



Connecting Through Culture as We Age: Digital Innovation for Healthy Ageing

A Call for Expressions of Interest

Connecting Through Culture as We Age



A Call for Expressions of Interest

Connecting through culture as we age: digital innovation for healthy ageing

Are you interested in co-designing digital cultural products or digital experiences with and for older people?

This is a briefing document for people interested in applying to participate in a set of workshops (leading to a further funding opportunity). You will find information about the project, the opportunity and the application process below.

If you have any access needs that mean this document does not work for you, please contact the team on furaha.a@watershed.co.uk

Background

Established in 2021, 'Connecting Through Culture as We Age' is exploring how and why we take part in arts and culture as we get older. We are interested in how participation in all forms of arts and culture, particularly those accessed digitally, can influence our wellbeing and feelings of social connection as we age. Working alongside disabled older adults and those that identify as socioeconomically and racially minoritised, we will co-design new arts and cultural experiences. Our inclusive digital innovation process will encourage cross sectoral collaborations in designing new digital products, services and experiences, and support creative industries to grow and to better understand older adults from diverse backgrounds.

Read more about Connecting Through Culture as We Age, which is a three-year UKRI (ESRC) Social and Behavioural Design Research Healthy Ageing Challenge funded project:

- <https://connectingthroughcultureasweage.info/>
- <https://www.ukri.org/what-we-offer/our-main-funds/industrial-strategy-challenge-fund/ageing-society/healthy-ageing-challenge/>



The Opportunity

The opportunity will have two stages. First is paid participation in a series of co-design workshops and surgeries. Following the workshops, participants will be able to form teams to apply for a pot of money to develop an idea to prototype stage.

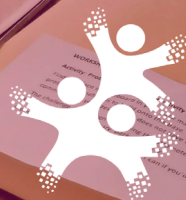
Through the workshops, teams interested in developing a prototype will be fostered. Teams might include older people working on the project (co-researchers), creative technologists, researchers, practitioners, artists and designers. Following the workshops, in stage two, teams will be able to apply for a pot of money to develop an idea to prototype stage.

The workshops will:

- Be an opportunity to meet other people (including potential collaborators and co-researchers) and discuss thoughts, ideas, and ambitions.
- Explore the value of working on a co-design process, alongside older adults.
- Be an inspiring, useful and fun experience, helping to forge interesting new relationships and connections.



Expanding **worlds.**



The Workshop Stage

We will host one introductory workshop followed by three co-design workshops (see Timeline below for dates) where 18 co-researchers, who are older people who identify as disabled, or racially or socioeconomically minoritised, will work alongside practitioners to co-design ideas for digital cultural experiences. You will be paid for your participation in the workshops (£125 per half-day workshop).

Workshops will be themed around:

- **Age unusual. Age Extraordinary. Age rebellious.** How do we recognize and make visible the diversity and difference in our experiences of ageing? This theme is all about creating digital arts and cultural experiences that push aside assumptions and stereotypes around age and ageing. It is about exploring and playing with the unusual, extraordinary and rebellious dimensions of ageing.
- **Expanding worlds.** How might we expand our connections beyond our everyday experiences - to spaces, places, things and people with whom we aren't connected? How might we deepen our sensory connection to places, things and people we are already familiar with? This theme is about designing digital arts and cultural experiences that appreciate the magic of the mundane, and/or crossing borders, journeys across life, space and time. It might involve enhancing everyday creativity in our homes, playing with forms of travel and connection across seas, boundaries and communities.
- **Creative bodies.** How might we encourage creative exploration of our bodies and connections through arts and cultural participation? How can our bodies (as we age) enhance and be enhanced for connection? This theme is about augmentation, designing digital sensory (and intimate) connections and creative responses to changing bodies.

Participation in the workshops will be a mix of in person and online, as some of the co-researchers can only attend online. Ideally, practitioners will attend all 4 workshops in person in order to facilitate networking.

In between the workshops, Watershed staff from Pervasive Media Studio and the University of Bristol research team will support partnerships through organising surgeries and meetings between co-researchers and practitioners.

NB: In order to be eligible for prototype funding, participation in ALL four workshops is obligatory.



Creative **bodies**.

The Prototype Stage

Following the workshops, teams will be invited to submit a proposal and costings for the development of a prototype of their idea which addresses one of the thematic areas from the three workshops. We will then select teams to each produce their own prototype based on these themes. We expect to **commission six teams** with a budget of **up to £25,000 per team**. These supported projects are a great opportunity to experiment, explore and take risks. Prototypes will be produced between October 2022 and March 2023.

