

## **‘Creating Diasporic Worlds’ Creative Commissions 2022**

The Centre for Greek Diaspora Studies and the Centre for the GeoHumanities at Royal Holloway, University of London in collaboration with the Cyprus High Commission in London and the Fitzwilliam Museum – University of Cambridge, are pleased to announce the funding of up to three (3) Creative Commissions on the theme of ‘Creating Diasporic Worlds’.

The Greek word *diaspora* indicates the dispersal of a group of people from one original country to other countries, or the act of spreading in this way. Embedded in its etymology (*dia* ‘across’ + *speirein* ‘sow seed’, ‘scatter like seed’) is a centrifugal movement away from a shared place of origin. This physical movement is usually balanced by a centripetal imaginary movement towards a longed-for homeland, which often translates into nostalgia (*nostos* ‘return home’ + *algos* ‘pain’) – the yearning for return home, or to an irrecoverable past condition. Lingering between past and present, and crossing geographical and political boundaries, diasporas are nonetheless deeply rooted in territorial imaginations and in a sense of place. They at once transcend and rest on the map. Diasporas are thus commonly defined by their geographical, social, political and spiritual liminality. Yet diasporas are also culturally expressed, creatively practiced and continually performed. In scattering seeds across the world, they create their own worlds and fertilize others.

This joint edition of the Creative Commissions calls for creative collaborations that explore diasporic identities, cultures, politics and ways of being. In particular, applicants are invited to consider the arts and humanities as a set of mutually attracted approaches through which to explore the historical and contemporary implications of displacement, dispossession and migration; intergenerational memories, emotions and traumas; nostalgia, belonging, estrangement, alienation and reconciliation; as well as the constitution of new relationships to space, place and landscape in the midst of a climate emergency.

Each Commission will be funded with up to £3,000. The Creative Commissions will run from 14/3/2022 to 31/5/2022. The programme is open to any collaboration between creative practitioner(s) and early career researcher(s). See below for further information on definitions of ‘early career’.

As detailed further below, application will be through a short application form and accompanying curricula vitae (CVs) of collaborators. An exhibition at the Cyprus High Commission, 13 St. James's Square, London SW1Y 4LB in June/July 2022 (or an alternative venue in London) will provide a platform for the presentation of commissioned works.

These Creative Commissions emerge from a collaboration between the Cyprus High Commission - Cultural Section, the Fitzwilliam Museum – University of Cambridge (under the project “Being an Islander: Art and Identity of the Large Mediterranean Islands”), the Hellenic Institute, the Centre for Greek Diaspora Studies (<http://hellenic-institute.uk/>) and the Centre for the GeoHumanities ([www.royalholloway.ac.uk/geohumanities](http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/geohumanities) & [www.geohumanitiesforum.org](http://www.geohumanitiesforum.org)) at Royal Holloway, University of London.



**HELLENIC INSTITUTE  
CENTRE FOR GREEK  
DIASPORA STUDIES**



**Centre for the  
GeoHumanities**

**The  
Fitzwilliam  
Museum**  
CAMBRIDGE



**CYPRUS HIGH  
COMMISSION  
CULTURAL SECTION  
LONDON UK  
[www.culturalchc.co.uk](http://www.culturalchc.co.uk)**

## The Theme

How are diasporas culturally and geographically constituted? How are diasporic worlds composed and congealed through diverse artistic forms, media and processes over time and space? How do emergent forms of authorship, audience and circulation influence diasporic cultures and their global significance? Where, how and to what extent does artistic creation express the politics and poetics of the diaspora?

Examining the relationships between diasporic communities and culture(s) involves questioning static notions of site, space, place and scale. As a medium of diaspora, art also transcends traditional categories and spaces of culture, for example via distributed modes of production, or through informal acts of circulation. In the context of an increasingly volatile climate emergency and several of the largest forced migrations in recorded history, it is increasingly urgent and crucial to investigate how diaspora is culturally, creatively and imaginatively expressed, and how diasporic worlds come to be.

This joint edition of Creative Commissions calls for creative collaborations that explore the relationship between diasporas and cultures by experimenting with the potential of diverse creative practices in the study, imagination and expression of diasporic worlds. These practices range from visual art and sculpture to performance, creative writing and new media. Applicants are invited to consider the arts and humanities as a set of mutually attracted approaches through which to explore the historical and contemporary implications of displacement, dispossession and migration; intergenerational memories, emotions and traumas; nostalgia, belonging, estrangement, alienation and reconciliation; as well as the constitution of new relationships to space, place, environment and landscape in the midst of a climate crisis.

