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East Leeds Project

East Leeds Pavilion Research & Development | Artists' Brief

Introduction

The East Leeds Project has secured funding from Arts Council England for a 10-month period of research and development relating to our ambition to create the first Maker Space in east Leeds. We call this space the 'East Leeds Pavilion'. We are delighted to be able to invite an experienced Artist or Artists interested in social practice to apply to join our team during the period November 2019 – July 2020 as we advance the Pavilion project in collaboration with our local community.

This briefing document sets out the background to the Pavilion project and the aims and ambitions of the commission.

About the East Leeds Project [ELP]

The ELP is a practitioner-led visual arts organisation working site-specifically in the Wyke Beck Valley in east Leeds. Running north to south for over five miles and bookended by two formal parks at Roundhay and Temple Newsam, this green corridor is a major asset for an under-resourced part of the city where the local authority's socio-economic measures indicate high levels of deprivation. The ELP is currently based in Gipton, one of the communities bordering the Valley, which also include Seacroft, Killingbeck, Cross Gates, and Halton Moor. We are interested in art as social action, an art which:

'...employ[s] the varied forms offered by the expanded field of contemporary art as a collaborative, collective, and participatory social method for bringing about real-world instances of progressive justice, community building, and transformation.'¹

The ELP was founded in 2017 during Leeds' bid to host the EU Capital of Culture in 2023, and is now led by Kerry Harker (Founder and Artistic Director) and Claire Irving (Communities Director). Between them Kerry and Claire have over 40 years' experience in the arts. Kerry was Co-founder of The Tetley and Artistic Director there from 2013-15 before founding the ELP, and Claire was inaugural Director of Shine, a social enterprise centre in Harehills and was also formerly Chair of the Board at East Street Arts. The

¹ Gregory Sholette and Chloë Bass, *Art as Social Action (a preface)*, in 'Art as Social Action: An introduction to the principles and practices of teaching social practice art', Eds. Sholette, Bass and Social Practice Queens (New York: Allworth Press, 2018), xiii.

Directors have strong networks and partnerships across east Leeds, where they have both lived for over 20 years.

The ELP is registered as a Community Interest Company, and has a base above Gipton Methodist Church, close to the Wyke Beck Valley. Our work is supported by Arts Council England and Leeds City Council.

The East Leeds Pavilion

Since mid-2018 we have been working in partnership with internationally renowned architectural practice Bauman Lyons, who are based locally in Chapeltown, through their founding Director Irena Bauman. The commission currently on offer forms part of an extended period of R&D informing our shared ambition to create a Pavilion at Fearnville Fields in Gipton, on the fringes of the Wyke Beck Valley, utilising Bauman Lyons' innovative system 'MassBespoke'. Developed in Leeds, MassBespoke is a digitally-enabled modular construction system which combines the benefits of mass production with bespoke design. Originally imagined for the community-build housing sector, its principles can be applied to any structure, and as an accessible, affordable and environmentally sustainable technology it offers an appropriate route for a locally led approach to realising the Pavilion.

The Pavilion, which will be designed and built by, with and for the community, will provide a shared Maker Space for activities led by stakeholders. It is imagined as a temporary, shared space not only for making, but also as a social space for collective conversation and nurturing local agency. We know there are creative people all across east Leeds, but there are no dedicated spaces for making in its broadest forms - no artists' studios, co-working spaces, hack spaces, makers spaces, open-access facilities or workshops. As a result, many people work in isolation from home, in their kitchens and converted garages and sheds, or they commute into the city centre or journey further afield. We know this from our research project East Leeds Makers, which is ongoing and which has already enabled us to have conversations with around 100 local makers. As part of this conversation, earlier this year we commissioned artist Andy Abbott to develop a project, *What Makes Gipton?*, which launched at the Gipton Gala in July, allowing us to expand on a broader conversation about making in east Leeds – what people make, where they make it, and whether there is an appetite for a local Maker Space. We are also working closely with the local authority, Leeds City Council, including the Leeds2023 team as the city works towards a self-organised year of culture outside of the EU Capital of Culture framework.

The commissioned Artist/s will have full access to our research findings.

Commission Details

We recognise that we are at the beginning of a journey towards realising this ambitious project, and that co-production with local stakeholders is the most desirable route. It is not our intention that the ELP will solely operate the completed Pavilion, but that it will be co-owned and run by a consortium of local partners. We are currently in the R&D phase of the project, and having secured funding from ACE we are now able to move to the next stage of the

process by bringing together a core team comprising the ELP's Directors, Bauman Lyons architects, local residents, and the commissioned Artist/s to collectively steward the project.

As a practitioner-led organisation, we value artists' contributions to society highly, and wish to embed artists' voices within the project from this early stage. No decisions have been made yet about the final location of the Pavilion, its physical form or aesthetic, the range of practices it might support, or the business model that will enable it to have a sustainable future. We want to explore these and other questions through this commission, to seek answers collectively, and to enable an artist-led approach to the Pavilion's development. We have already had conversations with some local people who would like to join the project and we will work with the commissioned Artist/s to recruit other team members. The commissioned Artist/s will therefore play a key role in shaping the next phase of this project.

