



**Big Lottery Fund Consultation - Phase Two**

**Response to consultation: January 2005**

NESTA  
Fishmongers' Chambers  
110 Upper Thames Street  
London EC4R 3TW

## **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 680 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.

This response adds to the contribution made by NESTA to the first phase of the Big Lottery Fund consultation. 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.

Q 1. The themes and outcomes are a sensible strategic framework and have the potential to offer flexibility if the intention to design programmes which cut across several outcomes is realised.

Q 2. As well as funding project work, it will be important to add value to the work of the funded groups by providing support, mentoring and networking opportunities. Especially for smaller and newer groups, there will be a need for capacity building at the stage before the application process to enable funding to reach community groups which have been excluded from previous funding opportunities. NESTA's experience is that our awardees value the non-cash element of the support we offer very highly.

Q 3. NESTA's experience of pioneering ways of supporting and promoting talent, innovation and creativity in science, technology and the arts through our four core programmes offers a useful perspective on this question. The projects supported to date are well spread across science, technology and the arts with 40% operating in more than one sector and 11% being involved in all three. The BLF architecture of three themes feeding into four outcomes echoes NESTA's three disciplines and four programmes. It has been possible to transcend the boundaries of each discipline by focusing on the over-arching qualities of talent, innovation and creativity which are relevant across all areas of our work. BLF funded projects which engage with the over-arching values of empowering individuals to enable their communities to maximise well-being should serve to achieve more than one of the outcomes.

Q 4b

- As well as developing basic business skill within social and creative enterprises, networking between such business and mentoring from those with relevant experience should be supported.
- Supporting public engagement with science through science education in informal educational settings.

Q 4c – In 2005-6, NESTA plans to invest £250,000 in a strand of work focused on creative approaches to literacy and numeracy, harnessing learning in these areas with learning in science, technology and the arts: 'a challenge' to practitioners in these fields who have ideas that are *transferable* and *replicable* in other settings. Some or all of the following are a necessity for any successful application:

- Link with science, technology and the arts;
- Raise attainment within formal educational settings;
- Have demonstrable impact in informal or lifelong learning settings;
- Are capable of influencing practice and policy through providing exemplars and models.

Q 4d – SoundProof Projects are organising the **Science Skiffle** programme to introduce and explore the science of music. NESTA is supporting a one-year pilot project in Liverpool, which it is hoped will lead to a sustainable national programme of school projects, public workshops and concerts.

Around three quarters of children are interested in science, specifically physics and biology, when they enter secondary school. By the end of Key Stage 4, the figure for physics has slumped to around one quarter even though interest in biology remains high, research by the University of Liverpool shows. Science Skiffle explores the physics of sound, using music and science to explore and enhance each other, rather than using one subject simply as a vehicle to explain another.

Education charity **businessdynamics** is running a series of road shows called Blue Skies to inspire and equip young people to set up their own businesses. NESTA is part-funding 40 events, enabling the project to expand into Wales and Northern Ireland in particular. Research reveals that almost half of young people aged 14 to 19 years would like to set up their own business.

To encourage young people to realise their ambitions, businessdynamics developed Blue Skies, an entrepreneurial road show that brings business to life. Students come face to face with successful young entrepreneurs to illustrate the opportunities available to them and the qualities they need to start their own business.

**Dream Ireland** is a company whose aim is to assist the growth of the digital and creative industries within Northern Ireland. NESTA is supporting their pioneering project, Dreamlab Generation, which will teach

digital technology and insider knowledge of the creative industries to schoolchildren.

By using industry professionals to teach 15 to 18 year-olds, Dreamlab will provide them with a direct link to the workplace. They will learn the most up-to-date technology, and get contact with potential employers.

Dreamlab Generation is a project focusing on eleven schools, rolling out over three years, which aims to provide a model of learning development that could then be introduced into mainstream educational policy.

Q 5b – Supporting innovations in communications and ways of working to enable access for geographically isolated communities, people with mobility difficulties and other excluded groups.

Q 5d – **Freddie Kofi** is a singer, songwriter and producer who wants to redefine British gospel music, making it more relevant to his own background and the multicultural society in Britain today. NESTA's support will give him time to develop his songwriting and production skills, to travel and learn from other artists and producers, and to buy his own studio equipment

Freddie aims to redefine what contemporary gospel music means, to push the boundaries between gospel and other musical forms and express a unique British experience through his music.

Q 6b

- Enabling individuals to understand the potential for effective personal action in response to global problems such as climate change.
- Facilitating behaviour change by individuals and communities.

Q 6d – Environmental company **BioRegional MiniMills Ltd** is developing a technology to safely and cheaply make paper from straw on a small-scale local level. NESTA's support is going towards their efforts to create a demonstration plant and take the project to market.

Q 7d – **Landesign**, in collaboration with Production Science and Studio Simple, want to create "inter-re-active" software that will allow children with severe learning difficulties to interact intuitively and creatively with a stimulating environment. NESTA is paying for research into the educational benefits, for software development, and for exploration of available applications.

Chartered psychologists Sue Wright and Nadine Field have launched **PsychologyOnline Ltd**, allowing people to receive therapy directly through the internet, bypassing lengthy NHS waiting lists. NESTA's support is enabling them to fully market the service to the NHS, private companies and the public.