

EXPERIMENTA

EXPERIMENTA LIFE FORMS COMMISSIONS

EXPERIMENTA IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE OUR CALL FOR APPLICATIONS TO PRODUCE NEW AUSTRALIAN MEDIA ARTWORKS.

Experimenta is seeking Expressions of Interest for media artworks by Australian artists for the triennial touring exhibition *Experimenta Life Forms* [2020-2023]. This document is intended to assist artists in responding to the EOI commissioning opportunity.

Experimenta is delighted to be partnering with two of Australia's leading experimental contemporary art organisations to enrich this commissioning program. The Australian Network for Art & Technology (ANAT) will be part of the selection process alongside Experimenta and will support the commissioning of one new work. SymbioticA will provide a residency opportunity for up to three months at its labs at the University of WA.

ABOUT EXPERIMENTA

Experimenta is Australia's leading contemporary arts organisation dedicated to commissioning, exhibiting and promoting art driven by technology. Since its inception in 1986, Experimenta has developed a worldwide reputation for fostering creativity that extends the aesthetic, conceptual and experiential potential of emerging art forms. Founded as the Modern Image Makers Association by a collective of film and video artists, Experimenta quickly expanded to include installation, performance and sound art. As an organisation that continues to support new forms of contemporary practice, Experimenta is recognised as a leading hub of experimental art in Australia, showcase dynamic and surprising contemporary artworks situated at the nexus of art, digital media, science and technology, and design.

THE COMMISSION

Commissioning new works by Australian artists is fundamental to Experimenta's artistic program. Through the commissioning process we support artists to create works for a touring exhibition that draw on many artforms and may be interactive, transdisciplinary, mobile, participatory and/or performative. Our commissions provide a significant opportunity for Australian artists to undertake professional and creative development, with financial and in-kind support from Experimenta, in order to realise innovative works that engage and ignite the imaginations of our audiences.

Commissioned artists will join other exceptional Australian and international media artists selected for inclusion in Experimenta's forthcoming triennial exhibition, *Experimenta Life Forms* (2020-2023). After premiering in Melbourne, the exhibition will tour to almost a dozen galleries and venues around Australia and be experienced by tens of thousands of people.

Commissioned projects will be awarded funding of up to \$8,000 and will receive generous in-kind support and assistance in securing additional funding where applicable.

EOI Application is due by 5pm on Thursday 25th April 2019.

Applicants must read the attached documents, the Commission Process and the Expanded Curatorial Brief.

COMMISSION PROCESS

The commissioning is a three-step process comprising:

1. Expression of interest applications
2. Shortlisting of EOIs by Selection Panel

Successful EOI applicants will be invited to develop and present a detailed concept, and will be paid a \$500 honorarium to do this

3. Final selection from successful EOI applicants of commissions.

TIMELINE:

1. Expressions of interest close: 5pm EST Thursday 25 April, 2019
2. EOI shortlisting process: 26 April - 10 May, 2019
3. Successful shortlisted EOIs notified: 13-15 May, 2019.
4. Shortlisted EOIs concept development closes: 12 June, 2019
5. Shortlisted EOI concept presentations: 17 - 18 June
6. Final selection of commissions from successful shortlisted EOIs selected and notification of successful applicants: 19th June
7. Commissioning period: July 2019 - June 2020

NEXT STEP - EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST:

- Make sure you read the Expanded Curatorial Brief at the end of this document
- Download and complete the fillable application form <http://experimenta.org/commissions/>
- Email the completed EOI application including all supporting material to commissions@experimenta.org

Deadline: 5pm EST on Thursday 25 April 2019

ELIGIBILITY:

- Individuals or collaborative groups may apply
- Applicants must be Australian Citizens or Permanent Residents of Australia

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Answers to applicant's questions will be published on the Experimenta website <http://experimenta.org/commissions/> for all interested parties to view. Should you be unable to find the answer to your question, please contact commissions@experimenta.org.

No curatorial guidance can be provided at this stage.

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS SUMMARY DOCUMENT:

A summary of the contractual terms and conditions is available on the Experimenta Website <http://experimenta.org/commissions/>

Expanded curatorial brief: *Experimenta Life Forms*

Philosophers have wrestled with defining life for thousands of years. *Experimenta Life Forms* reveals how contemporary artists are approaching this perennial question, at a time when technological change and new research findings are making definitions of 'life' increasingly difficult to pin down.

What new life formations are emerging through technological and biological adaptation, invention or discovery? What are the ethical questions, particularly now that scientific research is identifying sentience in animals, plant-life, and may soon be found in our machines? How close to reality are the fantastical paradigm shifts conjured by artists and sold to us by tech companies?

Experimenta Life Forms seeks to make a significant contribution to the dialogue around the changing landscape of life as we know it, or indeed, as we don't know it. We seek Expressions of Interest from Australian artists who wish to explore one of the following themes, or indeed both themes given the increasingly blurred boundaries between the natural and artificial.

1. Biological Life Forms

Despite the fact that we are living in the age of the Anthropocene, we are also seeing an increasing awareness of biological interdependency that is shifting our human-centric thinking. Biological research into everything from microbes and fungi to animals is demonstrating that many living things have agency and in some cases sentience. These findings shift humans from a central location to being just one node in a complex network of agents that co-exist and are interdependent. In this emerging paradigm, current social and cultural institutions and structures such as the law, economics and governance, based on notions of human supremacy, are no longer fit for purpose. This commission is interested in artists working in this complex and evolving space exploring the shifts and impacts of these developments and new understandings.

2. Artificial Life Forms

With the rapid uptake of AI and robotics we are experiencing an explosion of artificial lifeform possibilities. Already we are seeing significant developments in social and companion machines and software, through to mega data set and AI systems making societal level assessments such as our national tax agency with TaxBot through to criminal justice systems trialling AI on the international stage. Will developments in digital intelligence lead to the evolution of artificial life? How will such inventions impact on our social and cultural institutions and humanity's ideas of its place in the world? As physicist Stephen Hawkins famously warned, will this lead to the demise of the human race? This commission seeks applications from artist asking key questions in relation to emergence of artificial life and digital intelligence.