

Paul Hamlyn Foundation

Paul Hamlyn (1926–2001) was an entrepreneur, publisher and philanthropist committed to providing new opportunities and experiences for people regardless of their background. His overriding concern was to open up the arts and education to everyone, but particularly to young people. In 1987, he established the Paul Hamlyn Foundation for general charitable purposes.

The Foundation works across three UK programmes: Social Justice, Education and Learning and the Arts. Within each programme, funding is delivered through a combination of Open Grants, to which organisations can apply with proposals for funding innovative activities, and Special Initiatives, which are more focused interventions that aim to have an impact in a particular area. The Foundation also operates a programme of support for NGOs in India.

The mission of the Foundation is to maximise opportunities for individuals and communities to realise their potential and to experience and enjoy a better quality of life, now and in the future. In particular, the Foundation is concerned with children and young people and with disadvantaged people.

Arts programme

The Arts programme supports the development and dissemination of new ideas to increase people's experience, enjoyment and involvement in the arts, with a particular focus on young people. The Open Grants scheme supports organisations and groups, concentrating on work that is transformational at three levels: for the participants, for the funded organisations themselves and, more generally, for the sector in which they operate. Grants are also awarded to talented individuals through three Special Initiatives: Awards for Artists, Jane Attenborough Dance in Education (JADE) fellowships and the Breakthrough Fund.

For information about the Arts Programme or any other aspect of Paul Hamlyn Foundation's work, please visit www.phf.org.uk

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Paul Hamlyn Foundation

2009 Breakthrough Fund

Funding for exceptional cultural entrepreneurs

Natalie Abrahams and Carrie Cracknell – The Gate Theatre

Tony Butler – Museum of East Anglian Life

Tom Chivers, Sam Hawkins and Marie McPartlin
– London Word Festival

Helen Cole – Inbetween Time Productions

Claire Doherty – Situations



The Breakthrough Fund

A successful arts economy requires not only great artists, but also talented and visionary people who can enable these artists to make great things happen. Paul Hamlyn Foundation has committed £4.5m over the three years from 2008 to the Breakthrough Fund, a Special Initiative that exclusively supports exceptional cultural entrepreneurs.

Cultural entrepreneurs may appear in a range of roles and with various titles – producers, artistic or executive directors, curators, chief executives – but they each possess a pressing and persuasive vision, a drive and a strong track record of making things happen. The Breakthrough Fund aims to support these individuals in their determination to make a difference to the cultural landscape in which they work.

Through the Fund, PHF aims to identify exceptional individuals at a critical point in their development – whether they are an emerging talent, reaching full stride in their work or at a later turning point in their career – to provide support that will make a significant difference to them and to the organisations in which they work.

Existing funding approaches, including the PHF Arts programme's Open Grants scheme, require applicants to have fully formed proposals that can detail activities, outcomes, costings, confirmed income and delivery plans. This type of funding does not always match what is required to realise a vision, where activities and outcomes are often fundamentally shaped by processes of understanding, defining and planning – not just delivery.

Funders are rarely willing to commit at the stage where a vision exists but is not yet clear in terms of deliverable activities, resourcing and risk – however compelling it may be. Through the Breakthrough Fund, PHF is able to commit earlier in the cycle of making important things happen in the arts. Trusting that grantees, as they progress, will identify and realise their plans and the outcomes of the Fund's support, lies at the heart of this commitment.

The Breakthrough Fund demonstrates a new kind of risk through this approach, based on a judgement that the selected individuals, and the structures through which they work, will prove to have what it takes to succeed in what they are proposing to do.

Nominations process

The Breakthrough Fund proactively identifies potential applicants through a process of confidential nomination, asking a range of nominators to help spot talent and share their intelligence across regions and art forms. Whilst art form and regional spread are not criteria for support, it is hoped that a balance will emerge over the three years for which the Fund is currently committed.

In the second year of the Fund, 14 nominators were chosen for their expertise and experience. They gave their personal recommendations without the nominees' knowledge. Over 40 nominees were put forward and invited to enter the application process.

Paul Hamlyn Foundation gratefully acknowledges the invaluable contribution of the nominators for the 2009 Breakthrough Fund:

Iwona Blazwick (Director, Whitechapel Art Gallery)

Marc Boothe (Director, B3 Media)

Ruth Borthwick (Director, Arvon Foundation)

Simon Clugston (Performance Programme Director, The Sage Gateshead)

Marcus Davey (Chief Executive & Artistic Director, The Roundhouse)

Siobhan Davies (Artistic Director, Siobhan Davies Dance Company)

Richard Hogger (Director, Creu Cymru)

Tessa Jackson (CEO & Artistic Director, Artes Mundi)

David Lan (CEO, Young Vic Theatre)

Declan McGonagle (Director, National College of Art & Design, Dublin)

Alice Rawsthorn (Freelance writer and journalist)

Alastair Spalding (CEO, Sadler's Wells)

Virginia Tandy (Director, Art Galleries & Museums – Manchester)

Tom Trevor (Director, Arnolfini)

2009 Breakthrough Fund recipients

Natalie Abrahami and Carrie Cracknell, Joint Artistic Directors – The Gate Theatre

£254,000

Natalie Abrahami (right) and Carrie Cracknell (left) met in 2004 when attending the National Theatre Studio Directors' Course. Struck by a mutual interest in international theatre practice, in 2006 they applied together for the artistic directorship of the Gate Theatre, becoming its first Joint Artistic Directors in January 2007.

