



**Press Release 19 February 2024**

**New Leadership for East Midlands' digital placemaking agency Threshold Studios.**



Co-founder and Chief Executive of [Threshold Studios](#) Uzma Johal MBE, is leaving the organisation to take up a new role at Counterculture. Threshold's Co-Director Samantha Lindley will take up the reins, becoming the organisation's new CEO.

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Threshold Studios specialises in the commissioning and production of art in the public realm using digital technologies. Its flagship project is [Frequency Festival](#), the biennial celebration of digital culture and creativity. In 2024 its core operation will relocate to the historic city of Lincoln.

**Uzma Johal MBE comments:**

*"After 25 years at the helm of Threshold, the time is right for me to pass the leadership baton onto Sam. I am immensely proud of Threshold's work to date, its impacts and reach. In 2022, our senior team and the Board embarked on an intensive period of fundraising and business development to drive forward our future ambitions for growth. Foundations have been laid that will ensure Threshold takes a leading role in the development of digital placemaking initiatives in Lincoln and beyond. Threshold is proud to be an [ACE National Portfolio Organisation](#) and a key partner in the city of Lincoln's ambitious Be Lincoln [Town Deal](#) Fund, under the Lincoln Connected project in partnership with Destination Lincolnshire. We have also just delivered our most successful Frequency Festival to date - all initiatives that Sam has been so pivotal in driving.*

*Threshold is entering a period of growth and is being re-imagined beyond its founders. Barry and I started the organisation nearly 25 years ago as a voluntary artist led group, championing creative media for social change, and over that time there have been seismic shifts in the cultural landscape. We have witnessed the rise of technology, social, environmental, and economic highs and lows, and new challenges for the communities we have always been committed to serve. The legacy of this journey is an exciting one; under Sam's leadership, the organisation will continue to thrive and grow, and I know her passion and commitment for what we have achieved over the years will continue unabashed."*

**Sam Lindley, Chief Executive and Creative Director has been Co-Director of Threshold since 2017.**

**She comments:**

*"I wish Uzma the very best for her new endeavours. Having worked together for such a long time I am hugely appreciative of her leadership, and friendship over the years and everything that brought us to this this new chapter for Threshold's future.*

*As we start to develop the next iteration of Frequency for 2025 and the next exciting stages of the Lincoln Connected project, our legacy of commitment to cultural equity and more will continue on as Threshold seeks to innovate, collaborate, and create impact in place as we enter the next stage of our journey."*

**Prof. Harriet Gross, Chair of Threshold's Board of Directors comments:**

*"The board and I wish to extend our heartfelt thanks to Uzma for steering such a superb ship for more than 25 years. She has skilfully navigated the choppy waters of arts funding, embracing every challenge with enthusiasm. Her knowledge of the arts and digital sector is unsurpassed, and we know she will remain a passionate advocate for Threshold as she embarks on her new ventures. We welcome Sam into her new role and look forward to working with her and the wider team as we relocate to Lincoln and begin an exciting period of staff recruitment."*

Uzma departs on a high with Threshold having just delivered the seventh biennial [Frequency Festival of Digital Culture](#) in Lincoln – its most successful iteration to date. Frequency took place in October 2023 and across its four days it welcomed thousands of visitors to the city supporting the local economy by generating net economic impact of over £700,000.

With Threshold's NPO status and a new Digital Placemaking partnership in place with Destination Lincolnshire the organisation will continue connecting people and places through digital encounters, artistic collaboration, and talent development in Lincoln, and will develop new experiences in public spaces across Lincolnshire, the East Midlands, and the UK.

**Rebecca Blackman, East Midlands Director at Arts Council England, said:** *"Uzma has contributed so much to the East Midlands in her work at Threshold. She's brought digital art and creativity to more people in more places across the region, as well as launching the hugely popular Frequency Festival which provides many opportunities for artists to present exciting work.*

*"Uzma is a well-regarded leader in the cultural sector. We thank her for working closely with the Arts Council for many years, both as director of Threshold and as a former member of our Midlands Area Council, and we wish her the best of luck in her new role with Counterculture. With Threshold well established as one of the region's key cultural organisations and with Frequency Festival now a key*

*date in Lincoln's cultural diary, we're looking forward to working with Sam as she leads the organisation through an exciting new period."*

Threshold will soon be seeking passionate cultural advocates to join both its staff team and its Board of Directors. For more information email [sam@thresholdstudios.tv](mailto:sam@thresholdstudios.tv) or keep an eye out on Threshold's website and social media in the coming weeks.

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## **Notes to Editors**

### **About Threshold Studios**

Established in 1998 in Northampton by Uzma Johal and Barry Hale, Threshold Studios is a creative media and visual arts agency working with new and emerging technologies and talent; specialising in the production and exhibition of digital, moving image and public realm works. It is a not-for-profit social enterprise and an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation that develops partnerships across the arts and creative media industries, the public sector, grassroots communities, and higher education.

Threshold's work is anchored around **People, Projects, and Place**.

#### **People**

Through commissioning work, creating talent and skills development programmes, and developing sector-led research and debate, Threshold generates opportunities for emerging and established talent to develop and thrive.

#### **Projects**

Threshold designs and produces art and technology projects focused on transforming public experiences of shared spaces. Frequency Festival is its flagship project, running for 12 years in the city of Lincoln. Threshold offers digital placemaking expertise, consultancy, and partnership development.

#### **Place**

Threshold's creative digital placemaking activity generates positive social and economic impacts, inspiring innovation, social purpose, cultural change, and regeneration through shared equitable experiences.

<http://www.thresholdstudios.tv>

<http://www.frequencyfestival.org.uk>

Main image Uzma Johal MBE with new CEO Samantha Lindley (foreground)

Image one: Darren Henley CBE at the launch of the 2023 Frequency Festival of Digital Culture in Lincoln.



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Image two:

Threshold Chief Executive Sam Lindley (with microphone) speaking at the 2023 Frequency Festival of Digital Culture.



Images 3 and 4: Audiences embracing digital culture at Lincoln sites.





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