

Culture Durham Partnership

Brief for the development and curation of a 4-month training, development and networking programme (freelance).



Summary

Culture Durham Partnership (CDP) is seeking an experienced cultural professional or agency to work with the Partnership to inform the development of a 3-year strategic plan for professional development of creative, cultural and heritage practitioners in County Durham. We want to hear from artists and creative practitioners about their development needs to ensure the programme strengthens the sector and increases its resilience and sustainability. The role will include:

- Developing and curating a series of short (1-2 hours) exploratory networking and subsequent training and development (viability and sustainability) events for people working in the sector, ensuring particular opportunities for artists from diverse backgrounds.
- Preparing a final report to inform the next stage of the partnership's work to support the sector.

The budget for this work is £4,999 including all expenses. The contract ends 30 September 2021.

The deadline for expressions of interest is 12 noon, Friday 19 February 2021.

Interviews will be held online on 25 February 2021 at a time to be arranged.

Background

CDP has been operating since 2010 when it was originally established to bid for Durham City of Culture 2013. Although the bid was unsuccessful in securing the award it galvanised cultural and heritage organisations to work together. This formed the basis of a long lasting, mutually beneficial network of the main cultural venues and community cultural organisations in the county along with national and regional stakeholder organisations which form the Partnership board and meet regularly.

Before the Coronavirus pandemic the partnership's board agreed priorities for future work, and this includes the expansion of the training, development and networking programme. For many years, an annual event has been held which brings together cultural and heritage practitioners with board member organisations and explores different themes and collaborative work. This event normally attracts upwards 80 attendees. Feedback demonstrates that the opportunity to learn about developments in the sector and to meet with fellow professionals is appreciated. The time has now come to expand this work, offering a programme that encompasses a broader range of topics and the opportunity to come together more frequently.

Aim

The overarching aim of the programme is to ensure that practitioners have access to information and support that will allow them to develop, in terms of viability and sustainability, and flourish in their day to day work thereby helping the individuals, organisations and the sector to realise its full potential. It is critical that the programme reflects the needs acknowledged by the sector but also helps to identify areas of development that may not have recognised. We envisage that much of the training identified as a need will be delivered at a later stage, but the process can start in this programme. It must be flexible and assist the Partnership board in shaping its next phase of sector support.

Scope

1. Through the first one or two networking events with a minimum of 20 practitioners working in the sector, from different art forms and heritage, discuss and tease out the most urgent training needs and draw up a prioritised list. Recruitment of practitioners will be carried out by the Partnership, but we would expect the successful contractor to promote the events through their own networks as well. We would be interested to hear your proposals for structuring this to encompass the full diversity of the sector and the various markets it serves.
2. Produce and arrange delivery of a training, development and networking programme of 6/7 events that meets sector needs and can be delivered online in an engaging and interactive way. The programme, to be agreed with

the board, should include details of topics, suggested speakers, state how events will be made interactive, with dates and times proposed. We anticipate that the programme will include informal development opportunities as well as more formal training. There is potential to start the whole series of eight events with an online event using a well-known inspirational speaker from the sector to share creative thinking about working in the arts in such difficult times and generate a buzz around the programme.

3. Based on the research and learning from the full programme of 8 events, prepare a report of key findings and recommendations for the board to inform the next stage of sector support needed in the county.

Timescale

The CDP Board intends to promote the programme from late March 2021. It is therefore anticipated that a proposal for the first two or three events should be presented to the Partnership by 15 March, with a view to them starting immediately following the school Easter holidays.

Budget

The budget for the work is £4,999, to include expenses.

The audience

The training, development and networking activity will include at least 80 creative, cultural and heritage practitioners and SMEs (120 individuals) in County Durham and the North East.

Reporting

You will report to Jane Hedges, Culture Durham Partnership co-ordinator and be invited to present the final report to the partnership's project management group/board.

Contractor specification

- Ideally you will be able to evidence:
- An understanding of the creative and heritage sector in County Durham and familiarity with partnership working.
- A demonstrable understanding of the issues faced by cultural, creative and heritage practitioners whether working as sole traders or as part of larger organisations.
- A track record of creating training, development and/or networking events and programmes.
- Good networks within the sector that can help identify training needs and the means to meet them.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate effectively with sector members.
- Demonstrable ability to work independently for a wider partnership.
- Flexibility of approach – being able to adapt, experiment and evaluate results.
- Excellent time management skills, positive and results driven.

To express an interest, please send (to the same email address):

- A covering letter plus outline plan setting out your approach to this brief - together totalling no more than three sides of A4
- Details of how many days you could offer to the project and your daily rate.
- Details of the personnel / key staff who will work on the project
- At least two reference exemplars of previous practice

Assessment of submissions

All submissions will be assessed according to the following criteria and weightings

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| • Quality of submission | 50% |
| • Experience and track record | 25% |
| • Value for money | 25% |

For further information contact Jane Hedges, partnership coordinator at jane.hedges@durham.gov.uk or on 07584 703801