

## **Bringing digital arts innovations to St Helens – Artist Brief**

As our lives become increasingly dependent on digital tools we urgently need to explore the impacts of technological advancement on our cultural world. Part of this is better understanding how this connects to the growing need for physical community spaces, such as libraries.

As part of a wider piece of action research, Ideas Alliance are working with St Helens Borough Libraries to commission a creative digital arts project – inviting innovative ideas for how our increasingly digital society might affect the people of St Helens Borough. This call is aimed at artists or groups whose practices play with the ways digital and physical can interact, and who want to experiment with the spaces formed by this creative use of technology.

We are flexible about the approaches and outcomes used, as this is a chance to explore possibilities and invent new ways of engaging. As such, we welcome a wide-range of art practices, (everything from creative research, or digital workshops, to film-based works, performances, and installations which use creative technologies) as long as the final proposal is one which unites people through the use of technology.

The landscape of the commission is the digital world in St Helens Borough, but the area of focus is totally up to you. You might want to start conversations around environmental concerns, changing industries, new recreations, aging and care, or the future of libraries – we're open to your ideas and new approaches.

The commissioned project will be delivered (either digitally, in Libraries, or a mixture of the two) by the end of January 2021, and comes with a budget of £4,000. In addition, you will be asked to take part in an evaluation\* of the project once it is finished. This budget is broken down as roughly £250 per day for approx. 16 days of work overall. However, if you envisage your project will need a production budget this should be accounted for from the £4,000 budget (up to a maximum of £1000) and days worked on the project reduced accordingly.

\*Please allocate 0.5 days of your time to contribute to a piece of evaluation/action-research in the form of a one-to-one reflective interview and/or discussion/focus group.

**Deadline: 30 October 2020, 12pm/midday**

### How to apply:

Send the following to Hayley Trowbridge at [hayley@evolving-works.com](mailto:hayley@evolving-works.com) by midday on 30 October:

- a proposal of no more than 500 words, or an audio/video clip of no more than 3 minutes which outlines your vision for this brief and why your previous experience makes you a good candidate

- a CV and/or portfolio (or website where appropriate)

### Eligibility and Process:

- Artists and collectives must have at least 5 years experience in delivering high quality digital arts activities
- The call is open to all UK-based artists, but we're particularly keen to hear from artists and groups from both the borough and the North West region
- Diversity in the arts is really important to all partners in this project. All applications will be considered on merit. Applicants will not be discriminated against based on their; education or employment status, ethnicity, race, gender, sexuality, nationality, disability, civil or marital status, pregnancy or maternal status, religion, belief or socio-economic background.
- Applications will be assessed by a panel who will select one successful proposal. Please note, the panel may wish to contact shortlisted candidates before a final decision is made. Please let us know if you would rather not be contacted. The panel is made up of: Hayley Trowbridge (Ideas Alliance), Owen Hutchings (St Helens Borough Council), Joe Oxley (St Helens Borough Council) and Lesley Taker (FACT).
- Unfortunately, we are not able to provide feedback to all applications received.

### About the Commissioners:

Ideas Alliance are a social enterprise that wants public services to work in equal partnership with local people rather than to or for them, so better decisions are made and everyone can experience better outcomes. They partner with the brave pioneers and innovators who want to adopt this way of working using collaborative and community-based approaches. Working with St Helens Libraries, they are delivering an action research project that is investigating 'What does a digital offer look like for St Helens?'.

<https://ideas-alliance.org.uk>

St Helens Borough Libraries are an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation that works across St Helens Borough through libraries. They are a part of St Helens Borough Council and produce, programme and commission work which connects their audiences to each other and to the world through culture and stories.

<https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/libraries/>