

30 creative teams awarded up to £100,000 each for Festival UK* 2022 R&D project

- Teams drawn together from across the UK and every corner of the four nations for unique collaboration
- More than 500 organisations and individuals, including freelancers, from science, technology, engineering, arts and maths (steam)
- Following the R&D ten ideas will be selected for full production for the festival in 2022

A £3 million research and development programme gets underway this week, to progress open, original and optimistic ideas that could go on to become one of ten major creative projects, each designed to reach millions, bring people together and showcase the UK's creativity and innovation globally in 2022.

30 Creative Teams have been selected to take part in the Festival UK* 2022 R&D Project, each receiving up to £100,000 of investment to enable them to develop their ideas for the Festival. The teams, who will bring together more than 500 organisations and individuals from right across the UK, include freelancers and emerging talent. Collaborating across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, they bring an extraordinary breadth of knowledge and creativity across Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths (STEAM), with many working together for the first time.

Details of the Creative Teams are published today on the [Festival UK* 2022 website](#), with many exciting and unusual partnerships. They include organisations from the public and private sector, artists, scientists, technologists, engineers and mathematicians, plus choreographers, coders, games developers, musicians, theatre-makers, writers, and many other disciplines. The UK-wide geographic spread also reflects its diversity, including disability organisations, and Black, Asian, and minority ethnic creatives.

The 30 Creative Teams selected for the Festival UK* 2022 R&D Project were chosen following an open call. A rigorous selection process considered 299 submissions, involving almost 3,000 organisations, freelancers and other creatives representing the five STEAM sectors.

Over the next few months each team is being supported to develop its big idea, through a specially designed programme that includes presentations, workshops with the BBC Research & Development team, breakout spaces and opportunities to hear from high profile speakers representing STEAM.

As well as working within their teams, attendees are being encouraged to work across teams, to maximise the potential of the combined, cross-sector talent and to stimulate new creative networks.

The 30 teams will pitch their proposals before a panel in February 2021, with ten set to be taken forward as part of the UK-wide Festival, which will take place throughout 2022. The Festival programme is expected to be announced in late 2021. The development of the Festival is being documented to create a public resource for future generations, with the R&D Project being shared under a Creative Commons.

Independently run and led by Chief Creative Officer Martin Green, Festival UK* 2022 is backed by the four governments of the UK£120 million of new investment is coming from the UK Government, including funding to the Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales devolved administrations. The 30 Creative Teams selected for the R&D are made up of 22 UK-wide collaborations, and two each from England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

Culture Secretary, Oliver Dowden, said:

These 30 teams show our world-class British creativity at its very best – risk-taking, ground breaking and diverse. They've gone through fierce competition to get here and highlight exactly what's possible when organisations from every part of the UK work together. I cannot wait to see their daring ideas come to life.

With Festival UK* 2022, the Platinum Jubilee and the Birmingham Commonwealth Games, 2022 is shaping up to be a truly extraordinary year of celebration for the whole United Kingdom.

Lord Mayor of Belfast Alderman Frank McCoubrey said:

We feel excited and privileged to be part of Festival UK* 2022 and be in a position to showcase Northern Ireland's creativity and innovation on a worldwide stage. We're known for being a nation full of talent, creativity, ability and optimism; and this is a fantastic opportunity to bring creatives together with our illustrious scientific, technological, engineering, arts and mathematical minds to come up with truly unique and innovative ideas.'

This has been a challenging year for the arts and it's been encouraging to see how cultural programmes and activities have been adapted for the changing social landscape. This project is an opportunity to use local talent to build on this energy and to create ambitious and ground-breaking projects, and pioneer new ways in which culture can thrive.

Fiona Hyslop, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture said:

Festival UK* 2022 is already showing us new and exciting opportunities for Scotland's world-renowned Arts and Technology sectors to work together. There are two unique Creative Teams comprised entirely of Scottish-based individuals and organisations developing their proposals for delivery in Scotland during 2022, as well as a wide range of others in Scotland who will be key partners in other Creative Teams developing proposals for delivery across the UK. We can be sure that all of them are outstanding examples of Scotland's creativity and innovation.'

