

Artist Commission, Aylesbury 2019-20

Introduction

This commission is part of a three-year project, funded by the Rothschild Foundation, to create the confidence, experience and networks for the communities of Buckinghamshire to present and commission live performance. The overall project is managed by Farnham Maltings who are working with Essex Cultural Diversity Project (ECDP) on this commission.

Since 2007 ECDP has been bringing together artists, museums, libraries, performers and writers with local authorities and commissioners to improve and enhance artistic and cultural diversity, ensure that excellence is thriving, and that cultural integration and understanding is supported and enhanced through arts and cultural activity. ECDP is an Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) working across the East and South East of England to support diversity in arts and cultural practice.

Farnham Maltings was established as an arts centre in 1969. Over the past 15 years the organisation has repositioned itself as a regional development organisation working across South East England. As a NPO, Farnham Maltings runs a programme of work designed to increase the range, quality and audience for theatre across the south east region, has established a network of 200 venues who jointly programme and support a south east regional ecology, creates work for village halls, produces a cohort of the regions' most promising talent and leads a national programme to internationalise the independent theatre sector in partnership with the British Council and UKTI.

Buckinghamshire Library Service is run by Buckinghamshire County Council and has an extensive reach with 30 libraries across the county providing an important service for many local communities, particularly those in rural areas. Buckinghamshire County Council has recently brought together its libraries and cultural services, is re-imagining the library offer and, by supporting the delivery of the new Bucks Cultural Strategy, it recognises the potential to build on their role as accessible community hubs.

The Commission

For the first commission we are looking for an artist(s) or company to work with and within Aylesbury Library. The Libraries and Culture service is keen to explore new and different ways for people to experience libraries. Aylesbury Library reopened in January 2019 after an extensive refurbishment. Sitting in the town centre it is used by a large number of Buckinghamshire residents and includes a children's library, study centre and meeting rooms/flexible spaces.

We are inviting inspiring creative project proposals from artists and companies that respond to the following aims:

- To improve equality of access to cultural activities and opportunities in Buckinghamshire via libraries
- To provide opportunities for creative practitioners from diverse backgrounds
- To engage and involve local communities, removing barriers to participation in the arts

The project should be bold, distinctive, relevant and excellent. It should also include an element of performance and create a legacy artwork for Aylesbury library and its users.

We are also keen that this opportunity is used by the appointed artist/company to learn and stretch their practice, and this learning is shared.

Although preferred, it is not necessary for the appointed artist to live or work in Buckinghamshire, but we would expect them to spend a significant amount of time in Aylesbury and the surrounding area across the duration of the project, and they should have good knowledge of the area.

Application process

The successful commission will be selected by a panel of representatives from ECDP, Farnham Maltings and Buckinghamshire Library Service. A shortlist will be made from the received applications based on how well they meet the above aims and these will be invited to interview to talk further about their proposal before a final decision is made. The commission will be managed by ECDP and the commissioned artist/company will receive ongoing support, advocacy and advice from ECDP and Farnham Maltings throughout.

As work will take place in the library and other public spaces, safeguarding children and vulnerable people is paramount; a full risk assessment will be required for this work and valid DBS accreditation in place if required.

Timescales for Delivery

It is expected that work on the commission will begin in autumn 2019. All work must be finished and invoiced for prior to the end of March 2020. A final timetable for delivery, including milestones to monitor progress against the stated aims, will be established with the successful applicant and payments will be made against this timetable.

Budget

The commission budget is £10,000 and will be treated as a grant. This is inclusive of all expenses and must therefore cover fees, travel, materials and marketing. Some promotion and advertising will be undertaken by the partners, at their cost, and this will be discussed in due course. Payments will be made in instalments, on receipt of invoice, and subject to progress against achieving agreed activity as outlined above. If this is a joint commission one artist/company will need to be the project lead and all payments will be made to them.

The £10,000 can be used as match-funding for a larger project but this should not affect the ability to deliver the project nor the timelines for delivery set out above. If this is the preferred approach then please make this clear in your response and explain how the larger project still meets this brief.

Responding to this Commission

To apply for this commission please email jo@essexcdp.com and include the following:

- An outline of the artistic concept for the commission, including the proposed community engagement process, intended audience and legacy (no more than 1 side of A4).
- A brief description on why you are interested in this commission at this time, how your project promotes diversity and any relevant connections with Buckinghamshire (no more than 1 side of A4).
- A biography/company description with relevant previous work (no more than 2 sides of A4). Please include links to relevant websites and social media/media.
- An outline budget breakdown showing how you would utilise the £10,000 and an approximate timeline for the work.
- The signed declaration and monitoring form included below

Please ensure that proposals are received by **23.59 on 31 July 2019**. Interviews will be held in Aylesbury in September and will include an opportunity for a 15-minute presentation on your proposal.

Additional information

The Buckinghamshire Cultural Strategy recognises that culture is an important issue as the area and, urban areas like Aylesbury in particular, change and develop with major new house growth and economic development. There is recognition that culture can play a greater role in reaching and engaging more people across all communities, *'being fully inclusive, reflecting the county's diversity of perspectives, ideas, skills and aspirations; and securing sufficient levels of financial investment to attend to the inequality of opportunity that our residents face'*.

Culture and the arts are seen as critical to the future success of Buckinghamshire – as a way of giving everyone a voice and an opportunity to express their views and opinions on the changes that will affect local communities over many years to come through new housing and business growth. For this to happen there needs to be more opportunities for artists to work within local communities, and libraries offer a unique and accessible spaces.

To read the Buckinghamshire Cultural Strategy in full visit:

democracy.buckscc.gov.uk/documents/s116862/Appendix%201%20for%20Cultural%20Strategy.pdf

Aylesbury was awarded Garden Town status in January 2017. The ambition is to create truly desirable communities in a well-planned, sustainable environment that makes us proud. Garden Town status allows all partners to better plan for the future, and help in accessing funding to help build and improve Aylesbury's transport links and infrastructure. <https://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/aylesbury-town-centre-plan>

essexcdp.com

farnhammaltings.com

buckscc.gov.uk/services/libraries/find-a-library/aylesbury/

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Declaration

- I have read the details and terms above and my submission is my own work.
- I understand that this is a grant and not a contract of employment. I am able to provide evidence from HRMC of appropriate company or self-employed status. I undertake to manage the budget legally and responsibly to fulfil the aims stated.
- I will comply with Buckinghamshire County Council safeguarding policies and undertake a DBS accreditation if necessary.

Name:

Signed:

Date:

Equality and Diversity Monitoring

All the partners are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and as such monitor applications to measure progress towards this aim. We would therefore be grateful if you would answer the following questions. If you are applying jointly or as part of a company the lead applicant should respond.

How would you identify your gender?

Which Ethnic group do you perceive you belong to?

Which age group do you belong to?

Do you consider yourself to have disability or health condition?

Please provide your postcode



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