

**OPPORTUNITY FOR ARTISTS, ARTS ORGANISATIONS AND LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS:
CREATIVE COMMISSIONS IN BRIDGWATER 2024**

Seed is calling for expressions of interest from community-based artists/artworkers with experience in social arts practice and local arts and community organisations to:

- work with the community to initiate and deliver participation based creative activities in the Bridgwater Area, and/or
- provide creative arts activities to be located in a popup shop location in Central Bridgwater (see attached Prospectus document for more details)

If you are a community group or organisation that has an idea, but doesn't have the experience or expertise to make it happen, then we invite you to talk to us! We can help with ways to get started, including matching you with suitably experienced artists and/or project facilitators.

Expression of Interest for artists, organisations and community groups

Introduction:

Seed's primary aim is to enable more people in Sedgemoor to actively engage in the creative arts, particularly those who don't usually do so. We seek to remove barriers to participation, increase opportunities for people to see and engage with the arts, and for the arts to become a part of everyday life in the area. We believe that everyone is creative and can benefit from the opportunity to explore and develop that creativity.

Through a multi-stage community consultation process with people living and working in Bridgwater we have identified a great local appetite for arts and other creative activities, but the main barriers to participation local people identify are lack of access, lack of awareness of what is available and people's belief that the arts are 'not for them'. We have had success to date by putting on activities right where people are, rather than in traditional creative arts venues, and helping people to overcome those barriers.

Through our consultation process, Seed has worked with local community members to identify the following priorities suitable as smaller and/or ongoing participatory activities:

Activities in empty shops and on the streets with the roads closed
Activities which draw people around themes including the environment, building community and bringing people together
Collecting and sharing stories and reminiscences of the older generation
Dance and Drama activities including lessons and groups
Environmentally themed artworks and activities,
Exchange of unwanted items/upcycling
Interactive creative sessions for people in housing complexes and care homes
(more) music activities including songwriting and composing workshops, African drumming
Pottery activities, including with a wheel
Things celebrating the history of Bridgwater including the docks, the cellophane clock, the industry
Things connecting the town to its rural setting

Some larger scale project ideas and priorities have been identified that will be pursued separately to this expression of interest process.

This consultation formed a key part of the 'Plough' phase of our development model, and these commissions are a major part of our 'Sow' phase. The diagram below sets out that model:



We have also secured an empty shop at Angel Place Shopping Centre in Bridgwater (formerly a greengrocers) which we plan to programme between mid-August 2024 and the end of March 2025. Between now and March 2025, we would also be interested in proposals for participatory arts activities that could take place within communal spaces in Homes in Sedgemoor properties.

For further details of our consultation process and findings, please see the attached report on our **Creative Accelerator Bridgwater** sessions. For further details of the pop-up shop, see the attached **Prospectus Bridgwater Creative Popup** document.

The opportunity:

We are seeking expressions of interest from suitably experienced artists (or teams of artists) to develop, facilitate and deliver artistic activities that will:

- Connect people within and between communities;
- Take place at a local level;
- Respond to the existing strengths and distinctive character of Bridgwater and the people who live here;
- Provide opportunities for people in Bridgwater to participate actively in creative activities, skills development, and/or co-creation processes; and
- Have some kind of wider benefit or outcome for the community.

Activities must be new to the area, in that they cannot duplicate or compete with similar existing activity, be a continuation of an activity previously commissioned by Seed in Bridgwater, but they may be a Bridgwater version of an activity previously delivered elsewhere.

Seed will provide commissioning funds to enable projects to go ahead. Where possible, proponents should plan to secure and/or provide other support (either funding, or in-kind) rather than the commissioning funds be the sole source of income for the projects. Where ever possible, activities should be free or very low cost to participants.

Project Location:

Projects and activities must take place in the Bridgwater area, in any location or facility that the proponent can demonstrate is available and suitable or viable for the activity. Activities can be proposed for one or more locations within Bridgwater including our popup shop at

Angel Place and/or Homes in Sedgemoor properties. You are not required to fit your project into our popup shop if it is better located elsewhere.

Budget:

Projects will fall into one of these two categories:

CATEGORY 1: Short term/one off activities to a maximum commission of £2,000

CATEGORY 2: Medium term activities (up to 10 months) to a maximum commission of £7,500

All figures listed are inclusive of VAT.

