

Art Fund supported student placements
at CAST 2024-25



Recruitment	2
Induction	2
Saturday Art Club	3
Designing and leading a Saturday Art Club session	5
Public Programme	6
Programming for Schools and Families	7
Learning and planning for the future	8

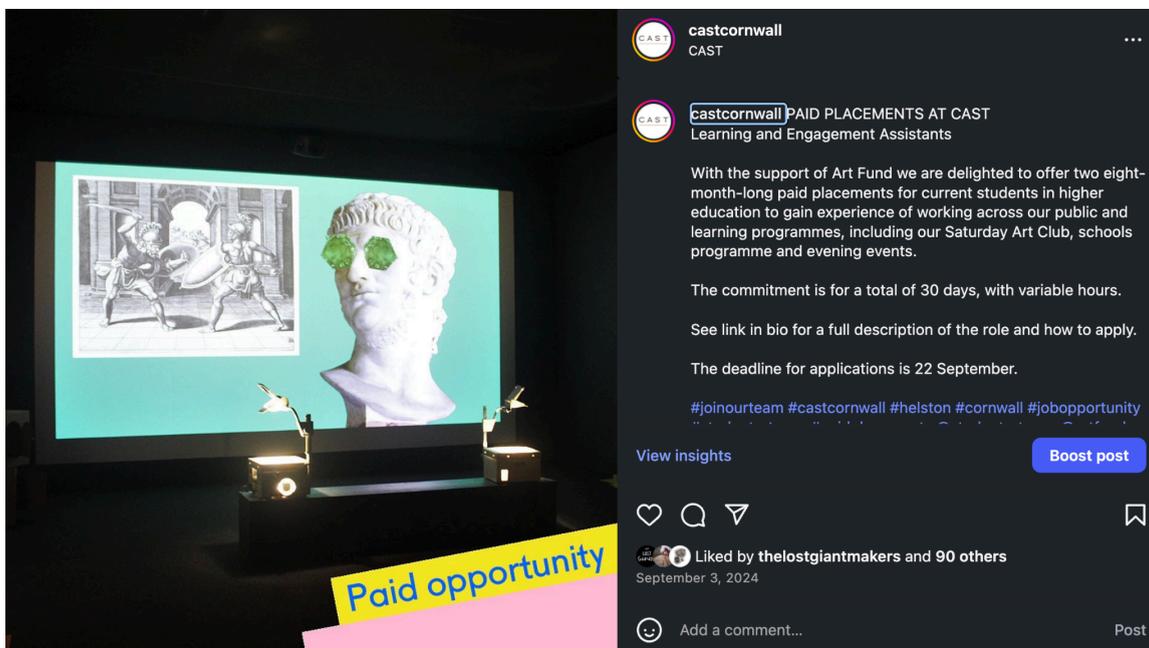
Recruitment

Having shared our call-out for students widely, through Art Fund's membership and directly through staff at both Falmouth University and University of Exeter, we received nine applications. Six students were short-listed and interviewed by Kate Turner (Young People's learning lead) and Cat Bagg (Programme Coordinator).

The two successful applicants were Finn Trew and Victoria Sheldon (Vic), both BA students from Falmouth University - Finn studying BA Drawing and Vic studying BA Fine Art.

Very sadly in November Finn had to take a break from her placement due to health concerns and in January 2025 made the decision to step back completely. "I very much hoped that I would be able to return, as this role is an incredible opportunity... The small time that I worked with CAST was the most fulfilling work I have done outside of my travels."

As there had been other strong candidates at interview stage, a decision was made to contact Francesca Pease to see if she would still be interested to take on the placement. Francesca (Cesca) was delighted to have the opportunity to do so and began her placement on 1 February 2025.



Induction

Finn and Vic began their placements with induction sessions.

