



PRESS RELEASE

An Urgent Enquiry

**Call out for artists to collaborate with biodiversity specialists along Ireland's East Coast
in a unique public art project which will bring art and science together.**

Submissions now open

The influences of climate change and its effects on biodiversity is more than merely an issue of our time, it is an urgent one. Today Wexford County Council, Fingal County Council and Dublin City Council came together to put out a call for artists interested in exploring this area of art and ecology to apply to be part of a new environmental residency programme entitled *An Urgent Enquiry*.

Artists are invited to submit an application to take part and to collaborate with biodiversity specialists along Ireland's east coast. For these participating local authorities, nothing seemed more pertinent than the influences of climate change and its effects on the biodiversity linking their shared coastline and the potential to bring art and science together.

The *Urgent Enquiry* team are located within the local authority and through their collective experience of commissioning public art, were mindful that this subject matter be explored meaningfully and perhaps act as a catalyst for change. With this in mind they have joined forces with those tasked with managing the biodiversity of each area towards this shared agenda and by offering these series of site specific residencies. Artists will be able to avail of the breadth of local knowledge, ongoing research and connection to a range of active communities from the peninsula of Portrane, to Bull Island part of the UNESCO designated Dublin Bay Biosphere, to the beaches and slob lands of Wexford and the wider global context.

Applications are now open for artists engaged in exploring this area of art and ecology to participate in a series of residencies which will be located in Wexford, Fingal, Dublin and the UK.

To find more details on how to apply go to www.anurgentenquiry.ie Deadline for submissions, 21 February 2019.

The project is funded through the Arts Council's *Invitation to Collaboration* scheme which supports innovative, ambitious local authority collaborations.

Throughout 2018 a series of Think Tanks took place along the coast featuring a selection of specialists engaged in research around climate change, biodiversity, ecology and its intersection with art. One such guest contributor was Alice Sharp, Director of the UK's prestigious art & environment commissioning Agency, *Invisible Dust*. Alice presented her perspective on commissioning projects that addressed the links between art and ecology, having worked across the field with artists such as *China Melville* and *Jeremy Deller* to explore the potential that such an alignment between the two subjects can have on behaviours and thinking while raising public awareness of our natural world, its possibilities and its fragility.

Closer to home, Irish artists have been gaining recognition within this practice, notably *John Gerrard* whose project *Western Flag* responded to the rising levels of carbon dioxide in the earth's atmosphere and presented as an interrupted broadcast on *Channel 4* as part of *Earth Day 2017* and



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UN Action for Climate Change featured artist *Siobhan McDonald* whose work *Crystalline* captured time based changes in the Anthropocene through drawing and installation. Artists are also being supported through innovative research based residencies such as UCD Parity programme which locates artist within the multidisciplinary academic sphere.

Invisible Dust became a project partner during the process and will further facilitate one of the selected projects to connect with their own residency programme *Surroundings*, located in Hull which will commence in 2020. www.invisibledust.com

Artists working through this field of practice are now invited to apply for the three Irish residencies, with *Invisible Dust*, selecting from those awarded artists. The Artists will be based at the three key coastal locations, where accommodation, remuneration, project support and documentation will be provided. Artists must be available from May – July 2019. For full details and brief please visit www.anurgentenquiry.ie

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