



## **Brigstow Institute and Bristol Photo Festival – a commission**

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## **A bit about the Brigstow Institute and Bristol Photo Festival**

Brigstow brings researchers from different disciplines together with a range of partners across the city and beyond to experiment in new ways of living and being. Our research is underpinned by a commitment to a distinctive way of working that foregrounds inter-disciplinary, co-produced research with – and not just for – external partners, and an emphasis on 'critical making' as a research methodology. More information on Brigstow can be found at [www.bristol.ac.uk/brigstow](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/brigstow).

Bristol Photo Festival is a new biennial festival with a year-round programme of commissions and collaborations, culminating in a series of exhibitions by both local and international artists in spring 2021. For the first time, all of the city's major visual arts institutions, alongside independent and unconventional spaces, have come together to create a programme to demonstrate the power and diversity of photography. Each edition of the festival will be themed and display existing work by emerging and established artists, alongside newly commissioned work engaging with multiple aspects of the city of Bristol. The theme of the inaugural festival is *A Sense of Place*. More information on the Bristol Photo Festival can be found at <http://www.bristolphotofestival.org/2020/06/20/2020-2021-bpf-launch-press-release/>

## **The Commission**

Brigstow is delighted to be able to work with the Bristol Photo Festival to offer the opportunity for one research team to work together on a short project that uses photography as a research tool/approach/method. We'd like the project to be, ideally, both interdisciplinary and co-produced, and fit broadly within the Brigstow theme of living

well. We are especially interested in projects that involve participatory photography or practice-led research (so photography is a critical part of the research process).

We invite applications from teams responding to either of the two themes identified by the Festival:

### **Growing Spaces**

Have a look at the Bristol Photo Festival theme description at <http://www.bristolphotofestival.org/growingspaces/>

This theme raises numerous questions around the places where a variety of flora grows and is grown. We welcome a breadth of research questions that might explore the relationship between gardening, farming and craft, guerilla gardening, planting and harvesting during lockdown, productive and unproductive edgelands, as well as those spaces where nature is nurtured by human care and knowledge. We're interested in agriculture and growing vegetables and fruit, but also trees and plants. These are just a few suggestions that are intended to open up, rather than close down thinking or define what we might mean by Growing Spaces!

### **The Living Room Archive**

Have a look at the Bristol Photo Festival theme description at <http://www.bristolphotofestival.org/the-living-room-archive/>

This theme raises questions around the meanings given to the places we call 'home'. We welcome a breadth of research questions that might explore where we live well, how ideas of what the living room represents changes over time and space, the negotiations of private and public space within the home, how we represent self within the home through curation, the gendering of domestic space, and the social nature of the living room. We are as interested in other living spaces that people create and occupy that are more transient and temporary, and what 'home' means for the displaced as well as the settled. What are other spaces where social interactions and conversations take place? These are just a few suggestions that are intended to open up rather than close down thinking or define what we might mean by the Living Room!

### **About this funding**

One commission will be made and the successful team will have a budget of c. £6k to fund costs such as fees and materials for the exhibition - within the £6k we expect the production costs for the exhibition to be included and to not exceed £1.5k. The closing date is **Wednesday 21st October 2020**. The timeline for this commission is:

October 21 2020	Applications submitted
October-November 2020	Brigstow and Bristol Photo Festival works with successful team to develop a photographer's commission
November 2020 – March 2021	Research and production
March – August 2021	Display of images and accompanying narrative during Photo Festival
6-9 May 2021	Bristol Photo Festival workshops, events and talks

Funding can be used to buy in expertise (for example, paying the community researchers and the photographer; please consider VAT when working out the cost), pay for researchers (both within and external to the university and including research associates and students), hardware costs, consumables (such as the costs for your project team meetings), production costs for the exhibition and travel needed to work together. Unfortunately, the funding cannot be used to buy out full-time academic staff time.

