

grounding technologies

Grounding Technologies is a pilot project about how creative technology can be used to support climate action. This document outlines information about the theme, the opportunity and the application process to apply to be a part of Grounding Technologies. You can also find further information in our [FAQs](#).

If you have any access requirements that mean this document does not work for you please contact Melissa Blackburn melissa.blackburn@uwe.ac.uk.



Play:Disrupt
Creative High Streets
Image: Jack Offord

Roxana Vilc
Lullabies
Image: Jon Aitkin

What is Grounding Technologies?

Grounding Technologies is a six month pilot project that explores how creative technology can be useful to those working in climate action.

Grounding Technologies aims to create new collaborations across the region, unlocking imagination and sparking conversation. We will fund six £15K projects that connect climate action and creative technology.

Our intention is to understand how creative technology can be used locally to support climate action. The West of England (Bristol, NE Somerset, South Gloucs and N Somerset) is home to a rich ecosystem of climate and biodiversity action, from the birth of Extinction Rebellion in Stroud, to Bristol as a European Green Capital in 2015. This call looks at how technology can support those mobilising action on the ground. How can creative technology support, enhance and build on the work already happening?

At Bristol+Bath Creative R+D, we've spent five years working to raise the bar for the region's creative industries. We've sought to support a socially responsible environment for creativity and innovation that is both inclusive and sustainable, putting people before technology.

Looking ahead to the next five, ten, twenty years, we know we need to radically transform our sector to combat and adapt to the climate crisis. Our response can no longer focus on quick fixes when the issues are systemic. This challenge is innately creative: we are faced with making our society anew when we don't know exactly what that looks like.



Future Soundings
Uninvited Guests and Duncan Speakman
Image: Jon Aitkin

“We need to reinvent and rebuild our systems and structures so that they embody and reflect different values and mindsets – values and mindsets we may only be able to discover through living into them. In other words, we have to make the road by walking it.”

– Alexis Frasz, cultural strategist and organiser

Technology, and creative uses of it, can play a crucial role in this task of remaking a world where people and planet thrive. Harmony between nature, technology and humanity is fundamental to the just, green society we want to build.

We want to nourish new regional collaborations, unlocking imagination and sparking conversation. This summer, we are inviting those involved in climate action, together with creative technologists, artists, designers and creative practitioners to explore with us, proposing new and distinctive ideas that will bolster climate action in our region.

We want to connect and resource groups who are doing the work on the ground, to find local solutions to pressing issues.



Image: Annie Spratt

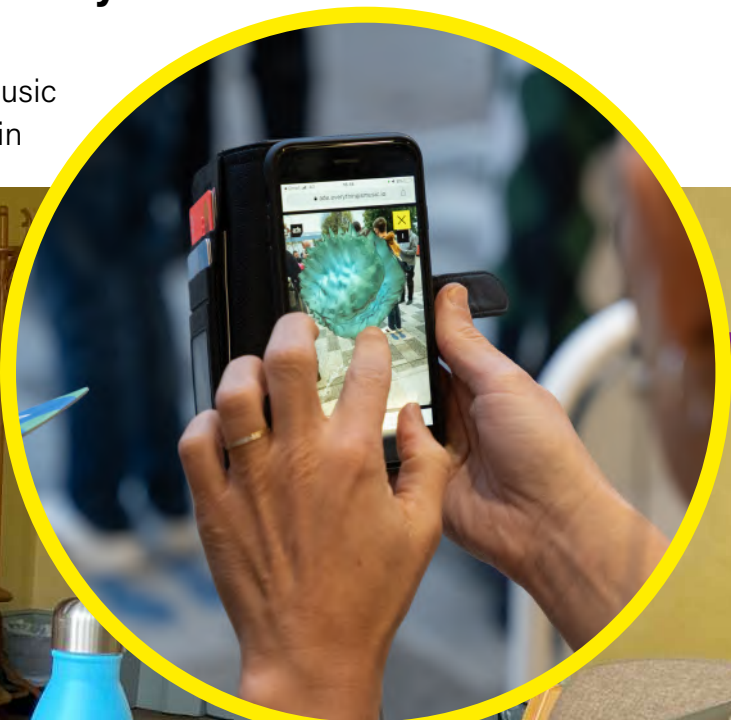
What are we looking for?

