



# BEYOND THE RADAR

PLOTTING NEW CULTURAL ECO SYSTEMS

## Introduction:

**Beyond the Radar** is a series of experimental co-production activities using virtual tools for building alternative networks, mapping local opportunities and thematics, exploring innovative virtual co-production and searching for new cultural ecosystems.

With a focus on the creation of new content; virtual workshops and online studio sessions will aim to co-author a collective project based on a locally relevant topic. Drawing from the province, the context should inform the project through a cross-disciplinary approach. An openness to engaging across cultural assets and infrastructure, creative drivers in the fields of environmentalism, education, science and technology and looking at management of natural resources, geography, history, identity and indigenous knowledge systems will help shape new ideas and outcomes.

## Background:

Discussions between the National Arts Council and the Trinity Session around implementing methods of improved sustainability through online and digital arts practices, were founded in the National Arts Council's attendance and participation in the International Symposium of Electronic Arts: ISEA2018 Durban, programme. Central to these discussions was the interest and potential for creative digital practices to affect social change at the community level with a view to growth on a national scale.

In accordance with the National Arts Council's call for strategic artistic, cultural and collaborative partnerships in areas of social innovation and cultural entrepreneurship; The Trinity Session's proposal adopts a pilot approach to cultural mapping and project identification in Mpumalanga and the Northern Cape, in order to identify initiatives that will benefit from cross-disciplinary and co-production methods.

## An opportunity for new methods:

In terms of foreseeable COVID based restrictions and limitations on physical social interaction and exchange;

the process proposed here will be engineered primarily through digital methods, and the approach is aimed at empowering and up-cycling limited and existing technological tools, combined with appropriate levels of mentorship in the application and use of these tools, in order to stimulate and advance co-authorship and co-production and enable artists and practitioners in their professional practice - their means of connection, marketing and self-promotion. Ultimately, in service of an enhanced cultural eco-system that can function at a broader national scale.

## The pilot phase:

The pilot phase is projected over a 6-12-month period, with a built-in review of the methodology, identified outcomes and small test projects. The intention is to test the approach in the provinces of Mpumalanga and the Northern Cape during this time with the intention of replicability in other provinces in South Africa.

## Identification / engagement / opportunity:

Through identifying and engaging local institutions, project areas and active individuals, the project will shortlist a variety of relevant topics and participants for a series of start-up workshops. These workshops will in turn provide a broader understanding of the potential for enhanced cross-disciplinary collaboration and new multi-stakeholder partnership opportunities that work towards the plotting of new cultural ecosystems that are attractive to strategic investment.

The processes and workshops mentioned above will take place between October – November 2020.

**Beyond the Radar welcomes expressions of interest and recommendations.**

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