



2026 Curtin Artist in Residence Program



2023 Paraburdoo Primary Mural, Paraburdoo



2024 Gnomesville, East Kenwick Primary, Perth

Expressions of Interest for 2026 are now open! Come Join Us!

Welcome to the 2026 Curtin Artist in Residence (AiR) Program which continues an innovative partnership between our WA Universities and Western Australian Schools over more than a decade (2007-2025). In most years, we have 5-10 AiR placements underway, with the majority in Perth/surrounds and in primary schools in partnership with primary generalist teacher hosts. The placements proceed after careful matching of our university student artists to schools. Our AiRs are generally in their 2nd or 3rd-year of the Curtin BA Fine Arts degree program and, therefore, have excellent art skills that can be beneficial for schools. They are not paid for their work and, other than support with suitable accommodation (ideally billeting) in remote/rural locations, do not derive any financial benefit from the program.



2018 St Stephens School - Mural



2016 Dalmain Primary - Sculpture Garden

PROGRAM FOCUS

The Arts have long been known to provide opportunities to build community and consolidate a sense of shared identity and belonging through creative endeavour. In the post-Covid period, this kind of community engagement is particularly valuable for children. However, the viability of the program is linked to school/university operations. If schools are open then placements are likely to go ahead. Where there are disruptions due to Covid or other events, placements will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. We aim to ensure *every child* has a part to play and that each person in the project feels they jointly own the process and the product and can be proud of their achievements.

Inclusion, engagement, belonging and quality ARTS education impact are, therefore, the main focus areas for all AiR placements in 2026. Come join us!!

ABOUT OUR PARTICIPANTS

Artists in Residence (AiRs)

Our AiRs are drawn from the BA Fine Arts Program at the School of Media Creative Arts and Social Inquiry (MCASI) at Curtin and the MTeach and B.Ed (secondary) arts education program at the Curtin School of Education (SoE) and undertake visual arts, drama and media projects in partnership with the generalist teacher Host

- Our Artists elect to take the placement as a voluntary CV enrichment opportunity or as an assessment (albeit only after approval by their unit coordinator [Lisa Paris](#) or [Mark Parfitt](#))
- MCASI Artists typically undertake a 40-hour placement (or 2 x 20-hour projects), whereas our SoE Artists typically undertake a single 30-hour placement
- Our artists work with the school host to jointly conceptualise the project and then demonstrate/guide the use of materials
- If the Host Teacher is happy for this to occur, they also sensitively 'fix up' any aspects of the work that fall below the expected high resolution/exhibition standard of finished work, typical of the program
- All AiRs have *Working with Children* clearance which they are required to provide to the University and the School prior to the projects getting underway
- Artists are covered by the Host School insurance provisions once the Fieldwork Agreement has been finalised with the school



2018 Dalmain Primary - ground mural



2018 North Cottesloe Primary - Printmaking

Hosts

The majority of our School Hosts are primary generalist teachers who would like to have an artist work alongside them in their primary arts program as an enrichment strategy

- The School Host retains the duty of care for students at all times and the AiR should not be left to manage the students on their own
- The placement Host is responsible for securing necessary materials for the project at the School's cost, and the AiR will assist with the preparation (e.g. priming workspaces) needed to undertake the work
- The Host retains responsibility for the safe operation of the placement and for ensuring the AiR performs their duties in a professional and appropriate manner whilst in the school environment

University Liaison/Industry Engagement Coordinator

The University Liaison (UL) is responsible for reviewing the project design to ensure it falls within the usual profile for the program and meets University risk management provisions/protocols:

- Once the School Host, AiR and School Principal are happy they have a viable project proposal, the UL checks and approves the placement proposal and provides the AiR with approval to proceed
- The UL supports participants through the provision of program guidelines, planning/commencement/completion protocols, regular communication and advice
- They arrange an online meeting for Hosts/AiRs
- They attend the project site upon request (in metropolitan sites) and support everyone in resolving challenges that arise (including monitoring and moderating the closed online learning community attached to the program)
- The liaison offers support by monitoring communication about placements and connecting the Host/AiR to appropriate support for any issues

ANTICIPATED BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS

- The Primary Generalist Placement Host has the opportunity to learn new art skills, concepts, processes and ways of working
- The children can experience an enriched arts learning program. They have the chance to participate collaboratively in a project that would typically be beyond the scope of the standard learning program
- The AiR has the opportunity to work in their major area of arts expertise/practice strength which has been shown to have a beneficial impact on self-efficacy. Kudos/success in the placement appears often to positively impact AiR attitudes to on-campus arts studies
- The University has the opportunity to support its stakeholder education community for the benefit of everyone and offer Work Integrated Learning experiences to students and stakeholders

COST – GENERALLY ONLY MATERIALS

There are no costs to schools other than those to do with sourcing the materials (paints etc) needed for the project. In 2026 (as in previous years) the University will absorb the costs of our staff administering the program which encompasses:

