**For immediate release: 3 February 2021**

**BCB launches #SupportNewTalent fundraising campaign in response to crisis facing early career artists**

**A picture containing person, wall, indoor, person

Description automatically generated A person sitting on a chair

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The British Ceramics Biennial (BCB) today, Wednesday 3 February, announces a campaign to raise £10,000 for a new Fresh Talent Development Programme designed to secure a better and more sustainable future for emerging artists, and to help anyone, whatever their background, to build a career in contemporary ceramics.

BCB, which runs a major international arts festival in Stoke-on-Trent – the home of British ceramics - alongside an ongoing programme of education and community engagement projects, has shaped the Fresh Talent Development Programme following conversations with artists, students and industry partners both locally and nationally.

Using the platform of the 2021 BCB festival, the programme will bring together over 300 new artists and more established creatives to create career-defining opportunities such as: talks and workshops led by established artists; mentoring support and a flexible access fund for up to 20 talented artists facing particular disadvantage; and structured networking opportunities for 50 early career artists to build relationships and grow ambitions.

Iain Cartwright, Executive Director of the British Ceramics Biennial comments: *‘With the pandemic forcing exhibitions, degree shows and fairs to be cancelled or moved online, studios to close and new artists being unable to access grants, this is a critical moment for the ceramic industry. The sector relies on original talent; it requires new voices, perspectives and ideas for contemporary ceramics to be relevant and resilient, and that’s why this new programme is so vital to the future of contemporary ceramics.’*

The #SupportNewTalent fundraising campaign will run until the end of February and donations can be made at the following link: <https://localgiving.org/appeal/BCBSupportNewTalent/>

More information about BCB can be found at [www.britishceramicsbiennial.com](http://www.britishceramicsbiennial.com)

**#SupportNewTalent**

**-Ends-**

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**Notes to editors**

**About the** **British Ceramics Biennial:**

The next British Ceramics Biennial festival takes places from 11 September to 19 October 2021.

The British Ceramics Biennial (BCB) is a prestigious and high-profile festival of contemporary ceramics that takes place in Stoke-on-Trent. BCB presents artworks from the UK’s leading ceramicists alongside work by international artists, in exhibitions and special events held across the city. BCB is underpinned by an exciting year-round programme of artists’ commissions, education and community engagement projects.

British Ceramics Biennial is a prestigious project that embraces the heritage of the Potteries as the home of British ceramics; that stimulates creativity and innovation across the breadth of its practice and sharpens Stoke-on-Trent’s creative edge as an international centre for excellence in contemporary ceramics.

Initiated in 2009, BCB has grown to be the single largest ceramics event in the UK, a flagship cultural project for Stoke-on-Trent City Council, and a catalyst for regeneration. BCB has been successful in bringing great art, creative energy and critical attention to the city, and has facilitated meaningful new public engagement with local communities, visitors and cultural tourists.

**British Ceramics Biennial funders:**

The British Ceramics Biennial Ltd is funded by Stoke-on-Trent City Council and is supported using public funding by Arts Council England.

