

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

Nine Worlds: Technology for People

Technology for people is about *Things* that people use to do *Stuff* and how the things and stuff change people.

We're about cauldrons and contraception, wigs and wardrobes, sofas and systems. And computers, the internet, infrastructure, the future, electronics, trains, and many other things.

We want you to come and do stuff with us.

12-14 august. CFP closes 22nd may

No experience necessary

These sessions are going to be run on a no experience necessary basis.

You don't have to have ever given a talk, have sat on a panel, or have run a workshop. We'll help you express your idea in the best way.

Diversity is good

We really care about diversity. We've been in places which do it badly. We've worked on safer spaces teams before. We've written open letters, and sent quiet emails. We're trying to do it right.

Access adjustments will be made no matter what your needs are. We have our own needs, and we know that at times it's hard to ask, or that you might not always get what you need.

A stringent safer spaces policy applies to all of Nine Worlds and will be enforced quickly and effectively.

Content notes for common triggers will be expected from participants, visitors and in all communications. If you need rarer, specific warnings, let us know.

What are we talking about

In short, anything!

We're not just looking at technology as objects, we're interested in how it's talked about, both inside of and outside of fiction, and its effects on people.

Also on the agenda is new media, how the internet and other new media are changing our world, and what it's like to exist in the technology industry from a variety of perspectives.

Dealing with the future, we're going to be talking about things that are in vogue, like the 'internet of things' and 'wearables', but also dusting off historical ideas of the future and asking what they mean today.

We're especially interested in things that help people do stuff but which aren't thought of as technology - everything from makeup to shoes is great. We're centring diverse contributions and how technology is used to oppress or can be used to liberate.

We really really really want to hear about how technology affects your oppression - How technology is used to oppress you and how you use technology (even if it's really simple) to help cope with oppression, or fight it, we really want to hear about it.

Things that we'd like to hear about

Here's some ideas for subjects, if it's not on there, you should still suggest something

- Global warming, famine, flooding, earthquakes and other (un)natural disasters.
- Technologies of power and violence.
- Queer futures, trans futures, straight dystopias.
- Black futures, brown futures, white dystopias, afrofuturism.
- Logistics, container ships, supply chains, the people at either end of them.
- Transport, the chunnel, crossrail, the colonial railways, bike, ferries, cars, and the people that surround them.
- Computers, the internet, its infrastructure, how it oppresses, how it liberates, how facebook outed you to your parents and how you found yourself on a web forum.
- Time, ways of keeping it, and how we measure it changes society.
- Cameras, selfies, and technologies of vision. Bodycams. Guns, and whether they kill people or people kill people. Who they kill, who kills

with them.

- Fashion. Wearables, if you must. How shoulder pads changed the course of history (for you, for the world). The reasoning behind weird bra sizing systems. Weird materials used in everyday clothes.
- Migration- How does technology enforce borders, and how is it used to overcome them. What technologies are useful or antagonistic to which migrants and refugees?
- Disability. How does a wheelchair fit into a convention? the world? How will we do better in the future? worse? How do speech to text voices enforce gender?
- CYBORGS. Figurative, literal, how you can be considered a cyborg.
- Bodies, in all contexts. Fatphobia, body diversities, how clothes and other technologies privilege or disprivilege certain bodies.
- Drones. The kind which kill people from 10,000 feet, and the kind that fit in your hand.
- Fictional technologies. How they effect real technology. How they help us understand it.
- Space. Should we leave the planet? Can we? Who gets to ride in the

lifeboats of a dying earth?

- Sex. Condoms, contraception, dildos. Poems about how weird sex toys let you realise you were ace. (18+ sessions are an option)
- Cake. Cooking is science. Ovens are technology.
- Medicine, medication, your meds. Where your meds come from. How your meds affect you. Why you can't get meds you need.
- Numbers, Cool math tricks, Cryptography, Security, keeping your parents out of your text messages.

Just some ideas, and they're pretty boring.

We're sure you can come up with weirder ones that are ten times more fun.

We know you've got cool things you can say, please let us help you say them.

How to suggest a thing

We're asking for 100-300 word informal proposals summarising:

What you want to do

Do you have a bugbear that you'd like to talk about on a panel? An idea for an entire panel with some other people? A workshop?

