

Plans for 2021-2024: Documentary Group

Overall objective

To support the RPS [Strategic Plan](#) *Photography for Everyone* and to enhance the relevance for **Documentary Photography** by engaging more diverse audiences and ensuring our activities self-fund. We have focussed our goals and 2021-2024 targets under the RPS Mission of *inspiration, creativity, and connection*:

Inspire – showcase inspiring photography and to shed new light on subjects of importance

These activities are focussed around showcasing and celebrating high quality photographic work and thinking, which is fundamental to the RPS's purpose:

1. **Engagement Talks** - range of talks by established and upcoming photographers working on long-term projects and visual storytelling. *Target: at least 6 Talks per year*
2. Develop our **Decisive Moment** (DM) magazine, currently published quarterly and on-line (via *issuu*), with themed approach and ca. 120 pages to enable high quality documentary projects to be given sufficient 'space'. Promote DM distribution and readership outside the RPS to increase visibility and relevance. *Target: increase external readership by 20%.*
3. **Documentary Photographer of the Year** (DPOTY) – For 2021, we have expanded to an 'open competition', with 'student' and member' categories and a world-class panel of judges. Prizes to support development. *Target: 20% increase in applications on previous year. DPOTY judging panel to be more diverse and international. Plan a DPOTY2023.*
4. **DPOTY Exhibition** – we plan to tour the DPOTY with images from winners and commended entries across the UK in 2022. *Target: at least 3 venues around UK for exhibition in 2022.*

Create - encouraging a deeper understanding of photography and providing resources for photographic education

To develop the range and reach of our educational activities. We want to help photographers develop their practice, and also educate non-photographers about what is current in documentary photography:

1. **'Telling Stories' Workshops** – build on our successful documentary focussed series of workshops and education covering the lifecycle of a project from initial idea and intent, developing narrative, conducting research, through execution, to editing, sequencing and 'getting it out there'. *Target: at least 3 workshops per year*
2. **Distinction Advisory** – work with Distinctions and Regions to host several documentary-focussed Advisory days. Continue to work with Distinctions to develop advice and supportive articles (e.g. in DM) for documentary projects. *Target: at least one per year.*
3. **Engage University courses** - focussed on documentary, following on from 'education' focussed editions of Decisive Moment and DPOTY. Show-case exceptional student work in Decisive Moment. *Target: Student entry to DPOTY.*
4. **Support individual development** - target competition prizes to support photographers (e.g. bursaries, mentorship), provide ongoing support to workshop attendees.

Connect – promote belonging and inclusivity, by supporting and engaging widely

To engage with more people and connect with other communities, including those who are not photographers, to appreciate the value of documentary photography, so that it is enjoyed and accessible to as many people as possible:

1. **Work with groups outside RPS** such as *PhotoScratch, Photo Forum, MPF* and recognised documentary photographers and publishers to put on documentary focussed events. *Target: at least one event per year*

2. **Regional and international activities** – continue to support and help fund sub-groups (e.g. help with room hire or Zoom subscription) and expand to cover new regions, subject to sufficient interest and volunteers. Showcase sub-group work in DM and social media. Where there is no active sub-group, work with the Region Organisers. Promote documentary internationally. *Target: engage international judges for DPOTY to broaden reach. Work with other Subject Groups to address regions with no sub-groups.*
3. **Website and social media** – develop our RPS website and social media to better engage younger and more diverse documentary photographers (currently being reviewed and revamped). *Target: increase social media ‘hits’ by 20% and provide regular image driven content.*
4. **DG Bi-monthly competition** – restart our online bi-monthly single image competition with documentary-focussed books as prizes. *Target: re-start in late 2021 or early 2022*
5. **Monthly Newsletter** – continue to publish in the months with no Decisive Moment publication. *Target: Quarterly publication with 20% increase annually in external readership.*

Schedule of Events 2021-2022 – see [RPS Events](#) for details and up to date information:

