

ELAN ArtistsInspire Virtual Facilitation Guide

Prepared for the **ArtistsInspire Grants** Program, July 2020 by ELAN Quebec's ArtEd Team:

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The [ArtistsInspire School Grants](#) program was successfully launched in spring 2019 as a funding initiative for schools to provide hands-on creative experiences with artists, for Quebec students in English communities. Almost 300 English public and secondary schools are eligible for this minority language arts & culture funding in Quebec.

The \$1500 Grants are one way that ELAN's ArtEd Team supports ESC Artists to connect with English Schools and Communities. The Team's overall goal is to facilitate connection that leads to diverse and engaging creative arts and culture learning experiences facilitated by professional Artists in collaboration with educators and/or community organizers. We believe that the future of Quebec's creative economy depends on supporting current and future Artists in their development and livelihood.

Introduction

The Coronavirus pandemic has challenged educators globally to improvise and innovate. This guide was developed to consolidate our learning about how to facilitate high quality ArtistsInspire learning experiences with teachers and students.

We expect that during the 2020-2021 school year, there will be two scenarios for schools using their grants virtually:

1. Students will be in physical classrooms with their teachers and you will facilitate groups using Zoom or other technology.
2. You will be facilitating sessions (using Zoom/ other platforms) with teachers and students joining on multiple screens from their respective locations.

We believe it is possible that some schools in very low risk regions will decide to welcome Artists to work in-person. We will address Artist concerns and preparation required for this scenario in a separate communication.

From April - July 2020, the ArtEd Team facilitated:

- **Free Online Youth & Family Workshops directly to participants at home, and**
- **Workshops for Elementary teachers who were either teaching in their classrooms with students, *or* teaching students online through Zoom or another platform.**

This guide responds to the following question:

What did we learn that is most important in delivering high quality, engaging online arts & culture experiences?



Prepare

There are often little surprises and glitches in online facilitation. The more prepared you are, the more equipped you will be to deal with these.

Prepare - Understand the Differences

Online facilitation is different than in-person - how you deliver information or content, while different from in-person, can have as much or more impact. The best way to understand the difference is to attend virtual workshops yourself. Artists particularly need to be aware of what is needed to adapt to:

- Time/timing challenges (delays/latency, lower attention spans for presentations)
- Technology requirements
- Materials available to your participants

Prepare - Weeks before the workshop

Weeks before your workshop, you should...

- Attend other workshops.
- Use your Zoom personal account to practice and try things out. You can record yourself and see how it looks.
- Plan your workshop. Write down the steps and timing. While each workshop is distinct, we recommend that workshops be about one hour long (shorter for early elementary). To achieve program goals, ArtistsInspire experiences must be spread out over two or more workshop sessions.
- Have all your workshop documents ready (Powerpoints, handouts, resource links, etc.). Incorporating photos/videos, etc. can be a great way to engage participants.

Prepare - The day of your workshop

Just before your workshop, you should...

- Prepare your environment ([See Set the Scene](#) for more details)
- Pre-load videos, websites, slideshows, etc. so participants do not have to watch you clicking when you screen share.
- Close any unnecessary tabs, windows or programs.
- Check your Zoom settings and your gear.

Know Your Tech

There are some interesting options in Zoom that can enhance your experience and that of your participants. There are also many options in terms of the type of gear you need. You do not need to be a total “GEAR NERD” or spend a lot of money to facilitate online workshops (but you can be!). A simple setup with one computer can work.

Know Your Tech - Zoom

Zoom's functionality has made it the most popular choice for interactive learning experiences and is the platform we recommend if schools allow. Review the basics [here](#).

Our recommendations include:

- **Audio:**
 - Disable Suppression of Background noise and Turn On Original Sound to improve your sound/make it less choppy.
 - Music or Sound from Computer: For high quality audio, share directly from your computer. This does not change your video screen for participants. This does not work for rhythm-sensitive activities due to latency/ delays.
- **Screen Sharing:**
 - Video: Use "Share Computer Sound" and "Optimize Screen Share for Video Clip" for best results.
 - Whiteboard: Participants must choose "Annotate" to be able to write or draw.

