

iOi Cultural Residency 2019

Application brief

The Institute of Imagination

From the first mark on a cave wall to the first footsteps on the Moon, our greatest developments have begun with leaps of someone's imagination.

The Institute of Imagination (iOi) is a charity creating space to re-imagine our world, together. Our goal is to spark imaginations everywhere, supporting skills development, innovation and wellbeing through our events, training, partnerships and research.

Our mission is to create a new, world-class cultural space in London which will develop vital future skills, connect people through experiential learning across the arts, sciences and digital technologies and research imagination's benefit to people everywhere. A new cultural space for everyone, with children and families at its heart.

On our journey towards this, we are operating our Imagination Lab on the Albert Embankment, which opened in 2017, and reaches tens of thousands of visitors every year. At the Lab, we explore and provide access to new tools and technologies with a range of audiences in immersive learning environments. From here, we also run a range of activities in schools, in cultural, learning and research venues across London and beyond and pop-ups in the public realm. Our methodology is to design interdisciplinary programmes to encourage learning across a range of topics, bringing different subjects together.

What are we looking for?

At the Imagination Lab, we run a series of Cultural Residencies, each exploring a theme. The residencies are 4 months, the outputs are a collaboration between our resident and audiences and through each residency we seek to develop skills and leave a lasting legacy (physical or digital) within the Lab space. They are open for any individual or collective to apply, regardless of background or discipline. We encourage interdisciplinary approaches across our learning experiences and as such we are open to proposals from diverse backgrounds of expertise.

For our 2019 residency at the Imagination Lab, the iOi will commission an individual or collective to:

- Present a concept based on our theme: Empathy
- Develop a plan to incorporate this concept into a participatory activity that can be run at events and workshops delivered to a



At a glance:

What?

An innovative and inspiring four-month Cultural Residency, which under the theme of 'Empathy' will spark the imaginations of children and families.

Where?

The Imagination Lab, Vauxhall, London.

When?

April to July 2019.

Deadline for initial submissions 5pm Thursday 21 February 2019

Fee:

£8,000 plus additional support

range of participants (see below for further information on these audiences)

- Incorporate collaboration from a range of audiences, including the option for an international element
- The concept should be active and participatory with a performing arts focus



This residency is open to all persons with any speciality across the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) fields and beyond. We ask that submissions are not for a static installation or art piece and we are particularly interested in exploring a performance-based output.

We would hope that the output (however it manifests) has a digital legacy, be this through video or online means in order for future visitors to the Lab to benefit from the project. The time to development this legacy should be budgeted for within the fee, but the output (such as filming or display) will be supported by additional funds, subject to proposal and we will work collaboratively with the resident to deliver this.

To give some examples to spark your imagination, this could be a performance or a series of imaginative interactions with the public. When we speak of international involvement, this could involve working with a partner school overseas, getting entries/responses from people around the world, interviewing people overseas. As an organisation, the iOi can support you to work with international audiences and harder to reach communities or those with additional needs. We would like to see this incorporated into the proposal for the residency programme.

What audiences would you be working with and what type of events could you take part in?

1. School/home education groups – with children at Key Stage 2 (7-11 years old). We would hope to work with both our existing networks and to bring in new schools and groups. iOi can support the resident to work with schools specifically for children with SEND and there is allocation with the project for accessibility.
2. Families – we regularly run half-day workshops and/or all-day events with children and families, aimed for children aged 5-12 and their parents/carers, of which the residency should make use.
3. Adults – we run evening events for teachers, other professionals or interested adults, of which the residency should make use.

All these events would incorporate dynamic and engaging activities for the audiences. It is worth mentioning that for larger events we run, the resident would be responsible for delivering one activity as part of many other activities.

Fees

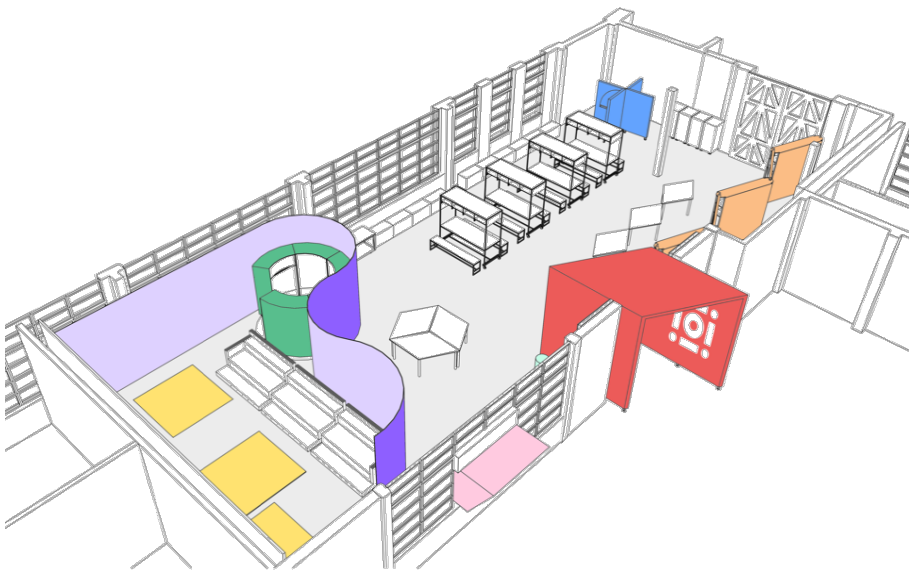
£8000, inclusive of VAT

This is for your time and expenses, including both preparation and attendance at the above-named workshop types (schools, families and adults). This will be paid in instalments.

