

## Curriculum Specialist Brief

### Blackburn with Darwen Place-Based Education Project

We are a Place Partnership of local cultural organisations aiming to explore how cultural programmes can become more integrated into educational frameworks and ultimately enhance learning outcomes - by connecting place specific context, culture, heritage and futures.

**We aim to develop a series of scalable activities to support place-based learning for KS2 children in Blackburn with Darwen, inspired by the area's rich culture of making - past, present and future.** For this phase of activity, educators have expressed a particular interest in resources that meet the Design & Technology curriculum, and we are also interested in increasing resources that meet cross-curriculum areas.

We are looking for a Curriculum Specialist with a culture-led approach to help shape a pilot with 3 schools and local partners across Key Stage 2.

### Key information

**Who is Eligible to Apply?** We welcome responses from individuals/collectives who feel they have relevant experience to bring to this piece of work. We do not ask for particular qualifications.

**Budget** £9000 to cover all fees and expenses associated with delivering this work.

A separate design budget is available. Bids can include the option for the design budget to be allocated to the provider as a complete service - more detail below.

**Deadline for Applications** 9am, 1st June 2026

Interviews will take place on 10th June at Blackburn Museum & Art Gallery. We may also be able to accommodate online interviews.

## Who are we?

This project is part of the wider Blackburn with Darwen Place Partnership, funded by Arts Council England. A key theme of the project is offering impactful cultural activities and experiences to all age groups. Our aim is to work collaboratively to support children to connect with their local culture and creativity from an early age.

The Place Partnership brings together:

- [Blackburn Museum & Art Gallery](#)
- [British Textile Biennial](#)
- [Culturapedia](#)
- [Festival of Making CIC](#)
- [Prism Contemporary](#)
- [The Bureau Centre for the Arts](#)
- [The Making Rooms](#)
- [Uncultured Creatives](#)

This particular piece of work is being led by Blackburn Museum & Art Gallery, and Festival of Making CIC.

[Blackburn Museum & Art Gallery](#) is one of the first purpose-built museums outside of London in the UK. Open since 1874, it houses collections of fine art, social history and the Lewis Textile Collection. Blackburn Museum is interested in presenting relevant narratives for the community it serves and creating an inclusive programme of exhibitions and events.

[Festival of Making CIC](#) is a not-for-profit arts and culture organisation based in Blackburn. It connects people, place, art and industry through playful and inquisitive artistic commissions and collaborative projects culminating in a large-scale annual public festival and programme.

## Our aim

*Integrating local resources, issues and values into resources that are grounded in the local context and history, the narrative of industrial and postindustrial making as well as reinterpreting & reinventing this with young people to ensure relevance.*

Through research and engagement sessions we have considered how place-based education in Blackburn with Darwen could present a valuable opportunity to enhance learning by connecting students with their local heritage, culture, and environment. After meeting with local primary school teachers youth organisations and home educators, we have identified key areas of focus for this particular brief:

- **Design & Technology:** Teachers find it difficult to bring the D&T curriculum to their classrooms. This is due to a combination of lack of time and low confidence in their own skills to teach this particular subject. Other educators are keen to use practical subjects such as D&T to subtly make links to curriculum areas such as Maths
- **Careers:** Linking careers into learning can be tricky.
- **Making links with existing resources/opportunities:** Educators make use of local online resources, trips and workshops where possible. Prohibitors to this include time to adapt resources to be age-friendly, knowing who to contact in order to access certain facilities/resources, and costs.

## Pilot phase

For this pilot phase, we will work with a culture-led Curriculum Specialist to develop relationships between 3 schools and partners (for example local manufacturers, cultural organisations, green space provisions etc) to identify areas where local context/culture/history can connect with a D&T curriculum that has cross curricular links e.g with Art, History, Literacy, Science.

