



Exeter
Cathedral



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EXETER CATHEDRAL – ARTIST BRIEF - SOUNDSCAPE

Introduction

We are looking for an artist (individual, collective or company) with skills in sound production and music as well as experience of working collaboratively with communities, preferably in a heritage environment. Working closely with the Cathedral team, the artist will deliver a Soundscape as part of the interpretation element of a broader 3-year National Lottery Heritage Fund Activity Plan.

Background to the Wider Heritage Fund Project for Information

The Soundscape is embedded within the *Exeter Cathedral – the 2020s Vision Investing in our Welcome* project associated with the transformation of Exeter Cathedral. Our capital works will ensure our buildings are fit-for-purpose by improving infrastructure for all our users. A new interpretation scheme and Treasures Gallery will bring the history and purpose of the Cathedral to life for everyone. A detailed Activity Plan sets out how we will engage our communities in co-creating events, works of art and interpretation content.

Our aim as an organisation is to create positive development in the following areas: improving our ability to welcome more people to the Cathedral (facilities and quality of welcome); embedding consultation and co-creation into our work; engaging with new audiences; creating a legacy of community cohesion and partnership working.

Our approach is to work in partnership with groups and organisations on our doorstep.

- We will develop the skills and confidence of our staff and volunteers to deliver meaningful activities for - and with - our communities.
- We will work with artists, musicians and creative producers to find new ways to engage people. We will improve the natural environment of the Cathedral for the benefit of all.
- We will use digital platforms to involve children in Devon with primary historic material held in the archives to enrich learning and encourage visits to the Cathedral.
- We will transform our interpretation and visitor experience in order to broaden our reach and appeal. The development of this interpretation will involve diverse voices and bring new perspectives to the history of the Cathedral.



Project Activity is split into two main themes:

Re-imagining the Cathedral

Using the physical asset as the starting point, this area will focus on the historic context of the capital works, improving the visitor experience and making it more relevant to a wider range of people. It will highlight and increase awareness and appreciation of the less visible assets of the Cathedral, including the library and archive collections. The setting of the Cathedral will also be a focus, taking interpretation beyond the building, exploring how Cathedral Green can be improved within the context of environment and biodiversity, and using it as a focus for developing new and meaningful relationships with local communities.

People and Place

This area goes beyond the Cathedral estate and into the community to encourage diverse audiences to explore their connections to the Cathedral and its wider city context. It will look at how more people can easily engage with the Cathedral and its collections beyond a physical visit. Through targeted activities, it will encourage diverse communities to use the stories told by the Cathedral and its collections to explore themes of contemporary relevance.

Within these themes, activities are broadly grouped under three umbrella projects:

- The Welcome Project
- The Creative Cathedral
- Environment and Climate Change

Through research and consultation, the following target audiences have been identified:

- *Hyper-local and underserved* – the project will work with partners in order to engage effectively with people who live in adjoining neighbourhoods who face barriers to engaging with heritage. Creative and skills-based activities will be co-created with local partners.
- *Young People (13-25)* – working with young people in and beyond a formal education setting, offering opportunities for creativity, learning new skills and gaining work- related experience.
- *Formal Education settings* (primary & secondary) – working with schools and educators to provide a high-quality set of innovative digital resources for them to use pre- and post-visit as well as in standalone lessons in the classroom. The project will explore ways to bring the archive and library to life in order to enrich the educational lives of students of different ages and learning styles across Devon and beyond.



- *Families (targeting lower income neighbourhoods)* – drawing people to the Cathedral who would not normally visit. Understanding and acknowledging the barriers they face to visiting and provide engaging, creative and enriching activities that appeal to them.

Project information - Soundscape

The chosen artist (individual, collective or company) will deliver a Soundscape (a co-created “soundtrack”) as part of the new interpretation of the Cathedral. The artist will work closely with the Cathedral’s external interpretation designers to ensure that the outputs fit with the needs of the interpretation scheme.

The soundscape should be created in such a way that it can be edited and used within the interpretation content and at several points within the Treasures Gallery, for example within the seating booths.

Content for the soundscape will be developed in consultation and through active engagement with people living and working in Exeter and Devon.

Within the context of the interpretation framework, the intention is for the soundscape to support visitors in engaging with their sensory experience of the Cathedral. Knowing that texts have been said and sung, bells rung, and organs sounded here over centuries, the sounds of the Cathedral are an important element in the commonality of experience of this place throughout its history. It is anticipated, however, that the soundscape’s content will also explore more abstract concepts such as disembodied sound in the Cathedral (retreating footsteps, overheard voices), quality of sound in the Cathedral (echo, delay) and the absence of sound in the Cathedral (peace, silence).

The soundscape will pick up on and link into other themes and strands:

- how the Cathedral intersects and interacts with the world outside. For example, how the public perceive and engage with the Cathedral, their memories and experiences of the space
- words spoken and sung
- how the physical features of the Cathedral speak to its purpose as a spiritual and heritage hub
- the significant role of music in the life of the Cathedral including the bells, the organ, and the choir
- the people of the Cathedral

The rationale behind creating a soundscape is the number and range of ways in which sound can connect with many different people – in the evocation of memory, through the sound of the bells carrying the Cathedral into the wider city, in the universality of music, and more. This approach reflects that which underpins work in the Activity Plan, bringing new voices to the Cathedral and taking the Cathedral’s voice out into the community, as well as drawing on the rich musical tradition and wide-ranging material in the library and archive collections.