We have further project funding for helping you to deliver your concept, for example to have iOi facilitators to support the residency, filming, materials for a digital legacy, external evaluation and ensuring the output of the residency is accessible. This would be discussed in full following appointment.

What will you have access to?

- Space to work in the Imagination Lab (see below), our 3,000sq ft space in Lambeth at the Workshop, equipped with AV, fibre broadband and storage space
- Technology and equipment such as iPads or VR equipment, subject to availability
- iOi connections, audiences and inhouse expertise including marketing, operations and experience and learning teams
- An external evaluator who will create a report of the residency
- 12,000sqft overflow event space at the Workshop



What is the application process?

Please read the theme for the residency (see below), complete an application form and an optional equality monitoring form and return to culturalresidency@ioi.london by 5pm, Thursday 21 February 2019.

Three applications will be shortlisted by an expert panel on Friday 8 March 2019. We will then ask the three shortlisted candidates to come and present their concepts to children at a school workshop. This will take place from 10am – 3pm on Wednesday 13 March. **If you are applying we ask that you save this date.**

Final judging will be conducted on week commencing 18 March, taking into account children's feedback.

The chosen applicant will be informed by Friday 22 March. The two runners up will be awarded £500.

The chosen resident will have access to the Imagination Lab from 1 April until end of July 2019.

If you have any questions about the process please contact Kathryn Wilson, Team Operations Manager on kathryn.wilson@ioi.london or 0207 494 9153.

Residency theme: Empathy

'In order for us to live well together in our increasingly interconnected and complex world we need to strengthen our capacity for empathy, friendship, social connection and concern for others, including future generations'

Arts and Kindness Executive summary

At the Institute of Imagination, we believe that through imagination we can put ourselves into the minds of others, imagining things from their perspective and considering how our actions may impact upon them. This is true not just with those around us, but we can put ourselves in the past, the future and on the other side of the world. As the world becomes more globally connected, it is important for us to be able to expand our sense of empathy to those who we have not met and to those who are living through conditions completely distinct to our own.

Why should we be concerned with having empathy? Empathy is a strong motive in eliciting prosocial behaviour, which has roots in the history of evolution. Prosocial behaviour is often linked to an increased sense of well-being with society and some anthropologists argue that it helps to further our evolution as a species to act in the interest of others and to have a foundation for social interaction that is not motivated by selfishness.

Why is this important now? We are living in a period of rapid change, which means turbulence and uncertainty in our day to day lives. We experience a constant stream of unsettling news cycles, coupled with the weight of expectation from society. This external pressure potentially can trigger an instinct for survival, creating an increase in selfish behaviour. The landscape of our society has changed dramatically over the last 40 years, particularly with the invention and boom of the internet. Suddenly, we have a world of connections and information at our finger tips and we are figuring out how to make the possibilities work positively for society.

Digital technologies are often painted as the enemy of empathy. With a huge capacity for anonymous communication, we have seen the steady



increase of 'trolling' and online bullying. Despite the freedom offered by anonymity, we often forget that our words and actions still hold a great deal of power and can impact hugely on those around us. Dr Connie K. Chung discusses this in her piece on our website, imaginationmatters.org, advocating for the use of ethical imaginations and to have the space to 'exercise both our empathy and our ethical imagination, and to consider situations from multiple angles, levels and perspectives.'



Developers recognise this importance and empathy is increasingly being 'taught' to machines and incorporated into technology such as AI. Whilst this brings up many ethical discussions regarding this use of AI, it is clear that empathy is a key element to being human. Interestingly, empathy was a key component of the culture revolution at Microsoft. Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella uses it not just as a means to understand one's customer better, but as a 'practice to foster innovation and develop deeper internal and external collaborations.' It seems that empathy can and should be incorporated into how digital and technological advancement is shaped.



For centuries, the arts have been a vehicle to allow us to increase our understandings of the experiences of others and to see the world from a different viewpoint. At the Institute of Imagination we have been inspired by the work of organisations such as People United and the Empathy Museum. People United's work has continually shown that participatory artistic interventions can increase empathy. We recommend reading their report on kindness in art and the importance of prosocial behaviour and how this can be incorporated into participation events, performance, art and creation.



The Empathy Museum is a series of participatory art projects dedicated to help us look at the world through other people's eyes. With a focus on storytelling and dialogue, their travelling museum explores how empathy can not only transform our personal relationships, but also help tackle global challenges such as prejudice, conflict and inequality.

We are looking for a resident (or collective) to explore this theme of empathy in a four-month residency at the Imagination Lab, through means or methods of their choosing.

To apply complete an application form from ioi.london and an optional equality monitoring form and return to culturalresidency@ioi.london by 5pm, Thursday 21 February 2019.