**FACTORY INTERNATIONAL PARTNER WITH APPLE AND ARTS VENUES IN LONDON AND BIRMINGHAM TO SUPPORT BLACK CREATIVE TALENT IN THE UK**

**Manchester’s new landmark cultural space will address the systemic barriers Black creatives face in the arts and creative industries as it enters major new cross sector partnership.**

Factory International, set to open later this year, will become a thriving hub for employment, training and education opportunities in the creative industries in 2023 and will play a major role in further diversifying the creative and cultural sector in Manchester and beyond.

In partnership with Apple, The Southbank Centre, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC) and Birmingham City University’s STEAMhouse, Factory International today announced a pioneering new talent development programme, REFRAME, to support emerging Black and Black Mixed heritage creatives in Greater Manchester, London and Birmingham.

This ambitious programme launches with a one-year pilot project between March and August 2023 which will reach 80 emerging Black creatives from low-income backgrounds as well as hundreds of secondary school children in 21 schools in Greater Manchester, London and Birmingham. The programme aims to supercharge digital creative skills and help young people reach new heights in their creative careers.

In addition, Factory International's award winning Factory Academy programme continues to help people from all backgrounds to start new careers in the creative industries, working in partnership with cultural organisations and employers across the city.

**Randel Bryan, Executive Director of Factory International**, said: *“We’re delighted to be part of this new cross-sector partnership to support the next generation of Black creative talent in the UK. 2023 will be a time of enormous change in Manchester’s creative and cultural industries with the opening of Factory International set to bring direct, accessible and tangible routes into the industry.Through partnerships such as these, Factory International is committed to bringing new and diverse voices into the creative sector, supporting the talent of tomorrow to show exactly what they’re made of.”*

REFRAME has two strands:

**The Residency**

The Residency programme is open to 80 talented Black and Black Mixed heritage creatives (18-30-year-olds) who have less than two years’ experience in their chosen field of film, photography or music. There are 25 place available at Factory International, 30 at the Southbank Centre, and 25 at STEAMhouse. This free course runs for 14 days and consists of hands-on creative sessions as well as sessions led by Apple creative experts. Designed in consultation with leading employers, it will focus on equipping young creatives to use digital tools needed for the future and preparing them for the practicalities of a career in the arts.

During the course, participants will be invited to creatively respond to the climate emergency, to global issues of climate justice, and to the challenges it poses for theirs and future generations, including its impact on young people’s mental health. Their work in film, audio and photography will be presented at the Southbank Centre in August as part of its summer season of multi-artform programming focussing on the climate emergency.

For more information on The Residency and how to register click on the link [here](https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/creative-learning/emerging-artists-creatives/reframe/residency).

**Inspire Schools**

21 secondary schools based in communities that are historically underserved by cultural organisations in London, Greater Manchester and Birmingham, will work with artists, graphic designers, illustrators and climate experts to design their own response to the climate emergency and its effect on them and their communities.

Participating schools will be asked to create a zine, linking its content to one of the UN’s Sustainability Goals. Each zine will feature poetry, illustration and creative writing and will be a classroom-based project, developing skills in literacy, design, IT and citizenship. Projects will take place in the Spring 2023 term and the zines will be showcased in an online exhibition at the Southbank Centre, Factory International and Midlands Arts Centre.

For more information on Inspire Schools and how to take part click on the link [here](https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/creative-learning/emerging-artists-creatives/reframe/inspire-schools).

Registration for The Residency opens on Wednesday 1 February.

The ground-breaking programme is part of Apple’s global Racial Equity and Justice Initiative (REJI) — and represents Apple’s first REJI expansion into Europe. Through Apple’s Racial Equity and Justice Initiative, this collaboration aims to inspire future generations to take part in building a cultural legacy for the UK. The project aligns with the Arts Council England’s Let’s Create Strategy and the UK Government’s Levelling Up agenda, which strives to build sustainable cultural communities across the country.

**Alisha Johnson Wilder, Director of Racial Justice Equity Initiative at Apple**, said: "*We’re thrilled that the Southbank Centre’s REFRAME program continues to take shape with the selection of new partners in London, Manchester and Birmingham. We believe the opportunities for young Black talent are boundless. This new program aims to unlock their extraordinary creative potential and will help them develop new skills that will benefit them well into the future.”*

**Alexandra Brierley, Director of Creative Learning at the Southbank Centre**,said: “*We’re honoured that the Southbank Centre and its partners in Manchester and Birmingham will be the first Apple REJI funded partnership in Europe. We believe that everyone should have equal access to art and creativity. We’ll track the onward journeys of the 80 participants in The Residency at the end of the project to ensure that at least 85% have been signposted into further education or employment opportunities, and we will build a network of relevant cultural and skills development partners who will support this legacy.”*

# ENDS #

**Press images can be downloaded** [**here**](https://bynder.southbankcentre.co.uk/web/59030a1c95ccad86/reframe/)**.**

**Information on REFRAME** [**here**](https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/creative-learning/emerging-artists-creatives/reframe)**.**