We will only consider completely new work or, ideas that have already been conceptualised but not yet brought to fruition, or the development of existing areas of work in new ways; we will not support work that has already been fully realised. We are looking for ideas with future commercial potential, not one-off projects nor products or services that are already market ready.

Applicants for this programme can work in any field, but must be interested in:

- **Creative uses of technology**
- **Ageing and creativity**
- **Arts and cultural participation**
- **Working with socially engaged and activist methods with communities at the margins**
- **Social and digital innovation**





The Prototype Stage

What Do We Expect From You?

Attendance at all four workshops.

A generous and open attitude. A willingness to participate and engage in discussions with peers and partners in workshop settings. An openness to cross sectoral working, including working with 'experts by experience' (our co-researchers).

What Do You Get?

Paid participation to attend the four workshops phase of the work.

If selected to develop a prototype, each team will receive:

- A prototype budget grant of up to £25,000 to focus intensively on the development of their exciting **new digital cultural experiences**. This budget is expected to cover all prototype costs including team time, research, equipment, development, testing and any necessary travel. We are not expecting all prototypes to be developed to a fully realised/published stage within this commission. Work should be developed to a 'proof of concept' stage. We will work with all teams to identify further development opportunities throughout the programme.
- A number of Watershed-supported events with the cohort of prototype teams to inspire, challenge and upskill you around the theme of Connecting Through Culture as We Age.
- Bespoke creative advice to ensure your idea is feasible.
- Bespoke business advice to help develop ideas and potential routes to market.
- Access to the Pervasive Media Studio at Watershed in Bristol, which is a vibrant community of artists and creative technologists.
- PR support, showcasing opportunities and feedback events offering the opportunity for discussion/collaboration with both peers and public.



How Do You Apply?

Please fill out this short application form to express your interest in attendance at the **four workshops** (one introductory workshop + three co-design workshops):

<https://forms.office.com/r/ubYf0N962L>


The application form asks for your name and an email address we can use to let you know the outcome of your expression of interest, and also asks you to answer three questions that will give us some understanding of your interest in joining this programme.

We are looking for up to **25 individuals**. Applicants will be assessed against the following criteria:

- The applicant's ability to fully participate in all of the workshops (one introductory workshop and three co-design workshops).
- The extent to which the applicant's work connects to the programme theme.
- The degree to which the applicant has shown evidence of previous experience of/genuine interest in co-design.
- We will also curate a mix of skills, disciplines, experience and perspectives across our themes.

This is a light-touch application process, meaning we will be making decisions based on responses to the questions asked in the expression of interest form. Decisions will be made by a group comprising members of the Watershed Creative Technology team (Jo Lansdowne, Luke Emery, Victoria Tillotson, and Furaha Asani) and members of the Research team from the Connecting Through Culture as We Age project.

If you have any access needs that mean this application form does not work for you, please contact Furaha Asani on furaha.a@watershed.co.uk, who will be happy to advise on more suitable mediums which you can use



Age **unusual.**
Age **extraordinary.**
Age **rebellious.**





**connecting
through
culture**
as we age



Timeline

Launch of call for expressions of interest: Monday 23rd May 2022

Deadline for expressions of interest is: **Monday 13th June 2022, 6.00pm**

Applicants can expect to hear back from us by: Monday 20th June 2022, 6.00pm

Workshops will be held in: June, July, September 2022. Participation in the workshops will be a mix of in person and online.

- Introductory workshop: **Friday 24th June 2022, 12.00pm-3:00pm**
- Co-design workshop 1 - Age unusual. Age Extraordinary. Age rebellious: **Tuesday 5th July 2022, 10.00am-2.00pm**
- Co-design workshop 2 - Expanding worlds: **Thursday 21st July 2022, 10.00am-2.00pm**
- Co-design workshop 3 - Creative bodies: **Tuesday 6th Sept 2022, 10.00am-2.00pm**

Application for prototype funding: September 2022

Selection and contracting period: October 2022

Project production period: October 2022 – March 2023

Testing period: April – November 2023

NB: If we encounter any timeline changes, we will update all applicants as soon as possible.

Contact Details

For any queries, please contact **Furaha Asani** (Research Lead, Pervasive Media Studio) on furaha.a@watershed.co.uk.

Visit <https://connectingthroughcultureasweage.info> to find out more about the project

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