

Announcement of Opportunity

Human Spaceflight and Microgravity Outreach: Arts and Creative Technology

Closing Date 27 July 2015

Background

The UK Space Agency is supporting new outreach related to human spaceflight and microgravity research.

In 2013, the UK joined the European Space Agency's International Space Station (ISS) and Life and Physical Sciences (ELIPS) programmes, to advance national science and industry. It is recognised that these space programmes can also connect with new audiences and increase knowledge of space beyond its usual STEM focus (science, technology, engineering and maths).

The upcoming flight of Tim Peake to the International Space Station has boosted interest in human spaceflight in the UK. The current scheme, however, looks beyond this one mission: the Agency is seeking original ideas which give new perspectives on science, technology and exploration in a socio-cultural context.

Awards are available from £10k up to a maximum of £50k. The Agency expects to make between 1 and 5 awards.

What we are looking for

Creative work which responds to space science and technology in new and interesting ways. Funding may be matched from other sources or be used to fund one part of a larger project. Proposals are welcome in these areas:

- **Visual arts**
- **Video games**
- **Creative technology + immersive media**

Some examples of effective work in this field could include: Elizabeth Price's [SUNLIGHT](#); Superflux's [Mangala For All](#); Helen White's [Solar Wind Chime](#). (NB these are illustrative only of the breadth and diversity of possible approaches.)

Context

'Human spaceflight' is here used to describe all human presence in space. Practically, this may be via one of two routes: 1. State-funded projects, in particular the International Space Station (ISS), a permanently crewed presence in low earth orbit (LEO). 2. Commercial spaceflight providers – none of these is yet fully operational for human missions, but several are expected to commence flights bearing the first commercial astronauts and 'space tourists' or 'participants' (as distinct from astronauts) in the next few years.

'Microgravity' is used loosely to refer to all research conducted in space, utilising one or more condition of the space environment – primarily microgravity but also radiation, extreme vacuum and other stressors – or in Earth-based facilities which mimic these conditions.

Applicants may note that these areas of academic research are current priorities for UK microgravity research:

- Astrobiology/astrochemistry
- Fundamental physics
- Materials science
- Biomedicine

Microgravity/space environments platforms include:

- The International Space Station
- Parabolic flights
- Sounding rockets
- Drop towers
- Bedrest
- Antarctic stations

More information on European platforms can be found [online](#).

...What we are *not* looking for

This announcement is deliberately quite open and broad in scope to allow for novel and unexpected responses. Applicants should note however that the Agency is already supporting a range of outreach related to the flight of Tim Peake, and has a comprehensive education programme. The current scheme looks beyond Tim Peake's Principia mission; is for outreach rather than education; seeks to highlight real space related activities.

In summary we are not soliciting proposals which are:

- linked specifically to Tim Peake's mission;
- explicitly educational
- purely speculative or science fiction (in a conventional understanding of the term – connecting with scientific reality should be sufficient.)

Review

Proposals will be judged by an expert panel, based on the following criteria:

- Audience
 - The priority is reaching new audiences
 - Size of audience is also important
- Impact
 - the level and significance of likely impact and engagement
- Link to UK Space Agency programmes
 - proposals which highlight existing projects by UK researchers are particularly welcome
- Feasibility
 - the likelihood of the proposal to be realised; confidence in its management
- Value for Money
 - the sum of funding requested compared to the rating on the above factors
 - proposals with matched or complementary funding are welcomed, or where the proposed work will enable further projects/act as a proof-of concept

Eligibility and how to apply

The scheme is open to individuals and organisations who:

- Are based in the UK
- Have audited accounts
- Have support of their sponsoring organisation or work in partnership with an organisation that can receive the funds
- Eligible organisations include academic or research institutions (including schools, universities, UK Space Agency partners), charities, trusts and companies (including not-for-profit)

Any questions regarding eligibility and remit of the scheme should be directed to Andrew.Kuh@ukspaceagency.bis.gsi.gov.uk . Please note that responses may take up to five working days.

Timing

Proposals must be made on the attached form and submitted to the address indicated no later than 16.00 on 27 July 2015.

Successful proposals are expected to be announced before September 2015.