as does the neurotypical world without them;

Neurodivergent artists may need advocates, championing their work and helping others understand how hard it is to share their information and thoughts. Barriers to opportunities and support may trigger mental health issues in neurodivergent people leading to further isolation;

A 'safe space' is often attitudinal, not necessarily architectural. We recognise the need for new neurodivergent-led models of practice and support to embed 'safe spaces', realise potential and unlock hidden abilities;

Silence is not absence. Neurodivergent artists need recognition and other forms of group participation, commissioning and grant applications should be created with the appropriate, integral support which suit their cognitive style and culture;

When neurodivergent artists shine it is because their authentic ability has been understood, they have been supported and the power and quality of their work recognised. When understood, facilitated and supported, due to their different way of thinking, neurodivergent artists are capable of excellence and surprise.

If we can't BE autistic on neurotypical terms then autistic people HAVE to rewrite their rule book authentically for them for both our benefit.