

CoSTAR National Lab: Inclusive Multisensory Experience

Call Specific FAQs

KEY INFORMATION & LINKS

All details about the [CoSTAR Network](#), the [CoSTAR National Lab](#) can be found on our website.

Please read the [Applicant Guidance](#) before attending the webinar or submitting your application.

We encourage you to reach out if you have any questions not covered online or in these FAQs and look forward to receiving your application!

Our email address for this funding call is costar.pilots@rhul.ac.uk

MULTISENSORY CALL SPECIFIC FAQs

1. Who are the Inclusive User Futures team?

The Inclusive User Futures team are user and audience engagement experts across a range of backgrounds, including cognitive, perceptual and social psychology, sociology, inclusive design, and human-computer interaction. The team has been researching multisensory experience for several years, developing an online resource hub with research insights on audience trends, perception and inclusion considerations. The Hub, alongside the team's expertise, will be a valuable resource available to all awardees to support the development of inclusive multisensory experiences.

2. What is multisensory experience?

Multisensory experience describes creative work that intentionally engages (or dis-engages) senses, such as sight, sound, touch, movement and smell, to shape how audiences encounter stories, spaces and interactions.

This call will focus on the addition, removal, or augmentation of **one** key sensory element.

3. What is meant by an ‘existing experience’?

Your existing experience could be an installation, a performance, an event, or something else which involves engaging an audience in a venue. The experience will have, at minimum, already been through an R&D or playtest process, but experiences can have been through many iterations.

Therefore, this call is not suitable for equipment purchase alone, for ordinary production costs with no research question attached, for projects that cannot deliver audience testing within the project period, or for development of a brand-new experience / one that is only at wireframe, script or planning stages.

4. Where will the public showcase experiences/events take place?

Applicants are expected to apply with a UK venue named in their application – your own venue or partnership.

Please note that the venue must be aware of the experimental nature of the showcase, and they should be able to support two different versions of your experience – adapted and original (as described in the call brief).

5. Do you have a list of venues we can use?

We have provided a list of venues on the call page who are happy to be contacted about hosting a potential experience. However, please be aware that we cannot endorse, guarantee availability, mediate negotiations, or become party to any agreement between you and a venue.

This is not an exclusive list, and we are open to a diverse and creative range of venues beyond cultural institutions. However, whichever space you choose, it must be able to meet baseline accessibility requirements so that audience testing is genuinely inclusive.

6. What is a letter of support and when do I need to provide it?

Successful applicants will be required to provide a letter of support from their venue partner, confirming its in-principle interest and availability. It is imperative that you have established a relationship with a suitable venue when you apply, as there will not be time to source and build a relationship with one at our contracting stage.

Project partner letters of support should be dated within six months of the application submission date and signed by the collaborating organisation's named contact.

7. What needs to be included in a letter of support?

A well-written project partner letter of support will confirm the organisation's commitment to the proposed project and should identify:

- The relevance and possible benefits of the proposed work to the partner in question
- The period of support, the full nature of the collaboration or support for the project
- How the partner may provide added value (staff time, access to equipment, software, additional materials etc.)

8. How many people are required to attend the events/experiences?

You are expected to work with a venue to showcase the two versions of the experience (one with the original version and one with the adapted version).

You are expected to recruit at least 100 audience members in total, with at least 50 audience members for each version showcase – i.e. at least 50 audience members to experience the original version and at least 50 audience members to experience the adapted version.

9. What support is available for my application?

At CoSTAR our goal is to ensure that applying and participating in our programmes is easy and accessible for all.

Access Support Bursaries are available, based on a disability, health condition, or access need, to support those making applications to, or participating in, our Industry Access Programmes.

If you would like to learn more, please read the information on our Bursary Information Page: <https://www.costarnetwork.co.uk/bursary-information>

Please contact us about individualised support requirements.

10. I'm a Freelancer or Sole Trader; can I apply for this call?

CoSTAR has been designed to support UK business growth across our Creative Economy. Research Organisations, Creative Practitioners Sole Traders, and Freelancers can be included in PPP applications, but the lead applicant must be a UK-based company and demonstrate a high level of ambition to deliver technological advancement and business growth in its application to creative industry challenges. Please see the Applicant Guidance Pack on the call page for more information.

However, please be assured that this is the first offering from CoSTAR National Lab and the Inclusive User Futures team on Multisensory work and there will be further opportunities to collaborate in the future if this opportunity isn't the right fit for you at this time.

11. What are the key dates of this call?

The timeline for the application and assessment processes, and the delivery window for this call are as follows:

Tuesday 29 September 2026 | Applications open

Monday 19 October 1pm-2pm BST | Online Q&A session

Tuesday 24 November 2026 2pm GMT | Application window closes

February 2027 | Successful applicants notified and contracted

March 2027 - June 2027 | Delivery window for R&D activity