As part of this commission, we are inviting Artist/s to:

- Become embedded in the development of the Pavilion by joining our project team and being present in Gipton
- Be part of a collective conversation, making sure that dialogue and research with the local community informs the decision-making process
- Work with Bauman Lyons to explore creative applications of the MassBespoke technology, translating our conversations with the community into the design process in readiness for a formal planning application and capital fundraising
- Bring experience of, and passion for, social practice into the project
- Accompany team members on research visits to inspirational comparator projects across the UK
- Collaboratively design and deliver a series of events that extend our creative conversation locally
- Take an active role in marketing and project evaluation as part of that conversation

This is not a traditional residency project – we anticipate that the commissioned Artist/s will be present in Gipton for a number of days per month over the 10-month period, including some overnight stays. We are flexible and will work collaboratively with the Artist/s to agree a schedule dependent on where they live. Site visits to other cities are fully funded and although we have identified some projects of interest there is scope for the Artist/s to inform final decisions.

Access

The commissioned Artist/s will need to spend time in Gipton and will be able to use our base above Gipton Methodist Church. We apologise that there is currently no lift access to our spaces on the first floor. We are actively seeking funding to remedy this in partnership with the Church but this will not be achievable in time to impact on this commission. There is ample free parking directly outside the Church, and good access via public transport, with stops for the number 42 bus from the city centre less than a five-minute walk away.

Budget

We have an Artist/s fee of £6,750 available for this project, to be paid in installments. This is equivalent to 25 days over the period November 2019 – August 2020 (10 months) calculated using Artists' Union England's recommended day rate of £270 for practitioners with over five years' experience.

There is an additional budget of £13,000 for expenses and co-production with the community, including events, research visits, marketing, documentation and dissemination. We will work collaboratively with the commissioned Artist/s to agree the best use of this budget. We are committed to ongoing fundraising to bring additional resource into the project, potentially extending the scope of the commission, and again would like to work collaboratively on this.

Timescale

Open call goes live	Friday 27 September
Submissions deadline	Friday 25 October, midnight (4 weeks)
Interviews	Wednesday 6 November (in Leeds)
Artist/s appointed	Friday 8 November
Commission period	November 2019 – July 2020 (inclusive)
Evaluation	Completed by end August 2020

Eligibility

The East Leeds Project actively promotes equality in all of our work and we welcome applications from all backgrounds and sections of society.

We are happy to receive submissions from individual artists as well as groups and collectives, and are looking for an Artist or Artists with an established social practice (or socially-engaged practice/art as social action). Artists may have additional interests in issues including built environment, the commons, circular economies, maker spaces, co-production and participatory governance in culture, and possibly experience of being involved in capital developments in the arts (although this is not essential).

Artists wishing to apply should have a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check or be willing to undergo one before the contract is awarded.

Submissions and Enquiries

Please provide the following by email to kerry@eastleedsproject.org no later than midnight on **Friday 25 October**:

1. Covering letter (max 2 sides A4) outlining why you would like to undertake this commission and how you propose to approach it
2. Supporting information on your practice (max 2 sides A4) outlining relevant previous experience

Please do not send a standard CV. Please do not send visuals but do provide links to online material (websites, social media) that you would like to signpost in support of your application.

If you have additional access requirements and would like to make a submission in an alternative format, please email Kerry Harker as above.

Shortlisted Artists will be invited to attend an interview in Leeds on **Wednesday 6 November**, for which travel expenses will be covered.

Selection Process and Criteria

Submissions will be assessed by the ELP Directors, Kerry Harker and Claire Irving, and Irena Bauman, Director of Bauman Lyons architects, against the following criteria:

- Artist/s' approach to the project
- Relevance and level of previous experience
- Potential to inspire the project team and engage the local community
- Ability to bring creative thinking to the project and to amplify creative voices

We will invite a small number of shortlisted Artists to interview in Leeds and the commission will be awarded on the basis of the application and interview. The ELP will issue a contract to the successful Artist/s, and this will outline a payment schedule for fees against agreed milestones in the project. The successful Artist/s will need to be responsible for their own tax and National Insurance arrangements, and will need to evidence that they have their own public liability insurance. Artists without insurance may apply but we will need you to obtain insurance as a condition of taking on the commission – we are happy to help Artists work through this. We work collaboratively and would envisage close working between the successful Artist/s and the ELP team throughout the commission period.

Marketing

The ELP will publicise the project throughout, and we have a small budget to commission a film and photography documenting the process. We will promote the commissioned Artist/s and their work through our website, social media and e-mailers to our database. We will work with the Artist/s to achieve any additional marketing and PR outcomes that are jointly identified. The successful Artist/s will agree to images of their work generated during the commission period being used for ELP marketing purposes.

For any queries or to arrange an informal conversation about the commission, please email kerry@eastleedsproject.org. Thank you for your interest, and we look forward to hearing from you!

East Leeds Project

Gipton Methodist Church, Oak Tree Place, Leeds, LS9 6SL

www.eastleedsproject.org

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