



**MANCHESTER CRAFT  
AND DESIGN CENTRE**

# **Artistic Policy 2023 to 2026**

# What will this policy do?

MCADs Artistic Policy sets out who we are, what we do and where we are going. It supports us to be clear on our decision making as an organisation in terms of our creative offer and gives us a path to follow on our journey.

The Artistic Policy will be a guide to support MCAD in creating and sustaining our ecology, enable and empower us to move forward with creative planning, recruiting and delivering our charitable purpose via our creative ambitions whilst being transparent about the above.



## Who are Manchester Craft and Design Centre?

There have been creatives within the old fish market for over 40 years. Our rich history was born when makers moved into the space in 1982 establishing it as Manchester Craft Village. Today, Manchester Craft and Design Centre (MCDC) is led by Manchester Craft and Design (MCAD), a charity that formed in 2016 with an Enterprise arm which leads the commercial activity at the centre.

The charity activities focus on programmes and audience development events to promote public understanding and participation in contemporary visual art, craft and design. These include exhibitions, public workshops, talent development programmes, community events, and educational visits and talks.

Manchester Craft and Design Centre is home to 19 studios, these studios are occupied by resident makers. The intended purpose of our studios is to enable the Makers to run their independent business, to produce high quality contemporary craft and design products that are available to buy in the studio and elsewhere.

# Mission and Vision

## Mission

MCAD is Manchester's space for craft, community and making.

## Vision

We promote craft in all its forms, expanding the definition and relevance of craft for everyone. We nurture and develop emerging and established talent, support viable creative careers, and showcase innovative and ambitious craft practices. MCAD is a place of enterprise, production and creativity and reflects the rich diversity of Manchester's 21st century communities. We welcome everyone to experience and engage with making and our creative community. We safeguard a space for everyday creativity in the heart of the Northern Quarter and look outwards beyond our building.





# Our Values

All of our work will be developed through the lens of equality and environmental sustainability. These are intrinsic values placed at the heart of our decision-making.

## Welcoming

We welcome all who wish to visit, work and learn with us. We aim to create spaces that are vibrant, social and safe. We base our plans on listening to our key constituencies, creatives and diverse communities and pursue ways to make our work more useful and relevant to more people. We actively seek to remove barriers to participation and leadership for those who might be excluded from our programmes, activities, staff team and governance.

## Transparent

We behave with integrity and accountability around our decisions, programmes and strategies. We passionately believe in equality of opportunity and the value of craft and making in the world today. We look outwards for partners and projects with shared values.



## Supportive

Our approach is compassionate and people-centred, in our dealings with our creative community, staff, audiences and collaborators. We work towards shared wellbeing with everyone we encounter. We embrace our civic role to take action on social injustice and climate change, and improve our local area.

## Empowering

We seek to inspire and support creative and sustainable ways of living and working. We create opportunities for visitors to experience and participate in the positive power of making. We support creative careers and skills development, particularly for those with the least advantage and opportunity.

## Vibrant

We support artistic, creative and entrepreneurial risk. We are confident and capable of making change. We are an innovative, listening and learning organisation, accumulating and embedding knowledge. We are energetic and well networked, generous in sharing our learning, and actively advocate for our sector.

# Strategic Objectives

- Create space and activities for craft and community to flourish
- Nurture and celebrate the talent of practitioners and makers
- Be a powerful advocate in our sector and funders for craft and making
- Ensure financial, social and environmental sustainability for MCAD



# The Studio Makers

Manchester Craft and Design Centre has proudly been home to makers and professionals in their trade for over 40 years. While we evolve and widen our ambitions as a charity, our studios will be occupied by skilled craft and design people, producing both high-quality handmade craft and design products to sell in the space, online and elsewhere.

We have 19 studios for makers to occupy and are committed as an organisation to showcasing and supporting an array of craft and design. Therefore, when a studio becomes vacant, we select a maker with an overall balance in mind to the Centre.

Our aim as an organisation is to support opportunity for all, no matter your professional pathway. We have put steps in place to grow our Centre's diversity which is inclusive of the types of Craft and Design we, as a Centre, offer to the public.



# Creative Plans, Partners and Networks

MCAD is the place for craft, community and making. We provide opportunities for Centre makers, emerging and existing creative professionals, volunteers, young people, families, communities and all visitors to explore innovative craft, learn creative skills and experience high-quality exhibitions and events.

**From 2023 to 2026 we will:**

**Strengthen and grow the North West Craft Network in collaboration, increase our diversity, advocate for the craft sector and connect wider.**

- In 2023, we will collect demographic information from our membership and set benchmark data.
- We will build our membership by 13% and build our wider network by 6%
- By 2026, 25% of our whole membership will be from the global majority.
- By 2026, we will have grown membership by 10% for representation of socio-economic diversity and D/deaf and disabled.

**Develop community-led projects to co-create exhibitions, gallery takeovers, studio pop-ups, residences and events.**

- We will develop and sustain 6 long-term relationships with co-creation partners.
- By 2026 we will have worked with 80+ participants on co-created projects.
- Between 2023 to 2026 we will have 147,000 visitors engage with co-created projects, 24% of people will be of global majority and 22% identifying as D/deaf and disabled.

**Improve and widen our public workshops to become more inclusive, and celebrate more key moments in the calendar.**

- Between 2023 and 2026 we will deliver 24 onsite public workshops that recognise and/or celebrate these moments in our calendar and will provide paid opportunities for 24 facilitators.



- By 2026 we will have engaged 1250 participants in the workshops we deliver.
- We want to continue our engagement outside of the Centre and will look to take part in 8 offsite events to support people's awareness and engagement of craft and design.
- By 2026 we will have established our series of workshops and this will continue to evolve into the future years as an essential offer from MCAD.

