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Newlyn Art Gallery, John Hansard Gallery and Arts Catalyst join the Future Curators Network

- **The Future Curators programme embeds disabled curators into visual arts organisations, with the aim of transforming deep inequality with the visual art sector**
- **Three new organisations will host disabled curators for a one year residency**
- **The Future Curators Network of arts organisations committed to working with disabled curators now stretches from Cornwall to Teeside**

Three organisations have been selected to join the Future Curators Network, which aims to address deep-rooted inequality against disabled people in the visual arts sector.

Newlyn Art Gallery & Exchange (Cornwall), John Hansard Gallery (Southampton) and Arts Catalyst (Sheffield) will join the network in 2022, joining existing members MIMA (Teeside), Wysing Arts Centre (Cambridge) and Midland Arts Centre (Birmingham).

The three new members will host a disabled curator for a 15 month period, during which time the curator will become fully embedded within the organisation. The long term nature of the residency allows genuine learning to take place on both sides – organisational norms that provide unwitting barriers to disabled people can be addressed, and the curator can gather valuable professional experience and develop their practice.

Each residency will result in a new exhibition or body of work, produced by the curator with the support of their host organisation.

DASH set up the Future Curators programme in 2019 in response to years of working with disabled artists. It became clear to DASH that meaningful progress depended upon disabled people taking positions of influence *within* visual arts organisations, rather than simply relying on well-meaning individual projects with limited long-term legacy.

Organisations within the Future Curators Network meet regularly to collaboratively plan the programme, discuss their activity and share details of successes and mistakes that have been made. This safe space for learning

between arts organisations aims to create genuine long-term change within the sector.

Mike Layward, Artistic Director, DASH comments: We are so excited about the expansion of the Future Curators Network. The three new partners bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to the Network, which now stretches from Cornwall to Teesside and covers most parts of England. We have high hopes for the Future Curators programme and the influence it will bring in diversifying the visual arts sector.

James Green, Director, Newlyn Art Gallery & The Exchange adds: We are delighted to have been selected to be part of this important programme and to be able to support an emerging curator at a key moment in their career. The Future Curators programme will help us to build on our work to address the striking lack of diversity amongst those in decision-making positions within visual arts organisations nationally. DASH has provided great leadership in this area and we are excited to be able to partner with them.

Woodrow Kernohan, Director, John Hansard Gallery comments: Striving towards an inclusive community is at the heart of John Hansard Gallery. This opportunity comes at a key moment for us, as we have been making positive change within our organisational culture and building relationships with our community partners. Through this programme we look forward to creating a new pathway for a disabled curator and transforming our model of leadership.

Laura Clarke, Artistic Director and Joint CEO, Arts Catalyst, Sheffield concludes: We're thrilled to be part of the Future Curators Programme and join this network of inspiring organisations with a shared commitment to institutional change. We are excited to work with the Future Curator to enrich the research and curatorial development of Arts Catalyst's programme and institutional practices, as we continue to work towards and advocate for a more polyphonic, intersectional and equitable cultural sector.

An open call for disabled curators will take place in spring 2022.

ENDS.

For more information contact Helen Stallard on Helen@helenstallard.co.uk or call 0774 033 9604

Notes for Editors:

About DASH:

DASH is a Disabled-led visual arts charity. It creates opportunities for Disabled artists to develop their creative practice. These opportunities take many forms, from high quality commissions to community based workshops, the work it creates is centred around its vision and mission.

DASH works with artists, audiences, communities and organisations to challenge inequality and implement change.

With a history of work including visual arts, dance, theatre, live arts and festivals in Shropshire since the mid-1990s, DASH became a limited company and registered charity in 2001 and in 2004 secured revenue funding from Arts Council England. In 2009 DASH took the decision to specialise its work in visual arts, while expanding its geographical boundaries.

During the last ten years DASH has undertaken truly ground-breaking work – projects that have challenged perceptions, fostered and mentored new Deaf and Disabled artists, encouraged professional development and helped to engineer change in the sector.

DASH partners and funders include Arts Council England, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Garfield Weston, Shropshire Council and ArtFund. As well as support from HM Government in partnership with the National Lottery Community Fund.

DASH is a member of the Plus Tate Network and are we are pleased to be working with Visability Film Festival and the artists collective ArtStudio01.

www.dasharts.org