I welcome this announcement as a boost for artists, practitioners and organisations across Scotland's STEAM sectors – and beyond, tapping into our talents, creativity and innovation. I look forward to seeing the proposals that are developed both in Scotland and across the other 4 nations as part of the festival.

Welsh Government Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism, Lord Elis-Thomas, said:

It's excellent news that we had a number of high quality entries come from Wales and I'd like to thank everyone for the time and effort in coming together and forming teams representing STEAM. We're now really excited about the two approved teams and looking forward to more detail on the creative ideas they propose to deliver for Wales. It is excellent that we can help these sectors during a difficult time and look forward to 2022. It's also great news that a number of Welsh partners will also represent Wales in the UK teams selected to undertake R&D.

Chief Creative Officer for Festival UK* 2022 Martin Green said:

Festival UK* 2022 is a massive experiment in creativity with the core values of being open, original and optimistic, and encouraging teams to think big. It's wonderful that so many brilliant people, offering extraordinary creativity across STEAM, want to collaborate beyond their usual disciplines and with people they might not have worked with before. It hasn't been an easy selection process, so we're really pleased to hear that some new creative relationships will continue amongst those who were not chosen, as well as being excited to see what the 30 Creative Teams come up with over the next couple of months.

Dame Vikki Heywood CBE, who chairs the independent Board set up for Festival UK* 2022, said:

Throughout this process the Board and our entire team have sought to ensure that the Festival will encompass the breadth of ideas and potential to celebrate Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths in new and unexpected ways across the whole of the UK. We'd like to thank all the teams that have taken the time to apply to be part of the R&D Project and trust that it has been the stimulating process it was designed to be by opening up positive conversations and potential future collaborations, never thought of, or realised, before.

For further information contact media@festival2022.uk or visit www.festival2022.uk

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About Festival UK* 2022

Festival UK* 2022 is a major UK-wide festival of creativity and innovation, which will commission up to 10 major public engagement projects designed to reach millions, bring people together and showcase the UK's creativity globally. It is backed by £120 million of new investment from the UK Government, including funding to the Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales devolved administrations. The Festival will take place throughout 2022 and each project will bring new opportunities for creative people in sectors that have been significantly impacted by COVID-19. A specific focus is being placed on emerging talent and under-represented voices.

The Festival UK* 2022 R&D Project begin on 16 November 2020. 30 Creative Teams, featuring participants from across STEAM, are being supported to develop their ideas into potential commissions that will be pitched to a panel in February 2021. Ten will be selected to be taken into full production for the Festival in 2022. The Festival programme is expected to be announced with a new name in late 2021.

Four of the ten commissions will each be led by the Creative Teams from England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. There will also be six UK-wide commissions. The strategic delivery bodies for the devolved nations are Belfast City Council, EventScotland and Creative Wales. Festival 2022 Ltd. is leading on the UK-wide projects and is the strategic delivery body for England.

A special purpose vehicle ("Festival 2022 Ltd") has been established in Birmingham, overseen by an independent Board drawn from STEAM sectors and from across the UK, chaired by Dame Vikki Heywood CBE. Martin Green CBE is Chief Creative Officer for the Festival, leading a team to curate, manage and promote the project, working with strategic delivery bodies within each nation to devise and deliver the programme.

BBC & Festival UK* 2022

The BBC is the lead broadcast partner for Festival UK* 2022 which coincides with the 100th anniversary of the foundation of the BBC. Both moments share a common goal: to be forward-facing and optimistic as we come out of the COVID pandemic and to demonstrate what British innovation and creativity will look like for the next 100 years.

During the R&D, the BBC's Research & Development team will be helping guide the 30 teams through the idea generation stage. This will include virtual workshops, talks, drop-in sessions and materials designed to get the best possible ideas out of the process. BBC R&D has a long history of developing innovative technology and collaborative and cross-disciplinary working, and will be drawing on this expertise to help the teams nurture their ambitious ideas ahead of final pitches taking place early next year.

The role that the BBC plays for the UK is unique, reaching over 90% of adults a week and nearly half a billion people globally. We will use this reach and Festival UK* 2022 content to celebrate the UK's strengths, values & identities and to boost pride throughout our communities.