



HSBC's PR BULLSHIT

ARTIST CALL OUT

BRAND//ISM[®]

DEADLINE EXTENDED
04th Oct 2020

OVERVIEW

Calling all artists: We need your help to expose HSBC's investments in fossil fuels and repression.

In 2019, HSBC launched a new wave of place-branding adverts designed by ad agency J W Thompson . The bank's poster campaign told UK audiences:

You Are Not an Island,
You are Manchester,
You are Birmingham,
You Are Bristol, London, Sheffield, Leeds,
Edinburgh, Newcastle....

Amidst the Brexit storm, HSBC tried to take our identities and cultures, attach their brand and sell it back to us. But it's investment record paints a very different picture.

Banks are not communities. And we are not HSBC.

Banks aren't like money boxes where we put our savings for a rainy day. They are active partners in providing big loans and complex financial services to dodgy companies all over the world.



Every bad project has a bad bank.

HSBC mask their destructive finance and investment practices with millennial-friendly, cosmopolitan-chic adverts which aim to unite us over our shared love of Colombian coffee and Swedish furniture. But their appeal to happy multiculturalism is in sharp contrast to the impacts of their investments abroad including their hand-in-glove financial support for fossil fuel projects, arms companies, deforestation and land grabs .

We're calling on artists to create billboard and bus stop poster artworks to provide an alternative take on HSBC.

We'll be teaming up with groups across the country to create public space art exhibitions of your submitted work - and there will be infonights and events in UK cities. We want to reveal a different side to HSBC's "global citizen" image.

Banks and corporations get to shout their slogans on ad screens across our cities; it's time we had a right of reply.



YOU ARE MORE THAN OUR CAPITAL. YOU'RE AN ICON OF THE WORLD. YOU'RE SALT BEEF BAGELS EATEN OUTSIDE CURRY HOUSES ON THE WAY TO THE SPANIARD'S INN. YOU'RE STRAWBERRIES AND CREAM, CARNIVAL FEVER AND CUP CHAMPIONS.

YOU ARE LONDON.

OPEN TO ALL, FROM CANADA WATER TO POLAND STREET. BECAUSE WHETHER YOU'RE A PEARLY QUEEN OR A SLOANE RANGER, TOGETHER WE ARE ALL PART OF SOMETHING FAR, FAR BIGGER. WE ARE NOT AN ISLAND.



Together we thrive

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ExteriorMedia

ABOUT BRANDALISM

Brandalism is a revolt against the corporate control of our culture and space.

We are an international collective of artists that confront the power of big business and their public relations advertising. Intervening into ad spaces that usually celebrate consumption, Brandalism use 'subvertising' as a lens through which we can view the social and environmental justice issues created by late stage capitalism. Our interventions, exhibitions and workshops aim to agitate, educate and facilitate those who want to challenge corporate power.



ARTWORK SUBMISSIONS

Please email brandalism@riseup.net to say you're interested in making some art for this project.

Final artworks need to be sent via **WeTransfer.com** to brandalism@riseup.net by end of the day on 21st September 2020.

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The artworks will be digitally printed. Please submit them in JPEG or PDF form. In CMYK or Greyscale with 300 dpi resolution.

We are seeking artworks in 2 sizes:

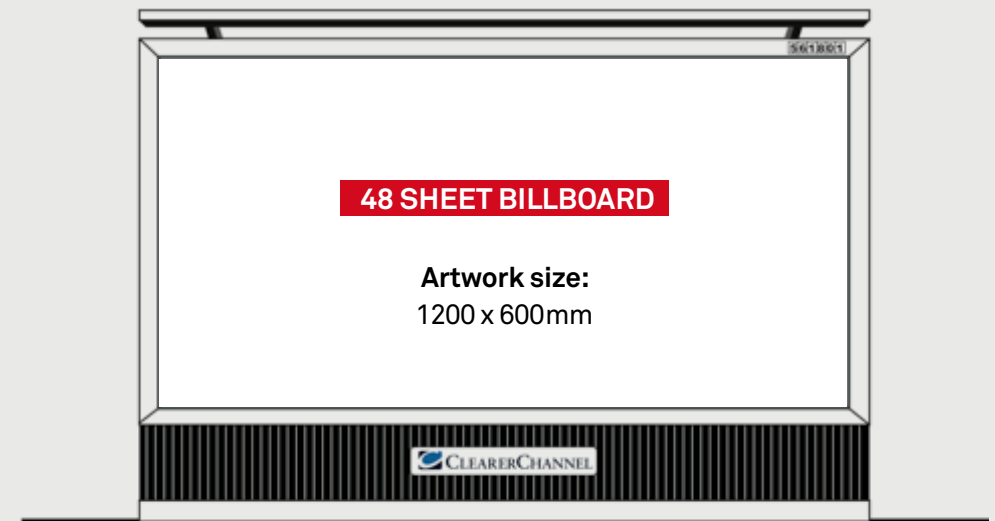
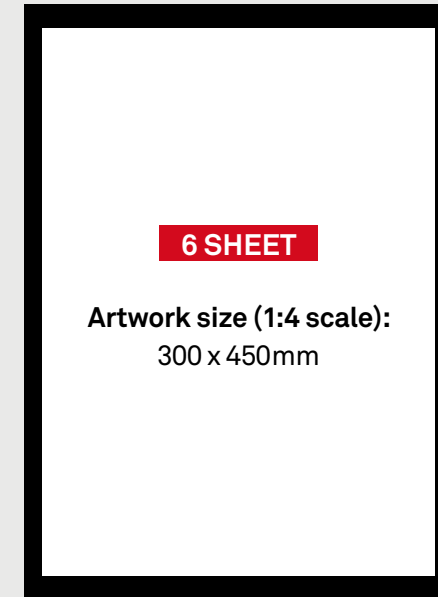
// 6 SHEET BUS SHELTER POSTER

The 6 sheet is one of the most common forms of outdoor advertising around the world. The installation process for these posters is relatively quick
Visible printed area: 1160 x 1760mm
Send your artwork quarter size: 300 x 450mm

//48 SHEET BILLBOARD

The '48 sheet' billboard is 20 foot wide by 10 foot tall. Artwork should be sent in JPEG or PDF form at
1200 x 600mm

48 sheets take longer to install and are more expensive to print than 6 sheets. As such, we may not be able to print every 48 sheet design that is submitted.



