



About the Tendering Process

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The enclosed invitation to tender provides information for consideration to with respect to the programme evaluation of 'Down To Earth', a Creative People and Places Programme in Wigan Borough made possible by Arts Council England and administered by Arts At The Mill CIC, Wigan (T/A The Old Courts)
- 1.2. All information received in connection with this tender application will be treated in the strictest confidence.
- 1.3. Tenderers are required to answer all applicable questions and include all documentation requested. The tender must be completed in English.
- 1.4. Tenders must be submitted in accordance with the following instructions. Any tender not complying fully with any of the instructions in this document may be rejected Arts At The Mill CIC, whose decision in the matter shall be final.

2. Tender Return and Validity

- 2.1. Tenders must be returned to Jess Rotherham at jessr@theoldcourts.com
- 2.2. Tenders must be returned to us no later than **12 noon on 22 July 2022** which shall be the date fixed for submission of tenders. Late responses will not be considered.
- 2.3. The tender shall be submitted on the basis that the offer in it shall remain in force for a minimum of two months from the date fixed for the submission of tenders.
- 2.4. In submitting the tender, the tenderer shall undertake that, in the event of the tender being accepted by Arts At The Mill CIC, within fourteen days of being called upon to do so, the tenderer will execute a formal contract consisting of the contract documentation and until such date as the contract is executed this tender, together with the formal written acceptance of it by the Principal

or Authorised Officer on behalf of the Arts At The Mill CIC will form a binding agreement between Arts At The Mill CIC and the tenderer.

- 2.5. Failure by the successful tenderer to execute a formal contract within the time specified above will render the contract voidable at the option of Arts At The Mill CIC at any time.
- 2.6. Tenders shall only be submitted on the basis that they are bona fide competitive tenders. It is therefore agreed that Arts At The Mill CIC shall have the power to cancel the contract and to recover from the tenderer the amount of any loss arising from the cancellation if either the tenderer:
 - 2.6.1. Shall have offered or given or agreed to give any officer or member of Arts At The Mill CIC staff any gift or consideration of any kind as an inducement or bribe to influence its decision in the tendering procedure. The word "tenderer" for these purposes shall be deemed to include any and all persons employed by the tenderer, or who are purporting to act on the tenderer's behalf whether the tenderer is aware of their acts or not, or
 - 2.6.2. Shall have communicated to any other person than Arts At The Mill CIC the amount or approximate amount of the proposed tender other than in confidence in order to obtain quotations necessary for the preparation of the tender, or
 - 2.6.3. Shall have entered into any agreement or arrangement with any person as to the amount of any proposed tender or that person shall refrain from tendering.

3. Acceptance of Tender

- 3.1. Arts At The Mill CIC shall not be under any obligation to accept any tender.
- 3.2. Arts At The Mill CIC shall not be under any obligation to accept the lowest tender.
- 3.3. Arts At The Mill CIC reserves the right to cancel the entire or parts of the tender, without such an action conferring any right to compensation on the Tenderers.
- 3.4. Arts At The Mill CIC has no liability to settle any cost incurred by the tenderer as a result of the tendering procedure or a re-tendering procedure.
- 3.5. The tender must be based upon the terms, conditions and specification(s) set out in these documents, otherwise it may be rejected on the basis of being unsuitable and non-compliant.
- 3.6. Tenderers will be notified of the outcome of their tender submission at the earliest possible time.

- 3.7. No tender will be deemed to have been accepted unless such acceptance has been notified to the tenderer in writing.
- 3.8. In case a tender appears to be abnormally low in relation to the services to be provided, Arts At The Mill CIC will request a clarification in writing and/or explanation concerning its elements. Arts At The Mill CIC reserves the right to exclude a tender, if after a verification process based on the explanations and evidence received it concludes that the tender is abnormally low.

4. Pricing

- 4.1. Unit rates and prices must be quoted in pounds' sterling. Tenders should be submitted exclusive of Value Added Tax (VAT).
- 4.2. If Arts At The Mill CIC suspects that there has been an error in pricing of the tender, Arts At The Mill CIC reserves the right to seek clarification as it considers necessary from that tenderer only.

