LEAD ARTIST COMMISSION – JULY #1

Luton Council seeks responses to this call to commission a lead artist/group of artists/arts organisation to create and deliver the ‘July #1’ event of the pilot year of culture programme.

PURPOSE OF COMMISSION

To create and produce a community-devised theatre event/play as part of Luton’s pilot year of culture; People, Power, Passion.

BACKGROUND

People, Power, Passion: setting Luton alight. In 2019, Luton Council will collaborate with the people of Luton to deliver a series of arts events made by, with and for local residents. As part of our ambition to be named UK City of Culture in 2025, we are embarking on a pilot year of culture programme Building on the themes of people power and community action and commemorating the centenary of the 1919 Luton Peace Day riots, a series of performances, events and artworks will reflect our diverse and vibrant communities. This is entitled People, Power, Passion and we are looking for lead artists/organisations for a number of creative events that reference the chronology of the riots and explore their themes in the context of today. Applicants are encouraged to read the People, Power, Passion full programme reference document prior to submitting a response to the commission.

Harnessing Momentum: Luton’s strategy for the arts, cultural and creative industries in Luton 2017 – 2027 highlights the positive impact the arts can have on our places and spaces, skills and jobs, community cohesion and on our children and young people. This pilot programme will explore this impact whilst reaching audiences through ambitious, innovative, inclusive arts activity.

Luton’s Peace Day riots 1919: Applicants are encouraged to research the Luton Peace Day riots prior to responding to this commission. The Bedfordshire archives provide a comprehensive summary here and Where They Burned the Town Hall Down, a book by Dave Craddock, is a thorough exploration of the riots.

Luton in 2019: As part of our ambition to be named UK City of Culture in 2025 we have identified the following four themes as important to Luton: Voices, Journeys, Growth and Home. Applicants are encouraged to consider these themes within their response and how people power and community action are relevant to Luton today and to the town’s journey over the past 100 years.

Luton Council is delivering People, Power, Passion as part of the Luton Investment Framework. Overseen by the Luton Investment Framework Partnership & Programme Manager, the Cultural Enabler will lead the delivery of People, Power, Passion supported by a Programme Producer and an Arts Engagement Officer (project team). The roles of the lead artist and the project team will be clearly defined at contract stage.
COMMISSION DETAILS

Context: In 1919, a major cause of the riots was the exclusion of veterans, women, the unemployed, and the working class from Luton’s Peace Day celebrations. Only those personally invited by the Mayor or those that could afford a price of fifteen shillings (exorbitant considering the labour climate) were invited to celebrations. Those most affected by the war (and peace) were the least consulted and included in planning and celebrations.

Brief: We are seeking an artist/group of artists/arts organisation (lead artist) to create and deliver a community-devised theatre project that explores the themes of community voice and exclusion from decision-making. The project must be developed in collaboration with a group of excluded Lutonians (e.g.: people with disabilities, people that are unemployed and/or homeless, the elderly, the LGBTQI community and ethnic minorities). The project will be performed in the Luton Council chamber and must feature excluded Lutonians as ensemble members. Upskilling and mentoring of non-professional ensemble members must be taken into consideration in the proposed approach.

Production information: The project must respond to, and be situated within, the council chamber space. Audiences will be seated in existing council chamber seating with an audience capacity of 111 per performance.

Provocation: Decisions made in council chambers affect our most vulnerable citizens, yet they are rarely invited into the chambers to participate in the conversation. Created by, with and for the people affected by decisions made in town halls, this play will give a voice to those rarely heard. A group of local residents will take over the council chamber and immerse the audience in a conversation about modern democracy and decision making.

Themes: People, Power, Passion, the causes of the 1919 Peace Day riots, exclusion, class, community voice, democracy and decision-making.

Vision: An ambitious production that invites the audience to witness and participate in a conversation about the issues that affect some of our most vulnerable residents. Taking over the council chamber, the project should be provocative, challenging and bold.

Timeline:
- Project development: from January 2019.
- Season: Tuesday 16th – Saturday 20th July 2019.

A minimum of four and a maximum of seven performances are required. Thursday 18th PM, Friday 19th PM, Saturday 20th AM & PM are required, with additional performances added due to demand and in consultation with the lead artist.

Note: directly after the Friday 19th PM performance, a large-scale music/dance event will take place outside of the Town Hall. Please see the People, Power, Passion full programme reference document for more information.
COMMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Community engagement: it is a requirement of this commission that the lead artist engage deeply with people in Luton experiencing or at risk of exclusion. This could take the form of open workshops with a wide group of participants, leading to a self-selecting core group who will engage directly in the creation and performance of the project. It is integral that excluded people are central to the creation of the project and that local stories and issues are explored within the project.

Emerging artist mentoring: it is a requirement of this commission that the lead artist involve a Luton-based emerging artist in the creation of this work. Once appointed, the lead artist will work with the project team to commission a paid Associate Artist. The associate should be given creative input and the opportunity to learn and develop. If the lead artist is not from Luton, then the associate artist’s local knowledge should be considered an asset to the project. Luton Council will cover the cost of the associate artist.

Skills-development trainee: the lead artist will be required to accommodate a skills-development trainee on the project at some point during the development or production of the project. Their role will be determined on project need and is expected to be in a technical, creative, production or event-management capacity. The council’s project team will be responsible for recruitment and management of the trainee. It is expected that the trainee will be given a certain role that could last from a number of days to a number of weeks. The council will cover the cost of the trainee.