- recruitment of artists and participating schools
- processing applications and matching AiRs to schools
- correspondence confirming and adjusting placements
- preparation and processing our exhaustive risk management plan for the program
- updating and distributing the operational protocols for the program
- ensuring our Artists have WWC clearances, have completed our risk management
- online training and applied for insurance
- tracking the completion of site visits
- holding AiR briefings to ensure all AiRs have clarity around their roles
- establishing/moderating the online learning community in which participants share challenges & successes
- proposal development and vetting arrangements for each placement for compliance with our risk management approvals
- tracking the placement documentation to ensure we have the principal's approval for the placement to proceed
- ensuring we have an appropriate fieldwork agreement in place and insurance cover confirmed
- periodic contact with the placement host to monitor the progress of the placement survey reviews at the completion of the placement to address any concerns and plan forward for improvement



2017 Caning Vale Primary – Graduation Portraits

RESIDENCIES

The details of the residencies vary from school to school. However, they are all characterised by a flexible structure, which is negotiated between the Host Teacher and the AiR-AiR team with support from the university liaison (UL) around the expertise/skill set and needs of participants.

A small number occur each year in rural or remote locations with high Indigenous Student populations and we try in these instances to send a pair of AiRs together as buddies. We rely on the School/Host to help connect the team with Indigenous Elders/Arts advisors where First Nations themes provide the focus and to cover any costs associated with this relationship.

The specific arrangements of each placement are negotiated between the AiR and the placement host to everyone's mutual advantage (around the AiR study commitments at times that are beneficial for the school) and approved by both the School Principal and the University Liaison

ROLES

Please be aware that our artists in residence are not undertaking the placement as practicum students and many are studying to become artists/arts practitioners and not teachers. They may not have worked with young children previously, and the duty of care for the children, therefore, remains at all times with the Host Teacher/School. Beyond the normal industry requirements of maintaining a professional dress code/standard of behaviour and attending school at agreed times, there are few of the obligations usually associated with practicum.

AiR's generally DO NOT:

- Write lesson plans/student briefs/rubrics
- Manage student behaviour
- Teach regular art classes
- Undergo a formal assessment of their teacher development (either by the Host Teacher or University Liaison)
- Clean store rooms or tidy resources
- Shadow the teacher as they teach other classes
- Have to be present in the school beyond the time commitment of the placement
- Understand the developmental profile of primary-aged students and are unlikely to know how best to structure lessons to teach the content
- This critical role of devising age-appropriate lessons falls to the Placement Host



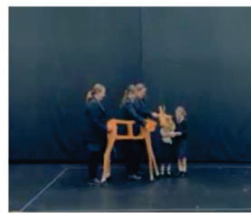
2018 Manning Primary – Library Mural

AiR's generally WILL:

- Meet with the Host Teacher (in person in Perth or online in remote locations) to talk about the students' needs and their own area of expertise (as a graphic designer, painter, printmaker, ceramicist, etc.)
- Work predominantly on one art project in their area of greatest expertise
- Negotiate the scope and sequence of the project and write a formal proposal outlining their ideas for the placement and the limitations/costs, which might impact the work (the school would cover the costs and this may limit the nature of the work which can be completed)
- Mentor students/staff by demonstrating cutting-edge techniques; offer advice to students/staff as they try the techniques; and produce and show work as technical/process exemplars
- Contribute to the school visual arts program by facilitating a 'high-end' quality visual arts outcome, which may not be within the strength portfolio of the classroom teacher
- Support the teacher in the staging of an exhibition of the work produced (either in the school classroom, admin foyer or local community)
- Maintain a log book recording the weekly development of the placement
- Support the teaching in facilitating coverage of the project by the local newspaper with appropriate school/parent permissions



2018 Harmony Primary- Stop Motion



2021 Perth College – Drama Mini Epic Project

THE PROJECT PROPOSAL/AGREEMENT

The Project Proposal is a key component of the AiR Placement and is therefore jointly developed by the AiR and Placement Host and approved by the School Principal and University Liaison.

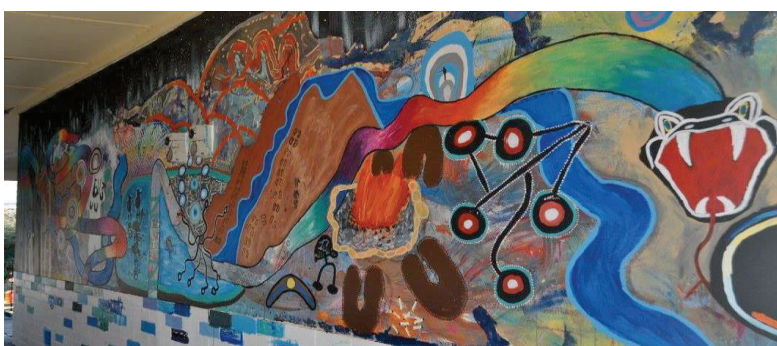
It is intended to ensure that participants have a shared understanding and vision for the placement and students' learning. There is an expectation that once agreed the AiR Proposal will be implemented without change.