Know Your Tech - Zoom (cont'd)

There are different view options in Zoom. Here are a few possibilities:

- **Speaker:** This makes the screen of the person speaking larger for you.
- **Gallery:** This makes all Zoom windows the same size for you and allows you to see many users at once. When there are many participants, they might not all fit on one screen so you may have to scroll through multiple screens to see all of the participants.
- **Spotlight:** When you are the host, you can make one participant's video the focus for everyone. Participants can choose to return to Gallery view if they prefer.
- **Pin Video:** This allows you to focus one particular participant in a larger screen.

Know Your Tech - Your personal setup

When you get a new phone, it takes a bit of time to learn how to use it. It is the same with online facilitation. Here are some key items to consider relating to your tech:

- Internet connection - ethernet or high speed wireless (More info [HERE](#))
- Device you use to connect:
 - Laptop/desktop (advantages: you can see more participants, screen sharing is easier, you have access to your computer's hard drive),
 - Tablet/ iPad/phone (advantages: may have a better camera and mic, easy to move around)
- Screens/ monitors & Cameras - one or two? (e.g. one for your camera and one to watch your participants)
- Microphone (e.g. integrated phone or computer mic vs. external mic for sound-sensitive activities like body percussion)

Know Your Tech - 2 Cameras?

Many artists decide to use 2 cameras. Here are things to consider:

- Only one device can be connected to Zoom audio - otherwise you will get feedback
- Place your second device in a strategic place (e.g. on a gooseneck above your hands for visual artists or zoomed in or out on full body or feet for dance - see examples)
- Use Zoom's [Spotlight](#) function to toggle between views

Do you have more specific questions about gear? Ask us! We have some interesting links and resources compiled by ELAN.

Know Your Tech - 2 Camera Example



Lisa Kimberly Glickman, ArtistsInspire Visual Artist

Goose Neck Tablet Holder available at Walmart, Bureau en Gros, etc. Prices vary. [HERE](#) is an example. Raised laptop for comfort.

Know Your Tech - 2 Camera Example



Deirdre Potash, ArtistsInspire Visual Artist

DIY phone stand for dual camera setup. Raised laptop for comfort. Attention to lighting.

Know Your Tech - Examples



Shure SM58 (or similar industry standard vocal mic) for close-up dialogue. More sensitive condenser mic to pick up body percussions. Sound card to send both signals to Zoom.



Geremia Lorenzo Lodi, ArtistsInspire Music & Sound Artist

Connect

One of the keys to the success of your ArtistsInspire experience is to connect with the school/educators you will be working with at least once for a 30-minute conversation.

In our promotion to teachers, we describe the steps of ArtistsInspire as:

Step 1: Connect with an Artist

Step 2: Collaborate to plan

Step 3: Create - students participate in the creative arts & culture experience

Step 4: Celebrate!

Connect - A few weeks before

When you are connecting with a school, you should have a conversation with the teacher(s) you will be working with directly to discuss the following:

- Scheduling/timeline of the project
- How activities will occur during the workshop and what will continue with the teacher between/after workshops, aided by your instructional materials
- Materials and tech available to students: every school is different, and in some cases, every classroom is different
- Platform used: Zoom (whose account), Google Meet, other
- Group size and number of groups
- Class or school policy of online etiquette and comfort (e.g. Have students done this before? Are students allowed to chat?)
- Follow-up documents and project completion timeline

Connect - A few weeks before (cont'd)

In the event that the teacher will be in a physical classroom with students, there are things to consider and discuss:

- *How will the students see you?* Ideally on a SmartBoard screen, Apple TV or similar.
- *Will you be able to see the students?* You can ask the teacher to draw the curtains to reduce the glare and place the computer with the webcam at a good vantage point so that you feel as though you are part of the class.
- *How will students ask questions or interact with you?* Will the teacher call on students to respond to questions or will you? Perhaps they can step up to the camera or one student can be the reporter and walk around with a mobile device.

