

Immersive Assembly Vol 4: 'Dreams & Echoes' Open Call



Inviting six early career UK-based digital artists and creators to participate in an innovative, collaborative artist development programme

What is it?

Immersive Assembly Vol 4: 'Dreams & Echoes' is the fourth annual talent development programme from Mediale. It is a multi-disciplinary residency focusing on learning, peer critique and developing new ideas and collaborations in and around immersive art and technology.

The residency will take place between May - November 2024 and will support six UK-based artists/studios to collaborate and develop proposals for immersive experiences. The cohort will be supported to develop projects which invite us to explore the potential of immersive media in interrogating consciousness and enabling new interpretations of 'reality'.

IA4 is supported by the [Cultural Programme at The Schwarzman Centre](#), University of Oxford, the [Cheng Kar Shun Digital Hub](#) at Jesus College Oxford, and Mediale's talent development focus supported by Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation funding.

For more information on the previous three Volumes - participants, contributors, and project proposals/prototypes - please look [here](#).

How does it work?

Immersive Assembly Vol 4 will bring together a cohort of artists, technologists and cultural practitioners to learn, share, network and play. It will run in a hybrid format, beginning and ending with in-person activity, punctuated by a series of online talks, sessions and workshops.

The residency will culminate with an in-person showcase of three new immersive project prototypes, developed by the cohort who will collaborate in pairs, alongside a dedicated University of Oxford academic research partner. The showcase, which will be hosted in the Cheng Kar Shun Digital Hub at Jesus College Oxford, will be an opportunity to present the project to both public and sector audiences.

This project should be the result of collaboration and learning throughout the Immersive Assembly residency, rather than the development of an existing prototype.

The artists should allocate approximately 20 days for creative development - consisting of eight compulsory in-person days, six compulsory online sessions (totalling three days), and nine self-led creative development and production days. Participation in the programme runs from April to November 2024.

The current schedule is:

- **April: Onboarding**
 - Cohort places confirmed and 1-1s with the Mediale team
- **May: Collaboration Kick-off (date TBC)**
 - Two days of in-person communal and creative activity
- **May - July: Online Programme**
 - Fortnightly keynotes/ideation sessions/workshops to support and stimulate artistic development via Zoom
- **August: Break**
 - Time for reflection and meeting with cohort collaborator
- **Late August: Creative Development Day (date TBC)**
 - A one day in-person workshop, focused on collaboration and ideation
- **September - November: Project Production Phase & Mentoring**
 - Self-led development & production of immersive project prototype, alongside bespoke mentoring with immersive producers and practitioners
- **November: Showcase (proposed 15-19th November)**
 - Approx four days in-person open studios showcase for public
 - A one day Immersive Salon presentation for sector

The artist fee is £4,000, to support your time. Accommodation, travel and per diem expenses for in-person sessions will be covered by the programme outside of this fee.

Theme

Immersive Assembly Vol 4: Dreams & Echoes, will explore the potential of immersive media in interrogating consciousness and enabling new interpretations of 'reality'.

In the context of new technologies, as our understanding of consciousness evolves beyond human thinking, IA4 will provide participants with the opportunity to explore neuroscience, mental health, access and medical science research expertise, as well as cutting edge AI and ethics research, and globally leading immersive art.

Whether inching towards philosophical questions around the existence of free will, or more directly exploring the potential of XR technologies in terms of embodiment, empathy and widened perception, we would like to support artists creating projects that are seeking to ask questions, pose challenges, and look at some of the 'elephants in the room'.

Drawing on the world-leading research of academics at the University of Oxford, we invite artists to consider the role that immersive experiences can play in the exploration of what consciousness means now, and what it could mean in the future. As described above, this could be through exploring the mind and mental health, non-human intelligence, sleep and the subconscious, or echo chambers and bias.

This summary is a guideline; we encourage artists to follow their own interests and inspirations, referencing the context of this theme.

