



Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL



Creative Practitioners

Cultural Tides Development Phase – Creative Taster Workshops

The Commission

Live Life Aberdeenshire's Museums Service seeks to appoint socially engaged creative practitioners with experience of working in communities for the development stage of the **Cultural Tides (Re-discovering, Re-imagining, Re-connecting)** project, working toward the creation of a new museum for Aberdeenshire.

These commissions are made possible by **The National Lottery Heritage Fund (Heritage Fund)**. Stage 1 funding supports a programme of community engagement and a series of creative 'taster session' workshops for identified community groups across Aberdeenshire. These workshops will feed into a wider programme of creative commissioning for the Stage 2 bid in June 2026.

Background

Aberdeenshire Council is currently in the development phase of a proposed 4-year project - **Cultural Tides: Peterhead (Re-discovering, Re-imagining, Re-connecting)** - with funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund to fit-out a new museum of Aberdeenshire in Peterhead. The Cultural Tides project is focussed on actively engaging communities with the cultural heritage of Aberdeenshire and realising commercial and economic development opportunities to offer a significantly improved visitor experience for communities and tourists alike.

This exciting new cultural facility will feature eleven galleries showcasing the significance of collections across Aberdeenshire and their link to stories of people and place. The new galleries will explore themes including but not limited to: **Connections and Belonging; Voices (in music, literature and film); Hidden Histories; and Horizons**. These themes will allow collections material to be contextualised within a broader framework and for museum practice and ethics to be explored alongside subject specialisms.

Integral to the new museum will be a learning room; Peterhead Library; and outdoor community spaces in a former walled garden area. A central aim of the development of the new museum is community involvement through **co-curation** and **co-production**.

To support this, a key element of the development phase is a programme of community engagement, and we are working with three key, target groups:

- Refugees/asylum seekers
- the Gypsy/Traveller community
- Incarcerated persons at HMP Grampian

The project also seeks to engage:

- Young people, particularly those in more deprived areas
- Carers and older people
- School groups and families / inter-generational groups.

The creative commissioning outlined above is focussed on working with these groups collaboratively, developing opportunities for skills building and creating positive partnerships. The specific groups we are working with and identified through our ongoing programme of engagement will be shared with the successful artists / practitioners on commissioning but will include some or all the groups outlined.

The process of co-curating aspects of the new venue with community groups across Aberdeenshire will be documented by a filmmaker already commissioned to work with us to capture many of the workshop sessions.

Context & Vision

The proposed taster session workshops are intended to **test approaches and ideas** with community groups, **strengthen relationships**, and nurture **creative skills development**, as well as engaging audiences with both the tangible and intangible heritage of Aberdeenshire by exploring lived experience through creative activity.

The outputs and findings of these workshops will feed into a wider programme of creative commissioning and intervention during the delivery phase of the project for the fit out of the museum.

Creative Practitioners

We are looking for creative practitioners with a minimum of three years' experience in their artform, and experience of working in communities through a socially engaged practice. We also welcome approaches from suitably qualified practitioners with evidenced workshop delivery skills and a desire to develop a socially engaged practice.

We are especially interested in commissioning artists and practitioners with a focus on, or knowledge of, **creative placemaking** and its approaches, and who can work with the engagement team for qualitative and quantitative reporting and feedback on outputs and outcomes.

We are calling for the following, specific commissions:

1. A socially engaged **digital filmmaker** able to work with refugees / asylum seekers to facilitate skills development in filmmaking through the delivery of two, two-hour workshops exploring and testing out ideas and potential for future filmmaking.
2. An experienced **bookbinder / maker** that can work with refugees / asylum seekers to try out and develop bookbinding / making skills in up to two, two-hour workshops.
3. A socially engaged **portrait artist** and, by separate commission, a socially engaged **printmaker**, able to work with secondary school groups to help develop portraiture skills, working collaboratively but independently from existing portrait photographs and encouraging different approaches in style and interpretation. Each artist to deliver two school-based workshops of two hours each. Experience of working with and in schools desirable.
4. A **mixed media artist / maker** with experience of working with young children to deliver up to two workshops with primary school-age children, in-school, developing artwork and making skills that respond to the themes of the museum and the needs of the school.
5. A **creative writer** experienced in working in, and supporting, Doric, and able to work with primary age children in schools to develop Doric language skills in both poetry and prose. Up to four, single session workshops of one hour.
6. A **woodworker / sculptor** experienced in applying creative methods to traditional objects such as benches, and able to work with incarcerated persons at HMP Grampian in up to two, single session workshops of two hours each.

7. A **metal worker / sculptor** able to deliver up to two, two-hour workshops with an Aberdeenshire based Men's Shed and / or a Scottish Women's Institute group to try out basic metal working skills and explore ideas and potential for the co-creation of future decorative interventions in the outdoor space of the new museum.

Outcomes and Outputs

Each workshop should include an element of skills development and, through the activities delivered, participants should feel more engaged with their own heritage and the wider heritage of Aberdeenshire. Participants should also feel more connected and a greater sense of belonging, both within their own communities and within the context of Aberdeenshire through a sense of broader cultural connection. Outputs should serve as ideas exploration and show potential for development in Stage 2. Practitioners should write a concise 150 - 250-word report at the end of their workshops to include an assessment of the appetite and potential within their groups for developing work longer term, with a view to co-curation and co-production outputs that might feed into the new museum fit out and / or exhibition programme.

Timeline

The **deadline for Stage One Workshop proposals is 5 pm Friday 30th January** with commissions being made by Friday 06th February and workshops expected to take place from the second half of February through to the end of May 2026.

Finance & Contractual

Fees will be paid as per Scottish Union of Artist (SUA) rates. Any 2-hour block workshop delivery as outlined will be considered a half day at the appropriate SUA rate, inclusive of prep time, travel and delivery. In addition, one hour at the appropriate SUA rate will be paid for the end of delivery report. Materials will be provided as required. Each artist / practitioner must have the means of independent transport to locations across Aberdeenshire and will be at the expense of the commissioned artist / practitioner. Appropriate PVG clearance and third-party liability must be in place and will also be at the expense of each commissioned artist.

For Scottish Union of Artist Rates:

<https://www.artistsunion.scot/recommended-rates-pay-rrp>

To apply

Applications should be titled '**Cultural Tides Creative Workshops (with relevant commissioning area)**' and sent electronically, by email, to: **Cultural Tides Learning & Access Officer, Ian Grosz, at: ian.grosz@aberdeenshire.gov.uk**

Submissions deadline: Friday 30th January 5 pm.

Please include the following documentation with your application in either Word.docx or PDF format:

- A short covering email or letter explaining why you would like to be involved in the project and how your previous experience fits with the brief, as well as your availability February 2026 through May 2026.
- A 300-word proposal including a suggested methodology and approach to your chosen commission area and artform with any potential themes, which clearly demonstrates a focus on **testing approaches and ideas, strengthening relationships, and nurturing creative skills development.**
- A current CV which demonstrates your prior creative and community engagement skills, including links to, or examples of, relevant previous work.
- A copy of Public Liability insurance and / or PVG clearance (or a statement of willingness and commitment to obtain insurance and PVG at your own expense).

Informal enquiries can be made prior to submission by contacting the Cultural Tides Learning & Access Officer, Ian Grosz by email at ian.grosz@aberdeenshire.gov.uk.

Selection process

Review and assessment of submissions will be by panel. The selection panel intends to make an appointment based on submissions but reserves the right not to choose any artist. Commissioning at Stage 1 in no way guarantees or implies commissioning at Stage 2, which will be by separate process and appointment.

GDPR Statement

Please be aware that by submitting an application you are agreeing to the processing of your personal data in accordance with:

<http://publications.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/dataset/arts-and-heritage-privacy-notice>