Engagement Talks - documentary talk series		
- <i>Arteh Odjidja and Melanie Friend</i>	Feb and Mar 2021	
- <i>John Walmsley</i>	Apr 2021	
- <i>Alys Tomlinson and Daniel Meadows</i>	May 2021	
- <i>KC Nwakalor</i>	May 2021	
- <i>Mimi Mollica</i>	Oct 2021	
- <i>Roy Mehta, Jack Low and Carolyn Mendelsohn</i>	early 2022	
DPOTY 2021 Expansion, Intl Judges and Launch		
DPOTY 2021 competition submissions	From 6 May to 5 Aug 2021	
<i>DPOTY 2021 Awards – On line</i>	<i>Dec 2021</i>	
<i>DPOTY Exhibition Oxford (St Johns)</i>	<i>Feb-Mar 2022</i>	
<i>DPOTY Exhibition - Fujifilm, HoP, London</i>	<i>Mar-Apr 2022</i>	
<i>DPOTY Exhibition – Newcastle (Arts Centre)</i>	<i>May-June 2022</i>	
<i>DPOTY Exhibition - Chippenham</i>	<i>Oct-Nov 2022</i>	
<i>DPOTY Exhibition – more dates to follow</i>		
Telling Stories Workshop Series (online)	Deliver new workshops	
- Starting Out and planning	<i>Jan, Apr 2021, Dec 2021</i>	
- Execution and the Shoot	<i>Feb, May 2021, Jan 2022</i>	
- Editing and Sequencing	<i>Mar, Jun 2021, Sep 2021, Feb 2022</i>	
Documentary Advisory (TBC)	(TBC)	
Ongoing community activities		
Update Website and Resources pages	Monthly, new content	
Social media FB, IG	Regular content / Takeovers	
Decisive Moment – online magazine issues	End Jan, Apr, Jul and Oct	
Bi-monthly photographic competition	Restart in early 2022	
Regional sub-group activities – (see RPS Doc Events for updates)		
<i>Local meetings, photomeets, exhibitions, talks</i>	All year	

Alignment of Documentary Plan Activities to RPS Strategic Plan's 21 Themes

Inspire		
Exhibitions	<i>UK Touring DPOTY2021 Exhibition (rps.org/dpoty)</i>	<i>P</i>
RPS Awards	<i>n/a</i>	
The RPS Journal	<i>Provide occasional articles, e.g. DPOTY winners</i>	<i>P</i>
The 'New' RPS Collection	<i>n/a</i>	
Campaigns	<i>n/a</i>	
Photographer Laureate	<i>n/a</i>	
Publication / Print Sales	<i>n/a</i>	
Create		
Education Programmes	<i>Engagement Talks, Telling Stories Workshops, post-workshop Support</i>	<i>I, M, P, F</i>
RPS Distinctions	<i>Advisory Events</i>	<i>M</i>
Chartered Photographer	<i>n/a?</i>	
The photographer 'journey'	<i>Engage more widely, external groups, through to membership</i>	<i>P</i>
National Photo Day	<i>Opportunity?</i>	
Photography for Wellbeing	<i>Support community-based projects??</i>	
RPS House	<i>Host PhotoScratch or similar events, livestream Engagement Talks, potential DPOTY exhibition in outside space – Summer 2022</i>	<i>I, P</i>
Connect		
Regional Hubs	<i>Work with Regions on Events, our Regional sub-groups</i>	<i>M</i>
International Community	<i>DPOTY expanded, with diverse international judges New US committee member</i>	<i>I, P</i>
Specialist Groups	<i>Decisive Moment online magazine (https://rps.org/groups/documentary/the-decisive-moment-the-quarterly-journal-of-the-documentary-group/)</i>	<i>E, M</i>
The RPS 'at home'	<i>Continue online Zoom content and Talks</i>	<i>M</i>
Young photographers	<i>Student DPOTY category, connect to 'doc focussed Uni'</i>	<i>I, P</i>
Mentorship	<i>Offer to those completing our Workshop series</i>	<i>M</i>
Multi-media destination	<i>Expand our 'Resources' website page (https://rps.org/groups/documentary/resources/) Maybe video links, interviews</i>	<i>M, P</i>

RPS Overall Aims (how incorporated)

- I -Inclusion – what are we doing?
- E -Environmental and Social Responsibility
- M -Member Involvement – measure active involvement?
- F -Financial Sustainability – overall financial position
- P -Profile Raising – externally, nationally and globally, and within RPS