

## Asian Arts Agency

### ***'Innovate' Musician Commissions*** ***'Breaking Barriers'***

#### **The Project**

Breaking Barriers is a pioneering project conceived and developed by Asian Arts Agency to create **opportunities for South Asian musicians/individuals to try out new approaches** to performance. We know that musicians and other creatives have had a difficult time during Covid restrictions and the Agency wants to support musicians to revitalise their music-making and find new outlets for their music. The programme will have different strands to support musicians at varying stages of their careers. The ***Innovate*** strand of this pilot project will create exceptional opportunities for experienced musicians to develop new career opportunities via new music commissions, training and development opportunities.

#### **Innovate Music commissions**

In our first series of 'Innovate' we are offering two new music commissions to support a group of individual South Asian musicians or bands to work with a world class industry-leading recording studio. This exceptional opportunity with a value of up to £15,000 per commission (for groups) includes:

- **two residency placements/commissioning opportunities** for established musicians at **Real World Studios in Wiltshire**
- **free access to studio time, accommodation, recording equipment & technical support/mentoring** for musicians to create and record new and innovative music that would be ready to release or tour in future
- **dissemination of new digital work** created via the Agency website/social media and partners
- The possibility of future live performances promoted by the Agency in partnership with some of our leading venues.

#### **Asian Arts Agency**

Asian Arts Agency (Bristol) ([www.asianartsagency.co.uk](http://www.asianartsagency.co.uk)) is a dynamic arts development agency, funded by Arts Council England to develop and support international contemporary and traditional South Asian music and arts in the UK and internationally. As one of the UK's premier Asian arts development agencies, we commission, produce and promote a range of contemporary Asian music events and touring productions; programme festivals; and coordinate international showcases. Support for UK-based South Asian artists is at the heart of our work.

We work to break down barriers by mainstreaming high quality South Asian music in the UK and internationally working with audiences from all communities and age groups and playing a national role in promoting creative diversity in the UK.

## Who Are the Innovate Project Commissions For?

Innovate is designed for established artists with a proven track record in touring, releasing music and regular performance at leading venues and festivals. The central focus of this programme will be on creating new work via commissions and partnership with major recording studios with support for new ways and opportunities for dissemination of work.

This strand of the project will consist of the following.

The musicians we choose for this exciting project will:

- have a track record in producing and performing high quality South Asian music
- have released successful, well reviewed music albums with major labels or independently
- be passionate about reaching out to audiences
- have a proven track record of touring and live performance at major venues and festivals
- have a strong idea for this residency and the ability to record new music as part of this residency with an view to release album in future.
- have an open and innovative approach to their music
- be available to take part in the project in September or October this year.
- permanently based in England.

The project is open to South Asian musicians of all types, traditional and contemporary, including individual and groups, based in England.

**Innovate** is the first strand of the project, we will be offering more commissions for mid-career and emerging artists very soon. If you do not fulfil the criteria for this commissions programme, keep an eye on our website for other opportunities.)

## What the Project involves

Asian Arts Agency is offering two commissions for individual musicians or groups of up to five musicians. Each individual/group will have the opportunity to spend 4 days at Real World Studios to make and record a new work for digital distribution and, potentially live performance.

**Real World Studios** is a residential recording studio founded by Peter Gabriel and situated in the village of Box, Wiltshire, England, near to the city of Bath. It is closely associated with the Real World Records record label and WOMAD music festival and has a world class recording facility with high level technical expertise and an excellent track record in promoting major artists (e.g. Amy Winehouse, Arctic Monkeys, Manic Street Preachers and South Asian Sufi Qawwali legend, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan.

If you and/or your group is selected you will be provided at no cost with full access to studio time with technical support. This cost would be covered by Asian Arts Agency as part of our **Innovate music commissions programme**. The commission will include free use of studio space for rehearsals and recording facilities at Real World with access to recording equipment with accommodation and meals for the period of the commission.