There is no minimum commission amount. You should request the amount needed to enable your project to go ahead, as demonstrated by your proposal budget, rather than the maximum available. Your budget should include any other income sources and in-kind support you intend to secure.

Seed has a total budget for this programme of £42,000 plus some additional support for our marketing and evaluation contributions to the selected projects.

Assessment Criteria:

- The activity will directly lead to new opportunities for local people to engage with the arts, particularly those who do not already
- Proposal directly and effectively addresses priorities raised by the community, as set out in this document and the attached Creative Accelerator report, and does not duplicate existing activity
- Activity is well planned and likely to succeed
- The artist(s) and other personnel are suitably experienced and skilled to deliver the project
- The budget is feasible, with artists paid appropriately
- The project offers good value for money in terms of numbers of participants and/or audiences and the relative cost per head
- The proposal fits with Seeds core values including sustainability and accessibility
- The required support for the activity is in place, and is demonstrated in the proposal

Additional Criteria to be applied if relevant

- *IF proposed for the popup shop*
 - The proposed activity fits with the project aims and objectives, and with the physical limitations of the space
 - The activity is likely to appeal to passers-by and those drawn into the shop who did not necessarily plan to take part in an arts activity
- *IF proposed for Homes in Sedgemoor Properties* – the proposed activity is suitable for the identified space, and fits with the stated interests and priorities of the residents

Seed actively encourages applications from artists who live and/or work in Sedgemoor, have disability or are of a minority background to lodge an expression of interest that meets these criteria. If you have disability, physical impairment or identify as neurodiverse, and would prefer present your expression of interest in a different way, please contact us to discuss alternatives.

Seed also seeks to build connections, alliances and partnerships with local non-arts organisations. Proposals that include support and involvement from local organisations not

traditionally involved in or supportive of the delivery of the delivery of arts activities are particularly encouraged.

Paying Artists a fair wage

Seed is committed to paying artists and artworkers a wage commensurate with their skills and abilities. We expect all proposals to set out artist fees in line with the recommended rates of pay for the artform involved. Eg:

<https://musiciansunion.org.uk/rates>

<https://www.artistsunionengland.org.uk/rates-of-pay/>

<https://uktheatre.org/theatre-industry/rates-of-pay/uk-theatre-equity-performers/>

Any other people working on the project other than volunteers should be paid the UK living wage as a minimum. <https://checkyourpay.campaign.gov.uk>

If you need help or advice planning your project, please talk to us. Useful resources can also be found here: <https://www.the-leap.org.uk/toolkit>

Deliverables:

Commissioned artists/teams will provide:

- Further development of their project idea, ready for launch and delivery
- Recruitment of participants into the project
- On the ground planning, management and delivery of the activity, including risk management and adherence to Seed policies and procedures where required
- Content for marketing and distribution of approved promotional material in collaboration with Seed
- Documentation of the process throughout their project
- Participation in evaluation activities including encouraging participants to complete surveys

It is expected that any and all costs relating to these six deliverables will be covered from the commissioning fee and other sources identified in the proposal budget.

All artists/facilitators/volunteers etc. who may interact with children or vulnerable adults through activities based in the popup shop will be required to have a current DBS and to comply with Seed's safeguarding policies and procedures, and codes of conduct.

Seed will provide commissioned projects with additional support in the form of:

- Ongoing advice & support on project development, delivery, documentation & evaluation
- Graphic design support
- Marketing and promotion support through our social media channels and website
- Policies, procedures and other helpful documents as required

All supported projects will be identified as having been commissioned by Seed, with funding from Arts Council England and the National Lottery.

Timeline:

These commissions have a rolling deadline and Seed will consider any proposals lodged prior to **23 September 2024**, or until our total budget allocation for this programme is exhausted. If budget remains unallocated we may call for an additional round of proposals for the popup shop location that will close on 2 December 2024.

Proposals will be assessed and replied to within 21 days of receipt. Project proponents should allow at least a further 14 days after a positive decision for contracting and further development of the project prior to commencement.

If you would like your project to be part of our pop-up shop programme, please submit it as soon as possible as the space will not allow for most activities to take place together and the programme will be filled by proposals as they are commissioned.



