

Call for artistic collaboration

The project we are working on is called *Living on the Margins*¹. Its aim is to improve **understanding of post-war transitions** in **Nepal** and **Sri Lanka**, and to improve policy responses to these transitions. It examines how key local actors from peripheral regions, called '**borderland brokers**', respond to, and help shape changing centre and periphery relations in post-war transitions.

The research team selected life histories of four brokers, two for each country. [PositiveNegatives](#) is working on a 'scrapbook' in which the key themes of research, concepts, country profiles and brokers' stories are presented in an engaging way through the juxtaposition of text and illustration.

The scrapbook resembles the comic format, and yet it is something different from a linear comic story (you can find two examples from the draft below). The innovative approach offered by the scrapbook format offers a unique opportunity to engage policy audiences, but also the wider public on themes such as transitional justice, devolution, and inclusive post-war development.

To further the project's impact on public awareness of these themes, we are planning an **exhibition** of our work in the countries of study. We are looking at engaging with local artists to **commission a piece of conceptual art** to complement the scrapbook.

The idea is to commission two artists for each country. Each artist will develop their own piece independently; however, they will have to consider the following **criteria**:

1. The piece will be **conceptual** and it will elaborate on at least one of the overarching research themes. The **main research themes** are: brokerage/mediation, brokers' mobility and shifting roles, centre-periphery relationships, borderland regions as centres of innovation and rebellion, borders and boundaries (geographic and cultural/visible and invisible), post-war dynamics.
2. The artwork will be a **stand-alone piece**, which can be understood independently.
3. Ideally, it will also engage in a **dialogue with the scrapbook**, so that the overall exhibition retains an organic outlook.
4. For logistic reasons, the artwork will be in **A3 format**.

The exhibition will take place between the end of April and the beginning of May 2018 (dates to be confirmed). The conceptual artwork should be completed no later than **March 2018**.

¹ The project builds on two existing research projects: *Borderlands, Brokers and Peacebuilding in Sri Lanka and Nepal: War to Peace Transitions viewed from the margins* (funded by ESRC Dec 2015- Nov 2017); and *State, Frontiers and Conflict in the Asia-Pacific* (funded by the University of Melbourne 2014-18). It also draws on several academic and policy networks established through these projects.

The exhibition will travel from Kathmandu, Nepal, to Colombo, Sri Lanka, with a final stop in London, UK. We are looking at exhibiting our work in borderlands regions where research was undertaken too, i.e. the Tarai region in Nepal and Batticaloa in Sri Lanka.

If you are interested and want to collaborate with us, please send us your ideas for the concept art. Our team will review all ideas and portfolios we receive. We will be in touch to let you know our final choice for the commission.

Please contact us if you need more information on the project or if you have any questions/comments. We are happy to share the scrapbook draft if this can help you with the development of the concept.

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