

Open Call for Artists

EASE — Artist Venturing Labs · Crete 2026–2027

Applications open: 1 May 2026 · Deadline: Monday 29 June 2026, 23:59 BST

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An invitation

Photoworks, on behalf of the EASE project (*Entrepreneurship, Art & Science for Environmental Sustainability*), invites UK-based artists to apply for one of 25 fully funded places on week-long Artist Venturing Labs (AVL) in Crete.

The labs will take place in different locations from UNESCO geoparks and Minoan palaces to underground rivers, earthquake-lifted harbours and mountain sanctuaries. Each lab brings together five UK artists, and local Greek participants alongside climate scientists, archaeologists, geologists and community partners to work side by side on the ground. Each lab day typically moves from morning fieldwork, afternoon Assemblage Mapping and discussion, evening presentations and reflection. There are five labs in total, covering five distinct landscapes and research areas.

This is not a residency in the conventional sense. It is a sustained experiment in how art and science can think together about climate, landscape and deep time — and in what happens when a small group of practitioners is put in the same rooms, caves and fieldwork sites for seven days and then allowed to imagine exciting ways to communicate together.

More information <https://www.picturingclimate.org/ease>

Selection Panel:

Mark Kasumovic, artist, academic, De Montfort University

Michael Pinsky, Artist

Louise Fedotov-Clements, Photoworks Director

Debbie Cooper, Photoworks Deputy Director

About EASE

EASE is a 24-month UKRI-funded programme led by De Montfort University with eleven partners across the UK, Greece and Europe, including Photoworks, the University of Birmingham, Nottingham Trent University, the Hellenic Institute of Speleological Research, and the UNESCO Global Geoparks of Psiloritis and Sitia.

The project develops and tests **Creative Assemblage Methodology (CAM)** — a framework for research that treats artistic practice, scientific enquiry and community knowledge as equal partners. Artists recruited through this call will be full contributors to that work, not documentarians of it.

The programme runs from July 2026 to July 2028 and culminates in the production of a touring exhibition, a published toolkit, and five collaboratively developed creative prototypes (MVPs). Participating artists will be supported with several opportunities to advance their creative, scientific and entrepreneurial capacities over the length of the project, and are expected to participate throughout the project lifecycle in the form of an “interdisciplinary collective”.

The five labs

Each lab is built around one theme, one landscape and one week of shared fieldwork. A typical day moves from morning fieldwork on site → afternoon interdisciplinary discussion and Assemblage Mapping → evening presentations and reflection. **You will apply to the project as a whole but indicate which labs you are available for** — we will try to place each selected artist on the lab that best matches their practice and availability.

Lab	Dates	Location	Theme	What you'll encounter
AVL 1	18–24 Oct 2026	Psiloritis / Zaros	Entanglements	Live climate-monitoring caves, the buried Bronze Age lake at Phaistos, the Ideon Cave (mythic birthplace of Zeus), and the Roman aqueduct city of Gortyna
AVL 2	25–31 Oct 2026	Margarites	Materiality	Melidoni Cave, the Minoan palace at Phaistos, the workshop of Yorgos the Maestro (the last wood-fired potter in Margarites), and the 2,700-year finds of ancient Eleftherna
AVL 3	10–16 Jan 2027	Palaikastro / Sitia	Sound & Sonic Environments	Active rescue archaeology on a coast being lost to the sea, Minoan water-management systems, and two acoustically distinct caves — Vreiko and Apeloustros — where scientific stalagmite collection runs in parallel with sonic fieldwork
AVL 4	2–8 May 2027	Phalasarna / Kissamos	Temporal Mapping	An ancient harbour lifted 9 metres above sea level by the 365AD earthquake, the contested 6-million-year-old Trachilos footprints, a Quaternary mammal dig, and the layered city of Chania

Lab	Dates	Location	Theme	What you'll encounter
AVL 5	9–15 May 2027	Sfakia	Immersive Environments	The Aradena Gorge, the 1,900-metre underground river at Drakolaki Cave, the stalagmite record at Skoteini, and the foot-access-only coast at Sweetwater and Loutro

A fuller site brief for each lab is still being developed, but more details are available on the [EASE FAQ page](#) at picturingclimate.org. All applicants are encouraged to register as members of the project site and place their active research on the map. EASE aims to recruit for this specific opportunity, but also aims to make artistic, scientific, and activist practice more visible so that collaborations become more common.

Who we're looking for

We are actively seeking diversity of medium and practice — photography, sound, moving image, installation, performance, sculpture, archive work, writing, drawing, hybrid and cross-disciplinary practices are all welcome.

You do not need:

- An academic background or university affiliation
- Prior experience of entrepreneurship, enterprise or prototyping — that is part of what EASE offers you, not a prerequisite
- Prior experience of working with scientists or in interdisciplinary settings

We ask that you are:

- UK-based (this is a UKRI requirement for the 25 UK places)
- Able to commit fully to one week on site in Crete, plus pre- and post-lab engagement online; for the 24-month timeline of the project.
- Interested in working collaboratively, publicly, and across disciplines — the labs are not solo residencies

Specificity of dates matters. Please read the availability section carefully before applying.

What artists receive

- **A £1,000 stipend** for the week on site (in addition to all travel, accommodation, meals and on-the-ground costs, which are covered by the project)
- **Full access** to the scientific team, site partners, local hosts and fellow artists for the duration of the lab
- **A place in the wider EASE programme** — optional but actively encouraged — including monthly CAM sessions, contribution to picturingclimate.org, invitation to the DMU symposium (March 2027), and the opportunity to develop creative prototypes through Work Package 2 sprints in Year 2

- **Photoworks features on digital platforms** for curated milestones from the work, potentially including the newsletter, digital publishing, and the touring exhibition, plus curatorial/creative process mentoring within the programme as relevant.

Five of the strongest MVP directions emerging from the labs will be developed into funded creative prototypes (£4,000 development contracts each) in 2027.

How to apply

Applications are submitted through a single Photoworks portal. All applicants — including those nominated by project team members — are reviewed on the same footing by the same panel.

To apply, please fill out the application form on Photoworks’ website and add a link to a **PDF with the following** (max 5 pages, stored on a Google Drive, Dropbox, or your preferred platform*):

- A short text outlining your expression of interest (max 500 words): include why this project is relevant to you, and how it speaks to your practice
- A short bio (max 200 words)
- Up to 3 examples of relevant previous projects (images + short descriptions). Include external links* to relevant examples of multimedia/film/hybrid works as relevant

***Please ensure the links you submit are accessible for anyone to view, please do not include password protected content.**

If you have any difficulties sharing your work this way, please contact us at info@photoworks.org.uk.

If you would prefer to send an audio/video recording (3 minutes max) of your application, please share a link to it in the form instead of a PDF.

Timeline:

Call opens	1 May 2026
Live online Q&A event	Wednesday, May 13 at 12pm BST: Join: https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/387326369574712?p=M37vTmpCi1FGa0x4sK — see picturingclimate.org for more details and for a link to the recording after the event.
Applications close	Monday 29 June 2026, 23:59 BST
Shortlisting	w/c 6 July 2026
Interviews (10–15 min, online)	13 July 2026
Decisions confirmed	14 July 2026
Notifications to all applicants	Before 20 July 2026

Questions? A public rolling Q&A will be maintained on the [EASE FAQ page](#) throughout the open call. Individual queries that would benefit others will be anonymised and added there. A live online information event will be offered on May 13th — a recording will be made available through the EASE FAQ Page.

Apply

→ [Application portal](#) · → [FAQ and site briefs](#) · → [Project details](#)



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ENGLAND**

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