



Royal Academy of Arts

To whom it may concern

It is my pleasure to commend the work of Caroline Marcus Associates for their excellent work with the RA Learning Team. In the autumn of 2016, Caroline and Tali Krikler worked with RA Learning staff to on a project to reconsider our work with community audiences.

The project involved surveying our current offer, providing a context of other arts organisations in London working with community organisations, guiding us to develop shared principles for our work with community groups and leading us in defining the scope and strategy for our practice in this area. Caroline and Tali conducted an audit of our current offer with eight team members and probed their experiences ideas, feelings and opinions related to the current offer. Working with me and managers in the department, they developed and delivered a very effective Away Day. Caroline and Tali provided us with excellent resources for further learning and guided us to examples of best practice in London and beyond. They also compiled a final report with a critical path for moving forward. Since two members of the team could not attend the Away Day, Caroline held a second session so that everyone's voice could be heard.

Throughout the process Caroline was highly organised, professional and warm. She kept us from going off on tangents and ran very effective and focused interviews, meetings as well as the Away Day. She shared her extensive knowledge and experience with us but never pressed a particular approach to community programmes or preconceived idea as to how they should be structured. She empowered all of us to take an active role. And she was clear from the beginning that she was guiding us on the beginning of a process that we would have to take ownership of and complete ourselves. While many on the team were a little nervous about the process in advance, Caroline won us all over. We are now moving ahead with a more coordinated approach to planning, communication is improved within the Learning Department and this is thanks to all of the hard work that Caroline Marcus and Associates put into the project.

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