More specifically, we invite collaborations between artists and scholars to explore one or more of the following themes:

- Emergence, experience, performance and representation of multiple identities, including cosmopolitan, national, ethnic, local, religious, cultural, social, and gender
- Nostalgia, belonging, estrangement, alienation, reconciliation and other emotions related to places of origin and countries of residence
- Displacement, dispossession, past and current traumas
- Diasporic worlds and the climate crisis, including resilience, survival and weathering
- Covid 19 and the impact of the pandemic on virtual and physical connections to homelands
- Intergenerational and intragenerational relations and conflicts, values, ethics and materiality
- Diasporic identities and their connections to the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of Greece and Cyprus
- Locality and insularity in Greece, Cyprus and Britain and its impact on experiences and representations of diasporic identity
- Diasporas within diasporas (local, religious, and other) and global connections between Greek/Cypriot diasporas in Britain, Europe, Americas, Asia, Africa and Australia.

## The Commissions

These Commissions are intended to evolve new and existing collaborations between creative practitioners and scholars interested in exploring diasporas. Those who accept a commission commit to:

- Attendance at one group discussion (online) with representatives of the Hellenic Institute, the Centre for Greek Diaspora Studies, the Centre for the GeoHumanities, the Cyprus High Commission - Cultural Section, and the Fitzwilliam Museum – University of Cambridge in March 2022.

- Provision of 2 x 500-word progress reports, one mid-way through the commission period, and one at the end.
- Contribution, transportation, set up and take down of new artwork or artistic research output at an exhibition to be hosted at the Cyprus High Commission in London (or an alternative venue in London) in June/July 2022.
- In-person attendance, except in case of illness or urgent circumstances beyond one's control, at the exhibition opening.
- Estimated expenses related to the research and development phase and the exhibition in London (transportation, insurance, specialized assistance/equipment, travel/accommodation etc.) should be included in the budget outline section of the application. We expect all expenses to be covered by the applicants using the allocated grant of up to £3,000.

## The People

The application must be made jointly by at least one creative practitioner and one early stage researcher. The collaborations may include more than two people. Applicants can be from anywhere in the world, though please note: 1) there is a requirement to be present at the final exhibition in London 2) at least one of the commissioned practitioners should have a UTR number (if UK based) or should hold an equivalent tax identification number as a self-employed individual in their country of residence.

These commissions are designed to support and develop interdisciplinary collaborations, so it is expected that the collaborative team will include a range of skills and knowledge. These will encompass creative skills as well as knowledge about diasporas, within the arts and humanities including social sciences.

These Commissions are aimed at early career artists and scholars or those seeking to develop a new direction in their work. For scholars, we define 'early career' to mean anyone within 8 years of the awarding day of their PhD (allowances made for time out for maternity, paternity, sick leave or non-academic employment and academic roles with little provision for research activities). For creative practitioners, 'early career' is less strictly measured, but the artist's past exhibitions and/or residencies will be taken into account. Ideally, but not necessarily, both parties should be early career.

The Commissions will be paid in two instalments: 50% (up to £1,500) upon selection, 50% (up to £1,500) upon receipt/evaluation of first interim progress report.

## Full Application Details

Your completed application should include the following elements:

- The application form (at the end of this info pack) comprising no more than 2 x A4 pages
- A CV for each collaborator – max. 2 A4 sides per collaborator, including a statement regarding early career status if relevant and detail of any previous collaborations
- Record of creative work – up to two web-links or two PDFs (up to five pages each)

## Submission

Your application should be emailed to [geohumanities@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:geohumanities@rhul.ac.uk) by 5 pm GMT on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

Please include documents as attachments where possible. If material is too large for emails please use appropriate file transfer service.

## **Assessment process and criteria**

The proposals will be assessed by a Selection Committee made up of scholars and practitioners at the Hellenic Institute, the Centre for Greek Diaspora Studies and the Centre for the GeoHumanities at Royal Holloway, University of London, the Cyprus High Commission – Cultural Section and the Fitzwilliam Museum – University of Cambridge.

The selection criteria will be:

- Excellence: Quality and originality of the idea, how the project moves beyond the state-of-art
- Implementation: (a) Experience and appropriateness of collaborators and efficiency of the plans for collaboration, (b) Feasibility/Credibility of the project including risk management
- Impact: (a) Contribution to knowledge in research areas covered by GeoHumanities, Diaspora Studies and the corresponding forms/media of art, (b) Ability of the project to communicate outcomes to expert and non-expert audiences, (c) Potential of the project to reinforce and enrich the career prospects of the applicants.

Due to the large volume of applications expected, we may be unable to provide written feedback on unsuccessful applications.

For any questions please contact: [geohumanities@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:geohumanities@rhul.ac.uk)

## **Diasporic Worlds: Application Form**

**1) Title of project:**

**2) Collaborators [add details for further collaborators if needed]:**

a)

Name

Institution [if appropriate]

E-Mail Address

b)

Name

Institution [if appropriate]

E-Mail Address

**3) Abstract [250 words max summary for general audience]**

**4) Project details [500 word summary, including brief description of deliverables]**

**5) Short summary of how this collaboration will evolve your research/practice [250 words max/ collaborator]**

**6) Outline Budget**