

# DISRUPT

community, art, social justice  
and the pandemic

---

**Open call for  
creative proposals**

---

# Open call for creative proposals

## **Let's not beat around the bush, 2020 has been a shocker.**

Despite everything, we've had to adapt. Theatres working as food-banks, dance classes are digital and community centres have risen to the challenge, more than demonstrating the crucial role they play in society.

2020 has been tough, but creatives and communities have proven themselves tougher.

Taking place 8-9 July 2021, DISRUPT will explore how the performing arts has supported communities during the pandemic and how a year of uncertainty and change has encouraged new and radical ways of working.

The event will bring together creatives, artists, communities, cultural and community organisations, researchers, charities, and schools in this brand new digital arts festival, which will harness collective learnings from an arduous year to reimagine the role of the arts in our societies.

Can we use the pandemic as a cultural reset? Can we disrupt, question and challenge assumptions and ways in which communities, schools, charities, local government, third sector organisations, artists, and arts organisations work together?

Following the event in 2021, DISRUPT is planning a follow-up festival in the summer of 2022, which will focus predominantly on post-pandemic community collaboration, using programming and ideas from 2021 as its foundation.

It's time to unlearn, rethink and restructure.

---

## **The DISRUPT Partners**

DISRUPT is a festival created in partnership with **Barbican; Culture Mile; Guildhall School of Music & Drama; Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance; Lived Experience Network, Maya Productions; Museum of London; and Slung Low.**

---

## **Contact us!**

The festival is coordinated by Guildhall School of Music & Drama and Barbican. If you would like to get in touch with us to ask a question, talk about your application, eligibility, or if you'd like support filling in the application, please contact us on **[disrupt@gsmd.ac.uk](mailto:disrupt@gsmd.ac.uk)**

---

# The Brief

---

## What are we looking for?

In short, you. Creatives, communities, artists, charities, researchers and arts organisations that work meaningfully together. We want to crowdsource projects, questions, challenges and solutions from the grassroots. Funded projects will premiere or showcase work at DISRUPT 2021.

This could be:

- new and experimental performance-based projects created with, by and for communities during the pandemic.
- tools and tactics to build skills on new or different ways of working in the performing arts, including practical steps on how communities, artists and organisations can collaborate.
- projects that explore alternative and more democratic futures for the performing arts.

We are aware that it might not be possible for all projects to have a live or performance-based element to premier at DISRUPT 2021. In light of this we will also be accepting digital aspects of the projects you create. This may include, but is not limited to, something visual like a zine, photography, a short video, a discussion, in-conversation, or any other engaging way in which you'd like to present your work for the festival.

We will fund work that is new or already under way, and we can fund the whole project, or part of a project.

We use some broad terms in our brief, so we think it's a good idea to explain what we mean by these.

### **Community**

We're using the word community in a relatively broad sense, meaning people living in the same place, people who self-identify as a community, and people who share a characteristic, belief or attitude. We're also talking about organisations who represent community interests and needs.

### **Community partner**

We mean anyone who is part of, or works on behalf of, a community. This could include, but is not limited to, someone that belongs to a community; a community group; a community organisation such as a youth centre; a school; a charity; or a local authority department.

### **Creative partner**

We're using the term creative partner because we want to open up the application process to as many creative people and organisations as possible. This could mean anyone who works within the creative industries or spends time of creative projects. Creative and cultural organisations, creative freelancers, artists, producers, community practitioners, arts therapists, designers, technologists, dancers, choreographers, animators, or architects – the list goes on!

### **Performing arts**

We mean anything that involves a live or performative element, including music, dance, theatre, performance art, live installation, spoken work and production art. This could also include projects that were developed as performing arts projects but have to be repackaged for an online audience, such as theatre projects becoming films, or spoken word becoming a zine, podcast or online performance.

---

# The Strands

We've split this Open Call into three strands: community commissions, tools and tactics and alternative futures.

In order to be eligible, all applications must:

- be a co-written and collaborative project between a Community Partner and Creative Partner;
- applicants must be based in the UK;
- applications must have a creative digital element that can form part of DISRUPT 2021 (for example a live performance, a film, photography, an exhibition, an online zine etc).

---

## 1. Community Commissions

Proposals for experimental and collaborative performance projects between communities and creative partners. The project should be a response to the pandemic or its consequences, and stem from something a community needs or wants to make. Do you have an ongoing project that is an artistic collaboration? We're happy to support or expand that, too.

### The important bit

You can apply for up to **£5000**. This can form part of existing funding, match funding, or we can fund the entire project. Anyone can apply to take part! Community groups, schools, third sector, researchers, charities, artists, producers, and arts organisations. Applications must be co-written with a community partner and a creative partner.

