

Art for Ogden Centre West 2024-2025

Invitation to artists: Commission to create new artwork for Durham University's Ogden Centre for Fundamental Physics

Context

Durham University's Ogden Centre for Fundamental Physics

<https://www.durham.ac.uk/departments/academic/physics/ogden/>

Durham University is a world-leading centre of research in astronomy and cosmology. The £11.5m centre draws together a team of international scientists, postdoctoral researchers and PhD students from more than 20 countries around the world. Together they are investigating the mysteries of the cosmos, exploring the birth of the Universe, the origin of galaxies, and the nature of dark matter and dark energy.

The Ogden Centre for Fundamental Physics houses Durham University's [Institute for Computational Cosmology \(ICC\)](#), the [Centre for Extragalactic Astronomy \(CEA\)](#) and the [Centre for Advanced Instrumentation \(CfAI\)](#).



The iconic Centre has been designed by the internationally renowned Studio Libeskind, the architectural practice behind the master plan for the World Trade Center redevelopment in New York. The Centre is a spiral, designed as continuous, stacked and interlocking forms, clad in

responsibly sourced Scottish larch. It provides spectacular views of picturesque Durham City and Durham Cathedral.

The final artwork will be located internally along a wall measuring approximately 10.5 x 3.5 metres, within a busy communal space central to the building.

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The Commission

Durham University's Ogden Centre for Fundamental Physics is offering a unique commissioning opportunity for a participatory visual artist to work with researchers to explore the research, involve young people* in the exploration, and to create an artwork for the building.

The successful applicant will work closely with Durham University's Science Engagement Team to develop and deliver at least two 2 hour interactive in-person workshops (on campus and within the communities) that will creatively engage young people in aspects of the Centre's research, and encourage active participation in the creative process.

It is envisioned that the resultant artwork will:

- o reflect that Ogden Centre West is a special place architecturally, socially and in terms of the world-leading research that takes place there;
- o be an inspiration for visitors and the people working in the building;
- o represent the research in astronomy, cosmology and instrumentation taking place in Ogden Centre West;
- o represent a sense of place and people;
- o draw on work by and inspiration from the young people and their creative responses, and allow them a sense of involvement in the work.

The commissioners recognise that artists can contribute significantly to individuals' experience of science, and, although established practitioners are welcome to respond, we particularly wish to encourage and support new and emerging artists wishing to develop their collaborative art practice.

A commission fee of up to £8000 is available to cover the development and delivery of the workshops, the artist's transport, materials for the artwork, and the creation of the final piece. (Note that a separate budget covers the material costs of the workshops with young people)

*This project is centred around engaging and involving young people. The commissioners have suggestions of groups that would like to engage with the project. However, we would welcome discussions with the selected artist to agree an age/group that the artist would be comfortable working with.

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The artwork/s

Proposals from a wide-range of visual media are welcomed but must respond to, reflect or interpret the research and people's responses to the science, as well as being sympathetic to the building and installation space.

The artwork is intended to be on display for a minimum of 1 year and so must be durable and be able to fixed to a plastered and painted wall. The building is not environmentally controlled to a museum standard and features windows and spotlights as part of its design. Any artwork must be able to withstand these conditions without suffering environmental damage. The location of the artwork is a high traffic and social space within the building so the work must be able to withstand human interaction. The artwork must additionally adhere to [University Health & Safety regulations](#) and must not infringe or breach any intellectual property.

After a minimum of 1 year's display the artwork must be suitable for sensible storage. The artwork will be governed by University standard terms for work of this type. The University will own the physical artwork, but the artist will retain copyright and Intellectual Property Rights. The artist will allow the University perpetual rights to photograph, record, display and transmit media of the artwork in any medium.

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Time-line & selection process

Interested applicants will be welcome to access additional advice and discuss their proposals informally with Durham University Science Engagement.

Applications must be received through the University's Oracle (e-sourcing) System by **5pm on 1 August**. Please note that you must register on the System so do allow time to complete the registration process. We are happy to provide support in doing this.

A selection panel comprising Ogden Centre researchers, Science Engagement and the University's curatorial team will examine how each proposal has responded to the brief.

Following the selection panel's decision, the successful applicant will be informed in **September 2024** and will be asked to sign a terms of acceptance.

The successful applicant **MUST** hold and provide evidence of Public Liability Insurance with a limit of indemnity of not less than £5 million. Your PPL insurance should not contain any special clauses that would prevent you from producing the completed artwork or delivery of the workshops to young people. (Note that you do not have to have this to apply, but we would expect the successful applicant to obtain this).

Due to the nature of this commission, the successful applicant will be expected to complete an application through the University to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) that proves suitability for working with minors.

The successful applicant must also be prepared to participate in marketing and social media publicity for the project. This may include photography, articles, video interviews. This requirement would be discussed with the artist and assistance provided to help create a comfortable environment.

A commission fee of up to £8000 is available to cover the development and delivery of the workshops, the artist's transport, materials for the artwork, and the creation of the final piece. (Note that a separate budget covers the material costs of the workshops with young people).

Delivery of workshops with young people will commence in Winter 2024/5 and the artwork must be completed by June 2025. The piece will be launched as part the National Astronomy Meeting in early July 2025.

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In considering applying for this commission, please follow the Artists' Union England guidance on rates of pay: www.artistsunionengland.org.uk/rates-of-pay/ Payments will be arranged by bank transfer in four stages:

- Stage 1 - 25% following receipt of a signed letter of acceptance and agreed project plan;
- Stage 2 - 25% Following successful delivery and completion of the workshops, and visualisation of the proposed artwork including size, dimensions and materials (Winter);
- Stage 3 - 25% Upon completion of the artwork by July 2025;
- Stage 4 - 25% Upon delivery and installation of the completed artwork.

Your proposal

Your proposal should communicate your suitability and intent to respond to the commission, highlighting in particular:

- How you propose to respond to the scientific research undergone in the Ogden Centre;
- How you propose to be sympathetic to the new building and installation space;
- How you propose to ensure a participatory approach in the development of the artwork with young people
- PDF images of relevant examples of your work.
- A breakdown of costings for the project highlighting the development and delivery of the workshops, any transport costs, materials required and the creation of the final piece.
- Agreement that, if successful, you would be prepared to obtain (if you do not already have) Public Liability Insurance with a limit of indemnity of no less than £5 million.
- Confirmation that, if successful, you agree to undergo a DBS check through Durham University.
- Confirmation that, if successful, you agree to participate in marketing/social media to publicise the project.

Contact for further info

Dr Lorraine Coghill

Deputy Director of Science Engagement

Durham University Science Engagement Office

Department of Physics, Science Site, South Road

Durham, DH1 3LE

Mobile: 07538 376 989

Email: l.s.coghill@durham.ac.uk