5. Duration

- 5.1. The tenderer shall be prepared to commence the works on **1 August 2022**

6. Submission of Tenders

- 6.1. Your tender should be a maximum of 10 sides of A4 and is required to include the following information:
 - 6.1.1. A brief summary of your understanding of this brief and the context for Down To Earth's work in Wigan borough
 - 6.1.2. How you will approach the evaluation, and a clear outline methodology that states how the proposed approach will meet our needs, answer the three questions set out by Arts Council England & align with evaluation [guidance](#)
 - 6.1.3. A summary of your relevant experience in delivering similar activity (please include links to two recent evaluation reports or products)
 - 6.1.4. Profiles for your evaluation team members
 - 6.1.5. How you will manage the project
 - 6.1.6. Your ideas about how you will present the evaluation findings to ensure they are accurate, relevant and accessible
 - 6.1.7. A budget that is broken down into the stages or tasks outlined in your methodology.
- 6.2. Please include as appendices:
 - 6.2.1. CVs of evaluation team members

7. Amendments to Tender Documents

7.1. Arts At The Mill CIC reserves the right to make changes of a minor drafting nature to the contract documentation.

7.2. Arts At The Mill CIC reserves the right to make changes to the award criteria stated below. Tenderers will be informed of any changes.

8. Queries

8.1. Where tenderers have any queries about the tender documentation which may have a bearing on the offer to be made, these should be raised with Arts At The Mill CIC as soon as possible, and in any case not later than two days before the due date for return of tenders. Where any such enquiry has been made, Arts At The Mill CIC will circulate to all tenderers a copy of the enquiry and the written reply, although anonymity will be preserved.

9. Freedom of Information

Tenderers are requested to specify with reasons if any information contained in its tender submission is confidential. Arts At The Mill CIC will use reasonable endeavours to keep such information confidential but does not guarantee to do so if it is obliged to disclose such information pursuant to its duties under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

10. Award Criteria and Methodology

The contract will be awarded to the most economically advantageous tender applying the award criteria and all in accordance with the Tender Documentation and evaluation methodology detailed below.

Assessment of Response	Scoring
Excellent: Fully meets expectations / demonstrates clear understanding of issues/questions & expands on the response sought	4
Good: Meets expectations / demonstrates understanding of the issue & some thought in framing a response	3
Satisfactory: Meets basic expectations / standardised response / no attempt to customise / minor reservations	2
Unsatisfactory: Does not meet expectations / response is weak & does not fully address the issue / reservations	1
No Response	0

10.1. Award Criteria & Weightings

The Tender Response submitted by Tenderers will be evaluated on the following award criteria and weightings:

Criteria	Weighting %
Project Affordability within the stated budget	PASS/FAIL
Technical and Quality Evaluation	
Relevant experience of delivering similar activity	30%
A clear methodology that articulates how the proposed approach will meet our needs	30%
An ability to create interesting and dynamic reports that are accurate, relevant and valid	30%
Budget and Value for money	10%
Total	100%

11. Indicative Timetable for Tender and Award of Contract

Activity	Date
Invitation to Tender Issued	23 June 2022
Last date for receipt of tenders	22 July 2022
Shortlisting and selection	25 & 26 July 2022
Preferred contractor to be selected/appointed and unsuccessful companies notified	By 29 July 2022
Contract Start Date	8 Aug 2022
Contract End Date	31 March 2025

About Creative People and Places

Creative People and Places (CPP) is a funding programme which focuses on parts of the country where involvement in creativity and culture is significantly below the national average. At the heart of Creative People and Places is making sure that everyone has access to creativity and culture. Since 2012, Creative People and Place projects have brought together community, grassroots, and cultural organisations as partners to take the lead in choosing, creating, and taking part in arts and cultural activities that their local communities want and need.

Up until 2021, there were over 7.4million people engaging with Creative People and Places projects across England, 83% of which involved people that do not regularly engage with arts and culture. The far-reaching impact of the programme continues through enabling over 17,404 volunteers and over 1000 local partners to take part. A new round of funding for 2023-26 from Arts Council England, means that every National Lottery ticket purchase contributes to more villages, towns, and cities up and down the country being able to thrive through a collaborative approach to culture – from Wigan to Walsall, from Rochdale to the New Forest, and from Boston to Basildon.

Creative People and Places is an action research programme, meaning each of the projects funded by the programme reflect on the results of their work as well as proposing and testing new solutions. All CPP programmes are guided by three core questions set out by Arts Council England:

1. Are more people from places of least engagement experiencing and inspired by the arts?
2. To what extent was the aspiration for excellence of art and excellence of the process of engaging communities achieved?
3. Which approaches were successful and what were lessons learned?

About 'Down To Earth', Wigan Borough's CPP Programme

Drawing upon the extraordinary natural assets of the area and Wigan Borough's well-known sense of humour and fun, 'Down To Earth' will focus on our green spaces as sites for cultural engagement. The programme will invite local communities to shape and create local, national and international arts and culture across the borough that can happen within minutes, rather than hours, of our homes, parks, schools and best-loved spaces.

The funding has been secured by a local consortium led by Arts At The Mill CIC and including Wigan Athletic Community Trust, Groundwork, Wigan Council and Lancashire Wildlife Trust – a partnership that brings together varied skills, knowledge and experience in community engagement, the natural environment, project management and artistic excellence.

