

Designer Maker West Midlands (DMWM) is looking for three mid-career designer makers for ‘Future Forward 2’ a creative and market development programme

Future Forward 2 is the second phase of an exciting mentoring programme tailored to the needs of mid-career designer makers from the West Midlands region. It offers mid-career designer makers (the mentees) the opportunity to be mentored by an arts professional who has knowledge and experience of designer maker’s practices and market opportunities. The aim is to support the artistic development, advance the quality of work and the ability to access new marketing opportunities of the selected mid-career designer maker.

What is involved?

The intention is for the mentor and mentee to work together to assist the mentee to develop their practice; making new work of artistic quality and to exhibit or engage with a project which will raise their profile regionally, nationally and/or internationally. The programme will provide focused discussion and regular one to one support (approx 9 x ½ days) from an experienced mentor of a period of 9-12 months.

The dedicated mentor will support the individual mid-career designer maker by making studio visits, engaging in creative/critical dialogue, discussing a schedule of work and research, planning and accessing new market opportunities. The mentors and mentees will also be involved in activities such as; group discussion days, research trips and evaluation feedback. The mentees will benefit from the mentors experience, research, knowledge and professional networks. Additional support will come from the mentors’ ability to be a sounding board and critic for new ideas. The mentees will be awarded a bursary of £2100 for materials, promotion, marketing, travel expenses and will be expected to give a presentation at dissemination DMWM event.

Mid-career designer makers?

Future Forward 2 is specifically tailored to advancing mid-career designer makers who have ambitions to be more critically engaged and/or innovative, have already an established body of work, and have developed their practices regionally, nationally and possibly internationally. For example, a potential mentee might be in the position that they survive by making work for retail outlets and selling galleries which subsidises their more challenging work. As a result of this they may find it difficult to progress their career further and revitalisation of

their practice is needed for them to increase their profile and reputation. Future Forward 2 will provide them with an opportunity to develop new work and gain exposure to new markets enabling them to become designer makers of more significant work in a national and/or international context.

Suitability

Applicants should fit into the following criteria:

- be designer makers based in the West Midlands
- practising as a designer maker for four years and beyond
- be able to make a commitment to the Future Forward 2 programme
- consider themselves to be at a mid-career stage (see above section on mid-career designer makers)
- have ambitious to be more critically engaged and/or aspire to be more innovative
- the work shows potential for creative progression and for positioning into new market opportunities
- already have an establish body of work which has been successfully marketed and/or sold regionally, nationally and possibly internationally
- have exhibited and sold at national fairs, outlets and shows
- have reached a level of recognition but find it difficult to more forward with their practice
- aspire to the development of new work and access new markets

Programme timescale

Start of the programme	January 2010
Finish of programme	December 2010
Final evaluation of programme	End of Jan 2011

How to apply to be a mentee on the Future Forward 2 Programme

1) Submit a letter of application responding to this brief and a summary of the following:

- why do you want to be part of the FF2 programme
- how you could contribute to Future Forward 2
- what are your ideas for the future direction of your work and practice
- what are your ambitions and aspirations for your work
- what opportunities and markets interest you

2) Submit a CV and a brief statement (300 words) about your work and practice

3) Name your preferred choice of Mentors

Appendix 1 is an outline of the area of expertise of five potential mentors who are interested in participating in the project. Designer Maker West Midlands has interviewed and selected these potential mentors, though the final choice of mentors will only be made after the mentee application short listing in order to ensure the best possible mentor/mentee match. Please indicate your preference for an area of mentor expertise by showing your first and second choices in your letter of application. The choices will be taken into consideration but there is no guarantee you will be partnered with the mentor of your choice.

4) Submitting digital images on a CD – maximum 6

Images should be in size 72dpi and be in a 3:4 ratio and no larger than 9cm x 12cm. The digital images should be saved as Jpeg files and have the suffix .jpg. Each image should be labelled with your name and a number from 1 to 6 for example jsmith1.jpg File names should be no more than 32 characters long and free from any non standard characters e.g. - / ; *) ~ The images should be filed in a folder and along with the CD labelled with your name.

