



Arts Nepal, Women of the World 2022

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**Harmful practices:**

**Call for Nepali  
visual artist(s)**

17 December 2021

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## Harmful Practices in Nepal: Call for Nepali Visual Artist(s)

We are inviting emerging to mid-career visual artist(s) (including photojournalists and multi-disciplinary artists) to work with UK curator Beth Troakes and the British Council Arts team to on a project focusing on the issue of Harmful Practices in Nepal.

Apply by **11:59 pm (Nepal Time), 7 January 2021**

Apply here (put in [arts@britishcouncil.org.np](mailto:arts@britishcouncil.org.np) as hyperlink)

### Introduction

The British Council has been organising [Women of the World Festival](#) in Nepal since 2017. The Festival is now in its fifth edition. Since 2018, the Festival editions have worked with artists to visually exhibit harmful practices affecting women/girls to raise awareness of key issues and their intersections with other socio-cultural barriers.

*The United Nations in Nepal defines harmful practices as persistent behaviours that discriminate on the basis of sex, gender, age, caste/ethnicity, language, religion, and more. They leave women and people from excluded groups at risk of violence, poorer physical and psychological health, educational and economic outcomes, injury, and even death.*

Over three editions (2018-2021), British Council has worked with two pairs of photojournalists and curators to produce exhibition and programming to further WOW objectives.

Uma Bista's [Our Songs from The Forest](#) and Nabin Baral's [Witch Accusation and Persecution in Nepal](#) are the primary outputs to date. Curators Nayantara Kakshapati, [photo. Circle](#) and UK-based [Anna Colin](#) have supported the two artists respectively.

The British Council intends to explore all the five recognised harmful practices through WOW in the coming editions. (Please see resources for literature on harmful practices in Nepal.) We are seeking for a Nepali visual artist(s) to collaborate with Brighton-based curator Beth Troakes in early 2022 to produce an exhibition on caste-based discrimination for the WOW Nepal.

### About Women of the World Festival

WOW — Women of the World — is a global movement that champions gender equality, celebrating the achievements of women and girls everywhere and examining the obstacles that keep them from fulfilling their potential. Festivals take place year-round across around the world. They are formatted and include dedicated strand activities.

The first editions of WOW were held in Kathmandu in 2017 and 2018. In 2019 the Festival was moved to cultural city of Janakpur. Through the pandemic, the Festival has operated virtually. A hybrid festival with both digital and physical streams is planned for delivery in March 2022.

Multiple exhibitions are created for each edition, encompassing photography, visual arts, multi-media, installations, and screenings.



Photo Credit: Our Songs from the Forest by Uma Bista, 2019

## Introduction of Opportunity

Nepal is home to over 120 ethnic communities each with distinct cultures/languages and social structures. This diversity is source of national pride – a unique characteristic for a country its size – but the intersections of caste and gender, coupled with historic marginalisation of many minority and indigenous communities, is ripe with issues that require attention and action.

A majority Hindu population practices a mix of caste systems with strong geographic indicators. More recently, Nepal has taken legal and policy action to curb caste-based discrimination, however without wider public engagement, the systemic problems of caste-based discrimination and especially its disproportionate burden on women/girls cannot be effectively remedied.

Perception change will play a critical role in shifting values and amending behaviours sustainably. To support the agency of marginalised women/girls, the Women of the World Festival is committed to exploring all five harmful practices recognized by the United Nations in Nepal through UK and Nepal collaborations. The British Council is inviting a Nepal-based artist to collaborate with UK-based curator Beth Troakes to develop and deliver a presentation on the harmful practice of caste-based discrimination for its fifth edition.



...y shows a photo of her mother, Parvati Devi Chaudhary, who was beaten to death August 2013. She was 45 years

Sunkesi Chaurdhary shows a photo of her mother, Parvati Devi Chaudhary, who was beaten to death at midnight on 16 August 2013. Parvati was ambushed by her neighbours who had accused her of witchcraft. Photo Credit: Witch Accusation and Persecution in Nepal, Nabin Baral, 2013

## About the Curator

Beth Troakes is freelance curator and gallery director based in Brighton, UK. She has curated exhibitions nationally and internationally and has worked with partners in Italy, South Korea and China.

In 2016, she established Gallery Lock In to host socially engaged exhibitions and curate work around her ongoing research into the social, psychological and physical boundaries of the body. Her other curatorial work includes 'The Dissident', working with artists from Shanghai and Brighton on themes of political and social dissidence; 'Anti-Frieze' that questioned the relationship between immortality and the ownership of art; 'Traces' in Seoul which used object-based artworks to resist the immateriality of the online world; as well as working with the China Pavilion at the Venice Biennale and an exhibition of Chinese video animation at Brighton's CineCity.

