

PRE-TEXTS INFORMATION SHEET AND APPLICATION FORM

This Information Sheet is accompanied by an Application Form. Please complete the Application Form and return it by email to CreativeEducatorsDublin@gmail.com by midday, Tuesday 24th April 2018.

What is *Pre-Texts*?

Pre-texts is a technique to make learning more challenging and fun. It encourages learners to read more by treating reading as a creative activity. It also attracts people back into learning. This is an educational initiative involving educators, artists and community organisers. It is suitable for all ages. It can be adjusted and applied to all levels of formal and informal educational or community contexts.

Who are we?

We are a group of community-based organisations in Dublin's inner city who have come together to support the delivery of a free training-of-trainers '*Pre-Texts*' programme hosted by DIT, Grangegorman in May 2018. *Pre-Texts* has been developed by Doris Sommer, Director of the Cultural Agents, NGO, which developed at Harvard University. We are delighted that Doris Sommer, such an experienced trainer, has agreed to lead this 'training for trainers' programme in Dublin. The programme comprises a two-and-a-half day intensive training course followed by individual support implementing the training over fifteen hours into a variety of educational and community contexts in Dublin city.

Steering Group: Grainne Foy, North West Inner City Network; Kathleen McCann, Grangegorman Labour and Learning; Vanessa Fielding, Director, Complex Productions; Julie Stafford, DIT Foundation; Siobhan Geoghegan, Director, Common Ground and Jenny Haughton, Grangegorman Agency Public Art Coordinator.

Why *Pre-texts*?

This innovative educational initiative aims to address some of the recommendations and issues arising from the Grangegorman Arts Strategy (2012); Grangegorman Socio-Economic Profile and Job Opportunities in Dublin's North Inner City (2013); the Cedefop Leaving Education Early Report (2016); the recent Area Based Childhood Programme (Murphy, 2017) and the Department of Education and Skills Acton Plan for Education (2017). These and other documents point to the need for more inclusive, intercultural and creative initiatives that can work across generations in supporting a return to education for life as well as providing creative forms of leadership with transferable skills.

Within the context of the redevelopment of Grangegorman, this is an important initiative. In some situations, those attending are already working with people experiencing disadvantages and discrimination because of where they live. This *Pre-Texts* programme sets out to assist in building life skills such as literacy, leadership and citizenship. It is about increasing personal opportunities and choice. The programme has been proven to bridge the gap between people who have been disenfranchised due to social circumstances in making the route to further education whether its school, college or community opportunities and employment.

We hope that it will be of particular importance to the inner city community in supporting local leadership. Priority will be given to those who live and work in Dublin's inner city. We also hope that it will be of interest to DIT in bridging the gap between arts and humanities. From a community perspective, we hope it will help to acknowledge and mobilise creative agency by making links between people and groups locally. This is about building a recognisable pathway for communities of people wishing to engage and re-enter education in a meaningful way.



Doris Sommer giving an introduction to the course, speaking here with Vanessa Fielding of The Complex at an introductory talk in Grangegorman.

How will *PreTexts* help me?

Benefits of training in *Pre-Texts* include:

- Learners read more
- Better learning outcomes
- Improves literacy
- Develops creative teaching skills
- Advocate innovation
- Develops citizenship
- Greater collaboration among learners
- Peer support
- Certificate on completion

Who is this *Pre-Texts* training programme for?

This 'Training for Trainers' experiential programme is aimed at teachers, trainers, youth workers, artists, child care leaders and people working with children, young people or adults in Dublin's Inner City. If you are willing to commit to applying the learning to your work and to networking with other practitioners, we'd love to hear from you!

The 'train the trainer' programme is aimed at both paid and volunteer teachers, trainers, youth workers, artists, educators and others working in learning environments with children, young people or adults in Dublin's inner city.

Training for Trainers

By providing training for trainers, our intention is to support provision of long term and sustainable skills which can be used within the respective learning environments of each of the 20 participants. Once trained and certified, it will be possible to roll out *Pre-Texts* with the community through course participants.

Dates

The *Pre-Texts* training course will take place on Tuesday 29th Thursday 31st May 2018 (9am to 5pm on Tues and Wed, 9am to 1pm on Thurs)." Participants are asked to commit to all course sessions. This is a once off opportunity.

Location

Room RD005, Rathdown House, DIT Grangegorman Campus, Dublin 7.

