

Nelly Ben Hayoun and friends introduce Tour de Moon – a cosmic celebration

Open call for submissions from nightlife artists, performers, creatives, makers of new worlds, digital artists, musicians and writers, aged 18-25

Strictly embargoed until Thursday 21 October 2021



Tour de Moon main logo, graphics by Manana Kobakhidze and Sebastian Kosedá. Image courtesy Tour de Moon.

We have lift-off. As of 21 October, Tour de Moon will launch its open call to young visionaries around the world to come together, bring their ideas to life, and help define alternative, pluralistic futures for the Earth and beyond. Up to 875 bursaries, from £100 to £25,000 are available for 18-25 year-olds to realise their creative ideas – inspired by our very own satellite, the moon.

The scope is broad, the brief radical and the possibilities endless. It might be a piece of music woven with the sounds of the galaxy, a film exploring our relationship with the moon, a concept for a float or a digital installation, a script for a play, an online experience or a DJ performance. With Tour de Moon, Nelly Ben Hayoun Studios' principal goal is to amplify a plurality of young creative voices, ignite imaginations, and shine a spotlight on the plurality of possibilities for positive alternative futures for humanity.

"Tour de Moon travels with the night, seeking new beginnings, to empower others to create, to initiate, to innovate with new thinking and pluralistic practices so that history does not repeat itself on and beyond Earth. In this cosmic night-time adventure, the Moon is both character and landscape, in permanent transformation and flux, to ignite radical imagination. We are an after-party of immersive experiences, new technologies and science innovation which supports decolonial practices, and showcases and celebrates the creativity of night-time workers and young people."

– Dr Nelly Ben Hayoun

Touring across the UK

With a special focus on nightlife and night-time culture, the multifaceted initiative will make appearances at various locations around the UK next summer, notably including live four-day experiences in Leicester (13–16 May), Newcastle (27–30 May) and Southampton (11–14 June), with a 'Moon Convoy' of satellite events also visiting Dover, Coventry, Nottingham, Sheffield, Manchester, Leeds, Liverpool, Wolverhampton and Bristol, concluding the tour in Hackney, London. It will feature collaborations with local bars, cinemas, and other venues with interactive, immersive experiences, talks and performances that challenge our current world and explore new ways of living on future worlds – such as the moon.



Moon Experience costume, digital render by Ben Wheelie. Image courtesy Tour de Moon.

Tour de Moon's programme will be supported by the independent and non-traditional publishing outlet Moon Press, which will release print and digital editions with each full moon; and the music label Moon Recordings, which will bring together voices from two generations, 18–25 and 75+, to collaborate.

Eight programming strands + cross-collaboration

Tour de Moon will award bursaries across eight programming strands: Moon Sports, Moon Press, Moon Music, Moon Cinema, Moon Bar (forum for discussion), Moon Hotline (online content), Moon Convoy (parade) and Moon Experiences (live events).

Thanks to partnerships from the likes of NASA's SSERVI (Solar System Exploration Research Virtual Institute), the African Astronomical Society, the SETI (Search for the Extraterrestrial Intelligence) Institute, as well as institutions and organisations across the sciences and humanities, bursary applicants also have the opportunity to collaborate with leading scientists and thinkers. By distributing this budget among a combination of individual creatives, youth groups, and nightlife workers, Tour de Moon aims to distribute essential funding and provide a high-profile creative

platform to a sector and demographic that has been hit especially hard by the impacts of Covid and funding cuts over the last few years.



Moon Convoy, digital render by Benjamin Mehigan. Image courtesy Tour de Moon.

The directors will be supported and challenged by the Tour de Moon Board – a collective of scientists, nightlife workers and performers, curators, and inspirational creators of all ages, who will help steer the event and select the successful bursary applicants whose work will be developed to feature in the festival programme. Alongside the board, a panel of youth reporters, aged 18–25, will be monitoring and documenting the event at every stage, ensuring it maintains its commitment to equity, plurality, community, collaboration, decolonial practices, social and racial justice and solidarity.

Dr Nelly Ben Hayoun, a pioneer of art and technology

The Tour de Moon project is the brainchild of the designer of experiences, artist, filmmaker and cultural innovator Dr Nelly Ben Hayoun of Nelly Ben Hayoun Studios. Nelly is the founder of both NASA's International Space Orchestra and the tuition-free University of the Underground. Her large scale projects have included collaborations with Noam Chomsky, Pussy Riot, Massive Attack and Kid Cudi to name a few. She is known for challenging institutions from within through events, and she has done so at the United Nations, NASA or the International Astronautical Federation. Nelly's fellow directors are Magid Magid, former Lord Mayor of Sheffield, former MEP, and founder of the Union of Justice, an independent, European, POC-led organisation dedicated to racial and climate justice; Natasha Patterson, head coach at Pedro's Youth Club; Professor Michael Garrett, Sir Bernard Lovell chair of

Astrophysics and Director of Jodrell Bank Centre for Astrophysics; Damian Bradfield, president of WeTransfer; and Adam Teskey, manufacturing director of The Vinyl Factory Plant.