Through an estimated number of 3 interviews, visits and/or sessions with schools/partners/young people per partnership, we expect the Curriculum Specialist to develop a series of scalable activities that allow educators to confidently teach D&T within the wider curriculum, and connect this to the locality. We are keen that activity plans consider how they can be adapted for children with differing accessibility requirements.

By scalable, we mean activity plans that can be used to suit the setting, time and budget the educator is working with - from light touch, to deeply engaged. Options might include lesson plans, topic links, resource lists, video content, CPD for educators, and even a list of makers to visit schools to deliver content. We expect to work closely with the Curriculum Specialist to guide this development.

### Expected deliverables:

- Develop the framework for 3x partnerships between schools and local orgs
- Facilitate an estimated number of 3 x interviews/visits/sessions **per partnership** (exact outputs of this will depend on framework development)
- Develop scalable activity plans connecting D&T with cross curricular links and career elements, responding directly to each partnership
- Work closely with BM&AG and Festival of Making CIC to share updates on the project and collaboratively steer its direction.

**We do not expect the Curriculum Specialist to be able to create all the final visual resources** - a separate design budget is available to build the thoughtful activity plans into visual and engaging resources. Bids can include the option for the design budget to be allocated to the provider as a complete service.

We will be responsible for securing schools and partners, however will take into account any suggestions or directions the Curriculum Specialist advises.

This is a project that will continue to evolve in response to educators' input and the partnerships that develop, therefore the brief is deliberately broad in scope. We expect the Curriculum Specialist to be dynamic in their approach and accommodate learning as it emerges.

Alongside this pilot phase, we will also be taking forward other feedback we have learnt from the sessions we've delivered so far. This may or may not connect with the outcomes of this brief.

## **What are we looking for?**

To deliver this work, we are looking for someone who:

- Has in-depth knowledge of the KS2 curriculum
- Has experience engaging with educators and understanding the pressures they are under
- Can facilitate conversations between educators, partners (e.g. industry & cultural organisations), as well as young people
- Can create scalable activity plans that respond directly developing relationships/feedback - there is the opportunity here to engage further creative support in illustration/film development, with a separate budget dedicated to this
- Has a proven track record of working with cultural industries or creative projects
- Is committed to creating thoughtful, engaging and creative activity plans, embedded within the curriculum

## **Budget**

The fee for this piece of work is **£9,000**, to include the facilitation of 3 x relationships between schools and partners, and the creation of scalable activity plans responding to input from the relationships.

There is an additional budget of up to £5,000 to be allocated to the design and creation of resources, including video/animation if applicable. Bids can include the option for the design budget to be allocated to the provider as a complete service

## Timeline

We aim to appoint a Curriculum Specialist in May, with some initial introduction and scoping meetings taking place over Summer.

We hope that work with educators and identified partners will take place in October & November, with resources then created ready for the Summer term.

## How to Apply

To apply, please send the following three pieces of information by email to [applications@festivalofmaking.co.uk](mailto:applications@festivalofmaking.co.uk) with Place-Based Learning Application

1. A 500 word expression of interest with reference to:
  - What attracts you to this project
  - Why you meet the criteria set out in 'What are we looking for?'
  - Outline of relevant experience you would bring to this piece of work
  - Where you are based geographically
2. A CV and/or shareable examples of relevant work (this could be shared through online links, PDF formats or other media that best portrays your work)
3. A simple budget outline including details of your fee/daily rates/outline costs.

**Deadline for Applications:** 9am, 1st June 2026

Interviews will take place on 10th June 2026.

You will be notified if you have been selected for an interview on or by the 4th June. We may be able to accommodate online interviews - please notify us if you may require this in your application.

We welcome applications in alternative formats, please email [applications@festivalofmaking.co.uk](mailto:applications@festivalofmaking.co.uk) if you would like to discuss this further.

As a partnership of organisations, our aim is that our workforces, 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. We encourage applications from all backgrounds and communities and welcome discussions about specific individual requirements. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact us by emailing [applications@festivalofmaking.co.uk](mailto:applications@festivalofmaking.co.uk)