

LEAD ARTIST COMMISSION – AUGUST

Luton Council and Revoluton Arts seek responses to this call to commission a lead artist/group of artists/arts organisation to create and deliver the ‘August’ event of the pilot year of culture programme.

PURPOSE OF COMMISSION

To create and produce a promenade theatre event as part of Luton’s pilot year of culture; People, Power, Passion.

BACKGROUND

People, Power, Passion: setting Luton alight. In 2019, Luton Council will collaborate with the people of Luton to deliver a series of arts events made by, with and for local residents. As part of our ambition to be named UK City of Culture in 2025, we are embarking on a pilot year of culture programme building on the themes of people power and community action and commemorating the centenary of the 1919 Luton Peace Day riots, a series of performances, events and artworks will reflect our diverse and vibrant communities.

Entitled People, Power, Passion, we are looking for lead artists/organisations for a number of creative events that reference the chronology of the riots and explore their themes in the context of today. Applicants are encouraged to read the People, Power, Passion full programme reference document prior to submitting a response to the commission.

This is a co-commission in partnership with Revoluton Arts, Luton’s Creative People and Places programme that seeks to place community voice at the heart of creative place-making. This partnership reflects our shared ambition to place young people at the forefront of the August commission as part of the Pilot Year of Culture.

Harnessing Momentum: Luton’s strategy for the arts, cultural and creative industries in Luton 2017 – 2027 highlights the positive impact the arts can have on our places and spaces, skills and jobs, community cohesion and on our children and young people. This pilot programme will explore this impact whilst reaching audiences through ambitious, innovative, inclusive arts activity.

Revoluton Arts: Revoluton Arts is part of the Creative People and Places (CPP) programme, initiated and funded by Arts Council England through the National Lottery. CPP is about more people taking the lead in choosing, creating and taking part in art experiences in the places where they live. There are 21 independent projects, each located in an area where people have traditionally had fewer opportunities to be involved with the arts. Revoluton Arts is the Luton based CPP project governed by a consortium of local partners, of which Luton Culture is the lead; with an independent team who manage all programming and project delivery.

Luton's Peace Day riots 1919: Applicants are encouraged to research the Luton Peace Day riots prior to responding to this commission. The Bedfordshire archives provide a [comprehensive summary here](#) and *Where They Burned the Town Hall Down*, a book by Dave Craddock, is a thorough exploration of the riots.

Luton in 2019: As part of our ambition to be named UK City of Culture in 2025 we have identified the following four themes as important to Luton: Voices, Journeys, Growth and Home. Applicants are encouraged to consider these themes within their response and how people power and community action are relevant to Luton today and to the town's journey over the past 100 years.

Luton Council is delivering People, Power, Passion as part of the Luton Investment Framework. Overseen by the Luton Investment Framework Partnership & Programme Manager, the Cultural Enabler is leading the delivery of People, Power, Passion supported by a Programme Producer and an Arts Engagement Officer (project team). As this is a joint commission, the project director role for the August event will be shared by the Cultural Enabler (Luton Council) and the Revoluton Project Director (the partnership). The roles of the lead artist, the partnership and the project team will be clearly defined at contract stage and regular meetings with the project team will be required.

COMMISSION DETAILS

Context: After the riots in 1919, 39 men and women were remanded awaiting trial for the part they played in the riots. The trials took place in August and October during which 28 people were tried and 19 convicted. The majority of the people tried were from the poorest parts of Luton and were considered 'working class poor'¹.

Brief: We are seeking an artist/group of artists/arts organisation (lead artist) to create and deliver a community-devised project that explores democracy and the justice system in Luton/the UK. The project must work with young people (14-24), be presented outside of the town centre and would ideally be realised as a promenade theatre piece that uses both outdoor and indoor spaces. Other artforms and interdisciplinary approaches, including dance, music and digital may be incorporated. The project must feature young people from Luton as ensemble members and the upskilling and mentoring of non-professional ensemble members must be taken into consideration in the proposed approach. It is expected that audiences will be challenged and will be introduced to spaces and places that they have not been before.

Production information: It is not expected that applicants propose exact sites or neighbourhoods at application stage. The successful lead artist will work with the partnership to identify suitable locations that both meet the artist's vision and the commission's community engagement requirements.