Set the Scene

The scene you are facilitating from should reflect your professional artistic practice.

The ArtistsInspire experience includes seeing a “Real” professional artist at work. Your tools of the trade should be visible.

Set the Scene - Welcome to My Studio

Many students have never seen a real, working artist and are very curious to see where they work. Show them! If you have a studio space, consider giving them a 360 tour of your space to show...

- Musical instruments
- Easels and brushes
- Cameras and lenses
- Your writing desk
- Works in progress
- Inspirational items

Set the Scene - Transform your space

If you are working from home and do not have a dedicated space, remember that your frame online is quite small. Transform your space to reflect your practice.

- Put paintings and other art work up
- Display your tools of the trade
- Put away any irrelevant objects - they take away from the mystique of you being a “Real” artist
- Put a backdrop up behind you to close off your space
- Record yourself using Zoom to see you in your space as the participants do (tip: the camera frame is somewhat larger and captures parts of your space you don't see in your own camera view).

NOTE: Experiment with lighting to brighten up your space on camera. Avoid having windows in the shot as they appear blown out and it can be distracting.

Set the Scene - Artists in their Spaces



Framed studio space. Condenser mic for capturing live room sound and played through an amp for warmer sound. Audio captured by iPhone 7 for Zoom for streaming live music performance.

Guillaume Jabbour, ArtistsInspire Music & Sound Artist

Set the Scene - Artists in their Spaces

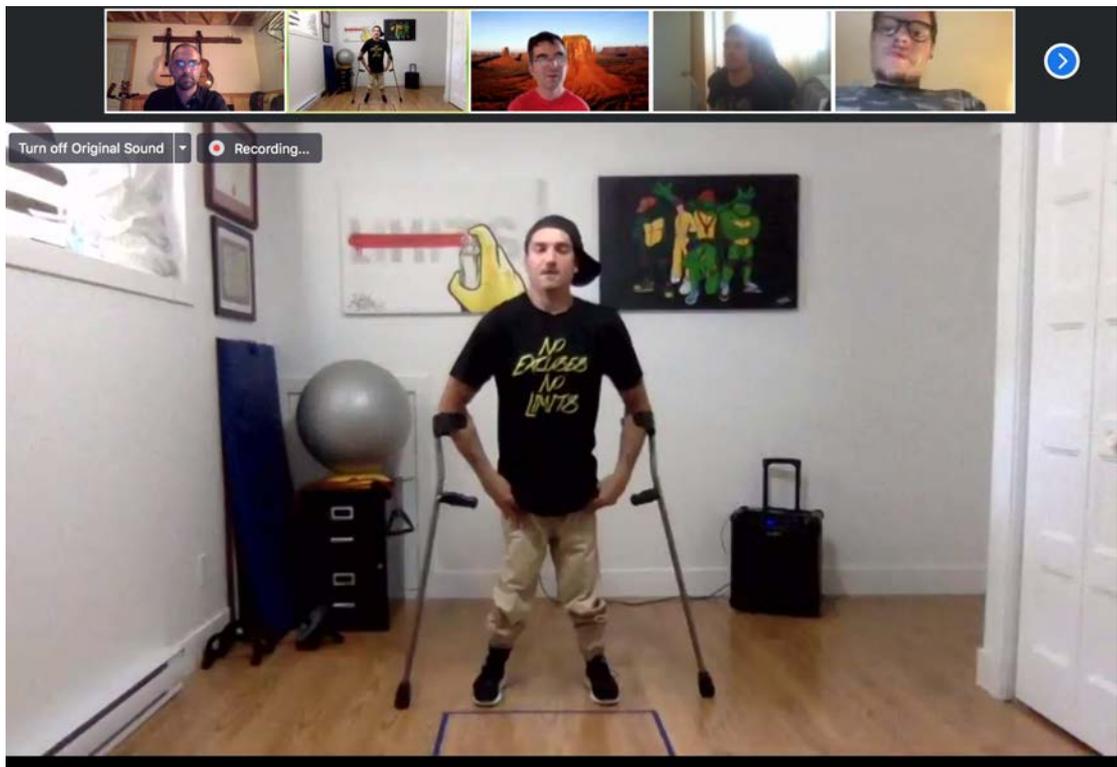


Sonia St-Michel, ArtistsInspire Dance Artist



Backdrop used to cut off space in turn creating more of it.

