

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

ENDS

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 began 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.

[£12.2 million boost for genomic surveillance to help stop transmission of COVID-19](#)

- £12.2 million to expand whole genome sequencing to see how COVID-19 spreads and evolves
- Viral genome sequencing data increases our understanding of outbreaks and help to track patterns of infection
- This research is essential for monitoring the evolution of COVID-19 for mutations which may impact the efficacy of vaccines

The public will be better protected from COVID-19 with £12.2 million of funding awarded to potentially life-saving research into how the virus spreads and evolves through genome sequencing.

[The COVID-19 Genomics UK \(COG-UK\) Consortium](#) will use the funding to expand whole genome sequencing of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, the cause of COVID-19. Whole genome sequencing uses scientific techniques to read the virus's genetic code, aiding our understanding of how the virus spreads and evolves through the study of DNA.

This means any changes to the genetic code, or mutations, can be picked up in samples from people and the environment. Tracking these changes to the genetic code helps us understand the spread of the virus which causes

COVID-19.

The rising number of COVID-19 cases in the UK requires an expansion of the national SARS-CoV-2 genome sequencing capacity, to ensure that the benefits of using genome sequence data can be realised in a rapid and robust manner. The funding will facilitate the genome sequencing capacity needed to meet the increasing numbers of COVID-19 cases expected in the UK this winter.

The viral genome sequencing data will be integrated within Public Health England (PHE) and NHS Test and Trace to help understand outbreaks and strengthen infection control measures across the country to help protect the public and break chains of transmission.

Health Minister Lord Bethell said:

This virus is the biggest public health challenge we have faced in a century. We have responded with one of the greatest collective efforts this nation has seen in peacetime. As each day passes, we are learning more and there have already been incredible advancements in science.

As we pull together to tackle this, it's imperative we are on the front foot with our research. This funding is a big step forward in going further to advance our understanding of COVID-19, and help us protect the most vulnerable – ultimately saving lives across the world.

Linking the data from viral genome sequencing with health data of those who test positive for COVID-19 allows us to better understand how the virus may become more or less infective, or more or less harmful to those who catch it.

This vital research will also assist in developing potential vaccines in the future. Some vaccines work by targeting part of a virus's genetic code, and by tracking changes in the genetic code, we are able to identify any changes which may affect a vaccine's ability to provide protection.

This additional investment will enable COG-UK to grow and strengthen current genomic surveillance efforts spearheaded by the Wellcome Sanger Institute, PHE, and other COG-UK partners, with the aim of increasing sequencing capacity across the national network and reducing turnaround time from patient sample to genome sequence.

Professor Sharon Peacock, Director of the COVID-19 Genomics UK (COG-UK) Consortium, Professor of Public Health and Microbiology at the University of Cambridge and a Director Of Science (Pathogen Genomics) at PHE, said:

To fully understand the spread and evolution of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, we must sequence and analyse the viral genomes. The pattern of accumulation of mutations in the genomes enables us to determine the relatedness of virus samples and define viral lineages in order

to understand whether local outbreaks are caused by transmission of single or multiple viral lineages.

Analysis of viral genome sequences also allow us to monitor the evolution of SARS-CoV-2 and assess whether specific mutations influence transmission, disease severity, or the impact of interventions such as vaccines.

Since its launch in March 2020, COG-UK has generated and made publicly available more than 100,000 SARS-CoV-2 genomes, making up over 45 per cent of the global total. This unprecedented effort has not been achieved previously for any pathogen, anywhere in the world.

COG-UK researchers have built a central database and developed cutting-edge analytical methodology and data pipelines for SARS-CoV-2 genomics. COG-UK has led the development of analytical software to define viral lineages and shares methods globally.

Collectively, these data and tools have provided important scientific insights into the spread and evolution of the virus, at local, regional, national and international scales.

The 4 UK public health agencies and COG-UK are working to link SARS-CoV-2 genome data with epidemiological, clinical and contact tracing records nationally.

This will help establish a comprehensive national dataset linking viral sequencing with host genomics, immunology, clinical outcomes and risk factors.

Report 12/2020: Derailment of a freight train near Wanstead Park

Press release

RAIB has today released its report into the derailment of a freight train near Wanstead Park, London, 23 January 2020.



