

Engage

Bringing people
and art together

Call for proposals — Engage 46: Generation Z and the Future of Creative Work

Edited by Professor Sarah Perks

The outline below, stimulated by a discussion with the Engage Journal Editorial Advisory Board (EAB), is followed by a series of questions that can be used as prompts in proposals for articles.



Proposals are invited for issue 46 of the Engage Journal: Generation Z and the Future of Creative Work. This issue will focus on the future workforce of visual arts engagement and participation and the wider engagement programmes that develop creative careers in our sector. Deadline for proposals is Monday 28 February 2022.

This Journal invites debate on the creative pathways and opportunities for young people today - collectively known as Generation Z - who are both a part of, and the future of, visual arts engagement and participation. The aim of the issue is to debate how their needs are changing and how we might respond as a sector both in terms of our commitments to creative pathways and the future structure of our profession.

Generation Z is now widely used to reference those born after 1997 and up to 2012, following Generation X and Millennials (the Y), they are also nicknamed Zoomers referencing their perceived ubiquitous use of the internet and social media. They are coming of age with a distinct set of contemporary socio-economic and political factors, from the global pandemic to populist politics, against ever-changing policies of governments and the global climate crisis.

Visual arts engagement and participation programmes are developing rapidly to keep up with the demands of Generation Z, from how digital technology is incorporated and policies and practices of inclusivity are embedded as opposed to just addressed. For example, how Project Art Works has recently drawn headlines

and a Turner Prize nomination for their ethos of collaboration with people with complex support needs, and the development of Pinc Colleges: special campuses in the UK providing art and design studies for Neurodiverse young people (16 – 25-year-olds) formed in deep collaboration with arts and cultural organisations. The shift in the cultural sector to diversify its workforce has also seen a rise in youth-led, young people's governing boards and independent training schemes, with many organisations placing this responsibility with learning teams.

The traditional pathway of higher education has seen huge changes since the introduction of tuition fees in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, bringing new structures and commercial pressures for post-92 Universities in particular (mostly converted from polytechnics or institutes) and the subsequent ramifications of this on creative pathways. Increasingly, they are launching Higher and Degree Apprenticeships (studied in employment only, 95% government funded), and face competition from alternative art school models. The growth of curatorial and art educator courses is also influencing our sector and vice versa.

Questions

We are interested in contributions from colleagues in the UK and worldwide that concern creative careers for young people and specifically where this connects to visual arts engagement and participation. Proposals can address questions such as:

- How can we further understand where issues around workforce development affect the practice of visual arts engagement and participation?
- What are the leading examples of inclusive creative career opportunities and pedagogies for young people in our sector?
- How has academic theory influenced sector practices and engagement methods?
- What has been the explicit relationship between government policies and young people's creative opportunities in visual arts engagement and participation?
- How have individuals, institutions and the sector responded to changes in further and higher education?
- What have been key findings from recent engagement projects addressing Gen Z specifically?
- How are institutions diversifying the workforce, removing barriers for Generation Z and where does this responsibility land?
- What is the role of place, community, inclusivity and/or identity in regard to future creative work progression?
- How does the issue translate in the devolved regions and nations of the UK? How do we view and learn from examples beyond the UK?
- What is the impact of alternative structures and projects?

This Journal is not restricted to the UK context, and we welcome international debates on this topic.

Contribution information

The Engage Journal accepts a wide variety of writing and/or online content proposals including academic essays, interviews, collaborative pieces, conversations, photo essays, debates, experimental work, and forms such as audio, video and other media will be considered. Final written contributions are expected to be between 2,000 and 3,000 words.

The Journal does not publish case studies, these are covered in Engage's sharing practice section.

The Journal will launch with a special public online event in the summer and also a members-only event to explore the content further. We are also launching a new podcast series to accompany this Journal and invite proposals to consider how their contribution could be involved in this.

If you are interested in contributing to this issue, please send an informal proposal of around 200-300 words, your job/freelance title and contact details to editor@engage.org by Monday 28 February 2022

The Engage Journal has a fixed number of bursaries for freelance writers for each edition, contributor's fees are not paid to full time employees, students or academics.

Journal timeline

- Proposal deadline: Monday 28 February 2022
- Contribution submission deadline: Friday 29 April 2022
- Engage 46: Generation Z and the Future of Creative Work will be published, and the online launch events take place in June 2022
- The podcast series will be released between July and December 2022

About the Engage Journal

First published in 1996, the Engage Journal is the international journal of visual art and gallery education. Now an online publication, the contents of each edition follow themes linked to the visual arts and education, chosen through an open-submission process. The Journal acts as a snapshot of current thinking on a subject, a repository of references, a source of practical ideas, and a forum for exchange between different parts of the art and museum and gallery community.

The Journal is edited by Professor Sarah Perks, curator, consultant and writer. The Journal is governed by a voluntary Editorial Advisory Board. The Engage Journal is accessible to Engage members and subscribers to the publication. To learn more please visit <https://engage.org/journals/>.

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