



I Am Festival 2023

15 May - 16 June

I Am Resource ACTIVISM

**A NEW
DIRECTION**
We create opportunity

I Am Festival

2023

This year, the I Am Festival is happening over several weeks, between 15th May and 16th June. Activity is taking place in schools and cultural venues across London with opportunities to learn skills and share practice, all in celebration of the creative talent of D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent young people.

Along with a schedule of events for students, teachers and the cultural sector, we are extending an invitation to all schools to take part in self-directed activities. Our network and festival are open to all specialist settings and SENDCOs and we support collaborations of all kinds: school visits, workshops, showcases and online sharing.

Our theme is activism. What does this mean to you? Is it about vision, justice, giving a voice to those who are not always heard?

This resource offers some ideas - developed and tested by our network - for you to try in the classroom and share beyond it in whatever way you like. They are budget-friendly, using the ideas, skills and materials you already have!

Have fun with them and share your creations in image or sound.

Sensory Banners

When words are not enough, engage all your senses with a different take on the protest banner!

Start with your base material

Voile, canvas, hessian, netting or vinyl are good options.

Some curtain netting is already weighted to make it hang well.

Sew channels for poles/ropes etc before you attach any other items. Make some small holes or slits to allow air to flow through if the fabric is heavy.

Then add your sensory elements

Pillows and pockets and lucky dips

Bells and whistles

Fidget toys, small plush creatures

Jewels, sparklies, bangles and beads

Flowers and feathers

Scent bags

Mirrors and reflectors

Fairy lights

Colours and textures

Messages

Double-sided foam tape is useful for a quick fix. A glue gun and/or stitching would be best if the banner is going out on a journey.



Sensory Banners

What's the message?

A plea, an invitation, a statement of fact.

Something provocative.

Use rhyme, puns, made up words or just keep it simple and true.

Be kind

I like everyone

Access denied

Join the sensory revolution

Family and community engagement

Why not invite parents and carers to join in with the making?

Show and share

Take your banner on a picnic. Join with another setting.

Have a demo in your local streets.

Have a photo in front of the library, with your MP, in the shopping centre.

Share a photo online. Get some media coverage.



Protest Song

What makes a good protest song?

It's true and sincere. It comes from the heart.

It's easy to remember and everyone can join in.

It has one message and this is usually repeated.

It can sing of what we DON'T want or what we DO want!

To get everyone on the right track, here's one we made earlier 😊

[Download the track](#)

Credit: Chris Mackin from Ickburgh School

Start with the chorus

We invite you to enter our chorus competition. Create a chorus for the track above and send us over the lyrics or a recording of you/your students singing along to the backing.

You'll find the chorus at these approximate timings in the track:

1' 12" , 2' 00" and 3' 10" with a 'taster' at 0' 35". Listen for a guide vocal.

The winner will be decided by A New Direction, Roundhouse and Digit Music!

We'll be accepting entries until **Thursday 25th May**.

Please send submissions to **beth.robertson@anewdirection.org.uk** and ensure none of your students are identifiable in any recording you send over.

We will announce the winning words on Monday 5th June.

Protest Song

Then on to the verses

If you only have time or ideas for one verse, repeat it. You can vary it with dynamics, percussion, vocal effects, maybe even a harmony line.

Sing the chorus, speak the verses. Some students are already great rappers and many feel comfortable with this style.

Fade out early if you want to make a short, sharp statement!

Record or film your song and get it premiered on the I Am Festival stage before 16th June.

The usual permissions rules apply if you decide to go for film.

Submit your entry.

Chris Mackin has kindly offered tech advice if you need it. Contact him at **CMackin@ickburgh.hackney.sch.uk**

5 more things you can do in the I Am Festival Month

1. Create some **activist merchandise** and do some fundraising.
For inspiration, see Bob and Roberta Smith or Sonia Boyce
Bags, posters, framed prints, key rings, plants ... what else?

2. **Visualisations** in art, models, poems, dance

I have a dream

Our idea playground or park

A fair world

Make models from recycled materials, take photos and make collages.

3. Go **guerrilla gardening**.

Seed-bombing, mini-instillations, trails. Where could you go?

Make wild art and use natural/biodegradable materials.

4. Exchange

Send letters or small items to another school and get some back!

Make them multi-sensory and fun.

Ask a question, send a message. Share the love!

5. Send us some **online content**.

Photos, songs, pictures, films; we want to showcase your ideas.

If you come across anything you'd like us to signpost, let us know.