Set the Scene - Artists in their Spaces



Interesting and relevant artwork. Music played from an amp in the space for rhythm-sensitive movement. Square drawn on the floor for demo purposes. Later on, Luca also set up a second camera to capture his footwork more closely.

Luca “Lazylegz” Patuelli, ArtistsInspire Dance Artist

Interact

Our early conversations with teachers, school administrators, arts organizations, parents and students clearly told us that students need interaction! In following the ArtistsInspire hands-on creative experience model, Artists should interact with workshop participants as soon as possible and as much as possible. The goal is to build a relationship with participants to encourage learning and creativity.

Interact - How to interact with participants during the Online workshop

Examples of ways that you can interact with participants on Zoom:

- Greet participants by name as they join.
- Ask questions and have participants answer orally or in the chat. You can choose participants to answer or ask them to put up their actual hand or have them use Zoom's raise hand feature.
- Conduct a poll. Click [HERE](#) to learn how.
- Ask participants to hold up their work.
- In a classroom setting, depending on the teachers' protocol, you can:
 - encourage students to step up to the web cam to interact with you
 - assign a student "reporter" to walk around the room with a mobile device to have peers interact with you

Interact - How to interact on social media

Virtual workshops can lead to increased interaction via social media as part of the project and/or for promotional purposes. Here are some guidelines:

- Follow the school's lead:
 - Review the school's website/social media pages
 - Identify who manages social media at the school and discuss policy prior to any social media engagement
- Send content to make it easy for the teacher/school to post. Possibilities include:
 - Images (e.g. materials, works-in-progress etc.)
 - Text (description of activities, Artist reflections etc.)
 - Links & Tags to your website/professional* social media, ELAN ArtEd & our partner, LEARN
 - @elanarted #artistsinspire & #TeachLearnHelp

Interact - Your professional* online presence

If you do not currently have a professional online presence, now's the time! Choose who you want to interact with: Facebook is generally more followed by schools, teachers and parents, Instagram by youth, and Twitter by educators for professional development.

IMPORTANT: Parent/student consent agreements only apply to organizations

- Images of students and students' work can only be posted by the school or ArtistsInspire, not by individual Artists
- Share/like/comment on ArtistsInspire posts - every action helps us all!
- If you post or share from your professional accounts, please tag ArtistsInspire:
@elanarted #artistsinspire #TeachLearnHelp

Let's work together to increase Artists' visibility!

Use Multimedia

With all of the information in the universe at your fingertips as well as access to your own body of work, it makes sense to use multimedia (e.g. photos, videos, music, web links, etc.) during your introduction and throughout your workshop to enhance the content you are presenting.

Use Multimedia - To enhance your workshop

Multimedia can be used to add to your presentation, illustrate examples and maintain interest among participants. Once you have organized your multimedia, you can share files and links with your participants in previews, during the workshop using screen-sharing or as follow-up for future reference. Here are some examples:

- Powerpoint slideshow
- Youtube videos
- Soundcloud for audio files
- Images online

Use, but don't over-use: presentation segments still need to be brief as a percentage of the overall workshop time (see [Create...asap!](#)).

**Create...as
soon as
possible!**

Watching and listening to a talking head for too long can be BORING - we've observed that students lose attention quickly in virtual presentations. Get participants creating as soon as possible! It is not necessary to script your workshop word for word, but you should practice your speaking parts so that you do not ramble on. Segments should be short and meaningful (max 10 minutes each including multimedia).

