



May 2015

## CREATIVE BRIEF FOR ARTISTS:

# WE NEED TO RE-FILL THE WORLD WITH BRIGHT IDEAS

**Using art to inspire people to believe in a better way of life in a post-growth economy that values well-being over reckless consumption.**

*Forever Swarm* invites international artists, designers, film makers and creatives to bring to life the benefits of shifting to a radically new sustainable economy. An urgent shift away from our destructive and dehumanising economy of endless consumption growth, towards an economy based on the shared values of well-being and living within our non-planet-damaging ecological limits.

We are seeking imaginative engagement with, and translation of the key messages below, to help counter the prevailing mass-media mono culture of competitive reckless consumption and inject real hope and hunger into the cultural mainstream for a rapid and meaningful system change.

Humanity is on track for a collision course with ecological disaster because we lack positive forward vision, clear and inspiring articulation of what can be achieved by change.

It's clear that the elements of our old narratives are exposed & broken, so we no longer believe that:

- in the rich world, more economic growth delivers more happiness,
- success should be measured in consumables and wealth,
- free markets and shareholder profits are universal goods or ends in themselves,
- humans can and should dominate and exploit nature,
- technology alone, without need for deep values shifts, can fix the fact we are living beyond the means of our planet.

All these beliefs are now being seriously questioned and challenged – we need to ensure the momentum of that process continues and all of the above assumptions are thrown out in order for the new story to be written.

So Forever Swarm invites you to be part of this critically urgent task: to help create the new story we need by imagining a better life in a world that has moved beyond the selfish obsessions of over-consumption growth.

At the moment, our progress narrative has been reduced to one thing: strong GDP growth, which is a story about consumption and shareholder profit. The purpose of our economy we are told is to continually grow - no matter what the cost.

Our role and identity in this process is reduced from active citizens to passive, unquestioning 'consumers.' No matter that this economic system puts us in direct conflict with the health of our planet: saving the earth is simply another casualty sacrificed on the altar of economic growth.



The solution enlightened experts and leaders are now talking about exists by a variety of names and theories, but all describe a new way of thinking about new economic alternatives: *Steady State economies, Regenerative Economies, De-growth.*

But for us, the common thrust of these ideas can be reduced to a single sentence.

The purpose of the new economy can be described as: *to promote a flourishing new sense of active well-being that works in harmony with a permanently healthy planet.*

So we are particularly interested in work that explores and gets across one or more of the following key messages in clear and inspiring ways. We invite creatives in any artistic discipline to get in touch to receive supporting information, following input from our expert partners.

## **THE 10 KEY ACTIONS FOR ARTISTS TO CONSIDER:**

- 1) **Un-badge yourself – DO NOT DEFINE YOURSELF BY THE BRANDS YOU CONSUME;**
- 2) **Nature is not a limitless, disposable resource – BUT A PARTNER IN OUR PLANET. Behave accordingly. Fossil fuels need to be left in the ground.**
- 3) **Mass Media is a machine to maintain things as they are – WE NEED NEW IDEAS, NEW STORIES, NEW VISIONS OF HOW THINGS COULD BE. And we need them out in the real world competing for people’s attention.**
- 4) **CHANGE CAN BE ACHIEVED. We are mapping out a hope grounded in real world change. It won’t be easy. But it will happen because the alternative is unthinkable. TIME FOR THE OPTIMISTS TO FIGHT BACK. Just consider the future of your children and grandchildren if you need motivation.**
- 5) **Unleash your imagination - RE-DREAM THE FUTURE AS A PLACE YOU WANT TO BE. Where people and planet co-exist sustainably.**
- 6) **Go local – rediscover your neighbourhood, re-connect with your community. INVESTIGATE AND ENJOY THE MINUTIAE OF YOUR IMMEDIATE SURROUNDINGS. Map and celebrate the micro elements of your personal universe.**
- 7) **COLLABORATE DON’T COMPETE. Find creative strength in numbers. MAKE STRANGE CHEMISTRY. CATALYSE SOMETHING NEW.**
- 8) **Challenge the prevailing truths. Think round them. Burrow under them. Build over them. DEVELOP NEW NARRATIVES THAT OFFER ALTERNATIVES TO THE EXISTING WAY OF DOING THINGS.**



**9) PUT TECHNOLOGY BACK IN ITS BOX. Use it when you need it. Don't need to use it all the time. Re-learn the craft of slow creation. Go from Instagram and Snapchat to Pause-agram and Slowchat. Delight in the art of face-to-face communication.**

**10) RESTORE THE POWER OF ART TO INSPIRE PEOPLE TO BELIEVE IN BETTER THINGS.**

#### **TIMELINES:**

We are now accepting submissions of work, as well as creative ideas we can help you develop, on a rolling basis for the remainder of 2015. **For our first round of selection, work is due 4th September.**

#### **WHAT WE WILL DO WITH YOUR WORK:**

Forever Swarm is planning a number of provocative cultural interventions to generate meaningful mainstream debate on the need for system change and specific policy alternatives.

In 2016 we plan to roll out an ambitious physical space, plus online platform, where the benefits of the better world/new economy will be brought to life through art, film, design, sound and creativity. This project is called ***The Beyond Store***: hijacking the familiar form of the supermarket to illustrate visions of a better life/world without consumption growth.

Artists responding to this brief may also be invited to be part of the Beyond Store in 2016.

In 2015, we will begin by featuring received work in social media, online galleries, and where you agree, shared with campaign partners across the globe to bolster their work. We will do our best to rotate online content and feature all work that responds in a clear and accessible way to the objectives of this brief.

#### **CONTACT:**

**To receive more information, or to have a chat, email:**

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