

SOUTH WEST
CREATIVE
TECHNOLOGY
NETWORK



DATA PROTOTYPE CALL

INVITATION TO APPLY

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We are aiming to fund ideas for prototypes in the field of Data that are brave and distinctive, that open up the field to new voices and challenge the status quo.

We are interested in collaborative working practices, and in alternative business models. We want to grow creative businesses across the South West.

We anticipate awarding grants of between £10k and £40k, and would encourage applications of all sizes between these limits. Prototyping will run from Dec 2020 for three months with a SWCTN Data Showcase between March - June 2021. We expect prototype teams to commit to the programme during this period.

We know this call will be very competitive. Please read the entire call closely and consider whether you meet the criteria carefully before applying.

Closing date for applications is 5pm on Sept 7th 2020.

We aim to be as inclusive as possible and will work to accommodate all access requirements. We will discuss your needs and tailor how we do things to support you as best we can.

If writing is not your thing, we welcome alternative forms of application. Please get in touch with melissa.b@watershed.co.uk to talk about your options.

People of all ages, backgrounds and disciplines are welcome to apply. We strongly encourage applications from BAME, LGBTQI, Deaf and disabled candidates, as they are under-represented in the creative technology sector.

KEY DATES

CALL OPENS: 2 JULY

CALL CLOSES: 7 SEPT 5PM

NOTIFICATION OF INTERVIEW: BY 7 OCT

PITCH & INTERVIEW DATES: 20 + 21 OCT

DATA PROTOTYPE FELLOWSHIP RUNS: DEC 2020 - MARCH 2021

DATA SHOWCASE: BETWEEN MARCH AND JUNE 2021 (TBC)

WHO ARE WE?

The South West Creative Technology Network is a project to expand the use of creative technologies across the region. The network has offered three one-year funded programmes around the themes of immersion, automation and data. The grant is part of Research England's Connecting Capabilities Fund, which supports university collaboration and encourages the commercialisation of products made through partnerships with industry.

In early 2020 we recruited 24 Data Fellows from a range of perspectives, backgrounds and sectors. They began researching the future of Data in April 2020, exploring what is new, what is interesting, where the gaps in the market are and what the challenges and potentials are for the future of data. You can read more about our fellows [here](#). Our Fellows' research and expertise has fed into the development and content of this call, and the themes below.



Billennium by Uninvited Guests and Duncan Speakman - Photo by Paul Blakemore

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY DATA?



SWCTN Immersion Showcase - Photo by Jon Aitken

Data is “powerful matter”. It can be extracted and abstracted from almost anything and everywhere. Once collected, we can mould and compute it into various representational forms. Spun in multiple ways it reveals patterns that can provide insights and enable change, monitor behaviours, as well as control, regulate and suppress actions.

- **Data is never neutral. How it is collected, combined, stored and redistributed can animate and reproduce existing inequalities.**
- **No single data point can ever tell the subtleties or complexities of the story.**
- **Data is power. When aggregated and contextualised increasingly governs the ways in which we construct information and generate claims about knowledge.**

We are writing this funding call as the UK begins to recover from the first wave of the COVID-19. The pandemic has brought back into focus the global debate on data and data rights. Issues relating to contact tracing, virus profiling, and disease management came to the fore, as questions around data security, including who collects data, where and how is it stored, and with whom it is shared, have become everyday topics.

We are looking to fund ideas that are brave and distinctive, that open up the field of Data to new voices and challenge the status quo. We're interested in prototypes which use technology creatively and have something meaningful to say about current data practices.

