

Aunty Social Vision, Mission & Values

Vision

To enable a vibrant, active and diverse creative community in Blackpool and the Fylde Coast area through positive, sustainable arts and cultural activities.

Mission

We want to give people opportunities to develop their creativity, learn new skills and meet new friends by coordinating specialist projects relating to:

Film exhibition and filmmaking
Visual Arts and Crafts
Local Heritage

Creative Retail
Hyperlocal Arts Reporting
Informal and structured arts learning and professional development

Values

Aunty Social is a collective and group of colleagues that treat each other and the people who take part in our activities with respect and fairness, working together to ensure a safe and caring environment for everybody.

We know that many current systems and institutional practises damage the potential and wellbeing of artists and local people. We seek transformation by centering the needs of those who are ignored by or who face barriers put in place by current systems.

We choose to do better.

We choose to create space where creatives (both current and in-waiting) can feel safe and supported. We believe that this type of environment helps all of us to be our most creative selves.

We're proud to be a feminist organisation and the following principles play a central role in our work.

We want to help our community feel more empowered.

- Coproduction, collaboration and activism are central to our work. We're **socially engaged** so that we can play a part in improving our local area.
- We speak up about the things that matter to us. We will always show **solidarity** and support marginalised people. We will not shy away from difficult topics.
- We value **queerness**; not only through the creative work and general community contributions of LGBTQIA+ people but also through the art and ways of working that are considered 'other'. We recognise the resilience, flexibility and innovation of queer creatives.
- We are a **diverse** community of people who are pro black, pro gay, pro disability, pro trans, pro community, pro neurodiversity, pro accepting people as we find them: We are proactive allies. We recognise intersectionality and **inclusivity** runs through everything that we do. If you're not feeling this, we're probably not the organisation for you.
- We scrutinise the way that power is held and take **radical** approaches in rebalancing it to create a more culturally democratic environment.

Aunty Social CIC

Company registration number: 8399715. VAT no. 461 042331

Registered Office: 28 Topping St, Blackpool, FY1 3AQ

www.auntysocial.co.uk

We're all about creating safe and comforting spaces where creativity can flourish.

"The absence of a sustained focus on love in progressive circles arises from a collective failure to acknowledge the needs of the spirit and an overdetermined emphasis on material concerns. Without love, our efforts to liberate ourselves and our world community from oppression and exploitation are doomed."

bell hooks, Love as the Practice of Freedom

- Celebrating the **joy** that social connections, making and creativity gives us.
- Providing opportunities for fun and giving people permission to play is so important. Traditionally cultural spaces have discouraged **playfulness**, sending messages of 'look, learn and don't touch' which have become entrenched over the years. By creating a playful environment, we're prioritising a better, healthier place to work and create; prioritising the wellbeing that comes from joyful communal activity.
- **Curiosity** keeps us going, a keen interest in the who, where, why, when and how keeps us engaged, relevant and collaborative.
- **Care** is central to our practice. Care for our volunteers, colleagues, artists, visitors and care for ourselves. This manifests itself in our working practises: from paying artists fairly and crediting work appropriately to providing travel bursaries and meals.
- We are people from marginalised groups who have not always felt safe. We're creating an environment that provides the respect and emotional security we need to be our **authentic** selves. **Safety** gives us the freedom to take creative risks and engage in complex, transformational and challenging conversations.
- The 2020/21 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns forced us to slow down. Apart from the clear worries linked to Coronavirus, lockdowns gave us the rare chance to daydream and **rest**. The pandemic confirmed to us that grind culture is harmful to our wellbeing. We are tired of the pressure to rush around and constantly be 'on call', rest will help us to deprogramme from these stress-producing toxic behaviours and find a place to heal.

Equity, justice and the fair distribution of resources drive us.

- We are a **democratic** organisation. Hierarchies are problematic, often working against our values, so our structure remains as flat as possible. Active listening, collaboration, co production and decolonising run through our daily work.
- We value open, meaningful and **transparent** relationships and admin practices. We publish our accounts and have a clear policy on fair pay. Keeping this information private is unhelpful. Public accounts show what is possible and can help artists be paid properly elsewhere. We also feel that it's important to be upfront about pay and working practices in the cultural sector as so few people speak frankly about it. We want to be held **accountable** and are happy to be scrutinised.

We're constantly learning and growing and want to do this hand in hand with our community.

- We are a community based on trust, collaboration, shared goals and mutual support. We strive to create high **quality** work and welcome the chance to actively learn from each other as well as 'big name' artists or organisations who are commissioned to work in our places.
- We are active in advocating for our work and place and challenging uninformed opinions; our work is **responsive** and nimble, supporting residents in feeling proud of our place; contributing to people becoming happier and healthier, with a better sense of wellbeing.
- We are an evolving group of people with a dynamic set of expertise; dedicated to developing our own skills and experiences and aspiring to be trusted leaders and advisors in our fields of practice. We take care to act **professionally** and diligently.
- We embrace innovation, but not just for innovation's sake. We are visionary and **experimental** and aren't afraid to take creative risks to fill the gaps in mainstream provision.