

**Proposal:**

A Workshop Programme for Schools and Colleges

**Outline:**

The New Futures Academy is offering to create a programme of one-day (or longer) workshops for schools and colleges. These workshops are designed for key stage 4 & 5 students and can vary in subject matter, but each will in some way enhance the student’s understanding and appreciation of the natural world. Some of the workshops will give the students practical skills in climate and ecological solutions and introduce them to principles of ecological design. Workshops will take place mostly on our 25-acre site in Littlehempston, close to Dartington, with the potential to run workshops at other rural locations if preferred.

**The Workshops:**

We would be very happy to work closely with schools to tailor workshops specifically to curriculum needs and staff/student interests where possible. However, here are some examples of what we can offer:

**Environmental Sculpture**

Making use of our 12-acre broadleaf woodland site adjacent to the River Dart and 13-acre field, we can facilitate a workshop in making ephemeral sculptures with found natural objects. Drawing from tradition with inspiration from established environmental artists such as Andy Goldsworthy, David Nash and Richard Long, we can also add a further dimension to the workshop by drawing on the nature therapy work that NFA director Chris Smith practices as a counsellor and counselling tutor. These practices (which are increasingly being used widely in various forms of outdoor therapy in the UK and elsewhere) can variously include using found objects, story, metaphor and/or ritual/performance to express the artist’s inner sense of meaning and experience.

Costs

NFA Tutor fee: £150

Tutor assistant fee: £120

Materials: £30

Refreshments & admin costs: £20

**Drawing from Nature: Nature Photography & Illustration**.

Our location is ideal for nature photography or illustration workshops - particularly macro and botanical work. Tutor Chris Smith can offer photography workshops, and botanical illustration can either be taught by other PCA staff, or one of the NFA team tutors at a reasonable day rate.

Costs

NFA Tutor fee: £150

Tutor assistant fee: £120

Materials: £20

Refreshments & admin costs: £20

**Natural Dyes**

Fashion and Textile students may be interested in a workshop using natural fabric dyes created from woodland plants and lichens. This workshop would include learning the basic principles of using dye plants, extracting dyes, understanding mordants, modifying colour, and considering the place for plant dyes in relation to regenerative practices and ecological crisis. We have an experienced natural dye tutor, Lucy Lepciani, on the NFA tutor team who can teach this workshop, or PCA tutors may wish to do this themselves.

Costs

Lead Tutor (Lucy) fee: £200

Tutor assistant fee: £120

Refreshments & admin costs: £20

Materials:

Mordant £40,

Wool (optional) £50

Lunch £45 (optional)

**What do we do about the Climate?**

How does it feel to be a young person in an age of climate and ecological emergency? How can I make a difference in my life? What would I enjoy doing to make that difference? These are some of the questions we will consider/address? in a fun and interactive day of exploration and discussion. We will examine practical climate and ecological solutions on a global, local and personal scale; helping the students to understand and make informed choices about what they could do, using their own sense of agency and creativity, whilst supportively addressing the emotional impact of these challenging times. Tutor: Chris Smith

Costs

NFA Tutor fee: £150

Tutor assistant fee: £120

Materials: £20

Refreshments & admin costs: £20

**Working with cob**

Cob is a traditional and ecologically friendly building material which lends itself particularly well to sculptural forms. We can offer workshops in which students make sculptural forms with cob whilst learning about its application in forms such as cob walls, cob oven building and outdoor seating. Cob workshops will either be ran by Chris Smith or NFA team member Jo Clark.

Costs

NFA Tutor fee: £150

Tutor assistant fee: £120

Materials: £100

Refreshments & admin costs: £20

**Intro to Permaculture Design**

Although originally created as a set of design principles and practices for cultivating organic food, Permaculture is in fact a design process that actually has an incredible range of applications; from lifestyle choices to business, product design and art practice.

We can teach these principles, and show inspiring examples of permaculture practice in an introductory day that can either be a bespoke taster workshop offered by PCA tutor Chris Smith, or as an internationally recognised Introduction to Permaculture course (accredited by the Permaculture Association), taught by NFA tutor team members Marina O’Connell or Bob Mehew from The Apricot Centre, Dartington.

Costs

NFA Tutor (Marina or Bob, Certificated) fee: £150

Or: Chris Smith, non-certificated: £130

Tutor assistant fee: £120

Materials: £10

Refreshments & admin costs: £20

Certification fee: tbc

**Tree Planting and Agroforestry**

At appropriate points in the seasons, we can offer PCA students the chance to plant trees as we expand our woodland and forest garden areas. Potentially we can also combine this with an educational trip to the neighbouring and internationally respected Agroforestry Research Trust demonstration site. These activities can be used as a part of a learning experience about climate change solutions; carbon sequestration, increasing biodiversity, food resilience and ecological restoration (or ‘Re-Wilding’). Tutor: Chris Smith.

