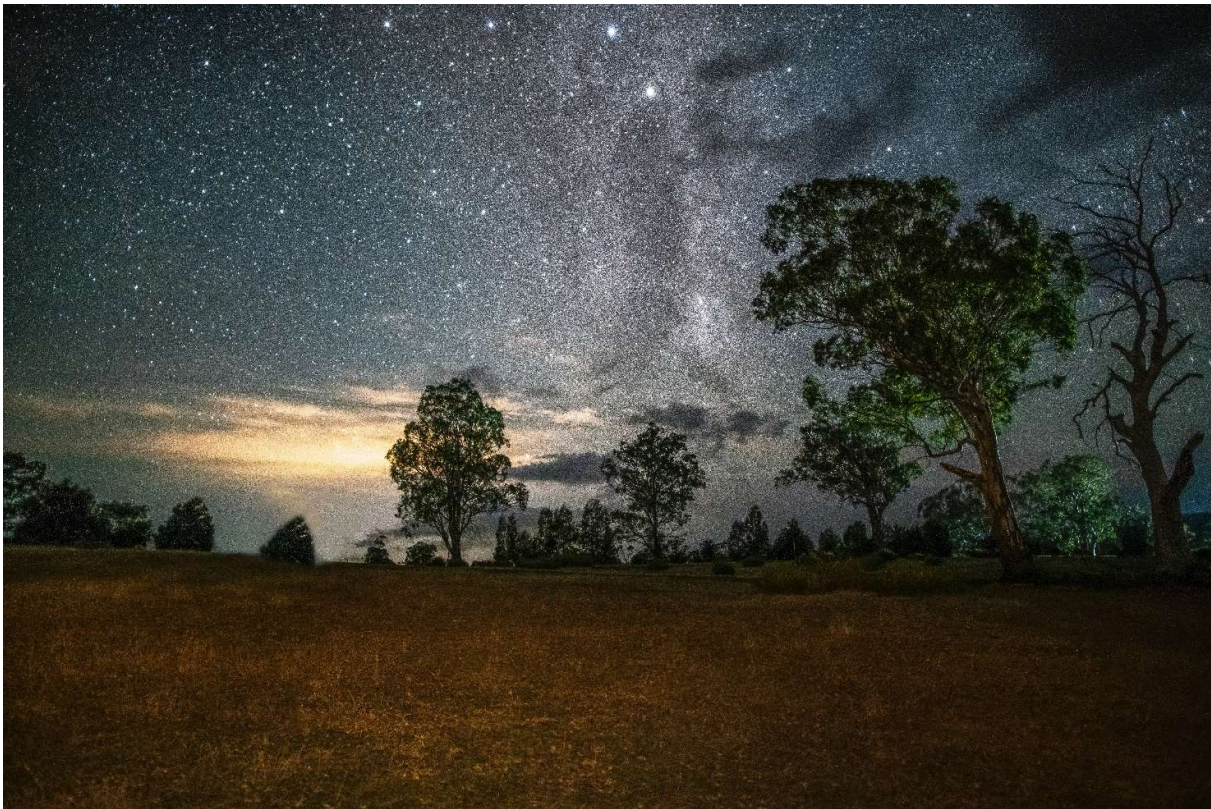


Creating out Loud: Overview



The University of Queensland (UQ) acknowledges the
Traditional Owners and their custodianship of
the lands on which we meet.



We pay our respects to their Ancestors and their
descendants, who continue cultural and spiritual
connections to Country.

We recognise their valuable contributions to
Australian and global society.



What is Creating Out Loud?

In a nutshell...

“Creating Out Loud” is a peer coaching opportunity, designed to help artists and arts managers

- deepen and expand their personal and professional networks,
- rethink important issues and current practices, and
- support one another through knowledge-sharing and goal-setting.

Unlike traditional “top-down” mentoring programs – which can be expensive and difficult to access – Creating Out Loud is freely available to independent artists, arts managers, and arts organizations. It also involves people supporting each other in small groups, rather than one-on-one relationships.

Based on extensive research – as well as both the lived experience of artists and arts managers – Creating Out Loud offers a series of guided discussions, addressing key issues facing the arts and culture sector.

However, Creating Out Loud is not a formal program of study. Rather, it is an opportunity for artists and arts managers to meet in a safe environment, to explore important issues and support one another while pursuing their personal and professional development goals.

Creating Out Loud “circles” are self-facilitated peer-coaching small groups for people working in the arts and culture sector.

What is peer coaching?

Peer coaching involves people with roughly similar levels of experience coming together in an intentionally “focused relationship,” to support one another’s personal and/or professional goals through open and trusting conversations.^[1]

Peer coaching is a form of “talk help” – but it differs from traditional mentoring, training, and counselling in two important ways^[2]:

- **peer coaching involves “equals”** – participants are not trained mentors, coaches or counsellors. They typically have similar levels of work or life experience – although “equality” is also about attitude. People come together for mutual support, recognizing each other as “equals,” sharing power and acknowledging that all parties have something both to give and to receive.
- **peer coaching is often goal-oriented** – not everyone comes into peer coaching with a clearly-defined goal. Some people discover what their goals are through peer coaching. But participants often identify a personal or professional goal they want to pursue in conversation with other people. Your goal should be something that matters to you, that you are willing to discuss with other people, and that you can make some progress towards within a limited timeframe. You might want to start a new creative project, learn about a specific topic, or develop your business or artistic practices.

