



**nesta**  
creative investor

**Big Lottery Fund Consultation**

**Response to consultation: September 2004**

NESTA  
Fishmongers' Chambers  
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## **Background**

NESTA – the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts – was established by the National Lottery Act 1998 to pioneer ways of supporting and promoting talent, innovation and creativity in science, technology and the arts. We do this primarily through our four core programmes – Learning, Fellowship, Creative Pioneer and Invention and Innovation, as well as NESTA Futurelab. To date we have made over 600 awards through these programmes and invested over £40 million in supporting creativity and talent across the UK.

Through our funding programmes we help turn ground-breaking ideas into innovative products, services or techniques; we support the creative development of individual scientists and artists; and we invest in new ways of delivering education to young people both in and out of school. Through NESTA Futurelab, we work to use new technology to improve teaching and learning.

Moving forward, we are building on the knowledge gained from these activities and making sure that the lessons learned inform the development of policy and practice across the areas of our remit, in order to make the UK environment better for the people NESTA was set up to help.

As a beneficiary of Lottery funds ourselves, we have an obvious interest in the future of all of the Lottery good causes. In addition, as a funder of projects aimed at improving the educational experience and creativity of children and young people in the UK, we have an interest in the development of the Big Lottery Fund's work in this area – building on that of the New Opportunities Fund. In responding to this consultation NESTA will not attempt to discuss all of the questions being raised. Rather, we will restrict our responses to those areas into which our experience provides an insight, and suggest two areas where NESTA and the Big Lottery Fund might work together in the future.

### **Q 11A - Mission and Values**

NESTA is fully supportive of the Big Lottery Fund's proposed mission and its values, which appear to build on the best of the work done by both the Communities Fund and the New Opportunities Fund. We feel that the values are the right ones deliver the stated mission, and welcome the renewed commitment to Big Lottery Fund support being additional to core Government spending. With this in mind, it would be useful to have some further information on how additionality will be maintained in the case of the proposed National Programmes, particularly those for education, health and the environment.

By the same token, NESTA welcomes the Big Lottery Fund's ability to attract funding from other sources, in order to maximise further economies of scale and provide even more support to good causes. We are, however, aware that the (admirable) commitment to additionality will in future act to preclude the Fund from raising money from Government sources as, with core government support for Big Lottery Fund programmes, they would, by definition, not be additional.

### **Q 3B - Funding Programmes**

NESTA welcomes the Big Lottery Fund's proposed work with young people, and the proposed national programmes, particularly those on education topics. NESTA is very interested in working closely together as this education programme develops. NESTA has a substantial track record in supporting projects aimed at improving the creative development of young people, and at improving the way science, technology and the arts are taught to children and young people, in and out of formal education. The following projects are examples of our work.

- **Cape Farewell:** David Buckland developed plans for *Cape Farewell*, an ambitious sea voyage through the northern Atlantic to explore and reveal the effect of the ocean on man and his climate. NESTA provided the seed money to allow him to develop these plans. Further NESTA funding was aimed at creating a module and supporting a resource pack for use in the Geography curriculum, based on the experiences and findings of the voyage. The new module is a collaboration between the Geography Association, the Southampton Oceanography Centre, Big Heart Media and the geography teachers involved in the voyage around the High Arctic. Available on CD/DVD, video and through the web, it will use the video film taken during the voyage, underpinned by the scientific and geological expertise of the Geographical Association. Its aim is to encapsulate a more current and narrative take on both human and physical geography, with study aids that motivate students to connect with the wider world and the issues that affect its eco-systems.
- **Bedroom Britain** The Bedroom Britain project aims to discover the next generation of innovators in the place they spend a lot of time – their bedroom. This Channel Four project, supported by NESTA, will support and encourage teenagers to follow their creative flow. This is being achieved through a cross-platform multi-media (TV, web, events and publication) campaign, designed to inspire teenagers across Britain to put themselves forward to take part in the project. The eight most innovative and imaginative entrants will be filmed over a six-month period and featured in a week-long series on Channel Four. The closing date has now passed and hundreds of applications have been sifted and 40 ideas have been short listed so far. The winners will be announced in November and will receive a bespoke package of support from NESTA.
- **Room 13** Pupils at Caol Primary School, outside Fort William, run Room 13 as an autonomous arts studio, independent of the school. NESTA's support is offering financial stability, enabling the youngsters to continue to pay two artists-in-residence, and to start the task of developing further Room 13s in other schools.
- **Acrisat – Disc Project** - The long-term aim of ACRISAT (African-Caribbean Representation in Science and Technology) is to encourage African-Caribbean children to study sciences and to take them up as a profession. The Delivering Inclusion in Science Communication (DISC) project is a development with the British Association for the Advancement of Science (BA). DISC aims to create an effective national framework to facilitate empowering networks and sustainable partnerships between ethnic minorities and the science communication community.

In addition to NESTA's role as a funder of projects to be delivered by third parties, we have recently begun delivering projects for young people ourselves through our "Ignite!" programme. The aim of Ignite! is to provide exceptionally creative people, aged from 10 years old to 21, with an opportunity to stretch their abilities, in a supportive and inspiring environment. Among 10 - 15 year olds, we're doing this by means of a series of workshops and residential creativity labs. Participants are very carefully selected, on the basis that they have demonstrated real originality of thought, and a willingness to challenge convention. By putting them in a situation where their natural creative impulses are both nurtured and challenged, we hope to accelerate their development as innovators, and open their minds to new ways of thinking. After the labs, we develop a tailor-made package of support to help maintain the momentum.

Older individuals aged 16-21 with outstanding creative ability are nominated by third party organisations. They are then teamed with a high achieving creative adult to develop a project, over a period of 6 to 12 months. The programme is now about to begin exploring the links between creativity and social inclusion, and this will be a major factor in the future development of the programme.

### **Young People's programme**

On a separate issue, discussions have already taken place between Jeremy Newton, NESTA's Chief Executive, and Stephen Dunmore on the possibility of NESTA's bidding for "award partner" status in relation to the BLF's Young People's Fund and we will be discussing this as soon as the appropriate documentation is published.

### **Q4 A-B Transformational programmes**

We would certainly welcome the BLF's ability to support large-scale transformational projects, but would strongly caution against an assumption that these should necessarily all be buildings. The future of urban (and rural) living fringes as much (possibly more) on transport and transport infrastructure as on buildings. The social, environmental and economic issues in relation to transport represent some of the key challenges we face and the need for innovation and transformation is immense. A number of projects that NESTA is supporting in their early stages of development fall into this area and could represent real options for large-scale beneficial transformations. We would argue that they and others like them are able to compete on equal terms with more traditional candidates for large-scale capital Lottery awards.

### **Q9 A-C. Sustainability of successful projects.**

Because of financial constraints, and to maximise the number of different projects we can support, NESTA often supports projects at a pilot stage, allowing them to demonstrate their effectiveness before relying on other funding bodies to support roll-out of the projects on a national basis. Similar to the Big Lottery Fund, NESTA's projects are additional to the support for education provided by central and local Government. We believe that there may be a number of projects in our current portfolio which in the longer term would benefit from support from the Big Lottery Fund's education activities, and we would welcome the opportunity to discuss with you in more detail how we might work together in the future, with the possibility of NESTA acting as an "incubator" for projects which might then go on to attract longer term Big Lottery Fund support.

### **Conclusion**

There are a number of areas – outlined above – where NESTA and the Big Lottery Fund could work together in the future, with opportunities for mutual benefit. We are very keen to maximise the potential for synergies between the two organisations, and make sure that our work complements each other, rather than fishing in the same pool of potential projects to support.