



FACT Together: A New Online Commissioning Scheme to Support Artists in Lockdown

OVERVIEW

FACT is inviting artists living or working in the North of England to create work during lockdown. The scheme, entitled *FACT Together*, will offer 10 early-career artists a grant of £1,500 each plus 3 months of support to develop an idea that will be presented online.

With the temporary closure of galleries and museums across the world, artists have had exhibitions, commissions and opportunities cancelled or postponed. As the uncertainty caused by Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic grows, FACT recognises the much-needed support for artists, freelancers and gig-workers at this time. Access to arts and culture would not be possible without these individuals and their work is the very reason why FACT and other organisations exist. *FACT Together* has been set up in response to this uncertainty, offering both financial and career support over a 3 month period. In addition to the grant, the 10 selected artists will form a network, receiving individual and group online mentorship. This includes technical expertise, professional development, production support and promotion of their work.

Everyone at FACT believes that art makes the world a better place. While there is much we can do to entertain and engage, we want to make sure that the creative community is sustained during this time. Their work brings curiosity, joy and new perspectives to our lives, for which we are grateful. We hope that *FACT Together* enables this to continue, in an online world, and helps to create new opportunities in the future when we all come back together.

ARTIST BRIEF

FACT Together will offer 10 early-career artists a grant of £1,500 each to create a new work for online presentation, responding to FACT's 2020 programme, *The Living Planet*. Alongside this, each artist will receive mentorship from the FACT team who will support them in the development, production and promotion of their proposals. This professional development will also include group sessions with all recipients of *FACT Together*, creating a virtual support network. All contact between FACT and the artists will be online, ensuring that everyone is encouraged to stay home and keep safe.

We are looking for proposals that will respond to *The Living Planet*. This theme examines our relationship with the natural world, exploring ways in which wildlife, plantlife and ecological systems have responded to the impact of human actions. The main areas of interest are:

1. The importance of **non-human perspectives** and how different **ways of seeing, and communicating**, change and challenge the way we see the world around us, and our place within it. How does the way we see the world, and the way we communicate restrict us? How might we use art and digital culture to overcome these barriers or disrupt the norm?
2. The **systems** of which we are all a part of, and how **actions affect not only one area**, but everything. How can understanding the planet in this way alter our behaviours, as well as our relationships with **those who may not be able to affect the system** itself?
3. How do we define a **community**? How do we create trust between, and care for, those within our community? What **possibilities** are there for humans and other species to be better aligned once we start to see **broader connections**?
4. The importance of **rituals** to human life, and how non-humans (plants and animals) feature heavily within rituals in many cultures. How do our rituals - including everything from daily digital rituals to those more spiritual ones - reinforce **alienation**, and how can they instead help us move towards **understanding, compassion and representation**?

PROCESS

We welcome all forms of online work and encourage a diversity of media: audio, video, text, games, app design, virtual or augmented reality, performance, socially-engaged practice, web or desktop interventions, animation, social media takeovers and workshops. We are particularly keen to receive proposals from artists who are looking to develop their practice, so you do not need to have previously created digital or online work. We are happy to speak more about this opportunity if you have any concerns around accessibility or specific working requirements. To discuss with a member of our team, please contact residency@fact.co.uk

Proposals will be assessed by FACT's Programme Team and selected on their response to this brief, how well they articulate FACT's 2020 theme of *The Living Planet*, and their feasibility within the budget and timeline. The final project should be ready to go online in July and August 2020.

ELIGIBILITY

- FACT Together is open to all artists living and working in the North of England (as defined by [Arts Council England](#) which includes North West, Yorkshire and North East).
- This scheme is aimed at early-career artists. We define an early-career artist as someone in the early stages of their professional career as an artist. This is usually someone who has been working on their practice for more than 2 years.
- We are looking for proposals from artists of all backgrounds and accessibility needs.
- No previous experience of making digital work is necessary, however, an awareness of online channels is important.

HOW TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL

Please submit both:

1. **A proposal**, submitted as a document (no more than one page) or recorded as an audio or video file (no more than 3 minutes long) for an online project that outlines your key concepts, motivations and how the work is tailored for an online experience. Your proposal should also respond in some way to the themes of *The Living Planet*.
2. **A short portfolio** including (where possible) a current CV, a brief artist statement about your practice and details of up to 5 past works (images, text files, social media links/recordings etc). You can also send a link to your website if all of this content is already available there.

Please send your submission to residency@fact.co.uk

The deadline for FACT Together is Sunday 26th April 2020 at midnight.

BUDGET & GRANT

Each artist will receive a grant of £1,500. The grant presumes an even split between the artist's fee and production costs, taking the average monthly rent for a flat in Liverpool as its starting point.

Grants will be paid in two instalments. 50% on selection and 50% upon completion of the project. Grants will be paid 30 days after the receipt of a valid invoice.

KEY DATES

Deadline for proposals: Sunday 26th April 2020 at midnight

Outcome of decision and all applicants informed: Friday 1st May 2020

Initial conversation with selected artists: Monday 4th - Friday 8th May 2020

Work ready to go live: July - August 2020

LEGACY

FACT Together is a new online commissioning scheme set up in response to the uncertainty and disconnect caused by Coronavirus (COVID-19). It will be piloted in 2020 and we hope to continue and grow the scheme in the future, irrespective of current global circumstances.