



Our Mission: Breaking Walls exists to bring arts education and leadership skill-building to diverse communities of young people starting in the United States and reaching out across the globe. Through its innovative programming and skilled artistic mentors, young participants utilize creative activism and peacemaking models to produce original pieces of literary, visual, and vocal art, instrumental music, dance, and ensemble performances. Breaking Walls ultimately seeks to create a diverse, equitable, inclusive, and justice-oriented global community by bringing together young people through its art and activism programming.

Our Demographic: Breaking Wall's demographic represents diverse cultural, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds. Additionally, differences in sexual orientation and identity, educational levels, special needs, immigration, and refugee status increase the risk of their being affected by what scholars call "voice poverty" - the denial of access to opportunities, agency, and advocacy due to a lack of attention given to a certain group, even when they speak out. Using a multi-disciplinary arts approach, Breaking Walls pushes back against the voice poverty plaguing the lives of so many young people. Their artistry is testimony to individual self-expression and their collective energies as a creative community.

We offer the young participants a three-tier path to leadership and ongoing involvement to create a sustainable creative collaboration model. By offering a three-tier approach, we can better serve the students and the skills they need in their specific age category. We breakdown the participants into these three categories:

- **Artists**, ages 11 to 19, write and perform their original work for a live audience during workshops, initiatives, virtual artist cooperatives, and international Summits.
- **Artists/Leadership Apprentices**, ages 19 to 21, continue to write and perform while developing their leadership skills.
- **Ambassadors**, ages 19 to 25, are former artists who guide the writing and performance processes while being mentored by the Director Team.



... using the arts to connect young people across the globe as ambassadors for peace...

Breaking Walls 2025 Summit Istanbul

Who: 31 Breaking Walls artists and ambassadors, ages 12 to 24, from Berlin, Barcelona, Bethlehem, Brooklyn, Cape Town, Jerusalem, Palermo, Santiago, Sarajevo, Tangier, and Yerevan, joining with 8 of their peers in Istanbul to write and perform around issues of self-awareness, freedom of expression, and nurturing a peaceful, just, and sustainable planet.



What:

The Breaking Walls International Summit's overall schedule, which unfolds over 17 days, is designed to support its creativity, youth empowerment, and global understanding goals.

- **Pen-Page-Stage**— Through 5 days of daily literary art workshops, students will build self-awareness and empathy as they explore literary, visual, and vocal art, instrumental music, and dance. The week culminates in a live performance.
- **Ensemble-Building/Peace-Making**— Students will develop a sense of community and acceptance through team-building lessons, including improv techniques.
- **Community Service:** Students will gain an understanding and appreciation of civic and community engagement by volunteering for one day with underprivileged youth in Sarajevo.
- **Creative Activist Lab:** In three one-hour sessions, students craft “seed” ideas that they can build to impact their home communities positively.
- **Health & Wellness Lab**—In three one-hour sessions, students will learn wellness techniques, including deep listening, personal reflection, and mindfulness skills.
- **Cultural Explorations**—Students will gain a rare cultural experience by visiting local museums, parks, theaters, workshops, and discussions with Sarajevo artists. They will also be exposed to Sarajevo’s rich culture, history, and art.

Breaking Walls benefits from the professional expertise of our 2025 Team, which undergoes training in anti-bullying, mindfulness, and diversity to ensure our goals are met successfully. Esra Usta (NY) serves as the Director of Ensemble-Building, Fran Tarr (NY) leads Literary Art, and Angela Constantinidou (CY) directs Theater Performance. Completing the Team are Adina Taubman (NY) as the Director of Creative Activism, and Dannie Kagan (SA) in Assessment and Leadership.

When: A 17-day program from July 11 to July 28, 2025. Breaking Walls covers all in-country expenses except for individual pocket money.

Why: As Breaking Walls enters its second decade, we truly embrace “A Whole Child Is a Healthy Child” mantra. Pledging our commitment to promote cross-cultural, borderless human connections to create a nonjudgmental and intentional healing space where young people can

unpack harm, build trust, and speak their truth using their art while creating solutions to address prejudice, misinformation, and the myriad of social issues challenging them all.

***"I'm a magician, but I still don't understand the Magic of Breaking Walls. To meet people from all over the world and see that we are not different, see that we all want to fight for a better world; that's the most beautiful Magic I've ever seen."
Barcelona artist Sergi.***



***"Breaking Walls opened me up. I discovered new ideas, learned about the cultures and ways of thinking of my global brothers and sisters. I surpassed my fears. Encouraged myself to understand I am not alone in the world. I cannot express the amazing sense we had on stage together."
Breaking Walls Yerevan artist Erik***

"Breaking Walls introduces us to ourselves.. Kamva, Cape Town artist.