5) What, when and where to send your application

Please apply by sending your letter of application, a CV and statement about your work, your preferred choices of mentor and a CD Rom with 6 images by post to arrive no later than 12 noon on 30 October 2009 to:

DMWM 'Future Forward 2' Mentoring Programme
c/o The Crafts Officer
Arts Council England West Midlands
82 Granville Street
Birmingham
B1 2LH

For further enquiries about the programme

Please email your questions to Natalie Cole info@designermakerwm.co.uk

Deadlines and dates

Receipt of applications: 12 noon 30 October 2009

Interview dates: 2,3,4 December 2009

Shortlist of applicants

The applications will be short listed and those who are selected will be invited to interview. The selection of mentees will be based on the quality of the application, the quality of the work and the potential of the maker to make use of the scheme. A selection of applicants will be made; who show the potential for further development of international and national market opportunities; the ability and creative talent to develop new innovative work and/or work with a critical content.

Interviews

The interviews will be held Arts Council England, West Midlands (ACEWM), 82 Granville Street, Birmingham B1 2LH on the 2,3,4 December 2009.

Talks at interview

Short listed applicants will have the opportunity to give an informal 10-15 minute talk (if you wish to do PowerPoint presentation a laptop will be available). The talk should demonstrate to the interview panel the following points:

- why you wish to participate in the Future Forward 2
- your current work and practice
- how you think you would benefit from work with a mentor
- how you could contribute to the programme
- what are your ambitions and aspirations for future work and practice
- how do you wish to move your work and practice forward
- what new opportunities and markets would you like to be involved in

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Designer Maker West Midlands - Future Forward 2

Appendix 1 Areas of mentor expertise

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If you have any enquiries please contact Natalie Cole at info@DesignerMakerWM.co.uk

Mentor 1:

- experience of curating contemporary craft exhibitions as director of a London gallery that showcases international and British applied art
- knowledge of the press and an in depth experience of promoting artist's and designer makers work both in the UK and abroad
- strong international networks and contacts particularly in Japan, USA and Scandinavia, gained through organising British exhibitor groups at international trade fairs

Mentor 2:

- an established practitioner in the field of ceramics, with experience of exhibiting in Europe, USA and the Far East and who has work in both UK and international public collections
- recent experience of developing new work through collaboration with a ceramic company
- experience of mentoring several artist mentees from different disciplines (not only ceramicists)

Mentor 3:

- a freelance curator and writer specialising in the field of textiles
- former Head of Exhibitions and Collections at a museum with a reputation as a centre for textiles and contemporary craft

- experience of working with established textile artists - curating exhibitions of new work, managing site specific commissions and publications
- involved in collaborations with the Ruthin gallery and the V&A Museum in terms of exhibition and project development
- Honorary Member of the '62 Group of Textile Artists'

Mentor 4:

- a freelance consultant and curator specialises in public art and craft, though current role spans a range of the visual arts
- experience of working on projects with applied artists, fine artists, photographers, sculptors, light artists and filmmakers
- knowledge and expertise are in the areas of public art and commissioning integrated within, for example, architectural, educational, healthcare, regeneration or environmental settings
- experience of mentoring designer makers from differing disciplines and has supported makers to develop their practice in the field of public art and site-specific commissioning

Mentor 5:

- a freelance curator with experience of working with museums, galleries and heritage venues
- involved in research and development of exhibitions and projects between contemporary artists/designer makers and museum collections and heritage venues
- currently working on a large project with a well known stately home to develop opportunities for makers in 2010 and as an advisor and curator at an urban historic house on contemporary craft development for a new gallery space
- interest lies where craft intercepts with other artforms particularly fine art, environmental art and performance