



## Future Libraries Creative Brief

### INTRO

The Festival of Libraries will be a five-day celebration of Greater Manchester's libraries taking place between 9 and 13 June 2021. This new, multi-venue festival will feature a vibrant programme of digital art commissions, artist residencies, dance, performance, panel talks and walking tours.

The inaugural Libraries Festival has four main aims:

- Celebrate people: the librarians who run the spaces, the users who make use of the services and the extraordinary stories that emerge from the everyday use of libraries.
- Reposition the public perception of independent and public libraries, as well as specialist libraries (medical, heritage, etc)
- Engage with those with low levels of cultural engagement, lapsed library users and cultural tourists.
- Grow into an annual celebration and to become a major festival of local engagement and international profile.

Library partners include: Archives+, Central Library, Chetham's Library, John Rylands Library, Manchester Poetry Library, NHS Libraries, The Portico, Working Class Movement Library, the University of Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan University and Greater Manchester libraries (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan).

### FUTURE LIBRARIES

As part of the Festival of Libraries commissions, and in partnership with The Writing Squad and innovation lab FutureEverything, Future Libraries will pair early career writers and creative technologists / digital artists to create immersive, digitally delivered narratives about libraries of the future (installations in three libraries and online).

# Manchester City of Literature

We are inviting creative technologists/artists working with digital technologies based in North England, and northern based writers from The Writing Squad to respond to this brief for a collaborative commission challenging perceptions about what libraries are now.

## THEME / CONTEXT

By exploring stories of what future libraries might and could be, this project will help change and challenge perceptions of what libraries are now.

Our provocation to the artists involved in Future Libraries is that libraries are personal and portable as much as bricks and mortar buildings. Libraries rely on people to come alive and for the knowledge they hold to work. They are a portal to self-development and to a development of our understanding of the world around us. Library staff act as navigators, as an interface between people and this knowledge.



## ABOUT THE CREATIVE PROCESS AND COMMISSION

Future Libraries will:

- pair writers from The Writing Squad with creative technologists to create an interdisciplinary creative team to explore these themes
- bring the creative teams together with librarians to understand the roles that libraries and library staff undertake currently and the people who access these services.
- support creative teams through creative development and realisation of their projects via a Festival Producer and the expertise and guidance of FE and TWS (the commissioning partners alongside MCOL).

The creative process will lead to:

- Work that can be shared online and/or as a physical installation during the Festival of Libraries in June (or work that uses the Festival as a starting point for creative development and/or public engagement)
- Work that is imaginative, accessible, joyous and thought-provoking; work that will engage and surprise a wide audience
- Work that puts a story at the heart of the creative output

## **EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST and SELECTION PROCESS**

We are inviting expressions of interest from North England based Writing Squad writers and creative technologists / artists.

Interested writers/creative technologists/artists are invited to submit expressions of interest responding to the above brief.

Interested parties can apply with:

- A response to this brief including a brief description of your current practice, and the reasons for your interest in this project and how you would like to work in a partnership (not longer than a double-sided A4)
- Examples of work relevant to the brief or ideas/examples that inspire you thinking about this project
- CV

Please send the above material to [irini@futureeverything.org](mailto:irini@futureeverything.org) by Wednesday 7th April 2021.

Selected applicants will be invited to take part in facilitated team-building sessions to select and build the pairs / partnerships / collaborations.

The Writing Squad, FutureEverything and the Festival of Libraries Producer alongside the commissioning partners will support and manage the ideation, creative development and creative delivery phases.

### **Intellectual Property**

Work developed jointly by the writers and creative technologists (authors) is the Intellectual Property of the authors and the authors assert their right to be identified as the creator of the work (for the purposes of the Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988) whenever the work, or any permitted reproductions, are exhibited.

### **Reproduction rights**

Festival of Libraries, The Writing Squad, FutureEverything and the participating writers and artists/creative technologists will be able to photograph, and/or record presentations of the artwork for archival, promotional purposes and for dissemination purposes.

## **TIMELINE and BUDGET**

Expressions of Interest deadline - 7th April

Intro and team building sessions - mid April

Project development - mid April to end of May (6 weeks)

Festival dates - 9-13 June 2021

# Manchester City of Literature

We will commission x3 writers and x3 technologists, to form x3 pairs. Each writer and each technologist will receive a fee of £2000 each. A fee of £1000 per pair will be available for creative realisation of the project.

## ABOUT THE FESTIVAL OF LIBRARIES

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## ABOUT THE WRITING SQUAD

[The Writing Squad](#) exists to create the next generation of writers in the north.

Our free two year programme is for writers aged 16-21 who live, work or study in the North of England. After that we continue to offer them support as they begin their careers.

We help them establish themselves as individual artists, collectives and start up companies. We link writers and activists with the literature industry and independent sector, while encouraging them to produce and distribute work themselves.

Being funded as part of Arts Council England's National Portfolio means our support can be rigorous, long term and shaped by the constant renewal of our writers' needs, ambitions and circumstances. We are a community of artists who make new work together and support each other's development. A continuous experiment. For us building is a verb, not a noun.

## ABOUT FUTUREEVERYTHING

Established in Manchester in 1995, [FutureEverything](#) is an award-winning female-led innovation lab and cultural organisation that has helped shape the emergence of digital culture in Europe. Through a curated programme of events, art commissions, critical conversations, collaborative projects and prototyping, FutureEverything pushes creative boundaries and stimulates new ways of thinking, across a diverse range of sectors, disciplines and audiences. Taking an action-research, artist-led and human-centred approach, FutureEverything is passionate about bringing people together to discover, share and experience new ideas for the future, creating opportunities to question and reflect on the world around us.