Create...asap! To maintain interest

For a one-hour virtual workshop, your total introduction time should last 10-15 minutes. After that, you want participants to start being creative. It is important to explain that they will not finish the creative process during the workshop (as you will have explained when preparing with the teachers). During the first workshop, participants will have the opportunity to start with the artist, ask questions, share work and interact to build a connection to the artist as well as the project. By the end of the workshop, Artists need to see that teachers and students know how to confidently proceed with the next steps to complete the project between workshops. If possible, show your own works in progress and allow participants to see that these can be messy and frequently altered. This is part of the creative process!

Follow Up

After your workshop, it is important to follow up with instructional materials (e.g. step-by-step explanations, examples, instructional videos, etc.). This will allow participants to keep working until the next workshop.

Follow Up - support, consolidate, complete

Following the workshop, send an email to the participants with follow-up materials. Your email should contain the following clear instructional materials, such as:

- Step-by step video (videos can be housed on the ELAN Youtube channel)
- Written directions with images to support
- Handouts to be printed should be **black and white** or minimally coloured to reduce printing costs

NOTE: We will be making it clear to schools that our ArtistsInspire teaching artists make a living from their workshops and materials. We will ask that they discuss with you how information can be shared and re-used. We strongly recommend that you add copyright information on your materials (e.g. © Guillaume Jabbour 2020.). Also please add the logo banner (below) and [Acknowledgement Statement](#) on all materials.



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Follow Up - support, consolidate, complete (cont'd)

More items that can be included in your follow-up email:

- Photo/video/audio/written examples of works in progress and completed works (yours and from students if the teacher emails content and confirms that parents/students have signed school media consent forms*)
- Links to examples
- Information about posting on social media and tagging: @elanarted, #artistsinspire, #elanqc #elanarted #TeachLearnHelp
- Your availability to answer questions/provide feedback

*Schools' media consent forms are signed by parents at the beginning of the school year, giving permission for the school to share photos of students and/or of their work. If a student's work is going to be shared online, they should also give consent.

Celebrate

How will you celebrate the process and outcomes of students' creative experience?

Plan ahead with the teacher to document and share within the school/with their community and through ArtistsInspire's online presence.

What would you like to see in [Stories & News](#)/on social media through the photos and feedback shared by the contact teacher?

Celebrate - In and out of the school

As noted in the [Interact](#) section, photos including students can only be posted by the school or by the ArtistsInspire team to ensure consent requirements are met. Once posted, you can then share on your social media pages. However, you can celebrate the students' efforts in other ways:

- Suggest to the teacher that other classes could “visit” during your final Zoom session to see/experience student work.
- Take screenshots that do not show student faces (e.g. have students whose parents have given consent hold their work up close to the camera).
- Post thoughtful insights with related images/video on your professional social media and tag the school and ArtistsInspire (FB & Instagram: @elanarted).

Discipline-Specific Recommendations

Visual

Film, Photo &
Digital Media

Music & Sound

Dance & Theatre

Literary

Visual

Materials: Keep in mind that schools have limited resources at this time and students at home may have even less. In classrooms, Coronavirus requires that activities be easy to set up and clean up. Materials cannot be shared!

- Found materials, recycled materials and nature can provide ample art supplies.
- Some artists are considering mailing supplies: material purchases and postage fees cannot exceed 20% (\$300) per \$1500 school grant.

Preparation Recommendations:

- Show many examples (photos, videos) of the project at different stages.
- For participants to continue developing between/after workshops, clearly layout instructions in text (e.g. Word or PDF) and in video if possible. Videos should be short and show key steps. Videos can be housed on ELAN's youtube channel. Ask us! As you make your video think about your audience's age and use appropriate language and detail.

