



## The Ignite! Commissions

in association with the **Nottingham Festival of Science and Curiosity (FOSAC)**

with support from **Arts Council England**

### Background

Ignite! is a Nottingham-based charity that works with schools, youth groups and communities to help develop curiosity in a creative way. We see the relationship between community, curiosity and creativity as follows:

We work through partnerships to develop projects and programmes to build community cohesion and confidence in public engagement in STEM, public understanding, Citizen Science and participatory research.

Projects always combine the expertise of science researchers and artists and creative practitioners.

The Nottingham Festival of Science and Curiosity (FOSAC) is an annual celebration and sharing of community engagement with STEM. It takes place in February and involves schools, public and community venues and online events.



With a new landscape of public engagement taking shape as we come to terms with social distancing and reduced opportunities for hands-on and face-to-face activities, we are looking to define and develop different ways of fulfilling our mission. And in keeping with our commitment to creativity, we turn to artists and creative practitioners to help us design a new and different future.

We are offering four commissions to Nottinghamshire-based artists and creative practitioners across any creative media to explore both their own practice and our goals of community engagement, and to produce new work that can be celebrated as part of the Festival of Science and Curiosity in February 2021. At least two of the commissions will be offered to artists in the early stages of their careers.

Website: <https://www.ignitefutures.org.uk/>



## **The commission brief, terms and conditions and application process**

The purpose of each commission is to create new work that progresses the practice of each individual artist/creative practitioner, and contributes to new and different understandings of how community engagement with science can be delivered in the circumstances and conditions of public health limitations on face-to-face encounters.

The outputs of each commission will be new work in any medium including digital media that explores the notion of curiosity in the context of public engagement with STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and maths), and is suitable for mixed audiences of young people, families and communities.

The value of each commission is £2,250 inclusive of expenses and materials.

The period of each commission is from October with target completion/delivery at the Festival of Science and Curiosity (10-17 February 2021).

The commissions will be contracted in accordance with Arts Council England recommendations and best practice.

Applications are welcome from Nottinghamshire-based artists/creative practitioners individually or collectively though the value of each commission remains as if a single contractor is engaged.

Support will be facilitated by Ignite! including introductions and networking with STEM researchers as and if requested.

## **How to apply**

We aim for the application process to be as open and straightforward as possible - Please submit up to two sides of A4 of your proposals or initial ideas for this commission. Please also include photographs, illustrations, examples or links to previous work.

Please also include a covering letter that describes how this commission would enable your research or exploration of innovative ways of working and advance your creative practice.

Commissions will be offered based on quality of previous work, clarity in how the commission would advance your research or creative practice, feasibility of the proposed activity within the budget and timescale and strength of link to science and curiosity.



## **Black Lives Matter**

Ignite! is reviewing all aspects of its work in light of the Black Lives Matter movement. These commissions are open to all artists/creative practitioners regardless of ethnicity and cultural background. We are particularly interested to hear from a diverse range of artists and we will ensure that these opportunities are widely advertised to Black-led organisations.

## **Time frame**

The commissions will be advertised from 7 September 2020 in social media and by direct contact with Nottingham arts and creative organisations. Expressions of interest/applications/proposals to be received at Ignite! by 5.00pm on Wednesday 30 September.

Submissions are by email to [info@ignitefutures.org.uk](mailto:info@ignitefutures.org.uk). Please identify the subject in the email heading as 'FOSAC Commissions'. Please feel free to get in touch before applying with any questions.

Interviews, open discussions with shortlisted candidates will take place between 5 and 16 October, with contracts confirmed by Friday 23 October.

Payment of commission fees will be in two instalments: £2,000 on signing agreements with £250 in January 2021 to facilitate completion of work in February 2021.



## **Appendix**

### **Further information:**

We have worked consistently with artists and creative practitioners across all our STEM public engagement projects – not to inject a bit of art into science but to reveal and encourage young people and families to engage with and express their curiosity with creativity and confidence; including 2012 (Breath of Fresh Air and Cargoes for the Cultural Olympiad).

Artists from all media have contributed to projects with schools, underserved communities, in projects across all research areas but notably in environmental sciences, health and bio-medical research, astro-physics, chemistry and materials science. Projects have taken place in schools, libraries, in woodlands and allotments, and in research facilities like BioCity in Nottingham.

Artists have engaged with participants through documenting and recording observations, through interactive installations and provocations to inspire confidence in asking questions, speculating about the future and engaging the imagination across all learning disciplines.

We have contributed to community arts celebrations like local Arts Festivals (Bulwell and Bilborough) as well as Nottingham city centre events such as Hockley Hustle and Light Night (both annually since 2017).

Our other principal focus for art science collaborations (creativity and curiosity in community settings) is the Nottingham Festival of Science and Curiosity now in planning for its 6<sup>th</sup> edition. Artists and creative practitioners have collaborated with scientists in the Nottingham Central library, in the Victoria Centre Market, Sneinton Market, Broadway, Nottingham Contemporary, intu Broadmarsh, Lakeside Arts – and then in local and community centres and branch libraries.

Artists have been drawn from Near Now, City Arts, Primary and BACKLIT studios as well as independent practitioners. (list of artists available)

The continuation of these relationships are central to our mission of encouraging communities to express their curiosity through creativity, especially those who are hesitant in asking the questions that matter to them.

<https://www.ignitefutures.org.uk/>