SelfMadeHero's Graphic Anthology Programme 2021 – FAQs

What is SelfMadeHero's Graphic Anthology Programme?
Launching in February 2021, SelfMadeHero's Graphic Anthology Programme (GAP) is designed to find, develop, publish and promote emerging comic-book artists from Black, Asian, Arab, mixed-race, Romani/Traveller and non-white Latinx backgrounds from across the UK. Working in partnership with writer development agency Spread the Word, SelfMadeHero will identify eight exceptional emerging comic-book artists and give them the tools to become publishable creators. Beginning in May, participants will embark on a 12-week online mentoring programme led by five established graphic novelists: Asia Alfasi, Catherine Anyango Grünewald, Sonia Leong and Woodrow Phoenix. With the mentors' support, each participant will create a graphic short story, which will then be included in an anthology to be published by SelfMadeHero in October 2021.

Why are you running this Programme?
The Programme builds on the results of a 2020 survey commissioned by UK Comics Laureate Hannah Berry and carried out by the Audience Agency, which found that Black and Minority Ethnic artists were less likely to be published by traditional print publishers (38%) than their white counterparts (50%). This Programme has been developed to address the ongoing lack of opportunities available for artists from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds to find an agent and receive sustained professional input and quality feedback to produce work that will be published.

The Graphic Anthology Programme has responded to this lack by putting in place this development scheme for the UK's emerging talent, with the main objective of increasing the number of creators from under-represented communities being published.

Who is the Graphic Anthology Programme for?
The Programme is for emerging comic-book artists, specifically any comics artist or illustrator from a Black, Asian, Arab, mixed-race, Romani/Traveller or non-white Latinx background who has not yet been published by a traditional print publisher. Participants must be over 18 and resident in the UK.

What does the Graphic Anthology Programme offer?
Successful applicants will be offered mentoring, support and networking opportunities, including:
- Eight craft and career masterclasses with leading industry professionals;
- Three hours of mentoring per week (to include a one-hour Zoom session and two hours of feedback) for 12 weeks;
- Participation in two discussion groups per month to gain valuable feedback on your project and give feedback to your fellow participants in return;
- Live online event: an industry networking session, with guest agents and publishers;
- Live online event: highlighting opportunities for comic-book artists in the film industry;
- Live online event: assessing the outcomes and next steps for mentees, including opportunities, funding, etc.

Do I have to pay anything?
No, participation in the Programme is free. Travel and other costs associated with participating in the Programme will be covered by the funders: Arts Council England, SelfMadeHero, Abrams & Chronicle Books, Oiffy and The Lakes International Comics Art Festival.

Will I get paid to participate?
You will not get paid to attend this Programme. However, you will be paid for the pages that you contribute to the anthology that is published at the end of the Programme (up to 8 pages).

Will the Programme be online or in person?
The Programme will be run online via Zoom (or equivalent). We are also monitoring advice from the government, and will make a decision in the autumn as to the possibility of travelling to a book launch event in October 2021.

What are the Programme dates?
The selection process will be completed by 19 April 2021. The programme of activity will start on **18 May 2021** and will end on **11 August 2021**. A full schedule of dates will be made available to successful applicants.

Will the Programme take up much of my time?
The Graphic Anthology Programme is for artists who are committed to taking their work to the next level and who aspire to being published and having a career as a comic-book artist/graphic novelist. You will need to be available to participate across all 12 weeks of the Programme. The discussion groups will take place twice a month and will last 1.5 hours each time (there will be six sessions in total). You will also be expected to spend 30 minutes reading your group members' art/writing pages in preparation for each session. There will be eight graphic novel craft and career masterclasses. Attendance is mandatory as part of the terms and conditions of the Programme (but recordings of masterclasses will be available if you have a valid excuse for non-attendance). You will also need to find time to work on your short story for a minimum of seven hours per week so that it can progress during the Programme. We estimate that the Programme will take up approximately **12 hours per week** – please consider this carefully before applying.

