



people
make it
work
we are culture people

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a reflection on what we are noticing,
questioning and making in culture

SEPTEMBER 2026

What conversations does our sector need more space for?

September feels like a moment for returning, resetting and thinking about what comes next. We've been thinking about what it means to create organisations where people can contribute, challenge, belong and change things — and what happens when we create the space to think together.

This month, that thinking is showing up in our work around NPO readiness, organisational transformation, belonging and leadership, as well as our new series of Essential Conversations.

what we're noticing

Perhaps leaders don't always need more learning. Perhaps they need more space to think....

But when do leaders have time to make sense of everything they already know?

Read the latest thought piece from Director of Empowerment, Vicki Igbokwe-Ozoagu

what we're exploring

What does it take to create cultures where people feel able to contribute, challenge and shape what happens?

→ Read Laura Twemlow's thoughts as Head of Belonging.



come and think
with us...



Essential Conversations

Not another webinar, but a space to think together.

SESSION #1

**Creating conditions
for transformation**

15 September 2026
12–1.30pm
Online via Zoom.

Explore the mindsets,
behaviours and practices
that help meaningful
change take root.

Hosted by
Azieb Pool
Richard Watts
Laura Twemlow



SESSION #2

The road to NPO

22 September 2026
12–1.30pm
Online via Zoom

[Register here](#)

Explore the conversations,
questions and
organisational foundations
that matter when preparing
for the next NPO round.

Hosted by
Azieb Pool & Clare Thurman



SESSION #3

**Everyone comes to you.
Who do you go to?**

29 September 2026
12–1.30pm
Online via Zoom

[Register here](#)

Join an honest
conversation about
the realities of
leadership.

Hosted by
Vicki Igbokwe-Ozoagu
Prince Taylor



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shout outs to...

It's a joy seeing what the community is making, thinking about and moving forward. This month, we're shining a light on three Associates doing brilliant things across the sector.



 **Adam Cooper — Director, Threads in the Ground**

For the work he's doing to bring creativity, imagination and hope into conversations about climate change and sustainable futures. Threads in the Ground explores how creative practice can help people and communities imagine different climate futures — bringing together creativity, sustainability and participation in thoughtful and imaginative ways.

<https://www.threadsintheground.com/>



 **Selina Thompson — Artistic Director, Selina Thompson Ltd**

Whose interdisciplinary performance company continues to make ambitious, experimental work that asks difficult questions about identity, society, history and the world we want to create. Selina, will also be joining us next Tuesday for Essential Conversations: The Road to NPO, where we'll be talking about the realities of preparing for an NPO application. We're very glad to have her in the conversation.

<https://selinathompsonltd.co.uk/>



 **Rachel Williams — CEO, Streetwise Opera**

Huge congratulations to Rachel and Streetwise Opera, on the organisation's recent National Lottery Heritage Fund award. The funding will support a major heritage project celebrating Streetwise Opera's 25-year history, helping to gather, preserve and share the stories, music and creative work that have shaped the organisation.

<https://streetwiseopera.org/>



introducing...

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Everyone's NPO CLUB

JOIN THE ONLINE COMMUNITY
SEPTEMBER 2026 - JANUARY 2027

We're excited to share something new with you: [Everyone's NPO Club](#) — a fortnightly space for everyone thinking about or making an NPO application, bringing insight, community and care for us all.

Whether an organisation is:

- considering an NPO application for the first time
- currently part of the National Portfolio and preparing for the next round
- or was previously part of the portfolio and hoping to rejoin

Everyone's NPO Club is for them.

We know the NPO process can ask a huge amount of organisations — and of the people carrying the work. It can be all-consuming, mentally, physically and emotionally.

So we've created a space to pause, think and navigate it together.

From Monday 28th September through to January, we'll meet online every fortnight to: Explore and test thinking — bringing questions, ideas and responses and working through them together.

CONNECT WITH PEERS | hear how other organisations are navigating the same journey, alongside established NPO organisations and experienced practitioners.

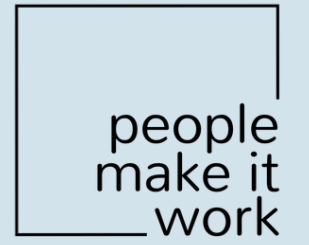
SHARE INSIGHT | make sense of what's happening around us and what it might mean for organisations.

MAKE SPACE FOR CARE | because sustaining the people doing this work matters too.

It's not a fixed course that people need to complete from beginning to end.

We'll respond to the people in the room and what organisations are experiencing as the NPO process unfolds, before coming together in January for a collective debrief — a chance to reflect, breathe and reset after submission.

Know an organisation, colleague or peer who might be thinking about NPO? Please do share this with them. Whatever stage they're at, they don't have to navigate NPO alone.



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something to take with
you...

What are we making possible together?

There's a lot happening across our sector right now. There are challenges to navigate, systems to question, things to let go of — and also new ideas, new collaborations and new possibilities emerging all the time.

As a community, we have a chance to share what we're learning, challenge each other's thinking and make space for different ways of doing things.

So, as we head into autumn, we're asking:

What are you noticing?

What are you questioning?

And what are you excited to make possible?

We'd love to hear from you — the ideas, questions, experiments and conversations that are shaping your work and your thinking.

Let's keep the conversation going.