

Practice in Public PGCF1006

MODULE DESCRIPTOR

ECTS credits¹	10	Programme	MA MFA in Art and Social Action
NQF level	9	School	School of Fine Art
Stage	1	Module Co-ordinator	Dr Fiona Whelan
Trimester	1	Module Team	Brian Hand, Dr Fiona Whelan and School staff
Contact	Dr Fiona Whelan: whelanf@staff.ncad.ie		
Responsibility	The NCAD Academic Council and the School of Fine Art Board have responsibility for this module.		

1. Introduction

This module requires students to establish a practice-based inquiry with selected participants or publics through experimentation with individual and collective methods of socially-engaged art practice. Each student will research and scope their own inquiry (or, should they wish, in partnership with another student on the programme). They will also determine the extent and the nature of the participation with communities, individuals or organisations, learning through action and reflection.

As a 10-credit module, conducted over a trimester, it is important to note that the Practice in Public module is designed to support 'experiments' rather than fully-resolved projects. These include experiments with form and methods of engagement with communities/publics (eg hosting a banner making workshop, staging an artistic intervention on the street, organising an alternative walking tour) as well as experiments with site and modes of documentation. As such the 'in public' element of this work may take the form of a proposition, or a short scale intervention into a public setting, or modest forms of co-creation with others. The peer to peer learning that is made possible through shared reflection on students' experiments will be nurtured here.

To inform and support their practice-based experiments, this module is structured around a series of talks from visiting lecturers (national and international) and practical skills workshops where students will be introduced to diverse approaches to engaging participants and publics in their practice, and key skills necessary to the development of social interactions considering how to effectively enter, engage and exit diverse social contexts.

A practice of critical reflection is of central importance, as students are supported to reflect upon their experiments considering challenges related to ethics, power relations, positionality and knowledge production. In this, they will be supported to make a proposal and to present their work at a mid-point to their peers and staff.

¹ European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System, where 60 ECTS credits equate to the workload of a full-time academic year

The aims of this module are to:

- Ensure that students have a sophisticated and critical understanding of potential and limits of socially-engaged art practice
- Provide learners with opportunities to engage with and critically reflect on different models of practice of socially-engaged artists, while developing their own practice
- Support in the design of a sophisticated and well informed socially-engaged project which can be tested in public
- Develop a sophisticated understanding of the techniques, understanding and skills required to document practice

2. What will I learn?

This module features workshops and other classes concerned with understanding diverse approaches to socially-engaged art practice by means of presentations with practitioners, and with developing key skills.

The themes of key skills workshops will include *facilitation* (i.e. how to work with different individuals and communities in inclusive ways that allow for different perspectives and needs to be articulated and shape outcomes), *group work* (i.e. how to manage differences of opinion and how to organise groups with diverse skills, needs and levels of engagement and to act together) and *communications* (i.e., how to communicate with different stakeholders in ways that meet good standards of plain expression and are sensitive to cultural differences). Particular emphasis will be placed on developing the skills and techniques required to *document practice* – in terms of project design, social engagement and public realisation. This includes critical reflection on the ethics of authorship and documentation (consent, open access, etc.)

The learner will secure opportunities to test these key skills and approaches by developing an inquiry of their own devising, engaging with communities and other social actors as necessary.

On successful completion of this module, students will be able to:

1. Scope an inquiry which is capable of being realised ‘in public’
2. Engage in facilitation and other forms of social engagement
3. Apply the principles and ethical frameworks required for meaningful and just engagement with different communities.
4. Document practice in sophisticated ways that allow for public dissemination.

Module content

The module will combine lectures and seminars led by the Art and Social Action team as well as socially-engaged art practitioners. Students will make site visits, engage in workshops related to the assessment task and undertake group work.

3. How will I learn?

Learning tool	Hours
Lectures and seminars	70
Specified Learning Activities	30
Autonomous Student Learning	100
Total Workload	200

4. What learning supports are provided?

Like all modules which form part of the Art and Social Action MA, this course will be supported by a Virtual Learning Environment. The site will feature module-related bibliographies, links to key organisations and practices, as well as policy documents. Students will have the opportunity to use this VLE to share resources and engage in other forms of peer exchange.

Students who wish to develop particular software skills to undertake the tasks outlined in this module descriptor will have access to Linked-In Learning training (Creative Cloud programmes, storyboarding etc).

5. Am I eligible to take this module?

Module Requisites and Incompatibles

Pre-requisites	None
Co-requisites	None
Incompatibles	None
Prior learning	Where a student can demonstrate that they have achieved at least 80% of the learning outcomes of this module, by academic certified achievement, or through quantifiable and documented experience, they can apply to the School for that prior learning to be recognised. Applications must be received prior to the commencement of delivery of the module.
Recommended	None

6. How will I be assessed?

The assessment task will take the form of a presentation in which students will demonstrate critical reflection on the ethical and practical elements of engaging in creative practice in partnership or close relations with civic society. It will be assessed using the College's published grade descriptors and written feedback will be given to the students.

Assessment tool*	% of final grade	Timing
Presentation	25%	Week 4
Presentation	50%	Week 11
Practice documentation and reflection	25%	Week 15
Total	100%	

- * Note: some variations to the form of assessment may occur depending on a given project brief.

Assessment tool	Learning outcomes assessed
Presentation	LO 1
Presentation	LO 2 and 3
Practice documentation and reflection	LO 4

7. Feedback, results and grading

Students will receive written feedback on completion of assignments. Assignments will be graded using the [NCAD Grade Descriptors](#).

8. What happens if I fail?

Resit opportunities will be provided. Opportunities to remediate an unsuccessful assessment depend on the deficit encountered. Resit opportunities will be provided at the end of each trimester to students who do not complete all assessments by the assessment deadline. Students who are unsuccessful at Week 4 and 11 for continuous assessment assignments worth 75% of module may be given the opportunity to resit each element during the 15 weeks of the module. This will not involve a resit fee. Students who are unsuccessful at Week 15 for the single assignment worth 25% of module may be given the opportunity to resit for the next exam board. This will involve a resit fee.

A student failing substantially at both continuous assessment and the final 25% assignment would be required to repeat (and attend) the module in the following year, and pay the required registration fee.

9. When and where is this module offered?

MA Art and Social Action Hub, Dept of Sculpture and Expanded Practice, Fine Art, NCAD, Tuesdays Semester 1.

10. How will I have the chance to evaluate the module?

It is important to NCAD that students inform the development of teaching and learning at NCAD. We encourage all students to communicate their concerns and their observations about their study to members of staff so that any changes can be made in a timely manner.

About two-thirds of the way through the year, a student forum will be convened to gather students' comments about their study and the delivery of the programme. In addition, at the end of Trimester 2, students have the opportunity to complete an online evaluation of their study and experience at NCAD. These evaluation events are important to current and future students, to ensure we can enhance the delivery of programmes at NCAD.

In addition, you are invited to discuss your experience on the module with your lecturers at any point during the year. You can also relay your comments to the class student representative who will communicate your comments to the staff.

**For further details on the content of your module and teaching arrangements,
consult your Programme or Module Handbook**