We have six lots of £15K to support teams across the West of England to develop an idea around climate action which uses technology in creative ways. This might mean making a new **thing**, but it might also be about the **processes** that lead to **new things**, **new ways of making** or **new organisational models**.

Developing your idea with us means getting it to work on paper alongside a practical test of some kind. We know that you may not end up with a fully operating version but hope you'll have a sense of how viable it is.

If you are working with or are interested in climate action - perhaps in food, nature, transport, energy or resources, perhaps as a campaigner, in an organisation, or as an individual - we would love to hear from you.

Everything is Music
Image: Jon Aitkin



Dhaqan Collective
Audible Tapestries
Image Jon Aitkin

Similarly, if you're interested in climate action and you work with technology, or are an artist or creative practitioner, we'd love you to get involved.

We are not expecting big shiny products. We are looking for ideas that tackle a problem in climate action using technology in a new and creative way.

This might mean playing with emerging technologies - Virtual or augmented reality, 5G, creative robotics or immersive audio. But it might also be something that engages with more mundane technology in a new, creative way - technology around collecting or crunching data, around visualisation, or around games. We care about the processes or hidden wiring that improve projects.

There are some interesting examples in our [FAQs](#).

Roxana Vilk
Lullabies
Image: Jon Aitkin



Kathy Hinde
Listening Underwater
Image: James Cook



Image: Jon Aitkin



How It Works

There are two parts to Grounding Technologies:

