

## Open call - Koro Lab

### R&D commissions for migrant and Global Majority immersive theatre-makers

Interactive arts charity [Koro](#) is offering bursaries for nine migrant and Global Majority artists to take part in Koro Lab, a new artist development programme offering workshops, practice-sharing, production support and R&D commissions for artists working in immersive, interactive and site-specific theatre.

#### The offer

Between April and October 2026, **nine migrant and Global Majority artists** will receive:

- **Training:** A two-day programme of workshops on immersive and site-specific theatre-making, game-making, co-creation, digital experiences and embedding accessibility in immersive performances. The programme will take place on **7-8 May** at Shoreditch Town Hall (London).
- **Space:** One week of free R&D space in London at Shoreditch Town Hall, Theatre Deli or Wellcome Collection to develop a new project.
- **Seed funding:** A £2,500 bursary, inclusive of all expenses (with an additional £500 budget for the artist creating work in response to Wellcome Collection's archives and collections). A small budget is also available to cover personal access costs.
- **Showcasing opportunities:** A sharing for a public or invited audience of arts and heritage professionals, taking place at Shoreditch Town Hall, Leadenhall Market, Wellcome Collection or a site-specific location, depending on which bursary you are applying for (see below).
- **Documentation:** Professional filming and photography of all projects.
- **Access consultancy:** Collaboration with an access advisor to support the development of your project.
- **Production support:** Mentoring from Koro's team to support idea and production development; advance projects; build venue partnerships; support fundraising; and explore touring pathways.

Koro Lab will feed directly into **Koro Festival 2027**, a new biennial showcase of inclusive immersive work presented in both theatre and public spaces (including heritage sites, libraries, public and community spaces). After the programme, selected Lab artists will receive commissions and additional support to develop their R&D ideas into full-scale festival productions.

## Types of bursaries

We are offering four different types of bursaries:

- **Open Spaces bursary:** We are offering **four bursaries** for artists interested in creating new socially engaged immersive or interactive performances. We are particularly interested in proposals responding to current social, political, economic or climate challenges, and the global histories that shaped them.

The selected artists will have **one week of rehearsals** (May-September) and a **joint public sharing at Shoreditch Town Hall on 30 September 2026**.

- **Wellcome Collection bursary:** **Wellcome Collection** is supporting **one bursary** for an artist to create a new immersive or interactive piece exploring questions about health, inspired by Wellcome Collection's archives or collections.

The selected artist will receive 3 days of collections research facilitated by the museum's Research team, **one week of rehearsal space in Wellcome Collection's studio theatre space, a scratch performance in September 2026** (date to be agreed with the artist) and a £3,000 bursary. **More information about this opportunity, including dates and themes, can be found below in Appendix 1.**

- **Marketplace bursary:** We are offering **three bursaries** for migrant artists interested in creating new interactive work for high streets, marketplaces and outdoor public spaces. The format of the commissions is flexible and may include immersive performances in empty shop units, interactive storytelling, games, pop-up market stall performances, or smartphone-based adventures across the site. A site visit will be organised in May with the selected artists to discuss ideas and potential spaces, so you are welcome to include multiple options in your proposal.

The selected artists will have **one week of rehearsal space at Theatre Deli** and present **public performances at Leadenhall Market in September**, as part of a weekend of events exploring migration stories in public spaces.

- **Site-specific bursary:** We are offering **one bursary** to an artist interested in creating new site-specific or site-responsive work. This could include a performance taking place in public libraries, work created for cafés or restaurants, or a piece designed for green spaces or entire neighbourhoods. We are also open to other imaginative proposals, provided they are feasible and permissions can realistically be secured.

The selected artist will receive **one week of rehearsal space at Theatre Deli**, producing support, and present a **site-specific sharing in September 2026**.

Applicants may submit multiple proposals, but can only be awarded one type of bursary.

## Who is this for?

Koro Lab is for:

- **Migrant and Global Majority artists:** By migrant, we mean artists who were not born in the UK. By Global Majority, we mean people belonging to all ethnic groups except white British and other white groups, including Black, Asian, mixed and other ethnic groups. You must have the right to work in the UK.
- **Professional artists at any stage of their careers:** Applicants must be over-18s and not be in full-time education during the Lab period (May–September 2026).
- **Individual artists and companies:** You may apply as an individual artist or as a company or collective. Up to three collaborators on your project will be able to attend the two-day training at Shoreditch Town Hall.
- **Theatre-makers interested in immersive, interactive or site-specific performance:** The programme is open both to experienced immersive theatre-makers who want to test something new, and to creatives interested in learning more about interactive or site-specific practice. What matters is that you have an exciting project idea in which the audience plays a central role, and an interest in learning and sharing practice with others.
- **Live theatre-makers:** We are primarily interested in proposals including live performances, but projects may incorporate digital technologies. For digital work, we are particularly interested in performances using low-fi, accessible and everyday technology, rather than VR/XR.
- **New ideas for R&D:** Koro Lab offers artists the opportunity to develop new ideas, experiment with new approaches, take risks, and playtest work with a live audience. This could be a new concept, an early-stage project, or one with partners already in place to develop it further - as long as it has not had a successful full run and will undergo significant development through Koro Lab. Koro does not need to be the sole partner on the project, but you must be open to presenting the work as part of Koro Festival in May 2027. If successful, you are also welcome to use the bursary as match funding to secure additional support (including from Arts Council England).

If you are not eligible or available for Koro Lab but would like to propose a project for the Koro Festival 2027 programme, please email us with further information, including tour packs, photos and videos. We will start programming for the 2027 festival from May 2026.