Their cross-disciplinary vision for the theatre has resulted in exploration of non-textual theatrical languages. This Breakthrough Fund grant will enable the recruitment of a fixed-term Associate Producer and Assistant Producer. With a full-time producer already in post, this extra staffing introduces a two-producer model to match the joint directorship. It will enable the development of stronger relationships with co-producers, and increase the Gate's reach through touring, revivals and site-specific productions beyond the boundaries of the existing theatre space.

They say: "The Breakthrough Fund will help us to further develop the 'Gate Elsewhere' brand that will see work from the Gate starting to tour both nationally and internationally and will allow us to seek out and commission emerging international theatre makers. Paul Hamlyn Foundation's backing represents an incredible commitment to the experimental work we are creating at the Gate."



Photo: Peter Schiazza

Tony Butler, Director – Museum of East Anglian Life

£150,000

Tony Butler has been Director of the Museum of East Anglian Life in Stowmarket, Suffolk since 2004. He was the 2007/08 Clore Fellow for museums. In 2007, he established an award-winning social enterprise to focus on training and skills for people with disabilities, long-term unemployed and offenders – the only one of its kind in a UK museum.

This Breakthrough Fund grant will enable him to develop HaHA (Happiness in Heritage and Arts) to help put the achievement of happiness at the core of the value systems and programming of a network of cultural organisations. This programme of work will result in a participative programme, research, advocacy, consultancy and a strong network of like-minded partners.

He says: "I'm really pleased that a small but ambitious museum like MEAL, situated in the countryside, has been recognised as an innovator. Through our social enterprise and a lateral approach to interpreting history through well-being, we are forging a new purpose for museums – one which can inspire people to be happy and live fulfilled and meaningful lives. Whilst the UK economy was strong and we happily consumed in newer and bigger ways, no-one paid much attention to this. Now we are all going to be poorer, we'll all be looking at what really makes us happy. The Breakthrough Fund will give me the leg-up necessary to put more of the ideas I've spent the last few years developing into practice."



Photo: Geoff Wilson

Tom Chivers, Sam Hawkins and Marie McPartlin, Founders and Co-Directors – London Word Festival

£141,000

London Word Festival has established a reputation for pioneering innovative new approaches to cross art form programming. Set up in 2007 by Tom Chivers (right), Sam Hawkins and Marie McPartlin (left), who met while producing/promoting live mixed bill events at The Spitz in 2006/07, the Festival encourages collaboration between writers, poets, comedians, musicians and artists. Often using non-conventional venues, London Word Festival relies on dialogue and audience interactivity.

After two successful years on a shoestring budget and without a secure financial base, the Breakthrough Fund grant will give the Festival a more solid and sustainable footing on which to develop creative cross-genre programming and engage new audiences.



Photo: Robert Sparrow

They say: "As independent producers, our success can be difficult to gauge, particularly when programming and producing a festival that arises from the spaces between art forms: it's not theatre, it's not music, it's not literature ... Receiving a grant through the Breakthrough Fund imbues us with a potent new confidence ... The single biggest thing the Breakthrough Fund gives us is the time to make it happen – to take the festival seriously as an occupation, not an elaborate side project. We can stop for a second, think, process, and put in place those things – structures, methods, dreams – that are needed in the long term. We can think not only about survival, but also about how to develop artistic ambitions that are challenging and progressive."

Helen Cole, Producer – Inbetween Time Productions

£278,000

Before joining Arnolfini in Bristol ten years ago, Helen Cole worked as an independent producer in Manchester and Tramway (Glasgow). Throughout her career, Cole's work has been interdisciplinary and combined art forms, industries, institutions, sites and audiences.

The first iteration of the Inbetween Time Festival in Bristol took place in 2001 and the event has grown from strength to strength since then. The support of the Breakthrough Fund will enable Cole to leave Arnolfini to set up an independent organisation that will produce the Inbetween Time Festivals, as well as a series of other projects throughout the year. The grant will give her the means to recruit a small team, initiate projects and have personal financial stability.

She says: "Thanks to support and investment from this courageous Fund, I can take the most important leap of my career. Over forthcoming months, I will set up a new organisation – Inbetween Time Productions – which will enable me to commit full time to my independent producing practice. 'Thank you, I have been dreaming this place for years' – these words, spoken by an audience member at one of my events in 2006, simply and beautifully sum it up!"



Photo: HC

Claire Doherty, Director – Situations

£300,000

Having previously worked as a curator at IKON Gallery (Birmingham), Spike Island (Bristol) and FACT (Liverpool), Claire Doherty set up Situations in 2003 as an international research and contemporary art commissioning programme at the University of the West of England in Bristol. Taking the ways in which artists respond to specific contexts and locations as its central concern, Situations commissions and produces artworks outside conventional gallery or museum contexts, often occurring unannounced to the public or encouraging new forms of engagement with our surroundings.

Having largely raised funding on a project-by-project basis to date, Doherty will now be able to recruit a part-time Project Manager and to initiate and develop a cumulative series of international commissions which will explore the idea of 'interruption'.

She says: "This grant will be profoundly transformational for me and couldn't come at a better moment in my career. I've spent the past six years conceiving and developing a university-based commissioning agency, endeavouring to do things differently, to open up new and surprising encounters with the work of contemporary artists in unexpected places. This grant means that I am no longer alone, but can embark upon a new series of ambitious temporary public art commissions with an expanded staff, supported by Paul Hamlyn Foundation, to pursue that bold and ambitious vision for Situations."



Photo: Damien Lovegrove