DASH

Artist Evaluator
(Digital Commission)

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'Mad Talks' at Newlyn Art Gallery & The Exchange, 2024. Photo: Xavia Smith.

Image Description: Jade Foster addresses a small audience. Jade is Black non-binary person, with short hair, wearing a black, white, brown and orange patterned shirt. They are seated with a group of four other people in a semi-circle, in a large white room with shelving to the rear and multiple square sticky notes on a large piece of paper taped on the wall to the right. Jade is animated as they engage with the group.

ABOUT DASH

DASH has undertaken 20 years of important work with representation and collaboration at our heart. We've built inspirational and long-lasting partnerships with some of the UK's leading galleries and museums, Disabled, Deaf and Neurodivergent artists, art workers and audiences. It is on these shoulders we stand as we begin our next chapter.

We are committed to being truly Disabled-led and representative of our artists & people we work with. The role is open only to applicants who are Disabled, Deaf, Neurodivergent and/or have any long term physical or mental health conditions or illness, who are creative, curious, engaged and proactive.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

DASH is a thought leader who uses a rigorous, innovative and experimental methodology in evaluating stories and change.

We are striving to capture data and communicate the variations and scales of change within the 'Future Curators Programme' (FCP) (2023-2026), a residency programme led by DASH for Disabled curators within visual arts institutions. The Artist Evaluator will be key to creatively mapping and sharing the sense of change and complexity to FCP; to make sense of the programme's impact.

The organisations who are part of the 'FCP Network' are:

→ DASH
→ Arts Catalyst
→ Disability Arts Online
→ John Hansard Gallery
→ MAC Birmingham
→ MIMA, Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art
→ Newlyn Art Gallery & The Exchange
→ Wysing Arts Centre

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One of our main challenges is finding creative solutions to map and share qualitative research in neuroaffirming ways that focus on complex feelings: emotional affect and effect. And by feelings, we mean for example— empowerment, belonging, and 'good pressure', leading to positive change in:

→   people
→   the position and profile of Deaf, Disabled and Neurodivergent curators/artists
→   the culture of the visual arts sector
→   the ability and capacity to influence the sector
→   Deaf, Disabled and Neurodivergent young people engaging and feeling as though they are the future.
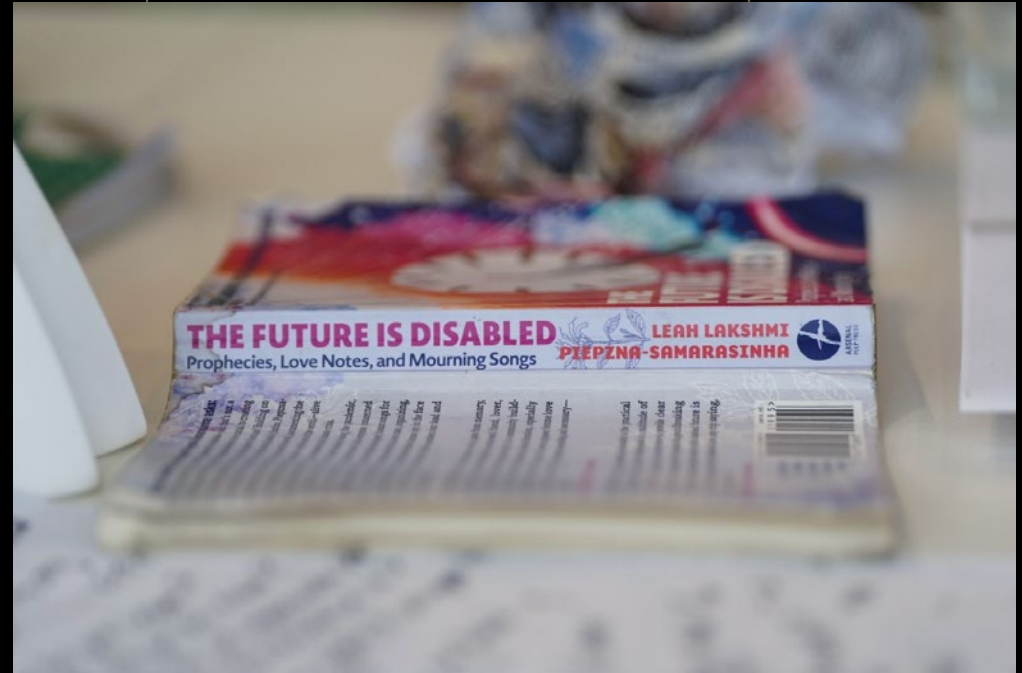
'The Future is Disabled' a key text informing the work of the FCP Network, 2024. Photo: Ayesha Jones. 2024. Photo: Xavia Smith.