### Need help finding a partner?

We know not every community partner will be in the position to be linked to an arts organisation, and vice versa. If this sounds like you, pop us an **email** and we will try our best to match you with a creative or community partner.

---

## 2. Tools and Tactics

We want to encourage and develop new collaborative skills by looking at what radical new ways of working have developed because of the pandemic. This could include how art is made, selected or thought about by involving and broadening who and how communities are involved in decision-making.

We're interested in hearing about things like:

- Changing or reconsidering programming based on input from communities outside of the organisation. This could take many different forms including, but not limited to, youth and community panels, mentors, advisors, community producers, and programmers.
- Community organisations who have helped creatives redefine their role, offered co-working space or skills-based training.
- Community groups or organisations who have helped and supported cultural organisations make changes in order to support locals during the pandemic. This could include space, shared resources, skills sharing and development, or mutual aid support.
- Redefining an organisation's purpose around community interests. Have you changed your purpose to support the community through food drops, providing space for schools, providing skills and training, developing projects for people who are shielding or curriculum support for parents?
- New methods of evaluating, including meaningful ways of measuring and demonstrating value.
- New education and mentoring models.
- Have you spent time redefining language and expanding understanding around artistic programming and commissioning in collaboration with communities, so that your remit has become more flexible and inclusive?
- Is co-creation a key focus of the organisation in some way? This could also include co-creating governance and flexibility around community engagement.

**The important bit**

You can apply for up to **£1000**. This can form part of existing funding, match funding, or we can fund the entire project. Your proposal needs to be co-written by at least two members of the project, one of which needs to be from the community partner and the other from the creative partner.

Your output for the festival could take many forms including an artistic response, a discussion or panel, a workshop, a written piece, a film, an interview or in-conversation, or anything else you can think of. Whatever you choose, it should aim to show others how and why they might go about developing something similar.

---

**3. Alternative Futures**

We want to open up spaces to explore what needs to change in order to harness our collective learnings (or unlearnings) about community collaboration. How should we restructure things? What changes need to be made in order to build a better, more democratic future for the performing arts?

Your application should consider what the change is that you'd like to make and how you'll communicate that creatively to an online audience. Ideas could include, but aren't limited to:

- discussions and talks
- creative and artistic responses
- creative writing and essays
- workshops
- elevator pitches
- anything else you can dream up!

**The important bit**

You can apply for up to **£1000**. This can form part of existing funding, match funding, or we can fund the entire project. Your application needs to be co-written and developed with a community partner and a creative partner.

---

# How to apply

## The deadline is noon on 30 January.

Everything you need to apply is available [here](#), including our Terms and Conditions, forms and templates. You can apply through the following ways:

1. Fill in an application form, available as an online form [here](#). You can also answer the longer written questions via video or audio application by adding a private YouTube, Vimeo or SoundCloud link to that section of the form.
2. Please download a budget template [here](#), which you should upload to the online form.
3. You can use our Microsoft Word version of the application form, which you can find [here](#), to draft your application before you complete the online form. If possible, please still use the online form to apply.
4. If you prefer, you can apply by sending an email attaching your completed Word application and budget to [disrupt@gsmd.ac.uk](mailto:disrupt@gsmd.ac.uk).

If you need support filling in your application, we're happy to help on the phone. Just shoot us an email to arrange an appointment [disrupt@gsmd.ac.uk](mailto:disrupt@gsmd.ac.uk)

---

## Your budget

Your budget can include:

- Artist(s) fees
- Production fees and costs
- Project management costs including any insurance or legal costs
- Equipment and software necessary to produce the work, whether hired or purchased
- Rights clearance costs for online publication
- Marketing costs
- Other relevant costs like expenses and travel
- Access support costs
- A contingency of up to 10%.

Your budget should include VAT, but cannot include any costs already incurred.

---

## Payment

If successful, we will aim to sign a grant agreement within 10 working days of confirming your funding. Payment milestones will vary dependant on your cash flow requirements but will typically be:

- 75% on signing the agreement
- 25% on delivery of your project

---

## Timeline

**30 January**  
Deadline

**4 March**  
Applicants notified

**15 March**  
Agreements signed

**23 March**  
Copy deadline

**24 June**  
Deadline for projects (or final details) to be sent to production team

**8-9 July**  
DISRUPT 2021

**12 July**  
Evaluation

---

## Contact us!

The festival is coordinated by Guildhall School of Music & Drama and Barbican. If you would like to get in touch with us to ask a question, talk about your application, eligibility, or if you'd like support filling in the application, please contact us on: [disrupt@gsmd.ac.uk](mailto:disrupt@gsmd.ac.uk)