Visual (cont'd)

Technology Considerations:

- 2 camera setup - this is ideal for showing a close-up of your hands working
- Playing music in the background while you and participants are creating individually
 - On Zoom, you can “Share Screen > Advanced > Music or Computer Sound Only” - This will not change your view and will play high quality audio that everyone can hear at the same time.
 - You can also play music in your space using a speaker and allow your device microphone to pick up the sound - the quality is lower but it may be less taxing on your computer if internet bandwidth is an issue

Music & Sound

- You can use a microphone (via a sound card) to capture your sound, which can improve the audio quality but your sound is still at the mercy of your listeners' setup
- You may want to use a condenser mic to pick up your whole space if you are playing an instrument
- If you want participants to play, clap or sing along, you are the only one who can have your sound on - others must be muted, otherwise latency will make things awkward

Music & Sound (cont'd)

- Playing pre-recorded music
 - On Zoom, you can “Share Screen > Advanced > Music or Computer Sound Only” - This will not change your view and will play high quality audio that everyone can hear at the same time.
 - You can also play music in your space using a speaker and allow your device microphone to pick up the sound - the quality is lower but it may be less taxing on your computer, if internet is an issue.
- You can use Zoom’s recording function to capture audio - the m4a file will be saved in a Zoom folder on your computer or on the cloud
 - This is useful for collaborative works - [HERE](#) is an example of voice clips captured during a Zoom session
- Become familiar with mobile devices as mics and editing and mixing tools (e.g. iPhone, Android, iPad, Garageband, FL Studio, Voice Recorder).

NOTE: There is high demand for activities for band and choir teachers

Literary

- Read works (stories, poems, etc.) that you and other authors have written.
- Give a bit of background on the authors.
- Consider selecting work from a diversity of authors, if appropriate.
- Use prompts and stimulating questions to get students writing.
- Use the interactive Whiteboard to brainstorm together. Click [HERE](#) for more info.
- Encourage participants to create their works in multiple formats (e.g. pictures, orally, recorded audio, comic strip, video, etc.).
- Short works (e.g Haiku) may be created during the workshop, but longer works (e.g. short stories) will likely be created outside of the workshop. Do what makes sense for the teacher, the participants and you. You may want to focus on writing the outline or storyboard during the workshop and have students do the bulk of the writing afterwards, guided by the materials in your follow-up email.

Film, Photo & Digital Media

- Become familiar with mobile devices as cameras/mics/editing & mixing tools (e.g. iPhone, Android, iPad, Garageband, iPhoto, iMovie, FL Studio, Voice Recorder).
- Show multiple short examples.
- Demonstrate how to use a storyboard or other methods to make a project plan.
- Use the interactive Whiteboard to brainstorm together. Click [HERE](#) for more info.
- Use Zoom recorder to capture scenes.
- Demo camera angles and framing live using your phone as a second camera.
- Inspire students during the workshop, then send them out to the field to capture content.

Dance & Theatre

- Show excerpts from live shows you have been involved in.
- Get participants moving/engaging in practice activities asap.
- Use one camera or pre-set to capture your whole body and the space around you, while a second camera/pre-set shows a close-up on your feet, hands, or face as needed.
- Get students to move using their Zoom window (e.g. Come close to the camera. Move away from the camera. Touch the corners of your screen.)
- For rhythm sensitive activities, make sure participants are muted and that the music is timed with your body. You probably have to play music in your space for that. Call and response works well as long as you give plenty of time between instructions.
- For atmospheric music or more abstract movement, you can share music from your computer (see [Music & Sound](#))

Conclusion

Nothing will ever replace in-person workshop facilitation and interactions. However, virtual facilitation is necessary at this time to keep participants connected to the outside world and to give them access to high quality art education programs like ArtistsInspire.

Announcements relating to schools suggest that art education may take even more of a backseat this fall, creating an even greater need for programs like ArtistsInspire.

We would like to thank all of the Artists who joined our learning community conversations this Spring and Summer, contributing insight and practical ideas that are incorporated throughout this guide. We would also like to thank our incredible team of Artists who facilitated the spring and summer online workshops in a professional and dynamic manner, particularly the artists who came on board for the first pilot round in the midst of quarantine and the onset of the pandemic. You all demonstrated the power of art education and the need for it in our communities.

Questions?

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