What's it about?

What do you want to talk about? Is it cooking or soldering or how your race affects access to NHS assistive technology?

How it fits into the track

Why is what you're talking about related to the track. What part of your discussion is about a thing that helps people do stuff?

What you'll need to do it

Will you need a projector? a briefing on how to deal with panels? Specific content notes? Tell us what's nice to have, and what you must have.

Why we should give it space at Nine Worlds.

Nine Worlds is a unique space in the UK, and even across the world. Why here?

You need to submit these [to this form \(bit.ly/9w_TFP_CFP\)](https://bit.ly/9w_TFP_CFP), before midnight on Sunday the **22nd of May**. We'll let you know by the 1st of June.

Examples

Here's a few examples of how you should send us a suggestion, in case you're unsure how to do it:

Are cracked phone screens a disability?

Hi, I've been doing research and theory considering phone screens as part of the modern day body, and how when these break we experience a disadvantage. I'd like to have a discussion with other disabled people about how our assistive technology (like wheelchairs) exists as part of us. I'd like to do this in an academic space if that's possible?

I think it's a good idea to run this session in the technology for people content group, and at Nine Worlds, because we can provoke a wide range of responses from a lot of different experiences.

The science of bras.

This suggestion focuses on how materials science has shaped the modern bra, and how the modern bra has shaped womens liberation.

Taking the form of a workshop among people who have breasts (or, wish to have breasts, such as trans women without access to

hormone replacement therapy) in which I will lead the disassembly of a series of bras and discussion of the effects on fashion, sport, and liberation within these frames.

Ideally this would happen in conjunction with someone with a materials science background, as I specialise in the history. A small room, of between 20 to 30 people, would be perfect for this session, and I think Nine Worlds is the right venue for this because of your unique fusion of relaxed fan exploration and serious attitudes to oppression.

Steam power, rail, and colonialism.

Hi, I'm fascinated by the way that the British empire used rail and steam power to seize, control and oppress massive amounts of land and people. I've got enough material for a short talk (about 15 minutes) and then I'd like to have a discussion with other people working on issues of colonialism and technology if that's possible? I've got some slides I'd like to show along with it if that's ok?

I think it's really important that these discussions are had in a space where the voices of colonised people are centered, and that we can approach this informally as activists and amateurs.

FAQ

Can I get paid/travel covered/expenses? A comp ticket?

A small number of day passes to the convention are available for no cost to people who would otherwise not be able to give a session. These will be allocated on the basis of encouraging diverse voices leading the content group.

Sadly, organisers have only been allocated a very small budget and can only spend this helping people who experience oppression with minimal expenses.

Wait anyone can suggest a session?

Yes. Anyone. Everyone. In fact, we don't want to know who you are until after we've decided whether we like your idea.

There is one exception: discussions of oppression are subject to "nothing about us without us"- no white people leading discussions on race, no men talking about sexism, etc. We'll check with you over email that you've the necessary lived experience of oppression to talk about what you're suggesting, and believe you if you say you do.

Can I do this really weird session?

YES!

Please!

Well. Don't break the laws of physics. We'd probably get shouted at if you broke UK law too. We're biased against having one person talking for an entire hour, but if you've got a really good idea, let us know and we'll talk about it.

But want to hang some art in the hallway, give a 30 minute interpretive dance, organise a group rant, a workshop, give a 20 minute presentation, or something else entirely?

You can do that.

You can do more.

Suggest it.

We'll work it out.

What's the selection process?

Everything goes into a google document. We won't see your email address or any identifying information at this stage.

We read everything, and work out if it's a good fit for the content we're

trying to run.

Then we talk to you, telling you what we think and how we want to fit your idea into the track. We'll ask for a bio then (and offer help writing them) and an image that represents you (it doesn't have to be a photo).

Summary

We're asking for proposals of diverse and non-traditional sessions relating to the theme of *Technology for People*.

These proposals should cover

- What you want to do
- What the subject matter is
- How it fits into the theme
- What your requirements are
- Why Nine Worlds is the best place for it

These should be submitted to [this google form](https://bit.ly/9w_TFP_CFP) (bit.ly/9w_TFP_CFP) before the **22nd of May**.