

## **Fear and Belonging in Minority Buddhist Communities Artist Brief**

The University of Manchester “Fear and Belonging” project research team, in collaboration with FutureEverything, is seeking a digital artist to work with researchers to co-create an open-access online digital artwork for the **Fear and Belonging in Minority Buddhist Communities** project, funded by The Leverhulme Trust. The digital artwork will be created in collaboration with the researchers and Buddhist community members.

**Fee:** £10,000 (incl. VAT)

**Production** (incl. web or tech support): £28,500

**Start date:** 1 August 2024

**Launch:** July 2026

**Location:** Working remotely, with project meetings taking place online. Some meetings may take place in person, if needed.

### **The project**

Fear is recognised as fundamental to human experience. In social sciences and humanities research, fear tends to be analysed as a negative and disempowering emotion and as a powerful political tool. Fear can create collective ‘others’ and delineate boundaries between ‘minorities’ and ‘majorities’ and it can fuel culturally motivated violence. But it can also be a productive force, creating solidarity, enhancing group cohesion, and generating change.

“**Fear and Belonging in Minority Buddhist Communities**” investigates the productive role of fear in religious belonging and ongoing community formation, particularly in contexts where a community is minoritised. Drawing on the life stories of ‘ordinary’ lay members of two Asian minority Buddhist communities in the UK and Japan, the project analyses how emotions shape people’s negotiation, performance and experience of belonging, and the implications of this for the maintenance and renewal of religious communities.

There are conceptual and methodological challenges to fully exploring the relation between fear, belonging, and religious community formation across linguistic, cultural and sociocultural contexts. Experimentation in developing innovative communication methods is therefore central to the project.

In addition to producing academic publications and co-producing a book with community members, **we are inviting an artist/artist collective (ideally, UK-based) to work with the researchers and community members to create an experimental, process-led, online digital artwork that visualises and explores the intersecting fears that shape members' experiences of belonging.**

The artist / collective is being brought into the project team for a period of two years so that they can understand the overall project development as they form their ideas.

**The digital artist / collective will:**

Develop an open-access conceptual online digital artwork on fear and belonging in collaboration with the research team and Buddhist community members (see also Objectives).

Create and deliver the artwork by the specified launch date.

Work with FutureEverything on evaluation and documentation of the artwork.

**The Researchers will:**

Lead the wider programme of work for the Fear and Belonging project, including overall project management, developing the conceptual framework, collecting and analysing the life stories of members of Buddhist communities, and producing project publications.

Liaise between the artist and community members.

**FutureEverything will:**

Coordinate the collaboration between the researchers and artist and the production of the artwork.

Lead on the promotion of the artwork and on the documentation and evaluation of this component of the Fear and Belonging project.

## **Objectives**

To produce an experimental, process-led digital artwork, that visualises and explores the intersecting fears that shape members' experiences of belonging

To communicate community members' understandings and experiences of fear across linguistic, social, and cultural boundaries

To create an online legacy for the wider project

## **Audience**

Collaborators: members of the Buddhist communities involved in the research project

Researchers: researchers working on religion, emotion, Buddhism, fear

Relevant parties: digital art sector, interested public

## **Who we are looking for**

Key qualities:

Interest in knowledge and skills exchange with academics and communities and in developing research-driven art.

Openness toward engaging with different world views and cultures.

At least 3-5 years experience in digital art.

Capable of managing your own budget and task list.

**Although not essential, we particularly welcome applications from artists/collectives with some familiarity with Japanese or Tibetan languages and/or artists/collectives who belong to a minority community.**

## **Budget**

The available fee for this project is £10,000 (incl. VAT)

There will be a separate budget for production, including web or tech support, for this project (up to 28,500K).

## **Timeline**

May 2024 Artist appointed

August 2024 Contract starts. Online meeting between artists and researchers  
October 2024- January 2025 online meetings with researchers every two months to discuss development of research, core themes and ideas  
March 2025: Presentation of initial concept to research team  
May 2025–January 2026: online meetings with research every two months to discuss progress  
March 2026: Presentation of work in progress to research team  
May 2026: User testing  
July 2026: Launch of digital artwork

## Apply

Send us your expression of interest.

To apply, please send a CV/portfolio and an expression of interest (EOI) to FutureEverything at [info@futureeverything.org](mailto:info@futureeverything.org)

The EOI should be maximum 2 pages A4 and submitted in PDF format. Please include:

- Reasons for your interest in this project
- An outline of your approach, including examples of relevant projects or experience
- A breakdown of the stages you envision for completion of the project

Deadline for EOIs:

**9.00am, Friday 15 March 2024**

Interviews will take place w/c 8 April 2024

Applicants will be notified of the outcome by w/c 29 April 2024

## FEAR AND BELONGING PROJECT TEAM

This project is a collaboration between Professor Erica Baffelli and Dr Jane Caple from the University of Manchester who have extensive research experience in Japanese and Tibetan communities respectively. It is funded by The Leverhulme Trust (grant no. RPG-2023-030). For further information see

<https://www.alc.manchester.ac.uk/modern-languages/research/projects/fear-and-belonging-in-minority-buddhist-communities/>

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The University of Manchester



Established in Manchester in 1995, FutureEverything is an award-winning 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 stimulates new ways of thinking and 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.

<https://futureeverything.org/>

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