

Open Call For New Festival Commission: Welcome Arch A Co-Commission With The Festival Of Culture And National Festival Of Making

The Festival of Culture and National Festival of Making are inviting applications to create a celebratory, temporary structure to be installed at, and transported between two festivals taking place in Lancashire this July.

The Festival of Culture, Nelson - 29th June 2024
National Festival of Making, Blackburn - 6th & 7th July 2024

Who Is Eligible To Apply?

We welcome responses from Architectural / Design Studios and Artists / Arts Collectives

Project Budget

This co-commission has a budget in the region of £14,000 which should cover artist fees, materials, build and production costs, transportation, artist travel and any other associated costs - budget to be developed in discussion with the co-commissioners.

Deadline For Applications

Deadline - Monday **4th March 2024, 5:00 pm.**

Interviews will take place on **Monday 11th or Tuesday 12th March.** You will be notified if you have been selected for an interview no later than Thursday 7th March.

Brief

The National Festival of Making and This Is Nelson have formed a partnership to create a new commission for an Architectural / Design Studios or Artist / Arts Collectives. The outcome of the commission will be a temporary structure that can be used and transported between two festivals:

- Festival of Culture, Nelson (29th June)
- National Festival of Making, Blackburn (6-7th July)

We are looking for a bespoke structure that will be informed by our local communities across our towns, that will reflect our sense of place and geography and draw together what unites our towns when presented in the two different locations. Suitable applicants will be able to demonstrate experience of delivering socially engaged design processes that could work effectively in collaboration with the communities of Pendle and Blackburn.

We're interested in a structure or temporary space that will invite audiences to have an experience that feels unique or out of the ordinary within the context of a 'festival'. We are open to the space being celebratory, forming a site for the festival audience to gather together. Alternatively, the space could be reflective, a site for thoughtful exchange amongst festival audiences who may not regularly interact. We are also interested in proposals for the creation of an entry point to our festival sites, for example an archway, a garden, a pavilion, or a gathering space for young people. Regardless of the feel and function of the structure, it is crucial that the outcome reflects a shared ethos of both festivals: to create opportunities for celebratory demonstrations of local cultures through the combination of art and community.

Both festivals take place in town centres. We have established key locations based on past Festivals, however, we are open to the artist defining where the structure might be depending on the nature of the work and the audiences you want to attract.



National Festival of Making, photography by Simon Bray & Robin Zahler.

Process and Requirements

- We ask that applicants demonstrate an eco-conscious approach to design and build and we are particularly interested in applications that make use of materials that can be reused or recycled in some way. Or, could the structure itself have an afterlife?
- Please indicate how the space will be used during the festival days: how will audiences interact or participate with the structure?
- Please outline how the temporary structure will be portable: – how can it be moved and rebuilt multiple times? This is key to the success of the project.
- The successful applicant will work with our communities to help inform the design process via facilitated design days, so the structure can reflect our audiences including our large South Asian heritage communities, and our sense of place.
- We ask that applicants demonstrate an understanding of the demographics of both towns. We are particularly interested in creative practices that have the necessary skills to bring together the rich diversity of our communities in a spirit of shared identity.
- We encourage applications from practitioners based in, or with strong connection to, Lancashire (although this is not a requirement).
- **Unfortunately, we cannot consider proposals from those unavailable during the period of the two festival weekends - 28th June - 7th July 2024.**

Delivery And Key Dates

We require:

- 2 x design workshops with communities (1 in Nelson, 1 in Blackburn)
- 2 x days of walks and local research (1 in Nelson, 1 in Blackburn)
- Installation, facilitation and de-installation at both Festivals:
 - Festival of Culture (29th June)
 - National Festival of Making (6-7th July)

About The Co-Commissioners

Festival of Culture is a major, annual event for Pendle Communities, who come together in solidarity and celebration of Art and Culture. Through the festival, our communities gather in a spirit of shared identity to celebrate the diversity of Pendle.

A family fun-day which will celebrate people, environment and culture through music, arts and crafts, food stalls, fun fair rides, community conversations and much more. Most invited artists and food vendors are sourced as local as possible in order to really celebrate Pendle and its people. The festival aims to provide an opportunity for as much interaction between people as possible and this is reflected by the fact that all stalls are given a requirement of having some interactive activity on the day.

Through the year the various organisations that we work with are invited to have some involvement in the festival, be it to be part of the planning or help in the delivery of the Festival. This has resulted in collaboration between community organisations, walking groups, musicians and schools.

National Festival of Making is a **unique celebration of UK making**, from the kitchen table to the factory floor. Presenting a programme of work that combines art, manufacturing, making and communities, we commission artists to create world class works, a year round programme and a participatory free family festival for all to enjoy.

During the Festival weekend, we fill the streets of Blackburn with free participatory making opportunities, workshops, performances, talks, exhibitions, makers markets and more. We regularly see audience numbers of between 30-40,000 from local and national visitors alike, and take-over 20+ venues across the town centre.

Formed in 2016, the ambition of Festival of Making CIC is to be a nationally relevant cultural festival in Blackburn, while celebrating the unique manufacturing heritage and contemporary characteristics of the town and region more widely.

This is Nelson is the arts and culture strand of the Nelson Town Deal, delivered in partnership between In-Situ, Building Bridges Pendle and Super Slow Way. It engages with Nelson's communities through a programme of activities and events alongside the reactivation of places and spaces. As outlined in the Nelson Town Deal website and literature, the £25million investment offers a 'once in a generation' opportunity to improve the future of Nelson, promising new hope, and a brighter future. The aim of the This Is Nelson strand of the Nelson Town Deal is to ensure that there is social and community benefit from the investment of the Town Deal. All This Is Nelson activity is free & through our youth programme, we are committed to ensuring that young people are at the centre of its social benefit. The Festival of Culture is a key, annual event supported by This Is Nelson.



Festival of Culture, photography by Diane Muldowney

Budget

The project budget for this commission is in the region of **£14000** to cover your artist fees, expenses, materials and any other associated costs.

Key Information

You will be required to provide a Risk Assessment and have your own Public Liability Insurance for £5m. When developing your concept, please give consideration to the environmental impact the work will have.

How To Apply

To apply, please send the following three pieces of information by email to helen@festivalofmaking.co.uk with **Festival Commission Application** as the subject title::

1. A no more than 500 word **expression of interest** with reference to:
 - What attracts you to this commission
 - Outline of what form your final work might take
 - Outline of your interest in working with the co-commissioning festivals
 - Any experience and interest in engaging with communities in a participatory setting
 - Any experience or interest in presenting artwork within the public realm and/or festival settings
2. **Links to your work online or a PDF** (max file size 10mb), referring to projects, commissions or elements of your practice that have the most relevance to this opportunity

3. A **simple budget outline** including details of your fee/daily rates/outline costs. If you reside outside of the North West, please also give an indication of any additional travel costs necessary to realise the commission.

We encourage applications from all backgrounds and communities and welcome discussions about specific individual requirements.

If there is any support you may need to enable you to make an application due to health or disability, **or if you know anybody who would need support to access this opportunity, please get in touch by emailing:** helen@festivalofmaking.co.uk or info@festivalofmaking.co.uk

The National Festival of Making CIC's aim is that our workforce, contributors and partners are representative of the diverse society we live in and that each individual feels respected, supported and able to give their best.

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