

International Justice Arts Network (IJAN) Annual Report (2025-26) and Plans for 2026-27

During 2025-26, [IJAN](#) further consolidated its activities and collaborative efforts connecting arts and justice across a series of online and in-person activities. Having been officially launched in March 2025, this was the Network's first full academic year. IJAN operates a growing mailing list with over 180 members across all continents including researchers, activists, arts practitioners, arts organisations, arts therapists, prison professionals and other justice related practitioners, and GLAM sector stakeholders.

IJAN is now able to operate a more administratively structured programme and can engage in promising collaborations transnationally. The Network now has an active presence on social media (LinkedIn) and the website has a webform for communication as well. IJAN has grown into a recognised Network that promotes critical and inclusive events which has meant our activities are considerably popular. All the events held so far were very well attended, included accessible chair and Q&A structures, and evidence a highly engaged audience that has now developed into a friendly community.

The Network has also been approached to serve as a platform to develop professional associations and disseminate initiatives around arts and justice:

- The US-based team at the Creative Prisons Project and the *International Journal of Creativity Inside* have connected with IJAN and now its members use the Network as its main organisational base; using it to share activities and projects.
- IJAN is a collaborator on a submission to the Venice Biennale, focusing on Prison Arts, which is currently under review.
- IJAN supported the development of a large Australian Research Council project involving members from Australia, UK and Canada, which has now progressed to the final stage.
- IJAN supported the development of a funding application to the AHRC Large Grants. This application included several IJAN members, and it focuses on an analysis of narratives of justice within criminal justice documents through the use of arts-based methodologies and creative practice.

This year we were able to increase the number and breadth of our events and to offer the Network a solid administrative base through which to organise events. This included:

- An IJAN all-members meeting, September 2025;
- "Feminist Approaches to Participatory Art: Researching Women's Prisons in Peru" with Lucia Bracco (Peru) and Camily Rodrigo (Peru), December 2025;
- "A Conversation on Evaluation, Evidence, and Quality in Prison Arts Programmes" with Charlie Weinberg (UK) and John Whitman (USA), January 2026;
- "Listening Nearby to Sonic Citizenship and Social Justice: Talking and Listening Sound and Detention", a launch event discussing a celebrated co-edited collection with co-editors Lucy Cathcart Frödén (Sweden), Kate Herrity (UK), Áine Mangaoang (Norway), February 2026;
- "Dale Gas/Let's Do It Now: Theatre in Prisons for Adolescents" discussing the practice and research of Sabrina Speranza (Uruguay), April 2026.

Aside from the above, IJAN has supported an organised several in-person events. These include:

- The *Timing Out* Exhibition at Warwick Arts Centre in October 2025 actively involved a number of IJAN members and contacts;
- Film screening of *Punishment Acts* with Q+A with the creators at Warwick's Faculty of Arts in Jan 2026 – a student and staff event in collaboration with IJAN members Saul Hewish and Sarah Bartley;
- An in-person seminar at Warwick with IJAN member, Prof. Sylvie Frigon on the role of prison theatre in Canada and France, held in Feb 2026. The event included criminology, law and theatre students and offered a conversation on the role of Prison Theatre in Canada and France;
- The launch event of Steeldoor Studios' solo exhibition at the National Justice Museum, 'Stretched to the Limit', in July 2026 was sponsored by Warwick and supported by a number of IJAN members;
- Finally, IJAN member David Kendall worked with us to offer the first Pinned Up Culture Festival inside a category A prison. The festival hosted a series of events, including a musician, two authors, a visual artist and an internationally renowned journalist and documentarist between June and September 2026. Feedback on this has been exceptional.

The Year Ahead

Looking ahead, over the next academic year IJAN seeks to continue its online activities and already has a series of events planned, including:

- A workshop on 'We Youth', a UK/Brazil art collaboration with young people in prisons with Faye Claridge and her collaborators in Brazil;
- An event on Dalton Harrison's new book, *A Prison Within a Prison*;
- A launch event for *Carceral Arts: Global Perspectives on Creative, Justice & Resistance*, a forthcoming edited collection published by Bristol University Press featuring the work of several members of the network;
- An event featuring the work of the Prison Abolition Collective at UCSC, USA.

Other relevant events and activities in 2026-27 linked to IJAN include:

- An event discussing the end of Steeldoor Studios' time as artist-in-residence at Warwick on 14 October 2026;
- Hosting Prof Marcela Aedo (Universidad de Valparaiso, Chile) at Warwick now in September; Marcela came here specifically to learn about our initiatives on arts and creative pedagogies in prisons;
- Hosting Prof. Gustavo Dalaqua (Universidade Federal do Amazonas, Brazil) at Warwick in March 2027, funded by the IAS; Prof. Dalaqua is an internationally-renowned expert in aesthetic injustice and justice;
- A prisoner arts exhibition in Coventry in mid-2027;
- The prospective launch of *Just Arts*, a prison arts magazine currently being developed as part of a Warwick Innovations project.

