



Golden Key Academy

The Golden Key Academy is a public speaking course developing the essential skills, knowledge and critical thinking required to deliver engaging walking and cycling tours unlocking complex architecture, heritage, and urban issues. Created by Open City, the charity behind the acclaimed Open House Festival and a much-loved year round programme of public tours, the Golden Key Academy covers everything a skilled guide needs to create and deliver an insightful, entertaining, culturally-aware, critically-ambitious and financially successful outdoor event explaining the city and bringing its many stories to life.

The taught programme – running from February through to September – features a series of informative and interactive lectures covering core competencies including: editorial programming, critical interpretation, and the ethics of cultural production; guiding responsibilities and crowd safety; self-promotion and confidence in public speaking.

Course members will individually attend public events delivered by Open City as well as joining an exclusive tour for the Golden Key Academy cohort.

Join an exclusive tour for the Golden Key Academy cohort with a post-tour discussion and appraisal





The final part of the programme will see academicians devise and develop their own full-length high-quality tour focussing on a theme, area or story of their choice. Alongside a structured step-by-step development brief, course members will receive one-to-one feedback from our expert mentor guides before delivering a public event of their own as part of the Open House weekend for their final assessment.

The Golden Key Academy connects aspiring guides and professionals of all kinds wishing to enhance their public speaking skills and ability to read cityscapes with the same expertise, insights and passion that enrich London's globally-renowned Open House festival and Open City's year-round tours. It offers graduates the critical tools needed to transform an idea into an impressive and memorable outdoor experience which communicates their unique conclusions and draws on the built environment to create a safe and unique forum for discourse.

The course is suitable for those hoping to build an independent business as an urban tour guide, professionals looking to hone their public speaking, research and explanatory skills in a creative way, and amateurs of any age interested in exploring the city and meeting like-minded people.

Graduates of the academy will receive a Golden Key Academy key and be inducted as lifetime member of the Open House Golden Key Academy network offering a wealth of additional networking and professional development opportunities.

The Golden Key Academy is accredited by Open City and counts as 20 hours of CPD.

Develop the essential skills, knowledge and critical thinking required to deliver engaging walking and cycling tours

What does the Golden Key Academy offer?

- Sessions taking place during evenings or weekends to fit around work and other commitments
- Lecture and Q&A sessions covering core guiding competencies, critical explanatory programming, legal practicalities and promotion, recommended reading list
- Exclusive tour for Golden Key Academy cohort with discussion and appraisal
- Group project focusing on developing tour concepts and delivery of your tour
- Half day public speaking workshop to inspire engaging story telling
- Complimentary tickets for Open City public tours and a Pocket London subscription until the end of 2024
- Step-by-step coursework brief outlining how to create and deliver your own high-quality tour
- Sessions taking place during evenings or weekends to fit around work and other commitments
- Peer and mentor guide-facilitated practice walks for enhanced development of route, content, interpretation and delivery prior to final coursework assessment
- Deliver a public tour to a real live audience as part of the 2024 Open House Festival for your final appraisal with written feedback by an expert guide or Open City team member
- Graduation ceremony and Golden Key presentation and induction into the Golden Key Academy alumni network

Learn the critical tools needed to transform an idea into an impressive and memorable outdoor experience

“Open House gives Londoners a unique opportunity to explore their urban heritage. A chance to learn about our built environment. To delve deeper. To go beyond the surface. And go behind the scenes of many of the buildings that have been so instrumental in shaping our society, culture and economy.”

What our supporters say
Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London



How much does it cost?

The course fee of £800 is fully inclusive of all sessions, activities, assessments and administrative costs.

Thanks to the support of our sponsors, we are pleased to offer a limited number of bursaries subsidising the course fee to just £650. Please apply early and complete the relevant section of the form for consideration of this discount or full bursary which aim to open up the art of tour guiding to wider audiences and those suffering financial hardship.



Images: Learn about the architecture of London and how to share your knowledge with others in our programme led by experts in the field of tour guiding



How do I apply?

Please complete our online application form before 6pm Monday 15 January 2024 to be considered for the 2024 Golden Key Academy cohort. Early applicants may be accepted early.





www.open-city.org.uk
[@openhouselondon](https://twitter.com/openhouselondon)

Merlin Fulcher
Worldwide Tours Director

Adrianna Carroll-Battaglini
Tours Programme Manager

goldenkey@open-city.org.uk