

ART LAB: Art of Antimicrobial Resistance

The opportunity

‘Combatting antimicrobial resistance requires creative solutions!’

Cardiff University researchers have been awarded funding to run a pilot study about using arts and film events to communicate and raise awareness of important issues in science. In partnership with Creative Cardiff, the researchers would like to commission five creative practitioners to produce a piece of work each that explores the theme of antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

The work will be displayed as part of the ‘ART LAB: Art of Antimicrobial Resistance’ event at Chapter during the Cardiff Science Festival in February 2022. This event will be free to attend and has two strands:

- an AMR and microbiology-themed art exhibition that showcases the five commissioned pieces and selected artwork from a public art competition, and
- a screening of a documentary on the topic of AMR which will be followed by a panel discussion where the audience can ask questions.

By combining arts and science we hope to deliver a thought-provoking but widely accessible event that increases awareness of AMR.

What is antimicrobial resistance (AMR)?

An antimicrobial is an agent that kills microorganisms or stops them growing.

Antimicrobials can be split into different classes depending on which microbes they target, including antibiotics (bacteria), antivirals (viruses) and antifungals (fungi). AMR occurs when microorganisms change over time and no longer respond to antimicrobial agents.

AMR can make infections harder to treat, increasing the spread of disease, severe illness and death ([World Health Organisation \(WHO\) fact sheet](#)).

AMR is a complex problem, driven by many interconnecting factors, that ultimately affects all of society. Antimicrobial resistant microbes are found everywhere: in people, animals, food, plants and the environment (water, air & soil). They can spread from person to person or between people and animals, including from food of animal origin. AMR actually occurs naturally, however the widespread misuse and overuse of antimicrobials, along with other key driving factors, have accelerated its spread globally; and AMR is now recognised as one of the top 10 threats facing humanity (WHO).

Combatting AMR will require a concerted effort from many different sectors to reduce the use of antimicrobials and to develop new ones. Everyone can play a part in decreasing AMR, however, by using antimicrobials responsibly; this is known as ‘antimicrobial stewardship’. Understanding how antibiotics work, how resistance emerges, and what practices drive resistance, will enable everyone to play a role in antimicrobial stewardship.

What are we looking for?

We would like to work with you to develop pieces of artwork that explore the multi-faceted problem of AMR. You may wish to consider:

- How do microorganisms develop AMR?
- How have human activities contributed to AMR?
- What new antimicrobial agents are being developed?
- How can we reduce antimicrobial use and promote antimicrobial stewardship?
- How will AMR affect society if we do not take action?

These are examples, so please do not let them limit your imagination. If you are looking for further inspiration, [Anna Dumitriu](#) specialises in BioArt and her work frequently explores complex microbiology topics. The [Wellcome Collection](#) also runs events and exhibitions connecting science, medicine, life and art.

If you would like more information about AMR, we will be holding a briefing session via Zoom on 26th November 12:00-13:00. During this session, Cardiff University researchers will share a short presentation about AMR and answer any questions you may have. This session is not compulsory but if you are interested in attending, please register [here](#).

We welcome applications from a range of creative practitioners working in different artistic disciplines, languages and mediums. The work must be suitable to be displayed in the Chapter exhibition space for the duration of the art exhibition (19th-22nd February 2022). The art exhibition will take place in the first space and/or media point [rooms](#) which have projection equipment (both rooms) and a screen (first space) available. We ask that you consider that the work will be viewed by a broad audience and we would not like any graphic content that might make people uncomfortable, for example, images of wound infections.

This project is open to self-employed creative practitioners only.

The budget

We have a budget of £500 per practitioner which includes fee, materials and expenses.

We will provide additional support (e.g. access) where necessary in order for you to participate in this opportunity.

The process

The commissioned creatives will work individually but will also be offered the opportunity to discuss their ideas with researchers at Cardiff University who work on AMR. If this is of interest, we will hold a meeting (via Zoom) in the week commencing 3rd January 2022 to connect creatives with researchers. If they wish, creatives can also visit the research groups at Cardiff University to see the research that is being carried out to understand and combat the problem of AMR.

At the end of the project, we would like the creatives to provide feedback about their experience of working with the ART LAB team to help us gauge the impact of the project.

Audience and sharing

The primary audience will be those attending the in-person art exhibition at Chapter in February 2022.

A digital image of the work will also be displayed on the ART LAB website accompanied by a short description about the piece that has been written by the creative.

The commissioned creatives will retain copyright over the work they create, but agree to provide to Cardiff University a non-exclusive, non-commercial license to use the pieces in perpetuity for the 'ART LAB: Art of Antimicrobial Resistance' project. Non-commercial uses of the pieces will include promoting the project on our website/social media (digital images of the pieces) and re-use of the original pieces if the exhibition is run again at a different venue. We would also like to use digital images of the work in our ART LAB project reports and to evidence the engagement work that Cardiff University conducts. The creative will be credited wherever the work is shared.

Timeline

Applications open: 12:00 17th November 2021

Briefing session (held via Zoom): 12:00-13:00 26th November 2021

Applications close: 12:00 6th December 2021

Application review panel meets: 14th December 2021

Successful applicants notified: 16th December 2021

Work commences: 3rd January 2022

Work to be completed by: 7th February 2022

Exhibition: 19th-22nd February 2022

Apply

1. Complete the short application
2. Provide examples of your previous work

Please send your completed application form and examples of your previous work to weiserr@cardiff.ac.uk.

The practitioners will be chosen by a decision panel made up of representatives from Creative Cardiff and researchers and staff from Cardiff University.

We particularly welcome applications from creatives working in Welsh or other languages. We are committed to supporting more creatives whose background and/or identity is underrepresented. This includes, but is not limited to, creatives from Black, Asian and ethnically diverse backgrounds, creatives from lower socio-economic backgrounds, d/Deaf creatives, neurodiverse creatives, creatives with disabilities or long-term health difficulties and creatives with LGBTQIA+ identities.

Please contact us via [email](#) if you have any questions about your idea, about AMR or would like any assistance with your application.