How to apply:

Please send an initial Expression of Interest comprising:

- A short outline of your idea (no more than one page setting out a statement of your concept for your proposed activity, including what your activity is (particularly the co-creation a community participation elements), who it is for, when and where it will be delivered, and how your idea meets the assessment criteria above.
- A current CV for the project lead artist, outlining relevant skills and experience of social arts &/or community-based arts practice, running of participatory workshops, collaborative art making and/or co-creation in a community setting; and
- An outline budget for your commission

These initial expressions of interest will be assessed by staff. Proposals not meeting the criteria strongly will be deemed unsuccessful and will not be invited to proceed. Successful proposals will proceed as follows:

PROPOSALS FOR CATEGORY ONE (up to £2,000)

That strongly meet the criteria and do not duplicate other proposals already received may receive a request to provide further information, or may proceed directly to commissioning. Any proposals with significant duplication will be assessed in competition as per the process below for Category Two. Proposals not strongly meeting the criteria or duplicating previously existing or other commissioned activity will not be supported.

PROPOSALS FOR CATEGORY TWO (up to £7,500)

that strongly meet the criteria will be invited to work up a fully developed project proposal.

Within two weeks of receiving that advice, they will be required to provide:

- A more detailed proposal (no more than three pages setting a statement of your concept for your proposed activity, including target participants/audience, recruitment strategy, an outline of your planned community participation and co-creation activities, planned location, and outcomes. This proposal should clearly demonstrate how your idea meets the selection criteria above.
- Current CVs of any other personnel to be engaged in the project, showing relevant skills and experience
- A detailed budget for your commission, broken down to show artist fees, materials, travel, venue hire, promotion, documentation costs etc; and

if required we may request further material such as:

- Letters/emails of support from any proposed partners in the project, and any planned providers of in-kind support including venues.
- Letters/emails from community members setting out the need for your activity and/or supporting your planned project
- Any other further details that your initial proposal indicates may be required

If the proponent has not previously been commissioned by Seed, and is either a freelance artworker or community group, then a fee of £400 (inclusive of VAT) can be provided to enable them to undertake that project development phase.

These full proposals will be assessed in competition with other developed proposals by a committee including Seed staff and members of the community (our Sowers and Growers).

The assessment process may require participation in an interview or presentation via teleconference. At the conclusion of that assessment, successful projects will be commissioned. Unsuccessful proposals will be advised of the outcome within seven days.

Please send your expressions of interest to info@seedsedgemoor.com using the subject line 'Bridgwater Commissions – Expression of interest'.

For further information or to schedule an informal chat about this opportunity please contact: scott@seedsedgemoor.com

About Seed

The Engine Room, 52 High St. Bridgwater Somerset TA6 3BL
www.seedsedgemoor.com

Seed was established in 2019 by a consortium of local grass roots organisations in order to improve the lives of people living and working in Sedgemoor through creative arts-based activities. The communities we work with believe that arts, culture and creativity bring about positive changes and benefits to their lives and the places in which they live. Our consortium comprises Homes in Sedgemoor, Community Council for Somerset, Bridgwater Senior Citizens Forum, Young Somerset, Somerset Film; and Bridgwater Town Council.

Creativity and the arts are not elite activities, but should be part of everyday life, created by, with and for the people, and respond to their imagination and reflect the things that are important to their communities. By the end of March 2024, we had delivered or started 59 projects with a total of nearly 20,000 participations, supported by over 7500 volunteer hours and attracting audiences of over 300,000. Independent evaluations show that Seed engages audiences of all ages and backgrounds who don't usually participate in the arts, with a strong track record of achieving our aims.

Seed is part of Arts Council England's Creative People and Places programme (CPP). Creative People and Places is about more people taking the lead in choosing, creating and taking part in arts and culture experiences in the places where they live. It is an intervention by Arts Council England to inspire new ways of thinking about cultural engagement in local authority areas where the official statistics showed historically low levels of engagement. There are 39 projects across the country, each located in a place where people are least likely to engage with arts and culture. The Arts Council is committing £38 million to the programme between 2022-2025. Between 2012 and 2019 it created 7.4 million engagements with the CPP programme and 86% of people who participate in weren't previously engaging regularly with arts and culture.

Your **Creative People + Places** project is facilitated by a consortium of local organisations including:



Bridgwater
Town Council



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