

Make New Work Explore Application Brief

What is the opportunity?

ARC is looking to support artists to create new performance-based work in response to one of the provocations below, working with local communities in Stockton.

There are two opportunities to receive £2,000 in cash, along with space, accommodation, marketing, technical, producing and community engagement support.

These opportunities are expected to lead to a performative sharing, this could be a public sharing or to an invited audience.

Deadline to apply: 10am, Mon 17 March 2025.

What are the provocations?

The provocations came from in-depth and wide-reaching creative conversations with communities local to ARC. They were created through these conversations by independent creative director Paula Clark as part of a project which began with the question What's On Your Mind? (you can read more about the project [here](#)).

The project was designed to capture the key areas of interest and concern to our communities. We are using them as guiding principles for our programme to help ensure that ARC's work resonates with our local communities.

Artists are asked to select one provocation to base their idea around. They are intended to be starting points for creative ideas – we are not looking for literal interpretations.

**#Change, #Welcome, #Escape, #Before, #Alcohol, #Women, #Anger, #Care,
#Community, #Climate, #Future, #Money, #Kindness, #Lifelines**

[Please see the full text for each provocation here](#)

What are we trying to achieve?

Over the next three years, ARC is seeking to achieve a shift in our programme to a more community-led/influenced way of working. These opportunities form part of exploring how we might do that, by inviting artists to respond to things that are on the minds of our local communities.

ARC's artistic policy is to provide creative activity and cultural experiences that are contemporary and relevant. We want to present a creative programme that helps us understand and enjoy the world as it is today and excites us about the future.

Co-design is a key principle of our creative programme. This means we work proactively with artists and communities to develop work that is relevant to and resonates with our local communities. This doesn't necessarily mean work that is about, or made specifically for Stockton and the Tees Valley, but we present work that our local communities can connect with, and that helps us understand the world we live in. We believe a principal element of manifesting that is ensuring that people authentically have an equal level of agency to influence the creative outcome of a project as any other artist involved in the process.

By communities, we mean communities of place, interest, identity, need and action,—we are all part of many communities.

Though the work we want to create is specifically for our local communities, we recognise that communities like ours exist all over the country; -in areas where there are high proportions of people facing inequalities and barriers to engaging with culture, usually as a result of either their protected characteristics or socio-economic status.

Working with communities

Part of the exploration we want to undertake is around how we can invite local people to be involved in the creation of work that doesn't necessarily rely on the traditional 'co-creation' model. We recognise that not everyone can or wants to work alongside artists as fully participating members of the creative team and are keen to test out other ways of meaningful involvement.

Firstly, we are involving local people in the selection process for these opportunities, which is a form of co-design.

We are looking for artists to consider how local people might contribute to the development of their ideas by:

- sharing skills or stories in the development of the work, in a way that enriches participants' own lives; this could be a conversation over a cup of tea, or by artists joining existing groups to learn about their skills, work etc

- playing a part in the creation of a work during the development process; this could be through attending a workshop or engagement opportunity, or working with artists to engage other people
- in other new ways that are beneficial for the artist, individuals involved and the creative process

It could be through direct involvement in the creation, playing a proactive role in the development and devising process as well as the final work, working alongside artists in a more traditional co-creation way.

In addition to the £2,000 budget, we have up to £1,000 available to support community participants to take part, which may be in the form of expenses, bursaries, vouchers etc.

NB: Innovative and robust approaches to involving local people have been more successful with previous panels so it is worth giving this some time in your application.

What do you get?

- £2,000 budget
- Producing, marketing and community engagement support from ARC
- Technical support for the sharing
- Rehearsal and creation space at ARC
- Accommodation in the [ARC House](#) (subject to availability)

The final sharing can take place in any of the spaces at ARC, but we anticipate would be most likely to be in the Studio. You can read about the spaces [here](#).

Timeline

Your project is expected to be delivered within one of the following timelines:

Tuesday 26 August – Friday 05 September

Monday 08 September – Friday 19 September

Monday 20 October – Friday 31 October

*Please indicate a first and second choice of timeline to deliver your proposed project in your application.

Selection Criteria

The selection will be based on the following:

- Idea for the project
How does your project relate to ARC's Artistic Policy? Is it bringing something new to ARC's Programme? How does your project specifically relate to the What's On Your Mind Provocations?
- Potential quality and impact of the community involvement
Is co-creation considered, and are communities taken care of? Will communities feel valued within the process? What about your project has the potential to excite communities at ARC?
- Deliverability of the project,
Including the skills and experience of the people involved as well as the available resources and timescale. Have you considered budget- paying people fairly and with enough lead-in time to deliver the project.

Selection Process

We have selected a Community panel who are involved in the selection process for the Make New Work programme. The community panel, along with one ARC Producer, facilitated by Creative Director Alexander Ferris, will come together to select the commissioned artists through three rounds of discussions.

The applications will be split into main commissions and seed commissions, the ARC Producer will read all the applications. One lead panellist will read the main commissions, one will read the seed commissions.

The first round will involve lead panellists coming together to create a longlist, Artist names and Project Titles will be published with permission across ARC's social media and website. Then following the longlisting, all panellists will meet and read/discuss longlisted applicants to then select a shortlist which will be published.

All shortlisted applicants will then be interviewed.

As we want to welcome community members who may not have been involved in commissioning processes before, we are not offering a strict criteria/way of talking about applications. Instead, we are welcoming all voices to express themselves equally, guiding and facilitating conversations where everyone's applications will be considered with thought, care and compassion. Shortlisting is not a science, and we are always thinking of new ways we can approach understand applications and how they might fit into our Programme of work at ARC.

- Longlisting Meeting- Thursday 27 March
- Shortlisting Meeting- Tuesday 01 April
- Interviews- Tuesday 08 April

Feedback

All unsuccessful applicants will receive general feedback- with the offer for personalised feedback upon request. All applicants at longlisting stage will receive personalised feedback.

All applicants will receive feedback by Fri 18 April. This factors in the time taken during the selection process, and then to write and send personalised feedback. As with previous rounds, we are expecting a high volume of applications so please do bear with us as we compile this feedback.