



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

## ***News Release***

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### **Dangerous women at heart of International Women's Day**

Acclaimed writers, researchers and artists are among those taking part in an online forum to explore the idea of dangerous women.

They have been invited to contribute to the new resource hosted by the University of Edinburgh which seeks to highlight women's stories, perspectives and experiences.

Organisers say the initiative has been inspired in part by a front page headline from last year that characterised the Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon as "The most dangerous woman in Britain." The headline prompted a debate in the media about what the label might signify.

Contributors will be invited to respond to the question "What does it mean to be a dangerous woman?" through a variety of media to be posted online.

The Dangerous Women project is being launched by the University's Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities to celebrate female achievement on the eve of International Women's Day and in the year ahead.

The Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities (IASH) is inviting commentators to offer responses in the form of essays, videos, images, poetry, or other creative media.

Over the next 12 months acclaimed commentators from across the globe will be invited to reflect on contemporary gender issues through answering the project question, and explore the contributions women are making to the world.

The Dangerous Women Project will be launched tonight (Monday, March 7) at the Scottish Storytelling Centre in Edinburgh.

Stand-up comedian Susan Morrison will compere the evening. A panel from diverse backgrounds will engage in a discussion about what makes a dangerous woman in today's world.

Panelists will include social justice researcher and campaigner Dr Akwugo Emejulu, pioneering chemist Professor Lesley Yellowlees and award-winning author Lucy Ribchester.

Guests will be given a preview of the first posts.

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IASH Director Professor Jo Shaw, said: “The Institute for the Advanced Studies in the Humanities is dedicated to fostering dialogue across cultures and disciplines. We are committed to promoting active engagement between academic, creative and civic organisations and the public. Put simply, we aim to help ideas grow.”

Already the project has received more than 170 responses and garnered interest and support from Britain to Japan, and Mexico to Australia, including Nicola Sturgeon, First Minister of Scotland who explained her participation in the project by saying:

“Since becoming First Minister I have looked to use my position to send out a positive and strong message to girls and women that there should be no limit to your ambition. Terms like ‘dangerous’ belittle the positions of women in power by implying that we should be feared, not trusted or not skilled enough to do the job. I want to challenge the status quo and set an ambitious agenda to make Scotland a fairer and more prosperous nation where opportunities are open to everyone and where everyone is able to contribute their talent, skill and commitment.”

Other contributors who will take part in the project include Anne-Marie Slaughter, President & Chief Executive Officer of the think tank New America; journalist Bidisha SK Mamata, who specialises in human rights, social justice and international affairs; Verónica Cruz Sánchez, human rights activist, and founder of Las Libres; and Sepideh Jodeyri, Iranian poet, literary critic, translator and journalist. The project is proud to be supported by Mary Beard, Professor of Classics at the University of Cambridge.

Contributions will be posted online on the *Dangerous Women’s Project* website: <http://dangerouswomenproject.org/> and on twitter at [https://twitter.com/dangerouswomen\\_](https://twitter.com/dangerouswomen_)

**For further information, please contact:**

Joanne Morrison, Press and PR Office, tel 0131 651 4266; email [joanne.morrison@ed.ac.uk](mailto:joanne.morrison@ed.ac.uk)  
Twitter @EdUniMedia - <https://twitter.com/edinunimedia?lang=en-gb>



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