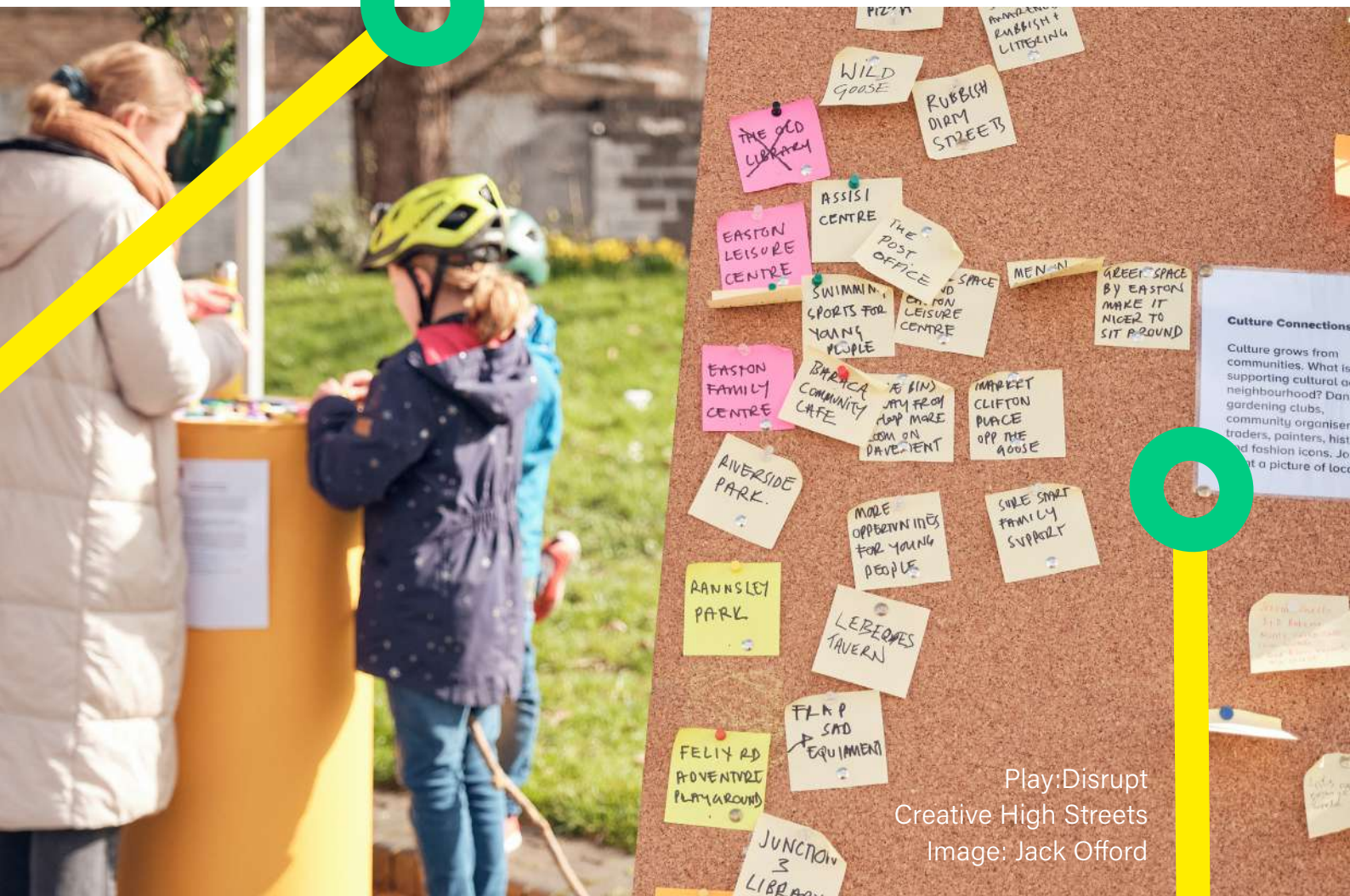
Stage 1: Apply for one of our [Ideas Labs in June 2023](#) to find out more about our theme as well as meeting potential collaborators (or come as a representative of your existing team)

Stage 2: Apply for up to **£15K funding** with your team - to take your idea forward over a three month period: August - Oct 2023.

You can read more about this in the [FAQs](#).

Responsible Innovation

Grounding Technologies believes in responsible innovation. That means making new things with an understanding of, and responsibility for, the social, cultural and environmental impact of your work. You should consider your audience, stakeholders, and community from the outset. We want you to think about the potential barriers to people engaging with the idea you want to develop and how you can remove those barriers? (eg. Do people need access to a smartphone? Do they need to be in a certain place?)



Play:Disrupt
Creative High Streets
Image: Jack Offord

What do you get?

- Attendance at an Ideas Lab with the chance to meet new collaborators and explore our theme of climate action and creative technology.
- The chance to apply for £15K to develop your idea with your team. This grant is designed to pay for people's time, materials and specialist skills.
- Support from a Producer as you develop and test your project, process or product (these people will be working across the programme, so you must have the core skills required to develop the project in your team).
- Desk space and access to facilities in the Pervasive Media Studio at Watershed in Bristol, connecting you to a vibrant community of artists and creative technologists.
- A series of development workshops between late July and Oct 2023 focussing idea development, responsible innovation and peer support.
- Showcasing opportunities and feedback events offering the opportunity for discussion/collaboration with both peers and public.
- Access support where needed
- A short promo film documenting your project, process or product.

What do we expect from you?

- Attendance at an Ideas Lab in June 2023.
- Should you be successfully funded, attendance at all three workshops (see timeline below) and one-to-one meetings.
- A generous and open attitude.
- A willingness to participate in events and discussions with public, peers and partners while your work is in development.
- Contribution to any press and media campaigns.
- Some time spent in residence at Watershed's Pervasive Media Studio in Bristol.
- Consideration of inclusion, equity and accessibility in your idea. We will support you to test your idea with this in mind.