Image Description: The book, The Future is Disabled by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha is laid open and faces page down on a table. The spine of the book is the focus of the camera, emphasising the name and author of the book.

PROJECT BRIEF: WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

DASH is seeking a mapper—an artist or graphic designer interested in the intersection between evaluation, art and technology, and disability justice to undergo a digital commission to evaluate FCP.

As part of the broader FCP initiative, all partners will work together and independently to deliver a variety of activities that not only involve a newly appointed Curator-in-Residence but also extend beyond the role. These activities will include events, exhibitions, art commissions, projects, training, professional development, and organisational learning.

FCP partners meeting at MAC. 2024. Photo: Ayesha Jones.

Image Description: Three women wearing stripey black and white tops are smiling as they sit at a large table. On the table are notepads, laptop, coffee cups, water jugs and glasses, as well as sprays of yellow flowers emerging from vases in various stages of collapse and tilted angles.

The Artist Evaluator will focus on understanding the impact of complex programmatic strands led by a diverse group of curators and organisations dedicated to disability justice and systemic change. This will be achieved through a research-based approach that combines both qualitative and quantitative artistic research, utilising a variety of neuroinclusive methods including an adaptation of the Theory of Change.

The evaluation will build on the initial assessments conducted by our external evaluator, Morag Carmichael. Unlike traditional evaluations, the process the Artist Evaluator will undergo will visually map and respond to the experiences of those involved in organising, participating in, and engaging with the creative outputs from DASH and the FCP Network. Special attention will be given to the experiences of visitors and participants.

DASH CEO/Artistic Director Heather Peak introduces a key text to the FCP Network, 2024. Photo: Ayesha Jones.

Image Description: DASH CEO/Artistic Director Heather Peak is seated at the head of a large table covered in notepads, laptops and yellow flowers. There are large windows behind her. She has dark brown curly hair that is loosely tied back and wears a black top. She holds a book up in front of her as she talks.

Some of DASH's Artistic and Theoretical Approaches to Evaluation:

→ DASH evaluates as...mappers.
→ We work in parallel with others committed to systemic change.
→ We navigate through the work of other visual arts organisations, artists and curators as critical friends to facilitate and instigate opportunities for collaborative working.
→ We deeply listen, share provocations, map out and respond during a period of change to stimulate growth and learning that leads to a more just sector for us and for you.
→ We evaluate the work we do and our work with others to understand how participants, audiences, curators and other communities navigate visual contemporary art spaces— identifying and noticing 'gaps'.

We have an interdisciplinary approach, learning from the legacies of decolonial cartography, psychogeography, the art practices of Stephen Willats (mapping relationships, movements and structures) and Suzanne Lacy, and understanding organisational structures as social sculptures and constellations. Our neuroaffirming approach to our evaluation process is focused on actively dismantling the status quo through an anti- rather than non-normative attitude towards the architecting and co-design of system change. We care about justice, ethics and the rights of people encountering art and art institutions.

Sculpting FCP at a network meeting in 2024. Photo: Ayesha Jones.

Image Description: A close-up of two hands in the process of crumpling a sheet of A4 paper. On the paper is a blue, black, red and white abstract drawing made up of many lines and circular shapes.