- We anticipate providing access to the space for up to four days depending upon the nature of project.
- Real World is also located in beautiful Wiltshire countryside enabling musicians to focus completely on music-making; the studio has been used by many World famous mainstream artists.
- The commissioning opportunity will enable the established artists/group to develop new work/test new ideas for live performance, national touring etc.
- This will include recording new music for future release.

Where possible the Agency will use its networks to pitch the work for live touring and album release through its extensive experience of live music touring and international work.

### Commissioning/Residency dates

Commission 1: 5<sup>th</sup>- 9<sup>th</sup> September 2021  
Commission 2: 25<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Please note, these dates are already reserved at Real World Studios and are fixed.

## How to Apply

Each musician applicant/group should complete an online application form - only one application should be submitted. If applying as a group there should either be one named lead applicant or a named band/ensemble with lead contact identified.

The application should include the following:

- Your ideas for the new commission
- Your track record in creating and performing South Asian music
- Biographies and track record of each musician/performer or creative collaborator
- One or two online audio or video samples of original work by you
- A written or video statement (up to 3 minutes) outlining why you wish to be supported and how the project will contribute to your creative and career development (**video is optional**)
- A supporting statement from a music industry professional (this could be a promoter or music programmer) with experience of your work and who can recommend you can undertake the commission
- Confirmation that you are able to undertake the commission on at least one of the dates indicated
- Confirmation that you don't not have funding from other sources and funder for this work
- Completed Equal Opportunities Monitoring form.

We are seeking applications from individuals regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, religion and/or belief.

## Application

Please visit [www.asianartsagency.co.uk](http://www.asianartsagency.co.uk) to download application pack.

Email your proposal, along with the monitoring form (and video link if relevant), to **Jaswinder Singh** [music@asianartsagency.co.uk](mailto:music@asianartsagency.co.uk)

If you have any questions about the project before you apply, please email us at [music@asianartsagency.co.uk](mailto:music@asianartsagency.co.uk).

**Closing date for application: Tuesday 24th August at 9.30 a.m.**

## How Will We Decide?

### Selection Process

Decisions would be made by a selection panel which consists of Agency's Creative Director and Board members.

Applications will be considered against the following criteria:

- Strength and imagination of the creative vision
- Reasons for applying to create a work in digital form
- Track record of the musicians
- The potential for the recorded music to be taken up by music labels
- Likely impact of the commission on the musicians' careers
- Availability to undertake the commission on the set dates
- Live performance and touring potential with mainstream venues
- Potential to engage with wider audiences both digitally and live
- Letters of support.

### Notification of decisions

All applicants will be notified whether they have been successful or not by email by the 26<sup>th</sup> August. We are sorry that we cannot offer individual feedback.

## Contractual Terms

The commission is offered on the basis of a freelance contract. The Agency will cover all agreed costs related to Real World Studios and will make payments directly to Real World for their services and studio hire costs.

**Fixed Fee:** The total commission fee payable to each musician is £1,000 based on 4 days work (maximum of five musicians). This will be to support the commission fee and all rehearsals.

In summary, each individual musician will receive:

- Up to 4 days of free studio time at Real World Studios (paid by Asian Arts Agency)
- A fee of £1,000 (based on 4 days work)
- Reimbursement of agreed travel expenses (to be agreed in advance)
- Agency support in promoting and disseminating the new work created

We understand that groups may not require all band members to be involved in each day's recording session and that a flexible approach may be required. For group applications, and where the whole group is not involved in every recording day, the number of recording days an individual musician spends at the studios will be paid at the rate of £250 a day for up to 4 days. Please make it clear in your application how many band members will take part in recording at the Studio each day.

### **Payments and Benefits**

Musicians will be paid the commissioning fee directly on submission of an invoice and on successful completion of the full commission including the creation of the new digital work.

**Real World Studios accommodation** costs up to a maximum of 3 nights will be covered by the Agency.

**Location:** The commission will be undertaken at Real World Studios in Box, Wiltshire. In accepting the commission the musicians agree to attend the full programmed sessions at the Studios on the dates specified.

**Tax and N.I.:** This is a freelance commission and the successful applicants will be responsible for their own tax and National Insurance liabilities and contributions.