LEAD ARTIST COMMISSION – OCTOBER

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

PURPOSE OF COMMISSION

To create and deliver an immersive, community-devised installation for the ‘October’ event 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: It is important to the council that the pilot year of culture programme concludes on a forward-thinking note that inspires positive community action and people power. Rather than looking to rioting as a way to enact change, the final event should encourage people to get involved in democracy, decision-making and local community action.

Brief: We are seeking an artist/group of artists/arts organisation (lead artist) to create and deliver an immersive installation that responds to the idea of the Luton of the future. Developed through workshop activity with local residents, this project should encourage audiences to question what they would want to see for Luton in the future and how to achieve it. It is expected that the installation would be situated somewhere in the town centre and be installed for a minimum of a week. Applicants should consider where the installation would be situated and how audiences would access it.

Themes: People, Power, Passion, Utopia, community action, people power, democracy, democratic processes, grassroots engagement in policy.

Vision: Audiences step into a future Luton, experiencing a wild assault on the senses created from the contributions of hundreds of local residents proposing their ideas for a ‘perfect’ Luton of the future. Audiences touch, play and participate in an exploration of a different Luton and leave inspired to get involved in local politics and advocacy groups to make change for the better.

Timeline:
- Project development and rehearsal: from January 2019
- Event: October 2019

COMMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Community engagement: It is expected that the lead artist will deliver a series of workshop activities with a wide range of local residents in Luton to involve them in the creation of the installation. A self-selecting group of people interested in local policy and community action should be deeply engaged in the production of 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 lead artist fee for the commission is **£7000 - £10,000**. Up to an additional **£2500** is available for further production costs which may include safety and security which will be delivered by the council.

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](https://www.duenorth.org.uk). More information is available on the [council website](https://www.luton.gov.uk). (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](https://www.luton.gov.uk/resources) 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 and how people will participate
   b. **Community engagement and creative process:** detail the process by which groups and individuals will be reached and how they will be engaged in the creation of the project
   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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of proposal</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Total score available = 100%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Suitability of project idea to achieve the commission brief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Experience mentoring and training emerging artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Previous experience of creating similar work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<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></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Realisation of project idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Accessibility, quality and potential impact of creative process/engagement plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Verbal communication skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Planning and preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Understanding and mitigation of potential challenges of the project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   **Price**
   
   30% Total cost of 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.
## SHORTLISTING AND PRESENTATION SCORING FRAMEWORK

<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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>