Programme stages. There are two stages to the *Pre-Texts* Training programme. The first stage comprises a 2.5 day intensive training session held in the DIT Campus in Grangegorman at the end of

May (just before the June Bank holiday weekend). The second stage comprises 15 hours of implementation with your own group at a time that suits you, ideally before the end of 2018. During this stage you will be supported by a lead facilitator ('weaver').

Stage one: 5 sessions of 3 hours each:

- 1.1. Each participant facilitates an activity of his/her choice, in order to try out the role of facilitator and to benefit from the feedback of colleagues.
- 1.2. Practice in the new role of facilitator. Though less demanding than conventional teaching, stepping aside to enable student-centred learning can be challenging for teachers used to claiming attention.
- 1.3. 'Multiple intelligences' come into play as the workshops develop with contributions from everyone. We come to appreciate the opportunities to nurture students with diverse abilities and cultures.

Stage two: 15 hours of implementation

- 2.1. During implementation, the lead facilitator ('weaver') will provide support to you as facilitator in implementing *Pre-Texts* with your own group. This comprises weekly meetings (virtual or physical) to share and note progress.

Training is complete upon provision of a short report on implementation.

What are some of the specific learning objectives addressed by *Pre-texts*?

The course is suitable for all levels of teaching and learning, from primary to secondary and informal learning contexts. This programme has worked well with very young people, with people who are challenged in learning environments, and for those re-entering the educational sector. So for example:

Reading – developing cognitive abilities through oral language, competence and confidence in using language, receptiveness to language, emotional and imaginative developments through languages

Looking and responding – exploring and experimenting with the properties and characteristic of stories, materials and making structures, making drawings from observation for analytical response, making imaginative structure.

Self-identity – making decisions, sharing safely, drawing and changing, taking care, respecting self and others.

What does the course cover?

The *Pre-texts* process involves the reading aloud of a chosen text, the asking of questions about that text and the active reflection upon the range of questions arising. Activities begin with instructions to use the text (drawing, singing, writing, acting, sewing etc.) and end with 'What did we do?' In this way a range of perspectives, responses and insights can assist learners.

Features of *Pre-texts* include:

1. Using complex text to stimulate questions and explorations.
2. Turning the pyramid of learning upside down, starting from creativity.
3. Recycling/changing/intervening in existing materials using literature, cardboard, gestures.
4. Be-coming an 'ignorant schoolmaster' – show, don't explain.
5. Promoting artistic and interpretive independence, always referring to the target text.
6. Taking advantage of technical and formal contributions from a variety of art forms.
7. Preparing collaborations among teachers and artists.

8. Making sure that all participants respond to prompts for making and thinking.
9. Keeping expectations high; assume the will be med and provide necessary support.
10. Working closely with the Weaver during the first months of implementation.

Results you can expect through *Pre-Texts* include:

- Certification on completion of training and implementation of learning in your own group setting
- Learners reading difficult and even boring material with pleasure
- Teachers working less and achieving more
- Learners reading more
- Better learning outcomes
- Improved literacy
- Development of a range of creative skills
- Greater collaboration among learners
- We are offering this innovative programme on a once off basis only.

Is there a cost?

The programme is free thanks to the generosity of our sponsors: Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT), Dublin City Council (DCC), Grangegorman Development Agency (GDA) and our partners the North West Inner City Network, Common Ground, ‘...the lives we live’ and The Ireland Fund.

Is there financial support for backfill and childcare?

Applications for financial support will be addressed on a case by case basis.

How do I Apply?

Please detach the **Application Form** (below) and return it to creativeeducatorsdublin@gmail.com by midday, Tuesday 24th April 2018. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

When will I know if I have a place?

All Applicants will be notified by 1st May 2018. Places will be allocated on the basis of the Application Form and the ability to implement learning in their environments.

Further questions.

The Steering Group, working with the Lead Trainer, will address all questions received.

APPLICATION FORM

Pre-Texts

Participation in the Training for Trainers Pre-Text Programme

DIT Grangegorman, Dublin 7.

Application Deadline: Midday, Tuesday 24th April 2018.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel/Mob: _____

Do you teach on a regular basis? YES/NO _____

Nominating Group/Organisation (if applicable) _____

Contact: _____

Your role: _____

Manager Signature: _____

In the box below, please let us know why you are interested in this workshop and the group/s you hope to work with. This can be a personal statement or a statement by your nominating organisation.

Return completed form to: CreativeEducatorsDublin@gmail.com