COMMISSION BUDGET

The fee for the commission is £13,000 - £15,000. An additional £7000 is allocated for any necessary production costs. Further additional funds are available to pay ensemble members that identify as part of the target groups of excluded Lutonians (people with disabilities, people that are unemployed and/or homeless, the elderly, the LGBTQI community and ethnic minorities). The allocation of these funds should be proposed at application stage.

All applicants need to be prepared for flexibility with their project budgets. There may be an opportunity for further funding and in extreme circumstances some budgets may have to be decreased.

Note that the fees for the associate artist and trainee will be covered by the council.

APPLICATION PROCESS

All applicants are required to follow the council’s procurement process to be eligible for this commission. The process is as follows:

1. Register as a supplier through the council’s e-procurement portal Due-north. More information is available on the council website. (For the purposes of this process, applicants will be known as ‘suppliers’ i.e.: suppliers of creative services and the budget for the commission will be known as your ‘quote’). If you require support to
register on the portal please ensure you have read all of the help documentation here prior to emailing ProContractSuppliers@proactis.com.

2. Search for and view the ‘People Power Passion’ project and express interest in applying for it.

3. It will take five working days to receive access to upload your documents – in the meantime you can prepare your five page proposal as per the instructions below.

4. Once granted access, you will have until the closing date to upload your documents.

5. Upload a copy of your CV and please make sure that this includes three examples of, or web links to, previous work as well two testimonials from previous commissions.

6. Upload a copy of your outline project budget. This will be used as an indication only and can be adjusted in consultation with the project team if awarded the commission. Note: there is a budget template available for your use, please ensure you download the correct template for the month you are applying for.

7. Upload your commission proposal of no more than five A4 pages, covering each of the following sections:
   a. Project idea: include your proposed project idea, how it will respond to the themes, the production concept and how it will respond to, and be situated in the council chamber
   b. Community engagement and creative process: include details of how excluded Lutonians will be involved in the creation and production of the project and how they and their stories and experiences will be central to the creative process
   c. Timeline: outline the stages of the project
   d. Artist mentoring and training: identify your experience of mentoring emerging artists and how you propose to include an emerging/associate artist in the creative process. Also indicate any particular roles you envisage being available for a trainee/placement.

8. You must be available to deliver a presentation in Luton on the 10th, 11th or 12th December.

NOTE: The filenames of both your CV and proposal must include the month of the commission you are applying for and your name.

**SELECTION PROCESS**

Selection will take place over two stages:

1. Shortlisting:

Following the closing date, a panel will shortlist proposals using the following weighting and scoring methodology:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shortlisting</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of proposal</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Suitability of project idea to achieve the commission brief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Total score available = 100%)</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Appropriateness of project idea for Luton and Lutonians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Experience mentoring and training emerging artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Previous experience of creating similar work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Appropriateness of budget breakdown for project idea</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The scoring framework we will use is on page 6. Proposals will have to score at least a 3 against all criteria to be shortlisted.

The three highest scoring submissions will be selected for the presentation stage on the basis of the highest total weighted scores but if there are more or less than three strong applications this figure may be adjusted. The Council will reserve the right at its sole discretion to invite more or less to the second stage.

2. **Presentation/Price:**

The selected applicants will be invited to give a presentation to a panel which will be assessed using the following weighting and scoring methodology:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Total score available = 70%)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Realisation of project idea

Accessibility, quality and potential impact of creative process/engagement plan

Verbal communication skills

Planning and preparation

Understanding and mitigation of potential challenges of the project

Details of what to include in the presentation will be communicated to applicants if shortlisted.

The scoring framework we will use is on page 6.

**A note on price:**

The council values the proper and fair payment of all creatives. However it must also demonstrate to our residents a commitment to achieving value for money. Therefore the final 30% of the score available will be awarded based on the total budget of the commission. The proposal with the lowest total budget will automatically score 30% as the price score and each following proposal will be compared to it. For reference, the formula used will be as follows:

\[ \text{Lowest budget} \div \text{your budget} \times 30\% = \text{your score}. \]

Proposals will have to score at least a 3 against all criteria to be selected. The highest scoring proposal will be selected.

All questions regarding the People, Power, Passion commissions and application process must be directed to the council via the procurement portal.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION RESPONSES</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>SCORE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent response with requirements being met and exceeded in some areas. Showing a comprehensive understanding and the ability to deliver to a high standard. Evidence relating to the proposed services shows high quality.</td>
<td>Outstanding</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good response with requirements being met with nothing other than a few minor exceptions which are acceptable to the evaluation team. Reasonable understanding and the ability to deliver to a high standard. Evidence in relation to the proposed services shows good quality.</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptable answer with requirements being met in parts but not fully. A reasonable understanding to have the ability to deliver the service. Evidence to show that the services is just suitable for the purpose but has not met the standard expected.</td>
<td>Acceptable</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor response where some requirements are being met but there are some large exceptions. Concerns that the services proposed would not be suitable for use.</td>
<td>Cause for Concern</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target requirements are only met on a few occasions. Low standard response. Major concerns that the services proposed would be suitable for use.</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answer does not meet the requirements at all. No evidence that the services would be suitable.</td>
<td>Wholly Unsatisfactory</td>
<td>0</td>
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