“Peer coaching involves people of equal status coming together in a focused way, to help one another pursue personal and/or professional goals.”^[1]



What are peer coaching circles?

Peer coaching circles are small groups of people who meet regularly to explore issues and questions that concern them, and to share what they are learning with other circle members.^[1]

Peer coaching circles rely on ‘quality conversations,’^[3] based on a desire to learn and genuine interest in the other participants.^[4]

They provide a “container for peers to examine and expand insights into action in other areas of their lives”^[5] – and they have been found to increase knowledge, connectivity and confidence in diverse settings, including among remotely-located Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander undergraduate students.^[6]

How does Creating Out Loud work?

Creating Out Loud Circles are self-facilitating peer coaching circles, designed for people working in the arts and culture sector.

Creating Out Loud Discussion Guides support conversations of around one hour each – although, larger circles (or those with very “chatty” members) might meet for 75 minutes or 1½ hours.

The Creating Out Loud Discussion Guide Library includes three key resources:

1. **Circle-Formation and Facilitator Guides** help get your peer-coaching experience off to a good start. This includes establishing a Working Agreement for your circle, beginning to get to know one another, and learning about facilitating conversations, whether in-person or online.
2. **Goal-focused Discussion Guide** provides a well-established structure for seeking the wisdom of the group on specific issues and helping one another pursue personal and/or professional goals.
3. **Topic-based Discussion Guides** invite circle members to explore five broad topic areas affecting the arts and culture sector (illustrated below), with Discussion Guides available for each topic.



Each Creating Out Loud Circle is free to

- **follow a standard 7-session program**, comprising two Circle-formation sessions (*Working Agreements for Courageous Conversations* and *Building Community*), followed by one session on each of the topic areas listed above, OR
- **create their own program**, choosing any combination of Goal-focused and/or Topic-based Discussion Guides and using them in any order. A 12-week program can be created by alternating between Topic-based and Goal-focused guides

When, where, and how often do Creating Out Loud Circles meet?

Like a book club, Creating Out Loud Circle members can decide when, where, and how often to meet – weekly, fortnightly, or monthly, as best suits its members. Where possible, Circle members might choose to meet in-person – over coffee or at work. But online connections can also be helpful, bringing people together across diverse geographies, including people with mobility constraints.^[7]

Who should join a Creating Out Loud circle?

Creating Out Loud Circles ideally involve around five people.

Circle members might be

- artists and/or arts managers working together in a single company
- working in similar positions at different organizations
- independent artists and/or associated with more than one organization.

You might form a circle with people you already know, or branch out and develop new relationships.

Participants to date have included actors, directors, producers, costume designers, dancers, circus performers, lighting designers, musicians, visual artists, and arts workers, managers and CEOs in both small-to-medium and large companies – as well as government agencies.

Circle members don't have to be alike to benefit from peer coaching. In fact, dissimilarity (e.g., demographic background, artistic field, job types) can be an advantage^[8] – so long as everyone acknowledges other circle members as equals, and is motivated to learn and willing both to give and to receive support.^[1]

The most important thing is that participants are willing to “journey” with one another, creating and holding a space in which all members can give and receive support.

When participants feel safe and stable in their circle, they become able to take on the role of “critical friend” – gently challenging one another – which can deliver “closer and richer relationships” than one-on-one mentoring^[9] and make peer coaching circles even more effective than one-on-one coaching.^[5]

What happens in each session?

All Creating Out Loud sessions begin and end with a

1. **“Being here” prompt** that (re)connects and helps circle members settle into the session. Some participants find this the most valuable part of the session, because it builds continuity between meetings and fosters deeper relationships between circle members.
2. **“What next?” prompt**, which invites circle members to commit to taking some kind of action before the next meeting. For many people, deciding on something they will do and speaking that out loud to other circles members is a helpful but gentle form of accountability, which helps them make real progress on their personal and/or professional goals.

Sample 1-hour agenda

Goal-focused sessions	Topic-based sessions	Suggested timing
Being here		Approx. 15 minutes
Structured group discussion	Individual reflection	Approx. 10 minutes
	Group discussion	Approx. 25 minutes
What next?		Approx. 5 minutes

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Creating Out Loud is a free resource, designed to support artists and arts managers.

Please share it widely!



Where can I access Creating Out Loud Discussion Guides?

Creating Out Loud Discussion Guides can be found at:

<https://creatingoutloud.business.uq.edu.au/>

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The opinions in this Discussion Guide do not necessarily represent the views of The University of Queensland, funding / industry partners, or the individual members involved in the reference groups.

About Creating Out Loud

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Creating Out Loud was developed to support Queensland’s artists and arts managers as they recover from and rebuild business, artistic, and cultural practices following the COVID-19 pandemic.

For further information visit

<https://creatingoutloud.business.uq.edu.au/>



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To interrupt the flow of this Discussion Guide as little as possible, reference information appears at the end of the guide and direct attributions have been minimized.

This guide includes links to various web material. All links were working at the time of publication. Please note however that these links may become outdated over time.

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