Tour de Moon open call, graphics by Manana Kobakhidze. Image courtesy Tour de Moon.

Part of UK-wide celebration of creativity in 2022

As of 21 October, bursaries are open for applications on the Tour de Moon website at tourdemoon.com until the closing date on 6 January 2022. The Tour de Moon HQ is available to answer any questions about applying by mobile, WhatsApp and Telegram on +44 (0)7377 837842, and the advisory board will be leading a programme of online classes to help with applications from 6 December 2021. Tour de Moon is commissioned as part of a UK-wide celebration of creativity in 2022, which is being announced on 21 October 2021.

Official launch event

The official Tour de Moon launch event on 21 October takes place at 6–11pm, EARTH Hackney, 11–17 Stoke Newington Road, N16 8BH. RSVP for tickets.

There will also be a Zoom meet-up for press outlining the full Tour de Moon programme at 11am –12.30pm on the 21st – join at tinyurl.com/zoomnellyben (password [alloallo](https://www.alloallo.com)). This will be followed by an Q&A on Twitch and mobile with Dr Nelly Ben Hayoun and the Tour De Moon Team – get in touch at twitch.tv/tourdmoon or on +44 (0)7377 837842.

Notes to editors

For more information, please contact Sabine Zetteler at sabine@zetteler.co.uk.

#TourDeMoon

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Twitch: twitch.tv/tourdmoon

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Nelly Ben Hayoun Studios

Founded in 2009, Nelly Ben Hayoun Studios is an award-winning interdisciplinary design studio which devises subversive events, experiences, and feature-length films. Led by the designer, educator, filmmaker, radio host and amateur boxer Dr Nelly Ben Hayoun-Stépanian, the studio works on highly ambitious projects to empower countercultures and communities by building platforms for them to challenge power structures, while also allowing for change and critical thinking through multi-faceted immersive experiences. Nelly and her team of architects, graphic designers, textile designers, philosophers and more have consulted and worked with leading scientists, creatives, writers, brands, politicians, policymakers, musicians, and engineers worldwide and have a track record of successfully challenging public engagement mechanics through theatrical, experiential, and design practices. The Studios support the training of young people, through the University of the Underground, a tuition-free charity founded by Nelly Ben Hayoun-Stépanian in 2017 to support free, pluralistic and transnational education. Clients and collaborators include NASA, the United Nations, LEGO, Mattel and many more.



Moon Convoy, digital render by Benjamin Mehigan. Image courtesy Tour de Moon.

What are the 8 programming strands?

The eight strands are: Moon Sports, Moon Press, Moon Music, Moon Cinema, Moon Bar (discussion and debate), Moon Hotline (digital content), Moon Convoy (parade) and Moon Experiences (live events).

Parading through towns and cities of the UK Moon Convoy synthesises the whole of the Tour de Moon festival as it travels between Leicester, Newcastle and Southampton. A series of floats and vehicles that bring the festival to town squares and public spaces across the nation and satellite global locations.

Moon Music is a platform that merges popular music sounds with recordings of the galaxy to build a new alien musical genre for all generations.

Moon Cinema offers a collective effort to reimagine and reconsider our relationship with the Moon and each other through film and newly commissioned immersive live cinema.

Moon Bar is a place where we can watch, listen to, engage with, and participate in multidisciplinary discussions and talks.

Moon Press is an urgent intervention into publishing, creating space for underrepresented writers, thinkers, and artists – appearing in both expected and unlikely places, from printed issues to the internet, cereal boxes, billboards, and more.

Moon Hotline enables participants to touch future defining technologies through a portal of playful and interactive experiments, digital content and digital experiences, and live-streamed events. It connects with the Moon and proposes a non-human centric approach to communication.

Moon Experiences is a series of immersive experiential, performative environments that give visitors the chance to take a trip with the Moon and ask questions about our time on Earth, it is a cautionary tale using the Moon as a landscape and the main character to activate collective imagination: to discuss, to inspire, and to experience future utopias beyond Earth.

Moon Sports brings to Earth a playground of giant inflatables created in collaboration with local community sports groups and youth organisations.

Why did you choose Southampton, Leicester and Newcastle?

From an initial 11 locations identified in project development, the Tour de Moon core team and advisory board pinpointed Southampton, Leicester and Newcastle as the optimum locations in terms of:

- a) audience access (18-25 year olds, nightlife artists and audiences)
- b) Breadth of geographic distribution
- c) Diversity of demographic profile
- d) Number of nightlife locations
- e) Accessibility to academic or industrial STEAM expertise
- f) Deprivation indices
- g) Level of Covid-19 relief funding for nightlife and cultural sector