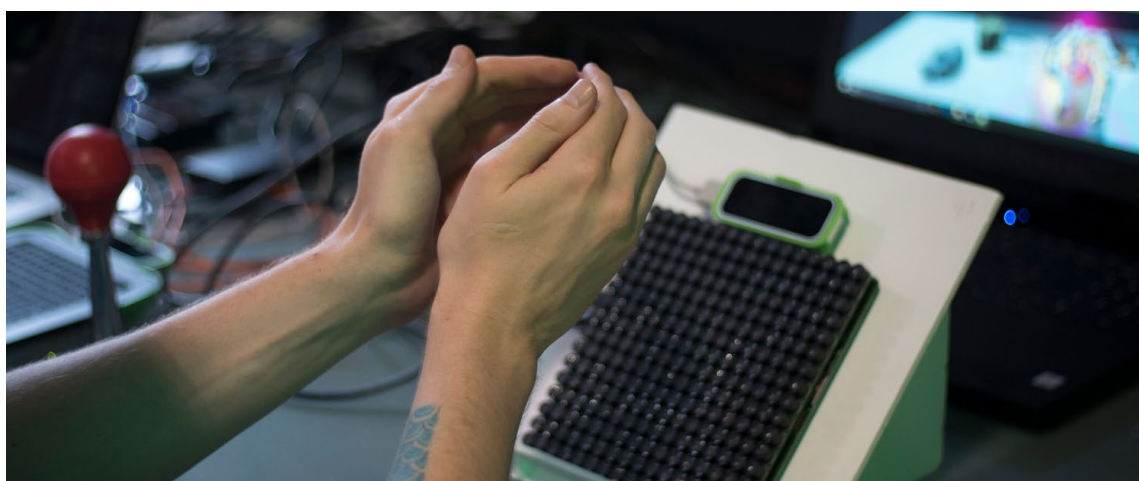
As well as being a great idea, your prototype application must show how your business will deliver the prototype ethically, how it will bring something new to the field of data, and how it will be able to sustain itself beyond the funding period.

OUR THEMES:

WHAT WE WILL FUND

After a period of bold, interdisciplinary thinking with our 24 Data Fellows exploring the frontiers of data, we are keen to invest in prototypes that respond to one or more of the following:

- **Inclusive Data** - data prototypes that address inequalities and social marginalisation, such as (but not limited to) those highlighted via the Cambridge Analytica case, Black Lives Matter, Covid-19 and the ensuing economic crisis. How can data products and services respond without reproducing the inequalities in our society?
- **Data and the Public** - prototypes supporting better public understanding of data literacy, privacy and data rights. Projects that highlight / explain data and algorithmic bias and data silencing. We're also interested in the use of live data and very new approaches to data visualisation.
- **Data Rights & Ownership** - exploring prototypes based around collective rights, data cooperatives and autonomy, decentralised data, data ownership, distribution of the value of data, and open source projects, as well as data and democracy or digital citizenship.
- **Climate Change** - what data prototypes or creative interventions might help us think about the effects of climate change, sustainability and biodiversity loss? Or help us respond to ecological sustainability or environmental goals? How can products or services which use data farms or cloud services reduce their impact on the planet?
- **Health, Care & Wellbeing** - we're interested in data prototypes which explore the idea of care; projects which look at data in a medical setting; health or wellbeing projects with data ethics at their heart.





SWCTN Immersion Showcase - Photo by Jon Aitken

WHAT IS THIS FUNDING CALL?

We will invest in prototypes that use creative technologies to create a proof of concept / prototype for further investment, partnership or funding. We are looking to award a range of grants and would welcome applications for between £10k and £40k.

We define a prototype as something that:

- Demonstrates an idea, shareable with the public and investors.
- Tests a new experience, process, service or product with users, but is not necessarily fully finished or completed.
- Is scalable; not just a one-off project or event (though it may include an event as part of testing with users).
- Has a plan for its future, with ideas about its audience, route to market, business development and future investment opportunities, including cultural funding models.

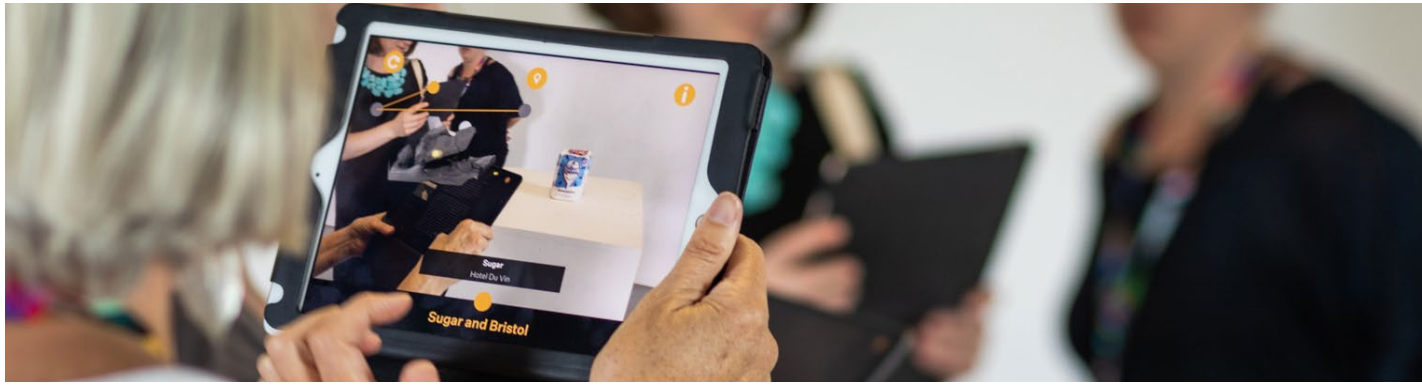


WHAT DO YOU GET?

