

**Immediate release**

**23-01-2018**

## **Photography project unites migrant and Scottish-born Glaswegians**

A ground-breaking new project exploring social integration and community through the lens of a camera will launch in Scotland on January 29th 2018. Changing Lenses will provide free professional workshops to migrants and citizens in which they will learn valuable skills while exploring their connections and identities.

The project is organised by Migrant Voice, who supports migrants to speak in the media and public life, and is hosted by the Centre for Contemporary Art. It follows the All Party Parliamentary Group on Social Integration sounding the alarm on cohesion in August, pointing out that the hostile tone of debate and lack of support for community organisations is throwing up barriers to successful settlement and integration.

Changing Lenses was piloted in London over the autumn. Previous Migrant Voice-led arts projects include, A Story in a Poem, where Glaswegians of all backgrounds produced an original poetry anthology together over several months. Changing Lenses will be led Migrant Voice's Glasgow Network Community Officer Amparo Fortuny, who is also a film director and producer with Photographer Karen Gordon. It will run from the end of January through to March, and close with an exhibition of participants' work.

### **Nazek Ramadan, Migrant Voice's director, said:**

"Everyone wants to live well together. In a climate of hostility towards migrants, it is important for people to be able to celebrate the benefits newcomers bring. Changing Lenses will allow for honest discussions about how people navigate settling in and how host communities react and engage with migration, while drawing out untapped Glaswegian talent and showcasing it. We're looking forward to the results!"

### **Louise Sweet, a participant in the London pilot project, said:**

"Changing Lenses was designed to foster integration. It brought together migrants who had not met before and provided technical information on how to use cameras to record our lives, memories and goals. It was an opportunity to build friendships, skills and confidence. I welcome the opportunity to put what I learned into practice."

**Ends**

### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

1. Changing Lenses will run on Mondays from 6-8pm over nine sessions from Jan 29th-Mar 26<sup>th</sup> Centre for Contemporary Arts (CCA), 350 Sauchiehall St, Glasgow G2 3JD The course is free and attendance at all sessions is expected for participants. If interested please contact [amparo@migrantvoice.org](mailto:amparo@migrantvoice.org)
2. Migrant Voice is a migrant-led organisation which develops the skills, capacity and confidence of members of migrant communities. It works to amplify migrant voices and representation in the media and public life, and has a growing network in Glasgow. Its Scottish conference earlier this year was addressed by Europe and international development minister Alasdair Allan MSP.

For more information about this release please contact [press@migrantvoice.org](mailto:press@migrantvoice.org)