

Azure

The Azure Steering Group, comprised of Age & Opportunity, IMMA (Irish Museum of Modern Art), Butler Gallery and The Alzheimer's Society of Ireland, is pleased to offer Azure foundation training for gallery/museum staff (curators, education/access officers, guides and volunteers), arts educators and artists with facilitation experience, this Autumn. We ask that arts educators and artists are working with a gallery/museum, so they have a collection to draw on to facilitate tours.

The training is designed for those currently facilitating general tours, or those with previous experience in this area. It trains participants in how to facilitate Azure tours for those with dementia-related conditions and their families, carers and friends. It aims to enhance their visitor experience of these cultural institutions and to promote more inclusive access. Underpinning the training is the belief, that we are all entitled to be active cultural participants throughout our lives.

Once participants have completed the foundation course their gallery/museum is considered part of the Azure network. For more background on Azure and the Azure network (organisations offering Azure Tours) please visit:

<https://ageandopportunity.ie/engage/azure-dementia-friendly-tours/>

VENUE AND DATES

IMMA, The Irish Museum of Modern Art,
Kilmainham, Dublin 8

Wednesdays: 16th, 23rd, 30th September
and 14th, 21st October 2026, 10am –
4.30pm.

Please note, participants must attend all of the September dates and one of the October dates. Which October date will be arranged once the course has commenced. The course involves 4 full days of training not 5.

PRICE/BOOKING

Azure Foundation training costs €625 per participant.

As places are limited, fees need to be paid in advance to secure a place.

For more information or to book a place, please contact Fiona at Tel (01) 913 3922 or fiona.holohan@ageandopportunity.ie

I wanted to say how much I enjoyed and valued the recent Azure training. It was clear that a huge amount of work had gone into the preparation for the course. The design and delivery of the content was extremely professional and yet there was a lightness in tone that didn't take away from the seriousness of the task in hand. A variety of factors combined to make it a very special experience – the beautiful setting of Dublin Castle, the shared goal of learning a new skill, the pleasant breaks in the Silk Road Cafe and above all the people, including yourselves”.

Participant, Azure Training for OPW, 2025.

“I really enjoyed the Azure training course. The course material was so well prepared and delivered with a lovely mix of personality styles..... The notes emailed to us were spot on. I think that the methodology (taught so well and tried and tested) worked for our final practice facilitation session. A special thanks to all involved in these four days.” Participant, Azure Training, 2024

PROGRAMME - 4 days training, 10am – 4.30pm

(Please note: sequencing and content is subject to change depending on availability of contributors/facilitators/exhibit space).

DAY 1 – Wednesday 16th September

Introduction

Azure Background and Ethos

Dementia Awareness and Lived Experience - Alzheimer's Society of Ireland and IDWG

Azure Tour Demonstration

Azure Methodology

Identifying Phases of the Methodology

Exploring Description

DAY 2 – Wednesday 23rd September

Questioning Preconceptions about Older Age (AgeWise) – Age & Opportunity

Methodology Recap & Designing Questions

Introducing Facilitation Skills

Azure Tour Demonstration

Exploring Listening & Deepening Questions

Identifying Facilitation Skills

Research for tour

DAY 3 – Wednesday 30th September

Facilitation Skills Revisited

Online Facilitation Skills

Preparing for a Tour

Azure Tour Demonstration

Azure Facilitator Experience

Programme Logistics

Reflective Practice

DAY 4 – Wednesday 14th October or Wednesday 21st October

(Participants attend on one of the above days only and times may alter slightly)

Trainees' Practice Facilitation Sessions

Group Reflection on Practice Sessions

FACILITATORS (will be drawn from our Azure Training Panel)

Caroline Orr is an art-educator with a background in dementia-inclusive art programming. In her previous role as a Curator of Engagement and Learning at the Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA) she was responsible for the development and management of inclusive art programmes, providing accessible opportunities for people to engage with the museum's exhibitions. She established Azure dementia-inclusive art-looking tours at IMMA and was a founding member of the partnership between the Alzheimer Society of Ireland, Age & Opportunity, Butler Gallery, and IMMA, which supports the expansion of Azure tours to museums, galleries, and historic sites throughout Ireland. Currently working freelance, she continues to co-facilitate training for Azure dementia-inclusive art-looking tours.

Bairbre-Ann Harkin is Curator of IMMA Horizons at the Irish Museum of Modern Art, with responsibility for IMMA's Health Partnerships. She previously led IMMA's Art & Ageing initiatives, championing inclusive and dementia-aware engagement and fostering key partnerships with IMMA collaborators such as Age&Opportunity, Global Brain Health Institute, Mercers Inst. for Successful Ageing (St James Hospital) among others. Before this, while working as Curator of Education at Butler Gallery, Bairbre-Ann became a founding member of the Azure network of dementia inclusive galleries and museums, alongside IMMA, the Alzheimer Society of Ireland and Age&Opportunity and the Erasmus+ funded European project 'Museums, Art and Alzheimers'. She initiated IMMA Horizons in 2023, exploring how creativity and arts experiences can enhance health, wellbeing and quality of life.

Bryan Hogan is the Learning and Public Engagement Curator at Butler Gallery, Kilkenny with experience working in museums and galleries in Ireland and Canada as an artist, educator and facilitator. The L&PE team design and deliver programmes and initiatives aimed at making art accessible to all. Before joining the Butler Gallery Bryan worked as the Visitor Services Supervisor at the Vancouver Art Gallery (2023), Visitor Engagement Facilitator at the Irish Museum of Modern Art (2019-2022), Volunteer Coordinator at EVA International (2018) and has been on the panel of Artists, Guides and Lecturers at The Hugh Lane Gallery since 2022. Bryan holds an MA in Arts Policy and Practice from University of Galway and a BA in Fine Art from Atlantic Technological University, Galway.

Caroline Schofield is a visual artist who works creatively with individuals and groups in a participatory and collaborative Arts & Health Practice. She is a trained Azure and Timeslips facilitator and began working with Butler Gallery facilitating Azure tours in 2017. She also facilitates Open Gallery, an art project developed in 2018 by Waterford Healing Arts Trust based at University Hospital Waterford (UHW) which brings art from the UHW collection to its wards and to nursing homes to be enjoyed.

CONTRIBUTORS

The Irish Dementia Working Group is a group of people living with a dementia who advocate for better services, supports and policies in Ireland. The group gives voice to the lived experience of dementia. The Alzheimer Society of Ireland supports the group, and their work is overseen by a Steering Group comprised of people living with dementia. **Saoirse Kelly** is **Advocacy, Engagement and Participation Officer** for the group.

Brian Dooney has been a Facilitator with Age & Opportunity's Engage programme since 2016. He designs and delivers courses on positive ageing and literature and the arts – in the context of building resilience and confidence, developing creativity and promoting lifelong learning and engagement.