Having spent time in Nepal, Beth has developed a passionate commitment to changing the lives of others through exposing harmful practices, displaying the work of marginalised voices, and giving a platform to those wishing to engage in these serious issues, as well as confronting those who don't.

Beth not only sees this as an opportunity for the selected artist but for empowering women and girls across Nepal and will use WOW as a catalyst for change and ongoing collaborations.

## Application

We are seeking an emerging to mid-career visual artist(s) (including photojournalists and multi-disciplinary artists) to work with the appointed UK curator and the British Council Arts team. Candidates with lived experiences that connect with the chosen theme of gender and caste-

based discrimination are preferred. Those from marginal backgrounds are highly encouraged to apply.

**The selected artist will:**

1. Co-design and co-lead a virtual exchange with the appointed curator to develop an exhibition on caste-based discrimination and gender intersections for the fifth edition of Women of the World Festival.

Exchange period covers the period of artistic production (January and February). Exchange needs to include weekly virtual meet-up to discuss progress and to share feedback. Final schedule of exchange needs to be recorded with the British Council via email. It will be the collective responsibility of the selected curator and artist to maintain their proposed schedule and meet deadlines.

2. Present collaborative output through Women of the World Festival in March 2022

The curator shall help finalise the body of work to be presented with the artist. A minimum of 20 images (and captions) as main body of work is expected from this assignment. The call will prioritise production of new work, but will also consider existing works that are relevant to the focus area.

3. Artist will be required to commit to at least 180 minutes of online public programming/press interviews in the lead up to/during and post WOW Festival. They will also need to work with WOW’s production team to support the exhibition design and fabrication.

The total commitment period for the artist is 4 months (January to April 2022) To support the delivery of their responsibilities, British Council in Nepal will issue a grant of NPR **250,000**, covering artist fees and costs in process of making the work. Please read the FAQ for further details.

Additionally, British Council will cover costs of producing a physical showcase at Lumbini Park.

## Important Dates

Dates	Milestone
Artist call administered	17 December – 7 January
Artist appointed	10 January
Orientation for Artist	12 January
Exchange with Collaboration and Exhibition production	15 January – 28 February ‘22
Finalising exhibition design/fabrication for physical stream	1 – 10 March ‘22
WOW Nepal - Virtual Campaign	8 – 19 March 2022
WOW Nepal - Lumbini (physical event)	19 March 2022

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## Eligibility and Process

Nepali artists meeting the following criteria can apply:

- Must be Nepali citizens (please see FAQ for details)
- Must be based in Nepal (geographic locations outside of Kathmandu Valley will be prioritised)
- With at least 5 years of experience working/education in visual arts (including photojournalism)
- Evidenced record of working with collaborators
- Experience/interest working on intersectional gender issues
- Artists who have received WOW grants in the past editions are not eligible to apply

Assessment of applications will be conducted through a panel consisting of British Council staff and the curator.

To apply, you will need:

- A statement of purpose highlighting your personal/professional interests/ambitions with regards to the subject-matter (less than 500 words)
- A portfolio overviewing most recent years of relevant work (up to 15 images and 800 words) – please note our mailing system will not accept attachments above 10 MB, you are recommended to use file-sharing platforms to send your portfolio in high-resolution and PDF format.

Above documents need to be submitted to [arts@britishcouncil.org.np](mailto:arts@britishcouncil.org.np) by **11:59 pm (Nepal Time), 7 January 2021**. Interviews may be requested by selection panel week of 10 January.

Please use this Email subject line: **WOW 2022-Harmful Practice Artist Application-[Name of artist]**

Interested candidates are requested to review past projects and review the reading list supplied below as well as this FAQ before applying.

You can also request a call to discuss the specifics with the British Council Nepal's Arts team. Please send your requests by **25 December 2021** by emailing [arts@britishcouncil.org.np](mailto:arts@britishcouncil.org.np)

## Resources

[Infographics on Harmful Practice Perception in Nepal](#)

[Literature Review on Harmful Practice](#)

[Article on Chhaupadi \(menstrual shunning\)](#)

[Witch Accusation and Persecution in Nepal \(see bibliography at end of photo story\)](#)

[Caste, Ethnic and Regional Identity in Nepal \(report\)](#)

[Press Article on Caste Based Discrimination \(Nepali Times\)](#)