Costs

NFA Tutor fee: £150

Tutor assistant fee: £120

Materials: £20

Refreshments & admin costs: £20

Agroforestry Research Trust visit fee: £tbc (optional)

**The Word from The Trees**

Starting with some well-chosen nature connection and creative writing exercises, students will then use their writing as the inspiration for creating artworks; whether sculpture, photography, illustration or whatever else they can create in a day. We will mentor and guide them through this process; a process in which they will stretch and explore their use of English Language, whilst also exploring and experimenting with artistic process in an insightful fusion of language and art. Tutor: Chris Smith

Costs

NFA Tutor fee: £150

Tutor assistant fee: £120

Materials: £20

Refreshments & admin costs: £20

**Introduction to Ecology**

A one day exploration of fundamental ecological concepts using our site as a living resource for learning; exploring ecology through the local and bioregional lens of the Dart Valley and a typical british woodland and pasture site. Tutor: Chris Smith

Costs

NFA Tutor fee: £150

Tutor assistant fee: £120

Materials: £20

Refreshments & admin costs: £20

**The Specimen and The Muse: Nature Observation & Ecology**

It’s amazing how much you can learn about a whole species, and local area and the subject of ecology through the observation of a single individual plant or animal out in nature. Why is it living there, and how is it interacting with its environment? There are so many interesting questions we can explore. This will be the starting point for our workshop. The students will then add to their new found skills in scientific observation with creative and artistic forms of exploration and expression (creative writing, illustration, photography, film; whatever suits their interest). Time spent observing nature is also excellent for enhancing wellbeing; so we will bring a little bit of mindfulness to the day also. Tutor: Chris Smith

Costs

NFA Tutor fee: £150

Tutor assistant fee: £120

Materials: £20

Refreshments & admin costs: £20

**Wild Food Forage**

Our woodland, hedgerows and surrounding countryside provides the perfect location for some wild food foraging. Students will learn about our local ecology whilst learning how to safely identify and harvest wild food. We will prepare and cook a fireside feast using our wild food. We will also create time, space and inspiration for our students to record and respond to their botanical discoveries in an artistic medium of their choice; with guidance on photography, illustration, flower pressing, poetry and more. Tutor: Chris Smith or Lucy Lepciani

Costs

NFA Tutor fee: £150

Tutor assistant fee: £120

Materials: £30

Refreshments & admin costs: £20

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**About Costs**

We appreciate that many schools may have budget restrictions; to counter this we are currently seeking funding to enable us to subsidise the costs for schools. Schools can help us strengthen our bid by indicating which programs they are interested in and how participating in our schools program will benefit their students. For schools that may wish to make use of our offer before we have established funding to subsidise costs, we have tried to keep costs to an absolute minimum. Further reductions in costs could be created by the school/college providing the Tutor assistant (saving the £120 Tutor Assistant fee)

**Facilities and Capacity**

The site is currently being developed. By October 2020 we plan to have sufficient infrastructure for learning experiences to begin; by which time we will have built luxury compost toilet facilities, outdoor learning, social and fireside facilities, and also a 24 ft diameter canvas yurt teaching space. We have enough space to work safely within the covid guidelines for 12 students with 2 meter spacing within the yurt classroom, and the potential for more students with a rotation of indoor and outdoor learning activities.

**Location**

Our site is at Little Barton, Littlehempston. We have 12 acres of broadleaf woodland and a 13 acre field site which is being developed to include a tree nursery, organic vegetable beds, a polytunnel, a forest garden and some demonstration agroforestry areas.

**Safeguarding**

All of our tutors will be DBS checked. We will work with the schools/colleges to ensure rigorous health and safety risk assessments and safety control measures are in place, with a trained outdoor first aider on hand at all times.

**Residentials and Short Courses**

In addition to the one-day workshops, NFA could also offer short courses on similar themes to those described above, or developed in collaboration with your school. These could be run either on a number of consecutive days or on repeated visits over a period of time as arranged. We can also offer residential ‘immersive experience’ camps, which we can design specifically to your school’s brief and incorporate any of the above described workshop elements, with an added dimension of a greater focus on wellbeing and resilience building. In terms of accommodation, we are not yet ready for residential visits, but will be by April 2021, with a mixture of on-site Bell tent and camping tent accommodation available, solar showers and luxury compost toilets, indoor and outdoor cooking areas.