Image: Pass Horizon



How to apply

The application process has two stages:

Stage One

You will submit a short online Expression of Interest. We will select up to 80 people to attend one of two half day Ideas Labs in Bristol and Bath in June 2022:

Tues 6 June, 10am - 1pm BATH (with lunch 1-2pm)

Wed 14 June, 6pm - 9pm BRISTOL + ONLINE (with dinner 5-6pm)

We will select people for the Ideas Labs who demonstrate a wide range of skills, interests, experiences and ideas relevant to Grounding Technologies. If needed we can offer freelancers, sole traders and representatives of SMEs £100 to cover their attendance of the three-hour Ideas Labs.

The Ideas Lab will offer participants a chance to:

- Meet other activists, action groups and creatives and discuss thoughts, ideas and ambitions.
- Establish areas of interest, insights and thoughts around the theme of climate action and creative technology.
- Collectively explore how existing work and ideas could be enhanced, adapted or resourced with creative technology.
- Learn more about the value of working together within a framework of responsible innovation.
- Map out emerging opportunities, questions, tensions of the role of creative technology in climate action.

[Register your interest in attending the Ideas Labs here.](#)

(We understand that online forms do not work for everyone. If you would like to register your interest by alternative means please email Melissa Blackburn at melissa.blackburn@uwe.ac.uk)

The deadline for Stage 1 Expressions of Interest is Friday 19th May at 5pm.

You will hear from us by Monday 26 May and will be invited to one of the Ideas Lab dates above.

Stage Two

Following the Ideas Lab, you will be invited to form teams and apply for up to £15k to develop your idea.

You will have the opportunity to attend a short one-to-one meeting with a team member to talk through your idea before submitting a full stage 2 proposal (including a simple budget) which will be assessed by a selection panel.

Shortlisted teams will then be invited to interview with members of the Grounding Technologies partnership and our external Advisory Members from organisations such as Bristol Green Capital Partnership and the Avon Wildlife Trust. We expect to commission six teams with a budget of up to £15,000 per team.

Assessment Criteria

We will assess proposals at Stage Two with the following criteria:

- Your idea responds to the Grounding Technologies theme **How can creative technology be used to support climate action?**
- Your idea is something that has the potential to be developed further with positive ongoing benefits for your community (ie not just a one-off happening or event).
- You have a team with the capacity and expertise to develop your idea.
- You demonstrate an awareness of responsible innovation and the core values of Bristol + Bath Creative R+D - which are [inclusivity, co-creation, sharing](#).

(For more information about eligibility and the possible make up of teams, please see the [FAQs](#)).



Roxana Vilc
Lullabies
Image: Jon Aitkin

Timeline

- Stage 1 expressions of interest. Opens 2 May 2023.
Closes May 19 2023
- Applicants will hear from us by
May 26 2023
- Ideas Labs (you will be invited to attend one)
Tuesday 6 June (10am- 1pm **Bath**)
Wednesday 14 June (6pm - 9pm **Bristol and Online**)
- Bookable one-to-one surgeries:
Between 15 June - 23 June
- Stage 2 Application Opens
15 June
- Stage 2 Application Closes
2 July
- Shortlisted Applicants will hear from us
7 July (tbc)
- Interviews
w/c 10th July
- Six teams attend workshops in late July/early August, September, October
(tbc)
- Final Sharing
October 2023



breathing.systems Nik
Rawlings
Trinity Center Bristol
Image: Paul Blakemore



Image:
eelco
bohtlingk

Talk to Us

We have shared some [FAQs](#) here. If your question has not been answered please contact Melissa Blackburn on melissa.blackburn@uwe.ac.uk or Zoe Rasbash at zoe.r@watershed.co.uk

Play: Disrupt
Creative High Streets
Image: Jack Offord



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Vilk Collective / Squid Soup
Circle
Image: Jon Aitken