

Artist Brief: River/ Flow/ Connect

Sculptural Artist for Community Co-Design Workshops

Summary

Bedford Creative Arts (BCA) is looking for an experienced sculptural artist to deliver Community Co-Design “Mini-build” events and workshops.

BCA is using art to shape the identity of three locations along the riverside in Kempston, Bedford. These community workshops will work with participants of a variety of ages to co-design and build prototype “sculptural spaces”. These sculptural spaces will provide artwork/infrastructure for up to three new riverside community areas in Kempston. The aim is to build a circa 3-6 prototype models of sculptural structures for the residents of Kempston to consider having installed along the river between Kempston Mill and Queen’s Bridge.

The findings will be shared at a community-led symposium where the public will be invited to provide feedback on the proposed designs so that BCA can work towards funding and commissioning permanent versions these structures and designs in the short-medium term future.

The Brief

Bedford Creative Arts is looking for an exceptional community artist with a background in design/ architecture/ sculpture to deliver a series of workshops where communities can test their ideas for community hubs/structures along the riverside.

BCA has been working with the community of Kempston and using creativity to help engage residents more the riverbank on their doorstep.

Residents, including school pupils, have expressed a desire to see areas along the river developed to enable them to have a greater use, potentially in the form of seating and dwelling space, play areas, way-markers for walkers and runners and performance space.

We hope that through this commission residents will be able to explore which sculptural structures could be built along the river and to create prototype models of these sculptures to be used in further community consultation.

We envisage that there will be a minimum of 20 workshops/ interventions and that the programme of activity facilitated by the artist would include, but not exclusively entail:

- Maquette-building workshops where participants can learn basic sculptural terminology, contribute ideas for structures and be involved in co-designing proposals (there may be an opportunity to share their work at the symposium).
- Building temporary prototype sculptures (for outdoor or indoor display) will be built in varying sizes through these community workshops.
- A larger temporary and /or digital outdoor structure will be installed to demonstrate a location and use (scale subject to funding)

- Communities will demonstrate their learning and skills acquired through the project e.g. contributing to a project symposium event, learning about environmental policy and planning.
- Communities will become advocates for funding the capital builds (it's our hope that we will use this stage of the project to raise funds to build permanent structures in the near future).

To learn more about our wider project visit:

<https://bedfordcreativearts.org.uk/projects/river-flow-connect/>

The artist will need to have significant experience in creating temporary artworks in the outdoors relating to the local environment, a passion for the river environment and community-engaged public art.

Timeline

Artist Contracted	March
Attendance at Light Walk Event	15 th March
Workshop delivery period	April – May 2025
Celebration event	Early June 2025
Evaluation period & debriefs	July 2025

Fee

The fee is in the region of £5,000 for labour to cover planning and workshop delivery time as well as attendance at meetings and events.

There is a separate budget available for materials held by BCA of £2,500 (max).

Reasonable travel expenses will be provided and agreed in advance.

This is a freelance contract. The artist will be liable for their own equipment, tax, insurance and pension contribution. This is not an employment contract.

Application Process

Candidates wishing to apply should submit an outline proposal of no more than 2 sides of A4 explaining how they will respond to the brief and outlining the following:

- Their relevant experience.
- Examples of previous work or links to these online.
- How they will approach the brief (ideas do not need to be worked up in detail but we need to understand the artist's approach to delivering the brief).

If we have not worked with the artist previously, we will obtain references from the successful candidate before appointment.

Artists are welcome to supply this information in video or audio format (no longer than 5 minutes) if they prefer. If you require any other support to apply, please contact us to discuss how we can support your application.

For informal enquiries, please email our Programme Producer, Ami Aubrey, amia@bedfordcreativearts.org.uk.

We welcome joint applications or applications from artist collectives.

Deadline for applications **11.00am Thursday 20th February 2025**
Interviews: **Week beginning 24th February (contribution to travel expenses agreed in advance).**

Please submit applications to: office@bedfordcreativearts.org.uk

Eligibility

We welcome applications from artists at various stages of their career and from a variety of demographic backgrounds.

An Enhanced DBS check will be required for any unsupervised work with the community.

About Bedford Creative Arts

Bedford Creative Arts is a contemporary arts organisation that has worked across Bedfordshire for 40 years. It is committed to commissioning high quality art in communities, working with people to make great art in response to the place where they live. We work at different levels, from light participation to deeper collaborative projects between artists and the public. Throughout our work we seek to make new work that is accessible and engaging for audiences and questions and develops social practice within contemporary art. Bedford Creative Arts is an Arts Council England national portfolio organisation.

www.bedfordcreativearts.org.uk

About River/ Flow/ Connect

River Flow Connect is a longitudinal project that aims to strengthen engagement and connection with the River Great Ouse by residents living near the riverbank between the town centre and Rural Kempston/ Great Denham. Beginning firstly in Kempston, the project seeks to use arts and creativity as a tool for helping residents to have a positive relationship with their local river that sees an increase in use of the riverbank as a place for recreation, navigation by foot and cycle, socialisation and conservation.

To do this we will identify locations along the riverbank that will be transformed into accessible community spaces (“hubs”). A “hub” is likely to be where we restore an overlooked open-space and re-claim it for use by residents as an area to picnic, walk along, cycle along and celebrate at. This Kempston phase of community engagement is funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, Bedford Borough Council and Arts Council England.

About Kempston

Kempston is a large town within Bedford Borough with a strong Parish identity. Three key wards are linked along the river area for this project and ward councillors are actively engaged. Some areas have higher levels of need for the Community Needs Index than for the rest of Bedford (the Community Needs Index identifies areas experiencing poor community and civic infrastructure, relative isolation and low levels of participation in community life.). Levels of deprivation are generally higher than average for England and for wider Bedford and levels of Higher Education are lower. Some areas also have a higher than England and Bedford average levels of disability.

Equal Opportunities

Bedford Creative Arts values inclusivity and strives to ensure equal opportunities for all. This means that all applications will be judged on the candidate's individual merit and abilities in relation to the brief for the role and no applicant will be unfairly discriminated against based on any protected characteristic (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) or will be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable. We acknowledge certain demographics are often under-represented in the arts and in our areas of work and therefore we especially encourage applications from diverse ethnic backgrounds, those with a disability, and those with less formal educational qualifications. We will not prejudice any applicants that do not come from one of these backgrounds if they have the skills and knowledge needed to deliver the role however, we may take positive action to support representation where this can be shown to be justifiable. If you require an alternative method of application in order to fairly access this recruitment process, please contact us on info@bedforcreativearts.org.uk or 01234 818670.

Privacy Notice

Bedford Creative Arts (BCA) complies with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 under the control of its Information Governance Policy. Your information will be stored confidentially and only be used for the purposes of selection for the role applied for. Your information will not be transferred outside the organisation. By submitting an application, you are indicating that you are content for your details to be stored by BCA for the purposes of handling this recruitment process until such time as all appointments are made. All application information from unsuccessful applicants will be safely destroyed unless you give us permission to retain it in our Talent Bank for the purposes of informing you about other future opportunities which may be of interest.