¹ *Where They Burnt the Town Hall Down*, Craddock, D., 1999, p. 143

Provocation: In August, join local young people on a journey through their neighbourhood. See the world through their eyes, examining the justice system, the decisions they face, and the stories that matter to them.

Vision: An ambitious production that takes the audience on a journey through the world of young people in Luton. By meandering through their backstreets, parks, lounge rooms and schools, places are reinvented, young voices are heard and authentic stories are told.

Timeline:

- Project development: from March 2019
- Season: August 2019

It is expected that a minimum of four performances are included in the season, with more added depending on audience capacity. Exact dates to be confirmed by the partnership, taking into account the artist's schedule and site availability

COMMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Community engagement: it is a requirement of this commission that the lead artist engage deeply with young people in Luton. This could take the form of open workshops with a wide group of participants, leading to a self-selecting core group who will engage directly in the creation and performance of the project. It is integral that local young people are central to the creation of the project and that local, authentic stories and issues are explored within the project. The engagement and recruitment work will be supported by the project team.

Emerging artist mentoring: it is a requirement of this commission that the lead artist involve a Luton-based emerging artist in the creation of this work. Once appointed, the lead artist will work with the project team to commission a paid Associate Artist. The associate should be given creative input and the opportunity to learn and develop. If the lead artist is not from Luton, then the associate artist's local knowledge should be considered an asset to the project. The partnership will cover the cost of the associate artist.

Skills-development trainee: the lead artist will be required to accommodate a skills-development trainee on the project at some point during the development or production of the project. Their role will be determined on project need and is expected to be in a technical, creative, production or event-management capacity. The council's project team will be responsible for recruitment and management of the trainee. It is expected that the trainee will be given a certain role that could last from a number of days to a number of weeks. The partnership will cover the cost of the trainee.

COMMISSION BUDGET

The total budget for the production is **£59,475**, divided as follows:

- **Artist commission:** The fee for the commission is **£30,000**. This should cover the all lead artist fees and expenses including time for development, workshop delivery, creation and production. It should also cover any workshop materials and expenses.
- **Additional funds:** Additional funds are available for certain costs. These funds will be managed by the partnership and agreed with the artist in accordance with project needs. These funds are as follows:
 - **Production: £22,500.** Production costs will be covered by the partnership up to a value of £22,500. The artist will work with the partnership/project team to discuss the project's requirements. Note that these funds must also cover any safety and security costs associated with performing outdoors.
 - **Luton-based performer fees: £6,975** (estimated based on 5 performers @ 3 weeks @£465 p.w.). Note: these funds are only available for Luton-based, non-professional performers that have been recruited from the target group of community members. These funds are not available for professional performers. If professional ensemble members are required, these fees must be covered by the artist commission. The estimated number of performers and weeks should be used as a guide only, the applicant should propose how non-professional performers will be engaged with the development and performance of the project.
 - **Associate artist and skills-development trainee:** These fees will be covered by the partnership.

The allocation of these additional funds should be proposed at application stage and will be subject to agreement with the partnership. The partnership will retain and expend these funds on behalf of the commissioned artist.

All applicants need to be prepared for flexibility with their project budgets. There may be an opportunity for further funding and in extreme circumstances some budgets may have to be decreased.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Please forward the following to info@revolutonarts.com by **11.59pm Sunday 17th February 2019**.

1. A copy of your CV or portfolio. Please make sure that this includes three examples of, or web links to, previous work as well two testimonials from previous commissions.
2. A copy of your outline project budget. This will be used as an indication only and can be adjusted in consultation with the partnership if awarded the commission.
3. Your commission proposal of no more than five A4 pages, covering each of the following sections:
 - a. Project idea: include your proposed project idea, how it will respond to the brief and the production concept.
 - b. Community engagement and creative process: include details of how young Lutonians will be involved in the creation and production of the project and how they and their stories and experiences will be central to the creative process
 - c. Timeline: outline the stages of the project
 - d. Artist mentoring and training: identify your experience of mentoring emerging artists and how you propose to include an emerging/associate artist in the creative process. Also indicate any particular roles you envisage being available for a trainee/placement.
4. You must be available to deliver a presentation in Luton on Wednesday 27th February 2019.
5. If successful, you must be able to attend a project development workshop in Luton in March (details to be confirmed).