

OPPORTUNITY FOR ARTISTS, ARTS ORGANISATIONS AND LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS:
CREATIVE COMMISSIONS IN BRIDGWATER 2025

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 provide creative arts activities to be located in a popup shop location in Central Bridgwater.

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.

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:



For further details of our consultation process and findings, please see the attached report on our Creative Accelerator Bridgwater sessions.

We have secured an empty shop at Angel Place Shopping Centre in Bridgwater (formerly a greengrocers) where we have held a wide variety of activities including exhibitions, consultation events and participatory arts activities. We are seeking further proposals for activities and events to take place at the Creative Pop-up shop between now and August 2025.

For further details of the pop-up shop, see the attached **Prospectus: Bridgwater Creative Pop-up** document.

The opportunity:

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

- Create new and appealing opportunities for people to engage with the arts, particularly those who do not do so regularly
- Provide people with an opportunity to connect
- 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
- Enable existing arts, cultural and heritage offers to reach a new audience
- Encourage further engagement with creativity, or engagement with other existing offers
- Contribute to Seeds core values including being widely accessible & sustainable



Now that the former greengrocers display shelving, counter and mirrored walls have been removed, we have a neutral and rectangular (roughly) 5.7m x 10m empty space in the front half or so of the unit, with the rear set aside for storage. There is a false ceiling at approx. 8ft height with fluorescent lighting. Festoon type lighting is available that can be hung to suit particular popup activities. The store front is shuttered and features a prominent sign declaring "Seed Creative Popup".

We are seeking expressions of interest from suitably experienced artists, groups and organisations to develop, facilitate and deliver artistic activities for the popup creative takeover. We are seeking both participatory activities with opportunities for co-creation and audience-oriented activities. Ideas might take the form of (but are not limited to):

- Participatory activities including creative writing, visual art making, photography, music making, dance, drama, T-shirt Printing etc
- Exhibitions and displays, which may also include artworks and art objects for sale
Artist in Residence style activities in any artform which include an audience/
public interaction
- Exhibitions, screenings and displays, with or without an interactive component
- Providing opportunities to sample &/or showcase activities and experiences offered by Bridgwater's existing creative arts and heritage venues and programmes &/or those previously commissioned by Seed across Sedgemoor
- Talks, seminars, discussion events, games events etc
- Art & Craft activities &/or packs, artworks, objects and other active engagement projects
- Music activities suitable to the shopping centre location where sound cannot be contained

The shop dimensions in total are 108.9m² or 1,172.8 sqft. There is a double (2 section) roller shutter at the entrance which is around 5.7m wide. There are no display windows or other doors. 5.7m is the width of the entire unit. The front part of the shop (approximately 57sqm) which is open to the public is 10 meters deep (and therefore 10 metres by 5.7 metres is the shopfront floor space). The rear part of the shop is currently a storage area. Access to this area is via a closable and discreet door. It includes a disused cool room (3.4m x 2.6 m), an office space (1.6m x 2.4m) a sink area and a separate toilet

Seed will also be showcasing previous projects, programming activity directly and inviting partners from the education, employment and mental health sectors to present activities and information at the popup.

Activities will be programmed between 1 April and the end of August 2025. All proposals should indicate when the activity would take place, and any flexibility around dates. When working up your proposal please contact us to check current availability in the popup shop for your desired days. Activity should be programmed during the Centre opening hours, Mon-Sat 8am-6pm, Sun 10am-4pm. It is not necessary for the activities to fill the entire day.

It is expected that proponents of commissioned activities in the popup shop would provide staffing in the shop throughout opening hours of their activity, including opening and securing the shop. Seed staff will not be available to manage this.

Activities cannot generate noise that will disturb other businesses in the centre. Activities that will create sound that will be heard from outside the shop should be planned to take place after 3.30pm on weekdays or on weekends to avoid clashes with the Barclays Bank stall opposite the shop.



Budget:

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. Where items are sold, a 10% commission will be levied and returned to the programme budget.

Up to £2,500 is available for each commissioned activity for the popup shop (inclusive of VAT) Seed has a total budget for this programme of £10,000 plus some additional support for our marketing and evaluation contributions to the selected projects.

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.

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 the attached Creative Accelerator report
- Activity is well planned and likely to succeed, including compatibility with the space
- 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 including staffing to enable the operation of the popup shop in the proposed hours
- 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

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 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 30 June 2025, or until our total budget allocation for this programme is exhausted. We will endeavor to assess and reply to proposals 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, duplicating previously existing or other commissioned activity will be deemed unsuccessful and will not be invited to proceed.

Successful proposals will proceed as follows:

PROPOSALS FOR CATEGORY ONE (up to £1,999)

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. Commissioning processes will include development of ideas, project plans, marketing materials and other items required to ensure success. Any proposals with significant duplication of other proposals will be assessed in competition as per the process below for Category Two.

PROPOSALS FOR CATEGORY TWO (£2,000 -£2,500)

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

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 'Creative PopUp – 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 December 2024, we had delivered or started 77 projects with a total of almost 25,000 participations, supported by over 9,000 volunteer hours and attracting audiences of over 400,000. 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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