Kate Turner's introduction to Saturday Art Club was the first session on 11 October, providing:

- Introduction to CAST- studios and organisation
- Art Club context and ethos
- How Art Club is delivered and set up
- Future planning
- Role description and key responsibilities
- Accessibility and Inclusion, including practical ways to support the needs of the group
- Safeguarding and best practice, including code of conduct and procedures
- Health and safety and building tour

Cat Bagg provided a half day induction on 18 October, covering public events in the building including:

- History of the programme and building
- Local community
- How to greet visitors and ways of navigating tricky or antagonistic situations, including team support
- The programme for the upcoming open weekend
- The rationale behind feedback collection, and ways of lightly encouraging participation
- Health and safety and building tour

Lucy Grant provided an introduction to CAST's Art Lab programme for primary schools (to Vic only) on 8 November, including:

- Explaining the model of provision and approaches to opening up learning
- Risk assessment, photography permissions and safeguarding
- Relationships with schools and teachers
- Practical preparation and set up
- Creative overview and the curricular underpinning of the forthcoming Lab

Lucy Grant provided an introduction to our Summer programmes for families (to Cesca only) on 15 July, including:

- Explaining the structure and content of sessions, and approaches to opening up learning and enjoyment
- Risk assessment, photography permissions and safeguarding
- Practical preparation and set up
- The importance of feedback and monitoring

Saturday Art Club

The majority of placement hours have been worked with the Saturday Art Club, under the supervision and guidance of **Kate Turner**. In feedback students have emphasised that supporting their learning over time, through observation and first-hand experience, has been invaluable to their professional development.

The addition of paid student placements allowed CAST to expand its Saturday Art Club offer for 11- to 16-year-olds, creating a second group and bringing the membership up from 24 to 40.

During the delivery of the sessions the learning and engagement assistants were supported to develop their skills in the following ways:

- By being introduced to a wide range of practical skills, including how to set up a safe, welcoming and engaging environment, setting up of AV equipment and practical making skills.
- By attending briefings and debriefings on each session led by Kate Turner, placement students are made aware of the practical steps that go into preparing the sessions, including the risk assessment, plan and accessibility considerations. The debrief allows space for the whole team to share feedback and talk through any questions or concerns in a supportive environment.
- Through opportunities to practice facilitation skills and learn about the delivery of successful projects and workshops. Vic, Cesca and Finn observed and learnt from the different ways to host and structure sessions that support young people's agency and creativity, observing what works

well and how activities are designed to encourage collaboration, confidence and direct engagement with contemporary art.

- By meeting and working alongside a wide range of professional artists as part of the Saturday Art Club Programme, the placement students have observed a diversity of approaches to the delivery of projects with young people and learnt about the practices of artists working at CAST, and in the wider region. Vic, Cesca and Finn have all shared that meeting and working alongside artists and being exposed to CAST's wider programme has vastly improved their awareness and knowledge of contemporary art practice and been beneficial to their own research and artistic work.

"I have observed the importance of listening, patience and empathy when working with young people to create a positive atmosphere in which the young people can thrive.

"The importance of accessibility has been highlighted when facilitating workshops for others (which I can now apply to working with any group, not just young people). I have learnt how each workshop is structured to allow for every member of Saturday Club to join in due to the inclusive activities set up for them. Kate has taught me how to adapt ideas for workshops to suit everyone's needs so everyone feels comfortable and is able to be creative where they may have been restricted previously." Cesca



Vic and Cesca assisting a Saturday Art Club session

"I have valued many aspects of the experience, these have included:

- seeing young people able to express themselves freely through the workshops
- the positive effect of being in a creative community on young people's mental health
- seeing the confidence of young people grow over time in the sessions and the friendships that form (alongside my confidence developing and my relationships with the young people developing too).
- being able to ask Kate any questions about facilitating workshops and learning from her extensive knowledge/experience (not just about Saturday Club but all of her experience)

- the feeling that I am part of a community which promotes the arts for everyone and holds science in close relation to visual art rather than as separate (in my school, science and art were held very far apart).
- feeding off the group's, Vic's and Kate's passion for creating and sharing enjoyment from being able to express yourself through making.
- the opportunity to run my own session which let me test an idea I had for a workshop to see how it went down with the young people. This taught me a lot and felt rewarding overall." Cesca



Vic supporting a Saturday Art Club Session

Designing and leading a Saturday Art Club session

Towards the end of their time with the Saturday Art Club, Vic and Cesca were supported to design and deliver their own workshops sessions, putting their learning into practice. The process included:

- Paid research and planning time.
- A planning meeting and support from Kate Turner to discuss workshop content and structure, timings, materials, delivery and accessibility.
- The delivery of the workshop with two Saturday Art Club groups, with support from the programme lead.
- Documentation of the session and feedback provided to support professional development.