**Continue to work with schools, FE and HE partners (recognising our existing and valued relationships with Manchester School of Art and the University of Bolton) to advocate creative futures, provide graduate opportunities to showcase their work and establish a career pathway for emerging talent in craft and design.**

- Between 2023 to 2026 we will work in collaboration with Manchester School of Art, awarding 3 exhibitions to 9 graduates.
- Between 2023 to 2026 we will work in collaboration with University of Bolton and award 3 pop-up shop opportunities to 9 graduates.
- Attracting a total of 72,000 visitors to engage with the work and the Centre.
- We will host 6 university visits and support 32 further self-led HE visits to the centre.
- We will develop relationships with FE colleges, and establish a placement programme providing quality experiences for 16 to 18 year olds resulting in 1 placement per year at the Centre.



# Our Volunteers

**Build on our volunteer programme supporting vulnerable people who are experiencing social isolation and enable more people to explore pathways to creative careers.**

- By 2026 we will have 18 volunteers consistently working each year in the team providing 180 volunteer days in total.
- We are committed to our volunteers gaining the best experience at the Centre therefore we will deliver 42 peer-led training sessions equipping volunteers with a range of creative skill sets.
- Our aspiration by 2026 is to enable 4 volunteers to pursue careers in the creative industries, with 10 of our volunteers reporting increased creativity and reduced isolation.



# Commitment to Makers

**Support resident maker business sustainability & strengthened community through a programme of affordable workspace and wrap-around support.**

When people take on studio space/share space in the centre they become part of the core ecology. We are committed to supporting Makers to get the best out of joining our Centre community by:

- Being transparent about MCAD plans and its future
- Having open and continued communication through a range of methods inclusive of regular meetings
- Sharing opportunities and collaborations when they arise (inclusive of paid opportunities at MCAD)
- We will establish baseline figures for sense of community and demographic data and by 2026 our sense of community baseline and global majority baseline will have increased by 10%

**Create a creative enterprise support programme, career development pathways and digital networking that will support future growth and sustainability in the Manchester creative sector.**

MCAD is a leader for excellence in Craft and Design. We aim to support the community of Makers to thrive, through providing a career development pathway and digital network that Makers at all stages of their journey can access.

- By 2026 our creative business programme will be embedded into the sector and will be a major supporter of maker businesses. Working with 1 partner, 4 facilitators delivering 4 workshops for 40 participants per year.
- We will host annually our Hands On programme, which supports emerging makers from underrepresented groups working in Craft and Design. This programme will provide £1k bursary, workshops, pop-up space, maker and business mentoring and a stall at the GNCCF.
- Each year one exhibition will be awarded to an existing (creating work professionally for over 3 years) artist or maker, the exhibition will run for 3 months, and we will advertise the opportunity through our website, social media and digital networks.
- By 2026 we will create and nurture an online community which encourages discussion, information sharing and peer support. This online community will have access to downloadable resources based on workshop key learning.

# Engage and Connect

We are striving to create an organisation that all people can be a part of, and we continue to work towards increasing our organisation and buildings' accessibility. We want to support people to have a meaningful experience when visiting the centre, working with us and being part of the wider ecology.

Further to our creative programming the following has been put in place to support those steps to engagement:

- Makers, Volunteers and Staff Team will be signposted to and have access to training to enable us to empower, create and sustain the Centre as a safe, welcoming and diverse space.
- We have committed 10 days (70 hours) a year of complimentary use of our community room for groups who identify as underrepresented in craft.
- Our website has details of our current building's accessibility and is annually reviewed.
- Our events and workshops are a mix of free, pay-what-you-feel and paid. These will be clearly advertised to maintain transparency.
- Our exhibitions will always be free to attend.
- Exhibition pieces for sale will have a range of prices to enable a wider range of people to own art.
- The spaces available to book have a pricing scale to enable a range of people and groups to access them.
- When we recruit (Team/Makers) or call out for proposals (Exhibitions/Workshops) we will be clear in our advertising about what we are looking for (skills, knowledge, area) and encourage applications from specific areas.
- We will provide information in different formats on request (recruitment/general information) and are open to receiving applications on the following mediums (paper, digital, audio, film).

# Creative Sustainability

We want MCAD to realise its full potential and become a recognised leader in environmental responsibility in the sector. We are committed to making those changes to support creative sustainability and environmental impact.

Between 2023 to 2026 we will focus on these areas in relation to our creative progression:

- Share knowledge and understanding with audiences and visitors of MCADs and Makers' current sustainable practices.
- MCAD will support Makers to build more sustainable practices and approaches (through research case studies/data collection) creating a baseline to grow from.
- Sustainability will become a key feature when planning, developing and delivering projects including exhibitions, workshops and events held in the centre.
- Share through our website a range of sustainable travel options and collect data around how people are travelling to the centre to create a baseline.



# How will we communicate our progress with the Artistic Policy?

We will monitor our performance and report annually through an MCAD annual report.

The Charity Board along with the team will review this policy in line with our business plan in 2025.

Artistic Policy, written by Stefanie Wyke (August 2023)

This policy uses baseline data that exists from 2021 to 2022 to set its ambition.

MCAD Board approved: 13th September 2023

Contact details below:

Manchester Craft & Design Centre  
17 Oak Street, Northern Quarter, Manchester, M4 5JD

0161 832 4274 | [www.craftanddesign.com](http://www.craftanddesign.com)

email: [contactus@craftanddesign.com](mailto:contactus@craftanddesign.com)

Opening Hours

Monday - Saturday, 10am - 5.30pm

2nd Sunday of the month, 11am - 5pm

T: [@ManchesterCraft](https://www.instagram.com/ManchesterCraft)

F: [manchester.craft](http://manchester.craft)

I: [@manchestercraft](https://www.instagram.com/manchestercraft)