

Call for Contributions

Future Collect Conference: Handle with Care, November 2021*

We are seeking contributions for an interdisciplinary ‘fairground of ideas’ which will explore manifestations of care in artistic, curatorial and collecting practices; consider resistance and resilience in new models for commissioning and acquiring work; and ask critical questions about power, representation and the civic role of public museums and galleries in the 21st century.

We want to reflect on the etymology of the word ‘conference’ as the idea of coming together with varying opinions and rearing, bearing or carrying something together. This conference will be an invitation to challenge and reclaim the term from spaces that systemically exclude people and ideas that exist and think outside of institutions. We want to reimagine what the format of a conference offers us as a site of collaboration, connection and dialogue.

Taking inspiration and guidance from inaugural Future Collect artist Jade Montserrat’s generous response to her commission with iniva and Manchester Art Gallery, in conceptualising the conference we have accepted her invitation to consider what it means to build an infrastructure of care for artists, artworks and their narratives with audiences.

We will also revisit the urgent call made by Professor Stuart Hall, founding chair of iniva, in his keynote speech at the national conference, *Whose Heritage? The Impact of Cultural Diversity on Britain’s Living Heritage*, held in Manchester in November 1999. Professor Hall called for a re-imagined Britain, reinvented for all who refuse to become othered in order to belong, and the Future Collect Conference will suggest that this call to action remains just as relevant and urgent when thinking about our national collections within visual arts museums and galleries today.

We are seeking proposals for contributions across a variety of formats and disciplines including performances, papers, workshops, calls to action and conversations. The format and medium of the contribution is entirely open, we just ask that in keeping with the idea of creating knowledge together all proposals create an opportunity for discussion.

We encourage the following potential areas of focus and are open to further suggestions.

- Innovative models of commissioning to collect that have animated an existing collection to keep it responsive and relevant.
- The centring of care in collecting as a critical practice.
- How contemporary artists create relationships with historical works in collections and open up new ways of responding to them.
- Enacting a nuanced project of decolonisation as an ongoing process that has the potential to lead to structural change rather than solely influencing representation.

This is a hybrid live and digital event which will be based at Manchester Art Gallery. We are able to support online or in person presentations and performances, which will be developed in conversation with the contributors and in line with our resources.

**The exact date of the conference is still being confirmed but we are planning for it to be in the last two weeks of November.*

Please submit your proposal by 6pm **Wednesday 15th September** to Anahi Saravia Herrera - Anahi@iniva.org We are accepting UK and international proposals.

Possible formats of submission (*just one is needed to apply*):

- A personal statement (500 words max)
- Presentation - Keynote or PowerPoint (5 minutes max)
- Short video or sound file (5 minutes max)

There will be an honorarium for the contribution to the conference, as well as accommodation, travel and per diems covered for those not already based in Manchester. iniva is committed to paying appropriate fees to artists, speakers and others who contribute to our programme.

If you need assistance in making your application, please contact us with questions at Anahi@iniva.org. For those that need it, we can help organise and pay for additional support.

Do you have any access requirements?

We are prepared to provide the necessary support to all contributors, this might range from phone calls instead of written communication, child care, support with writing event copy, large print for printed documents, BSL interpretation or captioning and video calls for lip reading. If you would like any of these, or anything else, please ask. Please include any details on this in your application, additional to your proposal.