FACEBOOK SUPPORT GROUP

The majority of our adult participants have a FB group, and we use a closed group to facilitate synchronous communication for troubleshooting and celebration of the work as it unfolds. The UL acts as moderator to ensure participants are part of the program and that all interactions meet professional discourse standards. Whilst not compulsory to join the group, we do hope you will and that you will use it on a regular basis to keep us updated as your project unfolds by posting pictures of the work that we can share with future participants. Only the Host Teacher should share images of children – and only where the principal has approved this (e.g. typically for celebrating the project in the school newsletter, etc).

TIMELINE AND KEY CONTACTS

Term 3 2026	
March-June Placement Matches Key Contacts: Associate Professor Lisa Paris: Program Coordinator /SoE Tel +61 412 754 796 Email lisa.paris@curtin.edu.au Mr Mark Parfitt: Program Coordinator/MCASI Tel +61 8 9266 4692 Email m.parfitt@curtin.edu.au Ms Rebecca Shillington Practicum Program Coordinator/ MCASI Tel +61 8 9266 2613 Email mcasiprac@curtin.edu.au	• School recruitment; Artist recruitment • School EoI and Artists Proposals returned/reviewed • Tentative Matches proposed • Site visits and project discussion (approximately 1 hour) • Proposal drafting and editing (approximately 1-2 hours) • Principal endorsement and Curtin Risk Management • Fieldwork Agreements established with each School • Participants invited/added to closed AiR group on FB • Training session with artists (online) (1 hour) • Materials Ordered and site prepared • AiR Travel requests, accommodation/billeting confirmed as suitable • WWC documentation provided to Curtin and the School • Approval to proceed issued • Projects commence by 28th September 2026
Perth Placements (Flexible timeline)	20 July – 28 September 2026 (site left clear)
	24-28 September 2026: Formal handover/exhibition support
Remote Placements	The project is completed across 5 days as an intensive placement during week one of term three (20-24 July 2026) which is also Curtin Semester Two Orientation Week



**2018 Mullewa DHS Remote/Rural Placement Project - Dreaming Mural (100% Indigenous Student Group)
with support from local Aboriginal Elders**

If you would like to host an AiR placement in 2026 please discuss this with your Principal to ensure they are happy for that to occur. Please then complete the EoI Project Planning Template (below) and return it to A/P Lisa Paris by email no later than Mon 23rd March 2026 – lisa.paris@curtin.edu.au

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins or other markings on the paper.

Number of students, teachers and likely age/class groups involved

Other important information

Are you open to a project in media or drama if a visual arts project isn't possible? If so, what kind of media/drama project are you keen to consider?

Thank you for your interest and we look forward to working with you this year

Lisa, Mark and Bec.

For more information on our 2026 AiR Program arrangements, please visit the Curtin Creative Education Research Hub on the Curtin Website and click on the AiR Program tab in the left-hand menu: <https://www.curtin.edu.au/research/research-areas/future-workforce-and-society/creative-research-hub/artist-in-residence-air/>

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research.curtin.edu.au/research-areas/business-society-and-community/creative-research-hub/

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Curtin University

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Creative Education Research Hub

The Creative Practice Research Hub celebrates a reorientation in our past Curtin University School of Education research culture from being strongly entrenched in traditional orientation to encompass more contemporary forms where research collaborators use the arts to reach new audiences.

Home > Research > Research areas > Business, society and community > Creative Education Research Hub

CREATIVE EDUCATION RESEARCH HUB

About us

Our research

Higher Degrees by Research

HDR Arts-based Resources

Curtin Artists-in-Residence (AIR Program)

Our partners and collaborations

Our people

Contact us

Method Meets Art

Arts-based research: "A set of methodological tools used by qualitative researchers across the disciplines during all phases of social research, including data collection, analysis, interpretation, and representation. These emerging tools adapt the tenets of the creative arts in order to address social research questions in holistic and engaged ways in which theory and practice are intertwined".
Leavy, P. (2009). *Method Meets Art: Arts-Based Research Practice*. Pg.2-3

There has been a shift in recent decades towards academics across Australia undertaking and/or presenting their research in Arts-based formats which are exciting, innovative and reflective of the dynamic evolution of research culture internationally.

The Curtin University School of Education aims to have a leading presence in this space and our Creative Education Research Hub provides a vehicle for Arts-based education research advocacy and collaboration within the disciplines of visual arts and performance/theatre work.

1 Progress at Shelly Primary (Oct 2025) ... Congrats to AIR Courtney and Host Amelia and everyone involved in this fabulous mural

Wonderful 2025 Work in Progress at Shelly Primary (Oct 2025) ... Congrats to AIR Courtney and Host Amelia and everyone involved in this fabulous mural

About the Curtin University AiR Program:

The AIR program has operated at Curtin via the School of Education since 2016 and annually places student artists from the School of Media Creative Arts and Social Inquiry and the School of Education in WA primary schools in Term 3 of the school year.

The artists work in partnership with teachers and students on a special art project beyond the scope of the standard curriculum. Most residencies are within visual arts, but there have been some projects in media and also drama disciplines.

Most projects have a duration of around 30-40 hours, are collaboratively designed and executed with the students and their Generalist Teacher. An increasing number are in remote/rural settings in partnership projects involving Curtin AIRs, Indigenous Elders and high Indigenous student numbers.