"It was because of Kate's guidance and support that I gained the confidence to deliver my own workshop. I was able to put insights from my placement into practice by having the opportunity to design and run my own session for the young people. This was a valuable experience – it helped me understand the planning, pacing, and flexibility needed to run a successful session. It also allowed me to practice my communication and leadership skills." Vic



Cesca leading her own Saturday Art Club Session, July 2025

Public Programme



Finn and Vic during Golden October

Vic and Finn joined CAST's team just ahead of the reopening of CAST's building following capital works. Golden October was a weekend-long event with open studios, an artist talk by Mike Nelson, and a range of public workshops. The two students helped with preparations for the weekend and then assisted the team in welcoming people to the building, encouraging participation and collecting feedback. They received training from Cat Bagg, including briefing on the history and layout of the building, explanations and crib sheets about each of the activities on offer, health and safety and lost child procedures, and advice on how to deal with unhappy or agitated individuals.

"Having the opportunity to help out with and attend the artists talks at CAST was for me one of the most valuable experiences of my placement. I got to hear one of my favourite artists, Mike Nelson, speak about his processes and material philosophies, which went on to critically inform my university degree show work. There was also something powerful about seeing such acclaimed artists in person – simply witnessing how human and grounded they are gave me confidence not just as an artist but as a person too. This is an effect that I'm sure I'll carry with me throughout my future career and personal life." Vic

Vic had a particular interest in the public programme and the technical set up of CAST's space. She assisted with several evening events and learnt how the projection and AV equipment are set up and managed.

"I really loved helping out with the public programme.

"Learning about the black box space – its set up, different functions, how it operates when open to the public - was really valuable as it is such a unique space and I found it interesting helping with the behind the scenes. Although it is purpose built for film screenings, I learned and experienced how versatile it is – also being used for talks and conferences, and activities as part of the learning programme and Saturday Art Club." Vic

Cesca's placement began later, and she has had fewer opportunities to take part in the public programme so far. She did however assist with a spring open day, which was part of an event taking place in venues across Helston:

"I have seen the importance of educating the general public about the programmes run by CAST especially to those who had never been to CAST before. I had to learn how to articulate the work of CAST and its benefits when asked by the general public who didn't know about the programmes.

"I observed how Teresa gathered the opinions of the general public at Spring Thing to inform her future steps and decisions. This included asking how they had heard about the event to find out what marketing works best for CAST, asking about their opinions of the regeneration of CAST, asking how often they come/how far they come. This highlighted to me the need to interact with the public to see whether the programmes are successful, what is working well and what could improve the programmes." Cesca

Programming for Schools and Families

Vic and Cesca have each undertaken placement days supporting CAST's Art Labs for primary schools, Vic for the programmes in November and March, and Cesca in March and July. The Art Lab programme provides active learning across a range of disciplines, for primary school children from reception through to year six. Each day of learning is structured to include immersive experiences, hands-on activity and storytelling. Lucy Grant tailors the activities and her delivery to the ages and capabilities of each attending class, and works with teachers to ensure relevant curriculum links are made.

The March Art Lab, which both Vic and Cesca worked on, was 'Light and Shadow'. Combining art and science, creative making and learning, this Lab takes advantage of the complete darkness in the 'black box' screening space at CAST to investigate light and shadow in relation to both astronomy and storytelling. An orrery was constructed to show the rotations of the earth and moon, and of the earth in relation to the sun – and the influence of these daily, monthly and annual rotations on the diurnal rhythm of night and day, the monthly cycle of the moon, and the annual pattern of the changing seasons. Each workshop also included the screening of a folk shadow play, commissioned from Cornwall-based artist Mae Voogd, that linked myth and legend to the eternal exchange of light and dark. This story was enacted as a duel between winter, characterised as the shadowy Gaelic goddess of winter, Cailleach, and summer, characterised as Brid, a young girl with golden curls. Children were shown how to make and animate their own puppets and given the chance to dress up to make silhouettes and perform to members of the class behind a simple sheet screen hung in the black box space.

"A really valuable moment was a meeting I had with Lucy and Holly, where they talked me through the logistics of the programme, such as the risk assessment and the process of contacting the schools.