- Money to pay for the development of your prototype.
- Full ownership of your intellectual property (IP). You must have a collaboration agreement in place beforehand (ideally before application) that agrees how the IP will be split between those working on the prototype.
- A collaborative cohort of other teams prototyping alongside you, to share with and learn from.
- Access to the South West Creative Technology Network's partnership and members.
- Focussed support from a Producer, our Knowledge Exchange Managers and our Business Development Advisor.
- A SWCTN Data Showcase for your prototype with investors and the public, which will take place between March and June 2021.
- Business development support to help you refine your business model, proposition and identify additional next stage funding opportunities. We are interested in alternative business models and innovative funding models.
- Access support if required (please contact the team to discuss).
- A making phase for the prototypes which will run from Dec 2020 to March 2021

WHAT DO WE EXPECT?

- That you deliver a prototype which can be shown to investors and the public in the SWCTN Data Showcase between March and June 2021.
- That you will be available to work on the prototype between Dec 2020 and March 2021 with an identified team with the appropriate skills and experience to deliver on your idea within the timeframe.
- That you will attend and participate in up to 3 one-day workshops (or 6 half day online sessions depending on our ability to meet in person), business development work sessions and the final SWCTN Data Showcase between March and June 2021.
- That you engage with our Business Development Advisor and Producer as agreed; attending a monthly check in with both during this period.
- An openness to sharing your process and testing your work as it develops during this time. We will work with an awareness that your IP needs protecting.
- Active engagement with the wider network, and an enthusiasm about advocating for the South West.



SWCTN Immersion Showcase - Photo by Jon Aitken

HOW TO APPLY

Please apply using this [application form](#) by 5pm on 7 September. We will let you know if you are invited to the Pitch & Interview by 9 October 2020.

All applications must answer a number of questions on the application form (see below) and also attach three documents: a proposal, a project plan and a budget.

We welcome applications (or parts of applications) in other formats, as long as you respond to all of the questions. If you need to discuss another way of submitting please contact Melissa on melissa.b@watershed.co.uk



The Rooms - Photo by Max McClure

OUR ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

All applications will be assessed against the following:

- **Fit to the theme:** respond to the interests outlined under **Our Themes - see above.**
- **Commercial potential and possible social impact:** an understanding of the current or potential market, the scalability of your idea, and a route forward beyond our funding (that will allow the idea to be developed further). Match funding from applicants or partners may form a part of this.
- **A Team Who Can Deliver:** Is this prototype feasible? Do you have a team (of whatever size) in place with the skills, experience, resources and time to deliver the prototype and progress into the future? Note: we are aware that due to the current pandemic, we may need to be flexible about how this works in real life.
- **Explain your impact in the South West:** we aim to create jobs, new businesses, new opportunities in the regions that our partnership serves (Bristol, Bath, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Somerset and Gloucestershire), so tell us about this potential. We also recognise that the region is not isolated from national and global markets.
- **Inclusion:** Your understanding of where inclusion exists in your proposal; this might include your team, processes, content and/or audience and should acknowledge very clearly where the gaps are. By inclusion we mean building a culture of belonging by actively inviting the contribution and participation of all people. Note that we will select applications with attention to the diversity of our whole cohort in terms of idea, perspective, background and geography.
- **Audience:** An understanding of the audience you are making this for, and how that understanding will develop during the programme. What **evidence** do you have that this market exists for your specific idea?
- **Ethics:** A clear vision of what data is being used or collected in your prototype; what are the ethical concerns surrounding the capture/processing/interpretation of this data and how will you mitigate against them, and how will you overcome the bias that is in the data you're using or collecting?

If you are unsure about whether you can meet the above criteria, please speak to a member of the SWCTN team in good time before the closing date - there are prototype surgery dates on www.swctn.org.uk or you can contact our team below.

