

Call for Applications: Training - Psychological First Aid Learning & Support Program

MCH Learning & Support Program

MCH works with experienced practitioners from our network to offer training and learning opportunities to our community. The topics are selected based on inputs from our Fellows (for example through surveys and from post-program feedback) and from our own observations and reflections on what skills and knowledge could benefit practitioners working at the intersection of arts and society in Asia.

During 2025, we are offering two training and learning programs on different topics which follow the same structure; a series of virtual workshops (spread over 4-5 weeks) with a small group of participants, including one-to-one consultation with the trainer/facilitator on the participant's specific issues and queries. We are also launching a Cultural Leaders Pod, for small group peer-learning on specific areas of leadership practice.

The training and learning topics for 2025 are Psychological First Aid (May 27-29, June 4, 11, 18, 25, 2025) and Ethical Dilemmas in Arts Practice (July 30, August 6, 13, 20, 26 2025). The first Cultural Leaders Pod will run from April-June 2025, and focus on Networking & Partnership Building. Please follow @mekonghub on social media to keep up to date.

1. What is Psychological First Aid?

Psychological First Aid can be compared to first aid for physical wounds; it refers to the psychological and emotional help and support that you can give a person in immediate need. It involves enabling people to feel safe, comforted and listened to, not pressuring them to talk, but helping them to feel calm and connected, supported and know how to get more help or information as needed.

For arts and cultural practitioners who work in an organising or facilitating capacity, where they have a duty of care¹ to other colleagues, participants or audience members, it is an essential skill to learn, especially if the nature of your work or the context you work in means that the people are likely to be suffering from stress or experiencing other situations that may impact their mental health and wellbeing.

Please note that this training will not prepare you to become a counsellor, and will not qualify you to professionally deal with individuals' mental health issues. It will provide you with a set of tools that you can use to navigate situations where mental health issues arise and require an immediate response. It will also help you to create a bridge for the person who is affected to be able to access a qualified professional to take the treatment further.

¹ A 'duty of care' is a moral or legal obligation to ensure the safety or well-being of others

2. How does this program work?

The trainer, Carolina Herbert, will guide the participants to look at and understand how trauma and stress impacts people. Some of the skills the participants will learn include:

- How to be more confident in supporting others psychologically
- What it means to be a safe person
- What are the signs of shock
- How to communicate and respond to someone in shock
- How to support a person who feels overwhelmed
- How and where to refer people for more support
- How to take care of your own wellbeing when supporting others

Participants will also have a chance to look at their own experiences, where they will be encouraged to discover their own inner wisdom and knowledge. They can help themselves to be more equipped in dealing with shock, traumatic events, crisis, loss and any complex situation people might face in life.

This Program includes the following components:

- **On-boarding**
 - In-take questionnaire, for participants to make the trainer aware of their current wellbeing and any information that is useful for the trainer to know given the topic of the Program.
 - 30 minute individual one-to-one, for the trainer to get to know participants individually and understand more about what brings them to the program and what they might focus their learning on.
- **Group workshops**
 - There will be four 3-hour workshops, facilitated by the trainer. These will include a mix of training skills and knowledge, creative exercises and peer-learning through group discussions
 - The final workshop will include presentations from the participants about their learning. The trainer will provide detailed guidance and support on preparing for this. MCH staff will join for these presentations.
 - MCH staff will also join the first part of the first group workshop, to get to know participants and to answer any questions
- **Creative journaling**
 - Creative journaling is a powerful reflective practice tool to expand personal and professional development that participants will be required to do regularly during the four weeks of the programme. During the workshops, the trainer will guide the participants on how to do creative journaling and how to use it as a tool for processing the learning both in the workshops and to reflect between sessions. The trainer will give assignments between the workshops that participants can use to develop their creative journals. We assume that each assignment between workshops will take you about 60 minutes.
 - To support the learning and the creative journaling, each participant will also have a 30-minute one-to-one session with the trainer, that will happen at a convenient time after workshop 2 and before workshop 4.

Participants who have fully participated in the training program, worked on their assignments and present their learnings will get a Certificate of Psychological First Aid Training Program co-issued by MCH and [ALKIMIA](#).

3. What are the goals of this program?

- Provide a chance for art and cultural practitioners whose work is at the intersection of art/culture and society to increase their understanding of emotional impacts that people they work with may be experiencing, and learn skills to support others
- Offer practical tools which will support participants to be more confident to support others in situations requiring an immediate response, using creative methods and guidance led by an experienced and professional trainer
- Build up networking and peer exchange between art and cultural practitioners in Asia
- Develop MCH's awareness and understanding of the health and wellbeing challenges experienced and encountered by our network

4. Who are the target participants for this program?

The target participants for this program are art and cultural practitioners (including artists) from Asia who are in a position where they have a duty of care to others. For example, this may include practitioners leading or facilitating projects, or organising events or workshops. Their duty of care might be to other colleagues, or to participants - who may also be arts and cultural practitioners, or might be community members, or the general public.

We particularly want to support practitioners who are currently or regularly, working with groups or communities where they are encountering situations or issues that they don't feel equipped to handle, and recognise that a foundation in psychological first aid would help them at this time.

To be eligible for this program you must:

- Be an arts and culture practitioner (including but not limited to artist, manager, facilitator, producer, curator, teacher...)
- Be a citizen of an Asian country
 - At least 4 places of 8 will be awarded to citizens from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam
- Have enough working English to participate in training, including:
 - Delivery from the trainer
 - Participation in the process and discussion with other participants
 - Please note that your creative journaling assignments can be completed in any language of your choice, when you give the presentations in the 4th workshop should be in English
- Be available and commit to participate in all sessions (see below), do the assignments (with the tool of creative journaling) and presentation of learnings

Date	Time (ICT time)	Participation
May 27-29	30 mins between 14.00pm-17.00pm	Each participant should participate in a 30-min one-to-one onboarding session. The exact time could be coordinated within the time frame the Trainer offers as listed.