## What to include in the application

Projects must meet the following – these will be used as assessment criteria for the call:

- All applications must reflect Brigstow's emphasis on '**critical making**' as a team and adopt an **interdisciplinary and co-produced research** approach (see below for more on this). The team must work collaboratively, carrying out the research and learning from each other.
- Applications must address one of the two **themes** identified by the Bristol Photo Festival and Brigstow (see above).
- The minimum requirement for a project to be eligible is that we would normally expect at least **three researchers** to be involved (whether university, community, creative – e.g. a photographer or from an organization external to the university) all bringing different knowledge, expertise, ideas and skills to the project. At least one of the university researchers must be based at University of Bristol for the project to be eligible. We are particularly interested in project teams involving university researchers that come from different schools or faculties. Given the focus on human experience/living well around growing spaces and the living room, we expect to see arts/humanities researchers and/or social scientists as members of interdisciplinary research teams. It is not necessary to have already identified a photographer – if not, please briefly explain the skills and experience you are looking for.
- Brigstow encourages applications from any University of Bristol academic staff who consider themselves **research active**. We particularly welcome applications from colleagues who have not yet been a principal investigator on a research grant. If you are a part-time member of academic staff you might want to cost your time in, although you will not be eligible to manage the budget. If you are in any doubt about your eligibility, please speak to us first.
- The main **output** will be the materials for exhibition – photographs and accompanying narratives explaining the research process and findings. Other outputs can also be produced, although the funding is predominantly for research and production costs for the Bristol Photo Festival and applicants should bear this in mind when considering the budget. We would also like team members to present their research during the Festival's main activity between 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

If you are successful, we will expect the project team members to meet with the Bristol Photo Commission as soon as possible after the award is made and throughout the production period.

**The following outlines what Brigstow means by interdisciplinary and co-produced research that involves critical making as part of its process:**

**Interdisciplinary research** (or trans-disciplinary or omni-disciplinary research) brings together people with different knowledge, expertise, skills and ideas. The minimum requirement is that there are at least three researchers and partners (whether university, community, creative or other organisation) all bringing their different knowledge, expertise and skills to the project. We are particularly interested in bringing university researchers from different schools or faculties together for the first time to undertake seed-corn projects.

**Co-produced research** values that knowledge takes many forms and lies within different areas and people. There is equity amongst team members which means everyone's expertise is respected, and there is trust and open communication across the team. In addition, all the team are committed to building and maintaining the relationships within the project. Projects should be co-created and co-led.

We like **critical making** because it moves beyond talking together, to making together. In particular it invites people to think creatively and value the process of making over and above what is made.

Don't underestimate the value of using an object or space as a means to elevate beyond language and to communicate ideas within and beyond the project group.

### **How to apply**

To apply, please look at the [Checklist](#) at the end of this document and then complete the [online form accessible by clicking on this link](#). There are instructions with the form online. You can view the [Application Form Questions](#) later in this document. If you have any problems using the form, please contact [hello-brigstow@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:hello-brigstow@bristol.ac.uk) as soon as possible.

We are also available if you have any questions - please contact either Gail Lambourne, Brigstow Institute Manager ([gail.lambourne@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:gail.lambourne@bristol.ac.uk)) or Tim Cole, Brigstow Institute Director ([tim.cole@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:tim.cole@bristol.ac.uk)).

We've also put together some [Words of Wisdom](#) in this document; offerings made by previous Brigstow projects that might help guide you when planning your project.

## Words of Wisdom

The following are Words of Wisdom that were offered by previous Brigstow projects and might help guide you when planning your project.

- Be clear at the application stage about how much time the project will take, what the contribution of each team member will be and what other resources you might need. Remember that not all time across the university and beyond is equal.
- Rather than consider a university researcher as the lead in name only, it is good to have commitment to the project from all team members. Projects should be co-created and co-led. If you want someone to be involved but they can't commit the same amount of time as the rest of the team, why not include them as a critical friend instead?
- Ideas should flow between all team members – avoid one-way flow of information and ideas. The knowledge generated by the project should be mutually beneficial.
- Be prepared to step outside of your discipline and experiment with methods and approaches, and output formats you may not have worked with before.
- Don't underestimate the value of frequent, face-to-face meetings with the team. Remember that there is value and learning from those discussions, as well as pursuing the project itself.
- The projects are generative – while there might be the immediate outputs for the Bristol Photo Festival, many projects have taken months or even years for the research to develop, secure further funding, crystallise approaches, and create further outputs.