## About Koro

Koro is a charity specialising in immersive, interactive and site-specific theatre. We create and produce shows that place audiences at the heart of the storytelling experience, exploring urgent contemporary stories - and the global histories that shaped them - through interactivity and play. We collaborate with diverse artists to tell stories that reflect a wide range of lived experiences, and design our work to be accessible, inclusive and engaging for audiences of all backgrounds. Whether in a theatre, heritage site or school hall, our shows invite audiences to see the world - and each other - in new ways.

Past projects include [1884](#), an anti-colonial game-theatre show that toured nationally and internationally in 2025 (Warwick Arts Centre, HOME Manchester, Norwich Theatre, Wellcome Collection, MIR Festival), and [Checkpoint Universe](#), an immersive family show by 27 degrees exploring migration through the lens of space travel (R&D in partnership with the Albany and Jacksons Lane). We also create site-specific projects that invite audiences to discover spaces in new ways, including [I am Bird](#), an interactive migration adventure for community libraries, and [Watching the House](#), a site-specific experience exploring the colonial history of Marble Hill, developed with Coney, English Heritage and young people.

In spring 2027, Koro will launch Koro Festival, a biennial celebration of socially engaged immersive, interactive and site-specific theatre across London.

Koro's mission is to:

- Create powerful immersive experiences that connect people and place audiences at the heart of contemporary stories, inviting reflection on complex topics through play
- Champion emerging immersive and interactive theatre-makers, with a particular focus on migrant and Global Majority creatives who remain underrepresented in the sector
- Increase the inclusivity of immersive theatre by creating accessible and affordable experiences in spaces where people already gather, including public spaces, schools, libraries, heritage and community venues

## Application process

Please complete this [Google Form](#) by **Sunday 15 March**. A word document with the application questions is available on the [Koro Lab page](#). All applicants will be **notified by 15 April**.

If you would like to **submit your application in another format**, please email us. If you would like to apply for **personal access costs** on top of your bursary, feel free to contact us before applying to discuss what we could cover.

For any questions, please contact [programme@koro.org.uk](mailto:programme@koro.org.uk).

## Appendix 1: Wellcome Collection bursary - Additional information for applicants

[Wellcome Collection](#) is a free museum and library near Euston station in London. We believe everyone's experience of health matters. Through our collections, exhibitions and events, in books and online, we explore the past, present and future of health. We care for many thousands of items relating to health, medicine and human experience, including rare books, artworks, films and videos, personal archives and objects.

We welcome proposals from individual artists and theatre companies interested in exploring questions of health equity through immersive or interactive performances inspired by our collections.

You don't need formal collections research experience; we're looking for artists who can demonstrate an interest in research and a willingness to engage with historical material as part of their practice. The proposal must be guided by our vision of a world where everyone's experience of health matters, and be inspired by or respond to our collections. We have shared three themes for artists who prefer a more specific brief, but you are welcome to explore other parts of the collections. We're especially interested in proposals led by people with racially minoritised, disabled, deaf or neurodiverse lived experience in line with our priority audiences.

### Besides the regular Koro Lab offer, we will offer:

- Hosting from a producer at Wellcome Collection when you are on site
- 3 days of supported collections research (a total of 21 hours) facilitated by the Research & Enquiry team and access to a desk or small meeting room during research days. This could include an online introductory meeting, a collection-viewing workshop, and an introduction to relevant staff.
- 1 week of rehearsal time in the Forum, which is a small studio theatre space. **If you want to rehearse for 5 consecutive days, you need to be available within the following periods: 26th - 29th May or 29th July - 8th September** (except 12th August and weekends). Rehearsing on ad hoc days between May and September may also be possible, to be discussed with the Wellcome Collection team.
- A scratch, invite-only performance at Wellcome Collection in September 2026
- Potential inclusion in our public programme in Spring 2027.

### About our collections

Our diverse collections explore health and human experience in a variety of forms: visual culture, audio-visual materials, books and journals, historical textbooks, and archives. On our website you can [read about what's in the collection](#) and [explore the collections](#).

## **We are interested in the following themes:**

### **Care & Repair**

How has care been understood and practised across time? You could explore the vital and often invisible role of carers, methods of care, and gendered histories of caregiving.

Artists could engage with materials ranging from medieval concepts of spiritual care, early modern self-care practices, and archives on [Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting](#), [Films relating to nursing from the 1960s to 1980s](#) and contemporary stories such as [What does a COVID-19 doula do?](#) This theme invites new interpretations of how care shapes, and is shaped by, social inequities and collective wellbeing.

### **Nourishment & nutrition**

Explore questions about nourishment and nutrition, highlighting the vital role of access to safe food, vitamins, and more.

Artists could engage with materials ranging from [medieval diet regimens](#) and a 16th century [Famine Relief Herbal](#) to 17<sup>th</sup> century [domestic recipe books](#); and 20th century archives exploring social inequality and food poverty; the discovery of vitamins and research into [vitamin deficiency](#) and more. This theme invites new interpretations of how nourishment shapes, and is shaped by, social inequalities and collective wellbeing.

### **Our health & Our land**

What is the relationship between human health and the environment?

Artists can explore material related to health and the environment from across history and time, including material on [medical botany](#) about the vital role plants have played in supporting health across time and geography, and pre-modern approaches to human health that stemmed from ancient humoral theories, which saw a direct connection between the environment and human health. To contemporary understandings of the environment's influence on health, reflected in 20<sup>th</sup> century archival material [radical science movement](#). Through this theme, you can explore how human health is shaped by the land and environment.