THEMES

// Climate

HSBC is one of Europe's largest banks and together with Barclays have been big funders of fossil fuels. Since the international Paris Climate Agreement was signed in 2015, HSBC have poured £67 billion into fossil fuels.

In countries around the world, this has included:

- £10.5 billion for offshore oil and gas drilling
- £3.4 billion for fracked oil and gas
- £2.3 billion for coal power plants.
And £278 million for coal mining.
- £2 billion in tar sands
- £1.7 billion in Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG)
import and export companies.
- £693 million in Arctic Oil and Gas

If HSBC continues to fund fossil fuels, this makes them just as responsible for climate breakdown as BP, Shell or ExxonMobil.

Sources:
[Banking on Climate Change, 2020](#)
[Funding Climate Chaos, 2020](#)

Every **bad project** has a **bad bank**



£67 billion
in fossil fuel projects
since the
Paris Climate Agreement
in 2015

// Funding the arms trade

HSBC have significant investments in weaponry. In 2017 the report “Deadly Investments” found HSBC were investing over £830 million in arms companies. HSBC holds shares in, and arranges loans to, companies like BAE Systems, the main UK supplier to the Royal Saudi Airforce, and whose bombs and fighter jets have caused chaos and destruction in Yemen. The bank also has investments in major arms manufacturers Boeing, Babcock and Rolls Royce.

These investments are in stark contrast to HSBC’s claim to corporate social responsibility. In response to campaigns against them, the bank brought in a ‘Defence Equipment Sector Policy’ which says they “do not provide financial services to customers who solely or primarily manufacturer or sell weapons”. But in practice, it’s business as usual, with the policy nothing more than a PR claim.



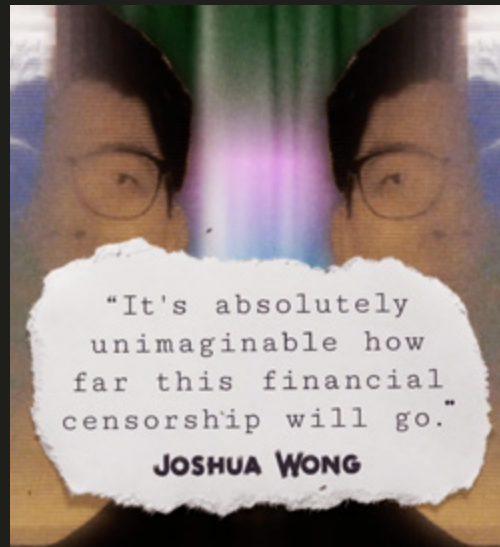
// Hong Kong

HSBC, who are UK-based but whose full title is the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, have strongly backed the authoritarian regime in Hong Kong and China's latest crackdown on pro-democracy protesters. HSBC threw its full weight behind China's imposition of security legislation in the former British colony, issuing a statement and signing petitions in support of the new laws.

HSBC have also cracked down on activists linked to the pro-democracy movement and their access to financial services. Prominent protesters holding accounts with HSBC have been subjected to greater scrutiny by the bank on their income. Hong Kong activist Joshua Wong said:

"It's absolutely unimaginable how far this financial censorship will go."

In the UK, HSBC's brand says *"Together we thrive"*. In Hong Kong, they back repression.



Source:
[HSBC among Hong Kong-based banks cracking down on clients with ties to the pro-democracy movement](#), This is Money, July 2020



// Land Grabs and Deforestation

HSBC holds significant investments in companies like the Olam Group, who have hit scandal over their deforestation for oil palm plantations in Gabon and cocoa in Ghana and the Ivory Coast. Their ongoing investments are driving further destruction and the bank show no signs of dropping them.

The struggle for indigenous autonomy and land rights against giant agribusiness intent on deforestation for palm oil, large-scale farming and logging is not a new issue for HSBC. Following 2012 allegations that it had been financing land-grabbing of indigenous territories and destruction of rainforests in Malaysian Borneo, HSBC promised to mend their ways. But despite the promises, it's been business as usual for the bank.

The Bureau of Investigative Journalism have also highlighted HSBC's relationship with JBS, the world's biggest meat company.



Analysts at HSBC have raised questions about the potential risks of investing in JBS after investigations exposed it's beef farming practices. Although HSBC's own investigation has highlighted

the issue, the company continues to hold shares and bonds in JBS worth some \$9 million, according to recent research by the NGO *Feedback*.

Sources:

Global Witness: "In the Future There Will Be No Forests Left", 2012

Global Witness: "Money to Burn", 2019

<https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/stories/2020-08-12/hsbc-jbs-deforestation-risk>



Above: spoof HSBC poster design by Jonny & George

NEW WEB APP

Write your own HSBC poster text

In addition to seeking artwork submissions of all different styles, we will also publish a simple web app to help members of the public parody HSBC's place-branding posters. The app will allow users to generate their own poster text straight into an HSBC logo template. After collecting and reviewing submissions, some text poster images will be used on social media and we will print the best submissions as bus stop posters for installation around the UK.

To use the simple design app, head to:

www.brandalism.ch/HSBC

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21st September 2020

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