How do I apply?
Applications may be submitted either online (together with artwork) through our Submittable page: https://selfmadehero.submittable.com/submit (preferred); or using a paper form downloadable from www.selfmadehero.com/graphic-anthology-programme and posted (together with artwork) to: SelfMadeHero (GAP), 139 Pancras Road, London, NW1 1UN; or as an audio or video file submitted (together with artwork) through our Submittable page. If you have access requirements and need further assistance to apply, please contact: gap@selfmadehero.com.

In each case, you will need to submit a sample of your work of between 4 (minimum) and 10 (maximum) pages of sequential comics art. The sequential art samples sent as part of your application should demonstrate some comic-book storytelling skills, but do not need to be perfect (that's why you're applying for this Programme!). The sample may be an example of any sort of narrative, be it fiction or non-fiction. The pages may contain pictures and words, or comic-book panels and speech bubbles; however, if there are no words (and just pictures), then the sample should show a story progression.

What is the judging process?
Entries will be anonymised and will then be sifted by SelfMadeHero and Spread the Word's designated first readers. The judging team will then examine the sifted entries. Shortlisted applicants will be invited for an interview online via Zoom (or equivalent) between 14 and 21 April 2021. Successful applicants will be notified around the 23 April 2021. Please check that

you are available on these dates before applying. We will confirm the interview format and other details in April 2021.

Who are the judges?
Asia Alfasi, Catherine Anyango Grünewald, Emma Hayley, Txabi Jones, Sonia Leong, Woodrow Phoenix and Ayoola Solarin.

Who is eligible to apply?
1. The Programme is for artists from specific under-represented communities in publishing, namely those from Black, Asian, Arab, mixed-race, Romani/Traveller or non-white Latinx backgrounds.
2. Applications are open to artists aged 18+ who live full-time in the UK.
3. Applicants must be unagented (this applies to graphic novel representation only) and unpublished. We define this as meaning:
   a. You do not currently have a literary agent representing you for graphic novels;
   b. You do not have an existing book contract with a publisher;
   c. You have not previously published a full-length graphic novel; but
   d. Previously self-published artists can apply; and
   e. If you have had a short story published by a traditional print publisher, you can apply.

You will also need to be available to commit to the 12-week-long Programme, which will run from **18 May 2021** to **11 August 2021.**

Do I need to have a finished graphic novel to apply?
No, but you will need to submit samples of some of your comics pages, either unpublished or self-published. The ultimate aim is for each artist to end the Programme with a finished eight-page graphic short story, which will be published by SelfMadeHero. You will need to submit these samples to apply, as outlined above.

I'm a self-published comics creator, can I apply?
Yes, previously self-published artists can apply.

I'm a writer and I can't draw. Is this Programme open to me?
This Programme is predominantly for artists. However, if you are part of an artist/writer duo, then one of you can apply on behalf of the duo.

I have access needs. What should I do?
If you have access requirements that will need to be supported for you to participate in the Programme, please complete the relevant section in the submission form when submitting your application.

When is the deadline to apply?
The application window will open on Friday 19 February 2021 and close at **11.59pm on Friday, 26 March 2021**. Entries submitted after the closing date will not be accepted.

What happens after I submit my application?
SelfMadeHero will respond to all applicants regarding the status of their application in April 2021. Please note that due to the high number of applications we expect for this Programme, we are unable to give individual feedback.

When does the Programme start?
The Graphic Anthology Programme will start on 18 May 2021 with an online welcome event bringing together the participants, mentors and publishing team. The Programme will run through to 11 August 2021.

My question isn't listed here – what do I do?
Please also refer to our Terms and Conditions and Eligibility Criteria for the Graphic Anthology Programme (both downloadable from: www.selfmadehero.com/graphic-anthology-programme). If you still have any questions, please contact: gap@selfmadehero.com.

Good luck with your application.

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