APPLICATION FORM QUESTIONS

Applications must be submitted via the application form which is [HERE](#). The following are the questions on the form (in addition to the lead applicant's details):

- Project name
- Project summary (100 words)
- Tell us who is in your team and why we should invest in you? (200 words)
- List the areas of interest and industry/sectors that your team brings together (100 words)
-

In addition to the above, please upload the following three documents:

1. Your **Prototype Proposal (2 sides A4)** using our essential assessment criteria:
 - Tell us about your idea. Please respond to the interests outlined under 'The Theme: what are we looking to fund in data?' indicating how you are responding to our priorities
 - Explain how your prototype has commercial potential and possible social impact.
 - Describe what impact your prototype will have in the South West
 - Please explain how inclusion is actively practiced in your project. For instance, how inclusive is your team, what are the actively inclusive elements in your prototype, in what way will it advance inclusion?
 - Please explain what data is being used or collected in your prototype. What are the ethical issues and how are you addressing them? And how will you overcome the bias in the data you're using or collecting? Please explain by giving examples.
2. A **Project Plan (1 side A4)** What exactly will you do during your prototyping phase?
3. A **Budget** an overview budget.
4. Optional: A link to a supporting document (max 2 A4 pages) or video (max 3 minutes). This is an opportunity to communicate your idea visually.



HOW IS MY APPLICATION ASSESSED?

Eligible applications will be assessed by two reviewers from our partners, fellows and additional industry experts. All applications will then be shortlisted using our essential criteria and considered by a panel of SWCTN and external experts. Note that we will select applications with attention to the diversity of our whole cohort in terms of idea, perspective, background and geography.

PITCH AND INTERVIEW

Shortlisted applicants will present their idea at a pitching day on the **20 or 21 October 2020**, location TBC but most likely online. Shortlisted projects will pitch their idea to a panel of our partners and external experts.

Applicants should be prepared to:

- Briefly describe their project
- Talk about the audience(s) for their prototype, and how they plan to engage their audience(s)
- Discuss funding they've had to date and how they plan to make their business sustainable and scalable beyond the prototype funding
- Answer any questions from the panel.

All pitching teams will then have a short closed interview with just the panel to allow any confidential or commercial sensitive matters to be discussed.

Please note that if successful, all applicants will need to make a State Aid declaration. SWCTN cannot give advice on State Aid restrictions but more information can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/state-aid>

TALK TO US

We recommend that you have a conversation with one of our team to discuss your ideas before applying - please see our [website](#) for SWCTN data prototype surgeries. If you have any questions about the programme or application process, please get in touch with one of the members of the team below, they'll be happy to talk things through.

Bath:

Rachel Pownall
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Bristol:

Tom Trehella
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Melissa Blackburn
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Exeter:

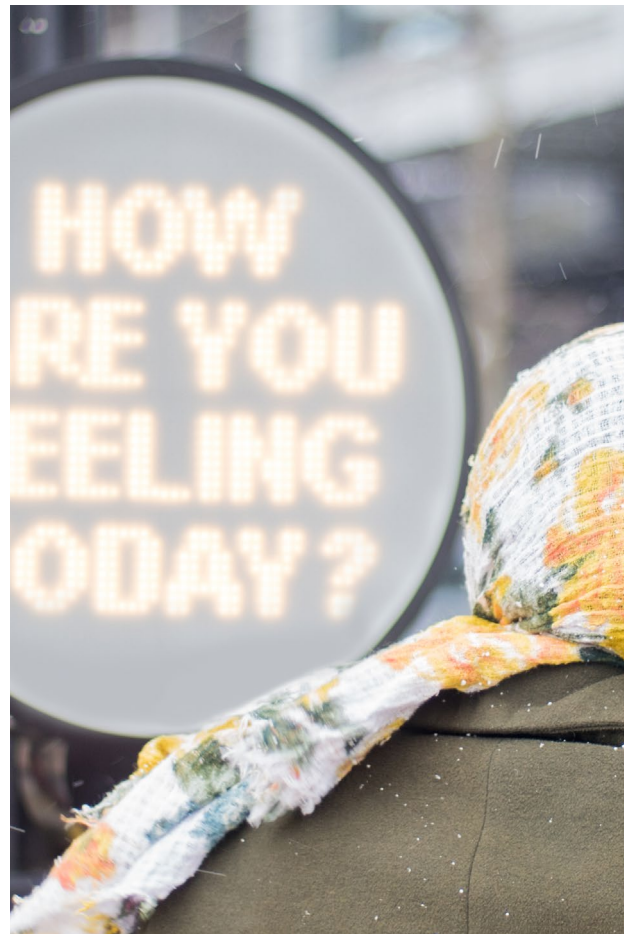
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Layered Realities, Watershed - Photo by Jon Aitken



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SWCTN Immersion Showcase - Photo by Jon Attkin