

artist call: STATUS LAB

International Artist Development Programme

What does it mean to create
work in the now?

UNITED KINGDOM



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opportunity for mid-career, socially engaged artists

SICK

LIVES REIMAGINED THROUGH ART

ARTIST CALL OUT

STATUS LAB: International Artist Development Programme

This call is for Ireland and UK-based artists only. Switzerland based artist recruitment will be managed through a separate process.

Location: Greater Manchester (UK), Dublin (Ireland), Basel (Switzerland), Zürich (Switzerland), & Online.

Experience Level: Mid-career

Artform: Socially engaged practice within the performing arts.

Accessibility: Diversity and inclusion are core to how we work. We are committed to providing an environment that is accessible to all. If you have any specific access requirements during the application process or during the programme, please contact info@sickproductions.org to let us know.

We encourage applications from artists developing new or evolving socially engaged projects that are informed by and connected to their lived experience.

Partners: SICK! (Manchester), Lowry (Salford), Project Arts Centre (Dublin), Kaserne (Basel), Gessnerallee (Zürich).

Application deadline: 27 April 2026

Interviews: w/c 4 May 2026

OPPORTUNITY OVERVIEW

Status Lab is a new opportunity for socially engaged artists who are actively responding to the current societal landscape.

The inaugural six participants, and venue partners, will be on a mission to uncover new strategies within the creative process, develop responsive platforms and create new artworks to seed new creative ideas.

- What does it mean to create work in the now?
- How do we understand where we are today?
- What performance speaks to the needs of our community in immediate ways?
- When do we need time to reflect?
- When do we need the tools or platforms to act?

Status Lab will support the work of two artists from Ireland, two artists from Switzerland and two from the UK, to take part in a collective residency process across all three countries together. These 6 artists will consider the above questions, whilst developing both individually and collectively.

Artists will work remotely with each other and within specific communities over 11 months, punctuated by three 1-week residencies in each location - meeting locally with activists, artists, policy makers, teachers and community members.

Participants will grow their own arts practice while activating local conversations about issues such as healthcare, housing, poverty, climate, human rights and more.

At the end of the six months, all artists will share their work in progress, or the beginning of their ideas as part of SICK! Festival in Manchester.

TIMELINE OVERVIEW

The programme will run from May 2026 to March 2027.

Interviews: w/c 4 May 2026

Online First Gatherings: 25 - 27 May 2026 (2 x half days)

Overseas Residencies: 3 one-week residencies:

- LAB week Zurich @ Gessnerallee 23 - 29 August 2026
- LAB week Manchester @ Lowry 8 - 14 November 2026
(Including a public Sharing as part of SICK! Festival November Beat)
- LAB week Dublin @ Project Arts Centre 7 - 13 February 2027

Online Workshops: 7 monthly 2-hour online workshops within non-residency months; June, July, September, October, December, January and March.

Mid-point sharing as part of SICK! Festival 2026: November 2026.

Evaluation Session: March 2027

FEES

To support equitable parity, fees are determined with regard to artists' country of residence and corresponding tax liabilities.

- Total fee – Ireland-based artists: €5,580
- Total fee – UK-based artists: £4,725
- Total fee – Switzerland-based artists: 5820 CHF

Artist Fee breakdown	IRE (EURO)	UK (GBP)	
Digital Lab (half days - 3 hours)	€580	£500	€290 p/session £250 p/session
Digital Lab (7 x monthly online sessions - 2 hours)	€1400	£1225	€200 p/session £175 p/session
Residencies	€3600	£3000	€1200 p/week £1000 p/week
TOTAL FEE	€5580	£4725	

The fee is inclusive of local travel within the artist's home country. In addition to the above, travel, accommodation, and per diems will be provided for each residency that takes place outside the artist's home country.

A modest production budget will also be made available, where necessary, to support the presentation or sharing of work developed during the residency.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Who Should Apply

- Artists 18+ based in the UK, or Ireland and who are not currently in 3rd level education (Higher Education) or training.
- Artists working in socially-engaged arts practice.
- Artists with at least 8 years experience working within socially engaged practice.
- Artists working in socially-engaged practice within the performing arts (in its broadest sense).
- Individuals from historically underrepresented backgrounds in the arts.
- Artists with established connections to communities.

How to Apply

To be considered, please submit the following via the [link](#)

- Artist Bio (Max 200 words): Tell us who you are and your approach to art and socially engaged practice.
- Initial Concept (Max 300 words): A brief description of your vision for a new or developing socially engaged project that you would like to explore.
- Community Details: information on the community that you intend to work with throughout the programme and residencies.
- Portfolio: A single PDF or link to your website showcasing 3–5 relevant previous works.
- Contact Info: Name, location, and preferred email.

Selection Process

Proposals will be reviewed by a panel consisting of representatives of SICK!, Lowry and Project Arts Centre assessed based on:

- Relevance of project and idea
- Feasibility and community connection
- Experience of socially engaged work
- Composition of final group
- Clarity of expression of interest

Questions? Reach out to SICK! Productions at info@sickproductions.org