"I found it very interesting how Lucy would shape the activities around the curriculum that the children were learning at school. It was a great opportunity to see how art activities can be inspired by history, science, and even folklore. This differed from the Saturday Art Club sessions which were inspired by contemporary artists. Experiencing both has given me a well-rounded insight into the different approaches to delivering creative workshops for young people." Vic

"It showed me that the opportunities are still vast despite younger children having less knowledge, shorter attention span and less motor skills. One of the main learning curves was the development of children over the ages and learning how to facilitate appropriate tasks for various ages. I saw how CAST integrates the school curriculum into a hands-on and engaging programme which educates children while allowing for a different type of learning, which is creative, freeing and exciting. I observed how eager the primary school children were to learn and saw how Lucy had incorporated elements that provoked curiosity, excitement and thinking.

"The cross-over of science and art (e.g. Lucy Grant's shadow puppet workshop) has been insightful to observe and inspiring for my own practice and my future.

"The ability to adapt my language and assistance from the young people of Saturday Club to the primary students of Art Lab built my confidence in my ability to transfer skills to different types of workshops."
Cesca

Learning and planning for the future

CAST is a relatively small organisation and we were initially unsure as to how well it would work to have two students on placement at the same time. However, we found this to be hugely beneficial to both the students and our programme. Vic was entering her third year at the beginning of her placement, whilst Cesca was just beginning her second year of study. The two students have largely worked side-by-side as a team, they've valued the opportunity to talk about their experiences and understanding with a peer, and have learnt much from one another.

"I loved that I got to work alongside a student who was from a different year group and different course to me, as I was able to meet someone who I most likely would never have met. I met Cesca whilst helping out at CAST and I am confident it is a friendship that will carry on into the future." Vic

The Saturday Club has benefited enormously from having two additional facilitators, working consistently alongside Kate Turner. It is really important for the 11- to 16-year-old members to have slightly older role models, who have a similar generational language and outlook, and are pursuing higher education and early career opportunities. The additional support the placements provide also means the young people get more one-to-one guidance and social support than would otherwise be possible.

Both Vic and Cesca developed their own workshops for the Saturday Art Club and it has been interesting for our team to see the ways in which approaches we have developed are taken on and adapted by younger artists. Having the two students as part of the wider team has also helped us begin to gain a better understanding of how our organisation and events programme is perceived by students and has strengthened our relationship with the wider student community.

We recently recruited student volunteers for our summer holiday programmes and received four times as much interest as in previous years. We know that some of the students who have joined us as volunteers know at least one of the placement students. We believe this to be a contributing factor to the increased interest from student volunteers.

Although it was disappointing that Finn had to step back from her placement, we found there were distinct advantages in having students beginning placements at different times:

"It has proven to be really valuable for a new student placement to work alongside another more experienced placement. Shadowing a more experienced assistant is a fantastic way to support training and provide opportunities for peer mentoring and learning." Kate Turner, Saturday Art Club lead

"I found the relationship with Vic really important as we were able to discuss our ideas together as well as our worries or experiences. Overall I think working alongside Vic gave me more confidence and I have appreciated bouncing ideas off each other for workshops or our own practices. We could also chat about our thoughts or realisations throughout our time at CAST, which made the experience more enjoyable. Furthermore, I found I could learn from Vic and her ideas and it was great to work with someone who was equally passionate and excited about the experience." Cesca

We would like to take this learning through into a second year of placements, by recruiting in two stages, with Cesca continuing in role until February next year and one new student joining her in September/October this year. This would allow Cesca, who began her placement in February 2025, to complete a full year of training, and would enable the peer-to-peer support Cesca benefited from with Vic to support another individual. We could then recruit another student to begin a placement in January/February 2026, and they could learn from the student we hope to recruit in September. We hope that they could then complete a calendar year of training, which would take the scheme through to December 2026.

“We would really like to continue working with Cesca. This approach would also help with continuity for Saturday Art Club members, particularly those who are neurodivergent and can find change difficult. The support of familiar trusted team members greatly supports their engagement with the sessions.”

Kate Turner , Saturday Club lead

“When Cesca began her placement with us we were in the final stages of a large capital project, which meant our public programmes were temporarily halted and I was unable to give time to induction training or provide the kind of experiences that Vic has so valued. Although Cesca has been able to take on more hours within the learning programme it feels important that she doesn't miss out on this aspect of the placement experience.” Cat Bagg, Programme Coordinator