During community consultations, both a love for green spaces and the borough's well-known 'down to earth' attitude came across as very important to local people – giving the programme its name. Down To Earth proposes to meet people's cultural needs and appetites, no matter what their starting point, and develop new audiences that support the long-term sustainability of culture in Wigan borough in ways that are fun and open to all. [Read more about Down To Earth.](#)

Down To Earth's objectives are to:

1. Meet people's cultural needs and appetites, no matter their starting point
2. Take people on a journey from observer, to participant, to shaper & advocate
3. Build and develop new audiences for culture, that support the long-term sustainability of culture in Wigan

6 strategic approaches support Down To Earth's objectives:

- A. Focus on and co-create activities that reduce as many of the current barriers our community has told us about, including travel, cost & time
- B. Ensure a broad range of quality cultural experiences that span beyond established & pre-existing definitions of art and culture
- C. Meet people in trusted spaces that surround them such as shopping & community centres, nurseries, gyms, libraries, pubs
- D. Create a pathway of participation activities, meeting the needs of those who are both time-poor to time-rich
- E. Link Wigan & Leigh through activity across communal green space areas
- F. Be visible, transparent, clear and committing of power, resources and responsibility to communities to both shape and lead this work

Down To Earth's Methodology & Framework:

1. Stepping Stones: opportunities to co-create & engage deeply in short periods

Designed by local residents, these small-scale, intensive projects will connect artists to communities on their own turf, developing welcoming entry points for engagement and connecting people to participatory activity. As a result, the communities that are involved have taken that first big step into cultural engagement.

2. Paths of Discovery: opportunities that are local, light touch & easy to access

Mid-scale public commissions where artists co-create work with a local group (e.g. gardening club, mums group, running club), which reflects the region, landscape or habitat. Final works are presented as 'chance' discoveries or destinations to be sought out. These interventions could be transitory happenings or permanently sited artworks. Paths of Discovery will re-enchant a love for the natural world.

3. Moments of Joy: large-scale collective celebration - 'one for the calendar'

Major events within the borough's green spaces, cultural sites & venues. Communities will congregate to participate in extraordinary moments, the likes of which have never been seen before in the Borough. Working with programme partners we will commission artists and community created works that use digital approaches to demonstrate and prototype a positive future; inspiring communities to create collaborative re-imaginings of the world.

4. Legacy: Year-round long-term development opportunities that empower people to shape cultural provision

All activities will encourage co-design with local communities, whilst reaching as many people as possible across Wigan. DTE will champion democratic platforms and invite local people into meaningful two-way conversations, centering community voice in our processes.

About the Programme Evaluation

The learning & evaluation partner will be guided by the three core questions that Arts Council England ask of all Creative People and Places programmes (see Pg.6).

The learning & evaluation partner will provide the CPP Consortium and the recruited CPP staff team with regular insight to support the action learning approach of the programme. The role of the evaluator is to:

- To answer the three questions set out by Arts Council England
- To ensure that evaluation aligns with and feeds into the Arts Council national framework for Creative People and Places programmes
- To assess whether Down To Earth is delivering against its targets set out in our business plan
- To analyse the journey of our programme and its participants
- To explore to what extent Down To Earth has an impact on a positive perception of Wigan borough
- To be formative in nature and reflect the action learning ethos of Creative People and Places, actively engaging with the CPP consortium and recruited CPP team at regular intervals so that we continue to be responsive in our approach
- To provide evaluation training to the CPP consortium, recruited CPP team and volunteers where appropriate, to ensure a healthy approach to evaluation across the programme
- To work with the CPP consortium to develop a suite of resources that are accessible, user-friendly and enable a consistent approach to evaluation
- To work closely with lead CPP partner Arts At The Mill to agree evaluation procedures and review periods
- To ensure that evaluation data & learnings are shared in a timely way to feed into quarterly Arts Council England reports
- To ensure that evaluation data & learnings are presented in a way that is accessible to the widest audiences
- To work in a place-based way as much as possible, working with local knowledge and partners

Evaluation approach

We expect that the learning and evaluation partner may apply varied evaluation methods which will be agreed and finalised alongside the development of Down To Earth's business plan during 2022-23. The evaluation must align with Arts Council frameworks for national evaluation of all CPP programmes and:

- Capture feedback from local people (audience members, non-audience, local artists, key stakeholders, Down To Earth staff and consortium)
- Triangulate data from different sources to provide insights into the learning about the programme.

We expect that the evaluation will:

- Capture data that is robust, rigorous and of high-quality
- Consistent application of the evaluation across different work streams

Budget

The total budget is £40,000 (ex VAT).