## Checklist

You might not need to include all of the following points in your application, but it's critical that you discuss and agree them with the whole team before submitting your application. Please check each point to let us know you've read and understood them.

The basic stuff:

1. Do you all agree on the idea for the application and submitting the application to Brigstow? Have you discussed roles and responsibilities, how the decision making will take place and how to resolve differences?
2. How are you going to work together? How often are you going to meet (and who's going to organise the meetings)? Do any of your team or collaborators or audiences have specific access requirements? When will you review progress and amend, if necessary, what you're planning to do?
3. Have you all agreed who will be paid and when? How much will different people be paid and what needs to be delivered before payments are made?
4. Have you costed in the involvement of the team accurately? Remember that these awards are cash limited so for the purposes of costing the project, non-university partners such as the photographer will need to be clear about whether they are self-employed and/or VAT registered, or whether they are eligible to be engaged as a casual worker on the project (and be registered with the university's Temporary Staffing Service (TSS)).  
**If a partner charges VAT, this must be included in the costings**, as does the holiday pay/national insurance costs for anyone registered with the TSS. For university researchers, you will need to consider your time commitment to the project and how this will work with your other university commitments. If you are in any doubt, please contact us before you submit your application.
5. Have you costed in your meetings accurately? This will include any costs for non-university partners/research assistants/creative and community partners to attend the meetings.
6. Did you discuss what data you will be collecting? Who will own it? Who will deal with the ethics application?
7. Have you discussed what information or product will be generated? Who will own it? What intellectual property (IP) does each party bring to the project? Have you all looked at the [University of Bristol guidance on IP?](#)
8. Have you discussed the outputs of the project and the timeline for achieving them in time for the exhibition? Remember to be realistic about what can be achieved and remember that the outputs will have to include a narrative explaining the research process as well as the photographs themselves. Have you agreed who takes responsibility for certain outputs and what each person will contribute towards them?
9. Have you discussed any plans for what might happen if the application is unsuccessful or what might happen after the project, if it is funded?

## Application Form Questions

As well as asking for the names and contact details of the project team members and who the budget holder will be, the application form asks the following questions:

- What is the proposed focus of the commission? What are the initial research questions that you want to explore? Why does it matter? How is it new? How does your project specifically connect with the Bristol Photo Festival and Brigstow's areas of interest for this commission? Address the key aims (including values) in the Commission guidelines.

**Max. 500 words**

- Who is involved and why do you want to work together? Please explain the interdisciplinary and co-produced aspects of the project, what each team member (including external partners) will bring to the project, and how and why you want to work together? Do you have a photographer already involved? If not, what skills and experience would you be looking for in a photographer?

**Max. 500 words**

- What will be the focus of the exhibition? What is the story you want to tell together? This is an opportunity to think creatively. We would expect exhibition ready photographs and accompanying narrative about the research process and findings, but you may also want to think about other outputs you will produce together.

**Max. 200 words**

- What funding do you require? Please give a cost breakdown and justification of individual items. Please remember to cost in VAT if applicable (particularly for the fees of the photographer etc) and think about the amount of time and cost per hour for artists.

**Max. 200 words**

You will also be asked to confirm that you have discussed and agreed the following points:

- If you are successful in your application, in addition to providing content and material for the Bristol Photo Festival, we would like to feature your work on the Brigstow Institute website and in publications. This includes not only any direct outputs of the research but also the learning from the process. We would also like a couple of short blog posts on Brigstow's blog - one during and one at the end of the project. Please check the box to indicate that the team understand the need to contribute towards these.
- By submitting this form you confirm that your Head of School supports this activity taking place, as do the relevant responsible persons at your co-researchers' school/external partners. Please check the box to confirm this.