The derailed wagon

PDF, 14.7MB, 61 pages

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Summary

Shortly before 06:00 hrs on Thursday 23 January 2020, a wagon in the rear half of a heavily loaded freight train derailed on a small radius curve as it crossed a bridge in east London. The forces from the train caused the rails on the bridge, which were attached to large longitudinal timbers, to spread apart. Two adjacent wheelsets from different wagons derailed, but one wheelset re-railed itself after travelling a short distance. The other wheelset remained derailed as the train continued for 2.5 miles (4.1 km) before stopping, and this caused significant track damage. Wagons positioned behind the derailed wagons remained on the track.

Track where the rails are supported on longitudinal timbers is subject to special inspections by staff who have received additional training to undertake this role. RAIB found that the condition of the timbers at the point of derailment had severely deteriorated because of rot, but this was concealed by their superficially good exterior condition. The inspection method and tools used by Network Rail staff were not sufficient to detect the poor internal condition of the timber.

The widening of the track gauge was identified, by track recording vehicles operated by Network Rail, six times between March 2019 and January 2020. On three occasions, the track maintenance gangs responded but undertook work in a nearby location due to erroneous GPS data. On three other occasions, the track recording vehicles' software did not report the location of the fault so maintenance staff remained unaware of it.

One wagon in the train exerted sufficient force on the weakened track support

to force the rails apart and cause the wagon to derail. Examination of the first wagon to derail and its maintenance records indicated that it had experienced unusually rapid wheel wear over several years. It is possible that this meant it was imposing higher than normal lateral forces on the track and that this is related to a defect which affected the way the bogie was able to rotate.

Following the failure of a longitudinal timber on a bridge in the same area in August 2017, Network Rail launched a review resulting in an updated standard for the detailed inspection and management of longitudinal timbers. The updated standard was under development at the time of the accident, and was published in March 2020.

Recommendations

RAIB has made one recommendation to Network Rail regarding improvements in the provision of track recording vehicle data to track maintenance staff, and one recommendation to the wagon owner concerning the monitoring of maintenance activities to reduce the risk of defective rail vehicles entering service. It has identified three learning points covering the management of longitudinal timber systems and loading activities in freight loading terminals.

Notes to editors

1. The sole purpose of RAIB investigations is to prevent future accidents and incidents and improve railway safety. RAIB does not establish blame, liability or carry out prosecutions.
2. RAIB operates, as far as possible, in an open and transparent manner. While our investigations are completely independent of the railway industry, we do maintain close liaison with railway companies and if we discover matters that may affect the safety of the railway, we make sure that information about them is circulated to the right people as soon as possible, and certainly long before publication of our final report.
3. For media enquiries, please call 01932 440015.

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[First sponsors for COP26 announced with one year to go until the climate](#)

summit

The UK has today revealed its first sponsors for COP26 as it drives climate action in the run up to the international climate change summit in Glasgow.

SSE, ScottishPower, NatWest Group and National Grid are the first Principal Partners who will support the delivery of a successful and ambitious COP next November.

The Principal Partners represent some of the leading lenders, investors and energy companies in the UK.

These partnerships demonstrate the COP26 Presidency's commitment to working with businesses who have credible science-based carbon emission reduction plans that are in line with the goals of the Paris Agreement.

ScottishPower, SSE and National Grid are investing in low-carbon assets and infrastructure as part of the UK's drive for a decarbonised economy by 2050 at the latest.

Today, the three energy firms confirmed they are developing ambitious plans to develop a multi-billion pound underwater super-highway that will see the North Sea become the hidden power house of Europe, supporting the UK supply chain and delivering hundreds of green jobs throughout construction and operation

NatWest Group is one of Britain's largest lenders to the renewable energy sector in the country, and has committed to provide an additional £20 billion of funding for Climate and Sustainable Finance (2020-2022) to help accelerate the transition to a low carbon economy.

COP26 President Alok Sharma said:

I am delighted to announce our first sponsors for COP26, who have all shown ambitious climate leadership through setting net zero commitments and Science Based Targets.

When it comes to climate action, we all have an important role to play. Only by continuing to come together can we build the zero carbon, climate resilient future that is essential for our people and our planet.

Keith Anderson, CEO of ScottishPower, said:

Tackling climate change and delivering the infrastructure that will support Net Zero is a huge opportunity for the UK . At ScottishPower, we have recognised the opportunity this challenge holds and seized it, leading us to make the major decision two

years ago to remove all coal and gas generation from our portfolio to focus solely on renewables.

For Glasgow, our operational headquarters, COP26 offers a fantastic opportunity to showcase what has already been achieved in the UK on the journey to Net Zero and to learn from others the steps needed to ensure we meet our climate change targets. We're very proud to be able to play a part in it.

The next five years are absolutely critical and we will be investing £10bn in the clean energy generation and networks infrastructure needed to help the UK decarbonise.