The soundscape also presents an opportunity to further pick up on the Activity Plan's overarching theme of health and wellbeing.

Engagement activity that generates content either to be incorporated into the soundscape or to inform its development could consider things like:

- the role of air and breathing in the production of musical sound in the Cathedral – both in singing and with the organ – in relation to the importance of how we breathe, and how we notice our breath, for our physical and mental wellbeing
- the physical and mental health benefits of engaging with and participating in music-making
- sound as a sense that supports the recollection and creation of memories

Potential engagement opportunities for target audiences could include the following:

- an opportunity to share knowledge around the physics of sound and the engineering that underpins an instrument like the Cathedral's organ
- potential for skills development in working directly with the commissioned producer on collecting, editing and mixing sounds for the final soundscape, as well as for music-based activity, working with the Cathedral's Director of Music

Role and key tasks

- Lead and produce the project from initial brief to evaluation
- Embed co-creation and heritage learning into the process
- Work closely with the interpretation designers to ensure the outcomes are fit for purpose
- Work closely with the Community Outreach and Partnerships Officer to ensure all elements of the project are delivered effectively
- Ensure clear and effective communications between all parties, including Cathedral staff
- Manage and report the project budget, ensuring that spending is appropriate and controlled
- Compile and disseminate information for the project; including relevant risk assessments and timetables
- Adhere to marketing deadlines to ensure the project is promoted effectively
- Work with the project evaluator and the wider team on the evaluation of the project, including gathering and analysing feedback as required.



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Knowledge, Skills, and Experience

Proven track record of producing high-quality sound-based projects in the creative sector

Experience of community engagement and co-creation

Understanding of working parameters within a heritage context

Knowledge of participatory arts practices

Understanding of the history of music and its use in a religious context

Ability to swiftly establish strong working relationships with a wide variety of people and groups

Creative, positive approach to planning and problem solving

Flexibility to adapt to the needs of the project as they evolve over time

Participant Targets

Minimum number of participants = **210**

Cathedral Choir	35
Exeter College	10
Community music organisations	65
Schools (via the Cathedral's Choral Outreach)	100

Heritage Fund Outcomes

Heritage Fund Outcome	Outcome No.	Project Outcomes
A wider range of people will be involved in heritage	O.HP.3	Young people, lower income families, socially isolated and vulnerable individuals will participate in cathedral heritage activities for the first time, and will recommend the programme of creative and enjoyable activities to others
	O.HP.4	The co-production and input of young people will be recognisable within the programme of activities and will serve to attract more young people to the cathedral and Activity Plan programme
People will have greater wellbeing	O.W.3	The Project will help to promote individuals' sense of place and identity which will lead to a sense of community empowerment and improved cohesion.
	O.W.4	The project will offer an increased sense of individual well-being and impact physical and mental health by providing opportunities to undertake creative and hands-on heritage activities
People will have developed skills	O.S.5	Participants from our target audiences will learn creative heritage skills associated with storytelling, writing, research, giving guided tours and interpreting history through art, craft and making. Many of these skills will be useable outside this project and are designed to build confidence and contribute to wellbeing
Heritage will be in a better condition	O.HC.2	The Project will provide enhanced opportunities for heritage-based recreation and activity.
Heritage will be identified and explained	O.HE.1	The heritage will be better explained through a range of interpretation and activities targeted at a wide range of audiences.
People will have learnt about heritage, leading to changes in ideas and actions	O.HL.1	Attitudes and preconceptions about the Cathedral will be challenged. People will engage in meaningful ways with the Project for its heritage and community value rather than simply as a place of worship.

Project timetable

Milestone	Date
Application deadline	Thursday 7 December 2023
Interviews are expected to be on	Thursday 14 December 2023
Start-up meeting	Thursday 11 January 2024
Research & Development	February - March 2024
Delivery	April – September 2024
Review & Evaluation	October 2024

Contract and Fee

Fee circa 45 days (including a minimum of 10 days direct work with participants, R&D, and any materials, travel, and subsistence)	£10,000
Total	£10,000

The successful candidate / company will be expected to manage their own hours to ensure that the project is delivered on time and within this overall budget.

A payment schedule will be agreed once appointed.

The successful candidate / company are expected to have public liability insurance of at least £2 million.

How to Apply

You can apply with a written proposal (maximum 2,000 words) or via audio or video (max 10 mins). We want to remove as many barriers to applying as we can, so, if there's another method you'd prefer to use please let us know.

Please ensure you include:

- Details of how you meet the specification for the creative brief, to include details of previous experience, including at least two examples of similar projects you have delivered.
- An outline of your proposed approach to the project and the methodologies you would apply.
- A breakdown of resources (time and fee) with a proposed timetable.
- Your contact details including telephone number and email plus contact details for two referees (references will not be requested without your permission).

The successful candidate will be required to complete safeguarding training and an Enhanced DBS check.

Applications to be submitted to: lis.spencer@exeter-cathedral.org.uk

Deadline for applications: Thursday 7 December 2023

Selection Criteria

We will assess applications via the following criteria:

- Knowledge, skills, and experience that demonstrate the best fit with the brief
- Clarity of approach for delivering the contract
- Value for money