ARTIST EVALUATOR SPECIFICATION & EXPECTATIONS

→ A fully realised, pre-production, proposal for a commissioned artwork, which will include an interim report covering:
  ↗ Available quantitative data
  ↗ Available qualitative data
→ Relating the impact of the programme on goals 1/2/5 as laid out in Arts Council England's Mission and Strategy.
→ For the Artist Evaluator to produce an evaluation/narrative-based visual artwork as a key infographic summary outlining the statistics and impact narratives of FCP by adopting a neuroaffirming approach to research, information gathering and information/ data interpretation as written within this brief. This artwork should visually illustrate change (e.g. interactive 'heatwave' map) and chart the progression of change. The Evaluator will produce a final artwork by May 2027.

→ It is expected that Evaluators attend quarterly updates (phone/Zoom) and meetings every 6 months (relating to the network meets) with DASH.
→ The Artist Evaluator is expected to promote and maintain an organisational culture that remains true to our core values of curiosity, trust, learning, creativity, representation, sustainability and equality.
→ Identify areas of best practice.
→ Capturing success stories.

KEY FACTS ABOUT THE ROLE

Job Title: Artist Evaluator
Responsible to: Curator

Artist Evaluator Budget
Artist Fee: £3,000 inc. VAT
Production Fee: £2,500
Access Budget: £1,000
Travel and Accommodation: £1,000
Total Budget: £7,500 (inc. VAT)

To ensure that the fee is fair, we recommend that individuals apply if their daily rate is between £215 and £350 for evaluation or research work. The daily rate, and consequently the total number of days required, will be determined based on the experience level of the appointed individual. The work for this role of Artist Evaluator can be scheduled flexibly between September 2025 and January 2027. This flexibility will be taken into account when inviting artists to submit a full proposal.

Contract Conditions
Freelance/Self-employed
Location of Work: Hybrid (remote with national travel to selected FCP activity)
Start Date: 15 October 2025
Final artwork produced by May 2027

Payment Schedule
First Instalment of Artist Fee (75%): October 2025
Second Instalment of Artist Fee (25%): On completion of commission

HOW TO APPLY

To apply, please email the following to info@dasharts.org using 'Artist Evaluator' as the subject:

→   Expression of interest (any format)
→   CV (any format), 3 pages (max.)
→   Names of 2 people who can provide references (to be contacted after appointment).

For the expression of interest, use one of these formats:

→   A written proposal (max. 1 page of A4, font point 12)
→   A film (max. 3 mins)
→   An audio recording (max. 3 mins)
→   A visual collage or drawing*

*   Please provide a digital photo of your collage/drawing or a WeTransfer link to your audio recording or film, since we are unable to accept physical submissions in the post.

Important Dates

Deadline for expression of interest: 4 July 2025
Invitation to write a full proposal [paid application]: 31 July 2025
Interviews: 31 August 2025, online (duration): 1 hour
Decision: 5 September 2025

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Please complete our Equal Opportunities Monitoring form. This form will be viewed alongside your expression of interest and made available to the selection panel.

DASH is an equal opportunities employer. We welcome applications from all suitably qualified persons regardless of age, sex, sexual orientation, religion, nationality or ethnic origin, disability, marital status or pregnancy. DASH is committed to the safeguarding and welfare of adults, children and young people with care needs and expects its staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Positions at DASH require a DBS check, either enhanced or basic, depending on the specific role.

If you have any inquiries regarding the DBS process, please feel free to ask.

GDPR Personal Data Notice:
During our recruitment process, DASH collects and processes personal data relating to applicants. We are committed to being transparent about how we collect and use data to meet our data protection obligations. Please be aware that we will share the personal data received in your application with the shortlisting and interview panel. Access will be restricted to those involved in the recruitment process.

Q&A

Please take your time in reading this recruitment pack.

If you have any questions about the role, please email our team on: info@dasharts.org using, 'Artist Evaluator Questions' in the subject header.

A dedicated Q&A section will be available on our website for inquiries about the Artist Evaluator position.

Each week, we will update the content in response to incoming questions, so keep visiting. Jade Foster, Curator will also be available for a 30 mins confidential chat (via Zoom or phone). This is an opportunity to talk about the role, learn about DASH, and ask questions.

To book a session, please email Jade directly on jade@dasharts.org with 'Confidential Chat' in the subject header.

Thank you and good luck!