

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: 27 February 2025

[Download press images](#)

10 years of A New Direction's I Am Festival

Celebrating a decade of empowerment and creativity for Deaf, disabled and neurodivergent children and young people in London with I Am Festival 2025



Photo © Eric Aydin-Barberini, courtesy of A New Direction

I Am Festival Theme 2025: Make Some Noise

Celebrating a decade of amplifying young voices, the I Am Festival returns for 2025 with the theme of 'Make Some Noise', bringing creative expression to children and young people across London. Since 2015, award-winning London based charity A New Direction has provided a platform for thousands of children and young people to showcase their talents, leadership, ideas and opinions. A New Direction has consistently worked to remove barriers and provide an opportunity and space for children and young people to access cultural spaces. As this year marks a 10-year milestone, the I Am Festival will showcase the bold and positive impact across the

capital through partnerships with AFK, Young V&A and Tate Modern hosting schools across the capital taking place during Neurodiversity Celebration Week.

Steve Moffitt MBE, CEO of A New Direction, said:

“A New Direction has always championed the voices of children and young people. In March 2025, we celebrate 10 years of the I Am Festival, and it makes me immensely proud to recognise the impact we’ve achieved with the hundreds of children and young people we’ve worked with. None of this would have been possible without the supportive collaboration of our funders, partners, artists, teachers and pupils who have participated in, and championed our work over the years. We will continue to increase the engagement of Deaf, disabled and neurodivergent children and young people in the outstanding cultural spaces London has to offer.

Michelle Walker, London Area Director, Arts Council England, said:

“We are proud to support the ongoing work of A New Direction, one of our National Portfolio Organisations. For the past nine years, their ‘I Am Festival’ has been a leading London event that empowers Deaf, disabled, and neurodivergent young people to explore and showcase their creativity — a commitment to the community that is truly inspiring.”

Over the past five years, A New Direction has worked closely with AFK, a national charity supporting disabled children, young people and their families and in this partnership has collaborated on work with the Cultural Ambassadors. Over a six-month period, our Cultural Ambassadors meet weekly to develop their creative skills, work with different artists, and design their own activities for the festival.

We have facilitated and nurtured lasting relationships between schools and disabled artists and disability-led organisations, creating opportunities for collaboration and growth. From parades through Tate Modern to completing a top-secret mission around Kensington Palace, the I Am Festival has showcased the voices and talents of all involved. During 2018/19, Garratt Park School proudly delivered the first-ever non-verbal 10-minute talk at Tate Modern, marking a significant milestone in accessibility and creative expression.

Kate Jackson, AFK, Impact and Innovation manager said:

“AFK is proud to collaborate again with A New Direction to host a work experience programme that opens opportunities for young disabled and neurodiverse talent. This inspiring partnership supports skills development, boosts confidence, and gives insight into the creative sector—an industry many of these young people aspire to join. The Cultural Ambassadors programme offers invaluable experiences, and it’s wonderful to see the creative journeys and excitement of each participant.”

“The Tate Schools and Teachers team is excited to partner with A New Direction on the I Am Festival again this year, sharing a commitment to inclusive access to art and culture for all children and young people. The festival is always a joyous celebration, and the 10-year anniversary will be no different. This year Tate are including free access to Anthony McCall: Solid Light and a chance to test our sensory resource Rock Wobble Pluck by artist Rita Evans. We are looking forward to

all that we get to learn from being with everyone... making some noise!" – **Alice Walton, Senior Learning Curator, Tate Schools and Teachers team.**

"Young V&A is delighted to host the I Am Festival in this special 10th year. The festival's vibrant programme perfectly complements our mission to build creative confidence and skills in the young, and we look forward to welcoming young people and their schools to explore and showcase their creativity in our museum. Diverse and divergent creativity is at the heart of Young V&A, and we are glad to be in collaboration with A New Direction and the many 'I Am' partners to celebrate another year of this important programme." – **Catherine Ritman Smith, Head of Learning and Engagement, Young V&A**



© Eric Aydin-Barberini, courtesy of A New Direction

"Engaging in creative activities allows children to express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas in amazing ways. As they see their creations come to life, their self-esteem soars to new heights and their confidence becomes a force to be reckoned with!" – **Teacher from Cherry Garden School.**

These experiences create meaningful memories, our pupils felt proud of their achievements. This was just the beginning, and we will continue to build on this collaborative work in the near future to continue to develop their confidence, self-esteem, leadership skills, teamwork and develop essential skills in preparation for adulthood." – **Teacher from Woodfield School.**

The festival will feature key activities at Young V&A and Tate Modern, offering unique opportunities for young people to showcase their creativity, with special events on Tuesday 18 – Friday 21 March 2025.

Please note: activities listed above are not available to the public and no booking is available.

—ENDS—

For more information, interview requests and images, please contact:

Georgina Walters, Marketing and Communications Manager
georgina.walters@anewdirection.org.uk | 020 7608 2132

[Website](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [YouTube](#)

#IAmFestival2025

Note to Editors

I Am Festival 2025 will offer:

- An event curated and delivered by our brilliant Cultural Ambassadors – a group of Deaf, disabled and neurodiverse young people facilitated by artist and facilitator Jo Paul. Over a six month period, our Cultural Ambassadors meet weekly to develop their creative skills, work with different artists, and design their own activities for the festival.
- Creative workshops for Deaf, disabled and neurodivergent children and young people.
- CPD for creative teachers working with Deaf, disabled & neurodivergent children across London's specialist and mainstream settings.
- Workshops for professionals working in the cultural sector.

About A New Direction

A New Direction is an award-winning charity working to enhance the capacity and agency of children and young people in London to own their creativity, shape culture, and achieve their creative potential. Charity Number: 1126216
www.anewdirection.org.uk