

ARTIST RESIDENCY OPPORTUNITY

VOICE OF THE CHILD

Celebrating Curiosity and Creativity in children and families

Action for Children Collaborative Opportunity: Call out for interested artists to work with Action for Children to develop a long term socially engaged artist residency bid.

Artist Brief

We are seeking expressions of interest from artists who work in a socially responsive way, who would be interested in relocating/working in South East Northumberland for an exciting and ambitious long term live/work artist residency in Newbiggin by the Sea in Northumberland.

Background

Action for Children are a national charity who have children's centres covering seven areas in Central Northumberland. They have been delivering arts projects in partnership with Museums Northumberland through the bait programme (an Arts Council Creative People and Places project) for the last five years.

Children's centres play an essential role in giving children and families the early support they need. They work with the whole community, working in partnership with other agencies such as health visitors, midwives and local schools to help children 0-19. Services include: child and family health services; parenting programmes and early year's education services, speech and language support and family learning. Support for parents and carers with adult learning and employment support.

This residency opportunity has been informed and shaped by a recent arts project funded by Action for Children, Arts Council England, Northumberland County Council and Museums Northumberland through bait. The project, called Voice of the Child (VoC), enabled a wide range of participatory arts opportunities to be delivered to children and parents accessing the seven children's centres in Central Northumberland.

The evaluation of the VoC project shows it reached a wide range of families and increased arts participation. Following this project, we are now able to experiment with what happens next when an artist(s) becomes part of a community rather than visiting a children's centre to deliver art sessions.

Residency community

The residency will be focussed in Newbiggin by the Sea, a small coastal town in South East Northumberland which is in the top 30% deprived wards in England. There is a population of 6308 (census 2002), with 352 of those under 4.

Action for Children has worked in this area since 2002 and in that time, have found the area to be unique, friendly and influenced by heritage, but also presents with low aspirations and isolation for many families.

Figures show there are high levels of deprivation and unemployment in Newbiggin. Children in Newbiggin are below the national average for good levels of development in early years at only 67% with the national average being at 71%. Children's Centres focus around the 0 -2 early engagement is to help narrow the gap. We want to see this opportunity as a chance to empower parents/carers and their children to make decisions that will develop their skills and benefit their communities, as well as raise aspirations.

To successfully work within Newbiggin, we need to bring opportunities into spaces that the community is familiar with, and work in ways that can explore the essence of family life and respond to it in subtle but radical ways.

Over the last year we have been working with families in Northumberland in children's centre settings to help develop their artistic and leadership skills and develop resources that will benefit the successful artist when establishing relationships in the area.

We are very interested in using the arts to engage families with young children, 0-2 years and improving the communication and literacy levels of children before they reach school age. There are some community assets such as sport centre, library, heritage centre, schools and the impressive beach. Getting to know the families brings a wealth of stories, and ideas to work with and we hope you will feel very inspired.

Partners and Locations

Action for Children works in partnership with cultural and art venues across the North East. We are delighted to have confirmed Seven Stories, the national centre for children's books, Museums Northumberland through the bait programme and Northumberland Libraries as partners for this project.

Who we are looking for

We are seeking expressions of interest from artists who work in a socially responsive way who are passionate about working in an early years setting and would be interested in working/relocating to South East Northumberland for a long-term artist residency.

The residency possibility has been informed and shaped by experiences working across all Action for Children's Centres over a 12-month period, and one of our largest and longest interventions to date. We are open to interest from artists that work in a collaborative way.

Artists will be commissioned by Action for Children, but will need to work in partnership with our partner organisations.

Structure

If we are successful with funding, we hope the initial residency will be for one year. The initial 12-month residency will have 3 monthly reviews built into the structure to ensure both the artist and commissioners are happy with the process. We see the artist(s) making their home in the community.

Process

Please submit an expression of interest that outlines:

- Why you are interested in working with Action for Children to develop this residency
- A background to your practice and why you feel it to be relevant to the post.
- Examples of past work/ projects that you think demonstrate how your practice fits this brief
- Your methodology – ideas on where you might start artistically, how you would get to know the area, drawing on how you have done this in the past.

Deadline

Please email expressions of interest (no more than two A4 pages, type 12) to Voice of the Child project manager Claire_newton@me.com by Monday 29th October at 12noon.

We will contact applicants by Friday 2 November to inform you whether we'd like to take your interest further. This would be to invite you to a ½ day development session, which will be a chance to meet families, staff and ask questions about developing the residency. This session will be held at Newbiggin Sports and Leisure Centre, Newbiggin from 9am-1pm on Friday 9 November 2018.

Travel expenses will be paid at up to £90 per artist.

Further information about our work can be found at:

<https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk>

<https://www.sevenstories.org.uk>

<http://baittime.to>

Eligibility

We are interested in applications from individual artists and artist collectives who feel they can balance the needs of the residency. We would consider artist/ producer partnerships but not applications from large organisations. You must have permission to work in the UK to apply.

Budget

Fundraising will be undertaken between November – January and we hope the project will start in February/ March 2019. You will be paid for the time you work to help write content for the funding applications and will be able to spend another ½ day in the community.

Accommodation will be provided for the residency (this will not include utility bills), the value of this is £4,800

Artist Fee: £18,000 for the year

Materials budget; £3,000 - £5,000