Selection criteria

Key selection criteria will be:

- The mediums in which artists work
- Experience or desire to work with immersive art & tech
- A history of collaboration or co-production
- An exciting and considered approach to the theme: 'Dreams & Echoes'
- Level of experience - we are looking for emerging and mid-career practitioners (with 2-10 years of experience) who are at a critical moment in developing their artistic practice

Please note that this programme cannot support artists who are in formal full-time education, international artists and those working outside the UK.

We will select a cohort who have a broad selection of skills and experiences to enable experimentation and learning to be as broad as possible. If you are a visual artist, animator, performance artist, creative coder, games designer, or digital practitioner - this opportunity is for you!

We would especially welcome applicants who identify as being from an under-represented group in the creative industries. This includes, but is not limited to, Black, Asian and ethnically

diverse candidates, people with disabilities, neuro-divergent people, individuals from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and members of the LGBTQIA+ community. We will select artists who have different perspectives and backgrounds.

To apply, please submit [this form](#) by the application closing date, **Sunday 31st March 2024 (5pm BST)**. Applicants will be notified in the week commencing the 15th April.

Access

This open call is available as an audio file [here](#).

If you would like to submit your answers in video form, please upload them to YouTube, Vimeo or similar, and include unlisted or password protected links in the textboxes (each answer should be no longer than 2 minutes).

If you would like to ask any questions or need further access support, please email willow@mediale.org.uk by Monday 18th March.

Mediale

Mediale is an international media arts agency. We develop, produce, exhibit and tour work from artists working around the blurred edges of digital art.

We work year-round to develop and deliver new commissions, live events and artistic development. We deliver careful, long-term interventions & holistic artist development, whilst producing high profile arts events that stimulate new thinking.

Mediale maintains the highest possible standards of curation, delivery and production; commissioning and producing globally significant work that is accessible to all while championing diverse talent.

Through incorporating technologies into their works, the artists we work with bridge the gap between the new and the traditional, to challenge and inspire. We work alongside artists, building trust through our actions, not just our words, to create lasting relationships, collaborations and partnerships with those who share and champion our values.

Mediale is fundamentally focused on national and international impact. We take bold artistic risks, programming diverse, powerful and provocative work from across the globe.

The Cultural Programme

Based in the performance and public spaces in the new Stephen A Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities, the Cultural Programme will bring together local, university and global cultural communities in a physical and digital cultural offer, inspired by the University of Oxford's

research.

The Schwarzman Centre will be a space where world-leading research takes place alongside arts and cultural activity of the highest quality. It will transform the way Oxford teaches, researches, and shares the humanities with the world. At the heart of the vision for the new building is a suite of performance spaces, including a world-class concert hall, a theatre, a cinema, an exhibition space, and a black box space for immersive work. Together, these facilities will enrich Oxford's cultural landscape and foster interdisciplinary collaboration.

Animating the new Schwarzman Centre will be an ambitious, wide-ranging and diverse programme comprising performances, mini-festivals, workshops, exhibitions, screenings, talks and other public events. The Cultural Programme will create places and spaces for collaboration across all genres and disciplines and attract artists, audiences and visitors of all backgrounds from across the globe.

This is a significant moment for culture in Oxford and the Cultural Programme is committed to ensuring everyone, from all backgrounds, can participate in the joy and power of the arts.

The Cheng Kar Shun Digital Hub at Jesus College, Oxford

The Cheng Kar Shun Digital Hub at Jesus College Oxford, is an exciting new physical and virtual space in the centre of Oxford that brings together the brightest minds and the curious via a curated events programme.

Through a wide range of interactive events, talks, workshops, exhibitions, and performances led by Jesus College researchers and collaborators from across the University of Oxford and beyond, the Cheng Kar Shun Digital Hub's term-time events programme aims to demystify the digital age, enable participants to learn new digital skills, and shine a light on how advances in digital technologies are transforming our understanding of the world around us. The Digital Hub's tiered forum, centred on a sweeping curved staircase, provides a flexible space for fostering these innovative and creative encounters. The programme is curated by the SOUTHWORKS Career Development Fellow of the Digital Hub, Dr Janina Schupp, and has three core themes: rediscovering the past, questioning the present, and defining the future.