Alison Rose, CEO NatWest Group, said:

NatWest Group is committed to being a leading UK bank helping to address the climate challenge. We will do this by driving material reductions in the climate impact of our financing activity and making our own operations net carbon zero in 2020.

But we want to do more than play our part – we want to lead on the collaboration and cooperation that is so critical to influencing the transition to a low carbon economy – which is why I am so proud that NatWest Group will be the COP26 lead banking sponsor.

Alistair Phillips-Davies, SSE Chief Executive, said:

The world faces twin crises with coronavirus and climate change and we must work together if we're to combat both.

Strong leadership and international ambition will set the course, but it is businesses like SSE that will provide the solutions and infrastructure to decarbonise and deliver economic recovery for the long-term.

Climate ambitions can feel a long way off, but we are acting now by investing £7.5bn in vital low-carbon infrastructure for the UK and Ireland – supporting jobs and creating opportunities. As the eyes of the world fall on Glasgow at this pivotal moment, we're proud to partner with the UK Government to play our part in delivering a net zero future.

John Pettigrew, Group CEO of National Grid said:

Tackling climate change and reaching net zero is at the top of National Grid's agenda.

To transition to net zero, we are connecting more renewables to the

electricity grid, we're creating the right charging infrastructure in the US and the UK to enable an increase in electric vehicles and we're continually developing and deploying new decarbonisation technologies.

It is crucial that every country, every government, every industry and every one of us works together to find ways to cut the carbon we produce. If we don't, we will put the planet in jeopardy.

For press queries contact COP26media@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

- Principal Partners are the top tier of sponsorship for COP26. The four announced today are the first in a number of organisations that will be working with COP26.
- These include the three energy sector Principal Partners for COP26
- We will release information on the details of sponsorship agreements after the event.
- We are ensuring that COP26 provides value for money for the taxpayer.
- All sponsors have committed to the Science-Based Targets initiative, this requires them to set ambitious targets for emissions reductions including having a credible action plan. All in line with what the latest climate science says is necessary to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement.

ScottishPower

- In 2018 ScottishPower became the first integrated energy company in the UK to generate 100% green electricity from its nearly 3GW of renewable assets with a further 7GW in the pipeline.
- Earlier this month the company outlined its £10bn investment strategy in clean energy generation and networks infrastructure over the next five years.
- ScottishPower is committed to delivering a green recovery through £10bn of investment in the UK's green energy infrastructure over the next 5 years.

SSE

- SSE is a leading generator of renewable electricity in the UK and Ireland and one of the largest electricity network operators in the UK. The company is committed to meaningful action on climate change and supporting the net zero transition
- It employs 12,000 people across the UK and Ireland and develops, owns and operates low-carbon infrastructure, including onshore and offshore wind, hydro power, electricity transmission and distribution grids, efficient gas and energy from waste, alongside providing energy products and services for businesses.
- SSE is also building the world's largest offshore windfarm in Dogger Bank, off the coast of Yorkshire, Scotland's largest offshore windfarm in Seagreen off the coast of Angus, and the UK's largest onshore windfarm in Viking on the Shetland Islands.

Natwest Group

- Natwest Group is the leading lender to UK renewables sector by number of transactions in the past decade (2009-2019)
- With £9.9bn to sustainable energy funding and financing provided to the sustainable energy sector between 2018-20.
- Emissions from our operations reduced by 61% since 2014
- Market leading policies on reducing the most harmful activities, including on prohibitions on project financing for coal power plants, thermal coal mines, oil sand or arctic oil projects.
- In February, they announced further changes their policy to prohibit project financing for fracking or oil and gas exploration

National Grid

- National Grid is investing in the clean energy transition, developing skills for the future, with a focus on lower income communities, committing to providing access to skills development for 45,000 people by 2030. National Grid has made significant commitments to achieve net zero by 2050.
- In its recently announced Responsible Business Charter, it set out its plan on how to do that with reducing Scope 1 and 2 greenhouses gasses, reducing Scope 3 emissions and reducing SF6 emissions.

The Science Based Targets initiative

- SBTi mobilizes companies to set science-based targets and boost their competitive advantage in the transition to the low-carbon economy.
- It is a collaboration between CDP, the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), World Resources Institute (WRI) and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and one of the We Mean Business Coalition commitments.
- The initiative defines and promotes best practice in science-based target setting, offers resources and guidance to reduce barriers to adoption, and independently assesses and approves companies' targets.

- ENDS

1 January 2021: Update to the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) fees

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