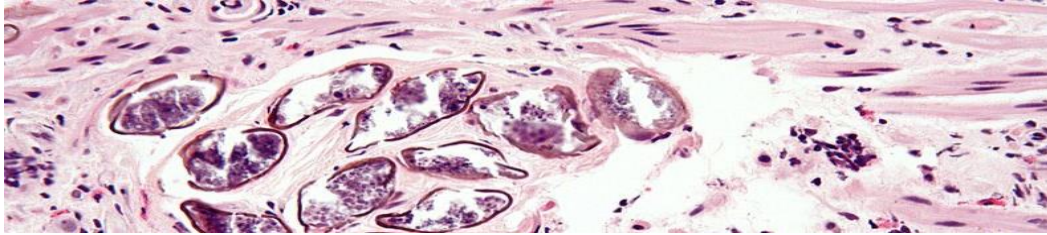


Call for Artists to Create a Commission on Health Knowledge in Africa



Artists in and from Africa and its diasporas are invited to apply for a visual commission to address questions of health, knowledge and the body. The commission can be carried out remotely, from January to March 2021 and carries a stipend and production budget for three artists.

Successful applicants will be invited to realise visual works in conversation with recent research on how public health knowledge is understood and utilised in Uganda, Kenya, Malawi and Tanzania. This research is led by the Localised Evidence and Decision-Making (LEAD) project, based at London School of Economics' Firoz Lalji Centre for Africa, in partnership with London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and SOAS, University of London.

The LEAD research uses participatory modelling to help foreground local perceptions of disease. It explores how health policy-makers and practitioners perceive and use different forms of evidence to make decisions around infectious disease control measures, and examines how this evidence is developed. The research focuses on helminth infections (specifically schistosomiasis and soil-transmitted helminths) in Africa, but also addresses broader social and public health concerns, and can be understood across a range of issues related to health, risk and response.

Key themes that artists might address when working with this research are, knowledge, health, the body, environment and power. These themes offer broad conceptual frameworks within which artists can interpret the academic research and undertake their own research. In doing so, they might make artworks that comment on social issues of authority and power as expressed through particular health knowledge systems. Similarly, artists could work on issues such as disease or risk, in relation to the body, or in relation to environments, such as water. These themes might also give insights into the experience of particular social groups such as health workers, or the fishing communities who are susceptible to schistosomiasis.

While this call is open to all African artists, we are giving preference to artists who have personal or creative experience related to the themes of the research, and artists from or residing in the countries of research: Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda and Malawi. Artists must be available to work on the project from January 2020- March 2021 and be willing to engage in virtual meetings and potentially workshops with researchers and other commissioned artists.

An ideal candidate would

- Be invested in research-based social practice visual art
- Be self-motivated

- Have previous experience with commissions
- Be willing to work collaboratively with the research team

What this commission is

- A commitment to collaborative knowledge exchange through visual practice
- An engagement with the research concepts and findings of the LEAD project
- A visual output of a research project
- Fully supported development of artwork

What this commission is not

- The development of an advocacy-based artwork
- A capacity-building exercise
- A residency

Application Process

Artists should develop a 1-2 page proposal outlining their approach for this commission. This can be sent to visualartsforlead@gmail.com along with a portfolio of their work, and a CV including the names of two references. The proposal can include the themes highlighted above or introduce new topics of social inquiry related to the research. The proposal should include the artists preferred medium of practice and how they plan to engage with the academic research. There is no set format for applications, although they should all be made in English. To be considered for this commission, all documents must be received via email by midnight GMT, Thursday, December 31, 2020.

Review and Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed by Principle Investigator, Polly Savage, and project curator Kara Blackmore. A shortlist will be selected for interviews in January 2020. Three artists will be selected for the commission to begin in January 2021. Wherever possible we will provide feedback to those artists who are not selected.

More details for the LEAD project can be found here: <https://www.lse.ac.uk/africa/research/Localised-Evidence-and-Decision-making-LEAD>

For an introduction to the research questions raised by the LEAD project, see this documentary lecture: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mj-zGSPwaS4>

For insights on previous creative impact done by the LSE's Firoz Lalji Centre for Africa go to: https://issuu.com/lseflca/docs/new_por_catalogue_print_final_sept_2019-digital-is

*Image Credit: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Schistosoma_-_very_high_mag.jpg

