

# No Going Back

## Peer Learning Programme

### Invitation to submit an Expression of Interest

#### **About *No Going Back***

In this Happy Museum programme, we seek to build on the particular power of museums to draw on past stories of rapid transition and transformation; and to inspire museums and their communities to shape new stories and actions to address the climate and ecological emergency:

- How have people adapted and innovated in the past to meet profound social and existential challenges?
- What have we learnt during the pandemic about our capacity for change?
- What might it mean for humanity and other species to thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?
- How might we re-think museums for thriving people, places and planet?

*No Going Back* is part of the [Season for Change](#), a UK-wide cultural programme inspiring urgent and inclusive action on climate change.

#### **What we've done so far**

Starting in April 2020, we have convened conversations in which a range of external contributors from psychologists to bioregionalists, activists to civic managers have offered provocations and invited participants to think afresh about the role and potential of museums: How might museums embrace compassionate values to strengthen communities and civic responsibility? How might museums tell a new story of place? How might they become engine rooms of the imagination and build creative connections to address the climate and ecological emergency?

The conversations will continue into 2021 and are recorded and [available here](#) and via the links below.<sup>i</sup>

#### **Inviting you to participate in a peer learning programme (February to June 2021)**

Building on and running alongside these conversations, we invite people working in and with museums to join a peer learning programme. We will support up to 15 small groups of

practitioners who wish to work with their spaces, stories, colleagues and connections to rethink museums for thriving people, places and planet.

Participants will explore the provocations and inspiration offered in the online workshops as a springboard for fresh ideas and responses. They will be supported by the Happy Museum core team and by members of the [Happy Museum's Community of Practice](#) – a network of affiliates who will be invited to mentor and support participants.

These small groups might be from a museum organisation, or from a related network. Each group should comprise between two or three people and may include someone from a non-museum partner organisation or field.

After an introduction and induction by the Happy Museum team, participants will work with peers to explore and shape ideas; to offer and receive peer review and feedback; and to refine their thinking and working.

As a condition of participation, we will ask participants to host online conversations with the wider sector to share their experience and learning.

There is no charge for participation in the programme – however we ask that participants commit their time and energy to the process.

The programme will involve at least **six days over the five-month period February to June 2021**, timetabled as follows:

- Introductory workshop and induction (**Wednesday 3 February - full day**): to include context for this work; ways of working, Happy Museum principles and iterative working
- Equivalent of **at least one full day** working internally in your organisation/ network to grow and test your ideas
- Peer learning group (**to be arranged with others working in the programme and with your peer mentor – half day**): to interrogate and refine ideas and to shape actions
- Equivalent of **at least one full day** working internally in your organisation/ network to take forward your ideas into actions
- Peer learning group (**to be arranged with others working in the programme and with your peer mentor – half day**): to share your learning and further responses
- Closing workshop (**Wednesday 12 May – full day**): reflecting and building on shared learning; preparing for wider conversations with sector colleagues
- Convening wider conversations to share your experience and learning, and to invite others to think afresh (**up to one full day in June 2021**).

If useful to programme participants, together we will create and share a light touch toolkit with case studies to draw out and share stories of change; offer guidance on convening open conversation and discussion around how we might live differently, and better; and what transformative actions might include. This resource would be an additional commitment for participants, and would be co-created with members of the Happy Museum, with support and advice from contributors to the provocation programme.

We will share our stories of change on social media with possible hashtags [#rapidtransition](#) [#nogoingback](#) or [#thinkagain](#) (ie if you think we can't change, think again).

## Schedule

Open call for Expressions of Interest – **December 2020**

Closing date – midnight on **Sunday 10 January 2021**

Selection and confirmation – by **Monday 18 January**

Programme under way – **3 February to May/ June**

Wider conversations to share experience and learning – **June**

Toolkit (if useful) – **June/ July**.

**Please submit an Expression of Interest responding to the following questions.**

**Please use a maximum of 800 words.**

1. What is your organisation/ network name?
2. Please (re)visit the recordings of the [online conversations](#) in our No Going Back programme (**see also below**). What ideas and possibilities from these conversations do you find most inspiring and energising, and why?
3. How does the [Season for Change's](#) call for urgent and inclusive action on climate change align with your/ your organisation or network's purpose?
4. Why does this opportunity feel right for you at this time?
5. Who are the people, communities and social and environmental challenges that you want to work with?
6. What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve? (These may change as the programme unfolds).
7. Who in/ with your organisation/ network will take part in the peer learning group? Please give names, roles, and contact details. (This may include one person in a partner organisation or field that you are seeking to work with).
8. In addition please confirm that:
  - you commit to **six full days of participation over the five month period February to June 2021** (including the dates below)
  - you are available on **Wednesday 3 February**
  - you are available on **Wednesday 12 May**.

If you work within a museum please provide evidence of support for your participation from a member of your executive team or equivalent.

Thank you! We look forward to receiving your Expression of Interest.

Please send to: [happymuseumproject@gmail.com](mailto:happymuseumproject@gmail.com) by midnight on **Sunday 10 January 2021**.

We will confirm the selection by **Monday 15 January** at the latest.

If you have any questions, please contact Hilary Jennings or Gaby Porter via the email above.

Commissioned by Season for Change, a UK-wide cultural programme inspiring urgent and inclusive action on climate change, led by Artsadmin and Julie's Bicycle, and supported by Arts Council England and Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

[www.seasonforchange.org.uk](http://www.seasonforchange.org.uk) #SeasonforChange @jointheseason\_

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<sup>i</sup> The themes and partners for the conversations are listed below along with a link to the recording(s). See also our [Happy Museum vimeo channel](#).

- [How can Museums Tell a New Story of Place?](#) with Isabel Carlisle, BioRegional Learning Centre; Clare Cooper, Ceteran Ecomuseum and Alice Briggs, Ceredigion Museum
- [The role of museums and culture in a time of self-reflection](#) with Tom Crompton and Ruth Taylor, Common Cause Foundation
- [What if Museums could become engine rooms of the imagination?](#) with Rob Hopkins, activist and writer; Hannah Fox, Derby Museums and Lucy Neal, Theatre maker and activist
- [Creative Civic Connections for Climate Emergency](#) with Debbie Bourne, Transition Kentish Town, Farhana Yamin, Environmental Lawyer and Climate Activist and Sue Sheehan, Camden Council, Bridget McKenzie, Climate Museum UK and Anna Bunney, Manchester Museum
- **Good Work: How might we re-think our work and our working relationships for good?** (*forthcoming, January 2021*)
- **From Footfall to Footprint** – *new approaches to creating and measuring value in museums (forthcoming, 2021)*