		Selected participants not making time for the onboard session will not be able to participate in the group workshops.
June 4th	14.00pm-17.00pm	All participants should fully attend as a group
June 11th	14.00pm-17.00pm	All participants should fully attend as a group
Between June 11th and June 25th	30 mins	Each participant should participate in a 30-min one-to-one check in session with the Trainer on their assignments at a convenient time
June 18th	14.00pm-17.00pm	All participants should fully attend as a group
June 25th	14.00pm-17.00pm	All participants should fully attend as a group. Each participant will present their learnings in a group reflection session.

* [Time zone converter](#) for your reference

You will also need to:

- Have access to a quiet space and equipment to allow you to focus and participate in the online training workshops. You will need access to a good and reliable internet connection and privacy so you can use your camera and also talk confidentially.
 - Please note that MCH may be able to offer financial support to help you access a quiet space if this is needed. This can be discussed if you are offered a place on the program
- Commit to participate all sessions listed in this document
 - Please consider the spaces are limited so should be taken and committed seriously
 - The training expects full participation and absence of any participants will influence the collective learning
- Understand and support the guidelines the trainer builds to create a safe and effective space for participants' learning
 - Participants will be required to have their cameras on, as would be the case if it were in an in-person workshop
 - Be willing to participate and also well inform the trainer what conditions you have or challenges you might meet before during the training so the trainer could support you better and more safely
 - Respect your own and others' personal matters and confidentiality

5. Why does the program have a selection process for this training? What are the selection criteria?

- We would like to offer the limited places to applicants most in need and most likely to benefit from the training workshop

- We would also like to have a balanced group of participants, comprising a range of experiences they would like to bring in to discuss, coming from diverse cultural contexts, and facing complementary challenges and needs, so that creative and participatory process of learning will be best practiced
- The shortlisted applicants will be invited to a short and friendly interview
 - it will be within 30 mins
 - during April 28-30 2025

The criteria that the program will use to select participants for this program include:

- Adherence to the eligibility criteria
- Potential of the training workshop to benefit applicants
- Ensuring that the group of participants is diverse in terms of range of experiences and areas want to inquiry related to the topic, countries of origin, art and cultural practice – which will enhance the participants’ learning and widen their network

6. How do I apply for this program?

- To apply for this program you need to complete the [application form](#) and email it to jennifer@mekongculturalhub.org by April 14th 2025 (before 23.50pm ICT time)
- When you send your application, we will confirm that we have received it. If you have not heard from us within 3 working days of sending your application, please contact us again
- Shortly after the closing date we will review all applications for eligibility
- All applications meeting the eligibility criteria will then be reviewed according to the selection criteria listed above
- Shortlisted applicants will be invited to have a 30-minute interview during April 23-24 2025
- All candidates will be notified of the outcome of the selection process by May 5th 2025

7. What is the structure and timeline of the program?

Onboarding		Training & Learning			
In-take questionnaire	One-to-one session	Online workshops 14:00 - 17.00pm (ICT time)			
May 12-16	May 27-29 14:00 - 17.00pm (ICT time)	June 4th	June 11th	June 18th	June 25
Every participant will fill in a questionnaire sent by the trainer and only viewed by the trainer.	Every participant participates in a 30-minute 1:1 session with the trainer. The exact time could be coordinated within the time frame listed above.	Every participant needs to participate in 4 group workshop sessions at the time and dates listed above.			
			Between workshop 2 and 4, each participant should participate in a 30-min one-to-one check in session with the		

		Trainer at a convenient time.	
<<--- Creative journaling --->> including assignments between workshops			

8. Who is the Trainer?

This training workshop will be delivered and led by an experienced practitioner Carolina Herbert, **Integrative Arts Psychotherapist, qualified Trainer, supervisor and consultant.**

Carolina is a photographer, musician and singer/songwriter, with an avid interest in all of the arts for expression, social action and change.



She is also a trained Life-cycle Celebrant and is able to curate ceremonies and memorials with individuals, groups and communities for any significant life event. Her passion is to enable communities, organizations and people to navigate transitions, crises and emergencies through engaging in music and the healing arts, cultural rituals, ceremonies and celebrations.

The workshop will be supported by the MCH team, including Jennifer Lee, Program Manager and Frances Rudgard, Director.

Carolina has extensive work in the Asia region and has also run several workshops with MCH to support art and cultural practitioners to deal with their own emotions and challenges professionally and personally for several years. She also conducted the MCH training program of "Psychological First Aid" in 2023 and 2024.

8. Recap of key dates

Date	Time (ICT)	Activity
March 18th	17.00pm ICT time	Virtual Q&A session for anyone who has questions about the program and the application process. Register at here to get Zoom link: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/5VW2xS-gQi2ftbdP-2xUhA
April 14th	23.50pm ICT time	Deadline for applications
April 23rd - 24th		Shortlisted applicants to be invited to interview
May 5th		Selection result notified to all applicants
May 16th		Selected participants return their In-take questionnaires before May 16th

May 27th-29th	14.00pm-17.00pm ICT time	Selected participants take a 30-minute one-to-one onboard session
June 4th	14.00pm-17.00pm ICT time	Workshop session 1: all participants attend
June 11th	14.00pm-17.00pm ICT time	Workshop session 2: all participants attend
Between June 4th and June 25th		Each participant takes a check in a 30-min one-to-one check in session with the Trainer at a convenient time.
June 18th	14.00pm-17.00pm ICT time	Workshop session 3: all participants attend
June 25th	14.00pm-17.00pm ICT time	Workshop session 4: all participants attend