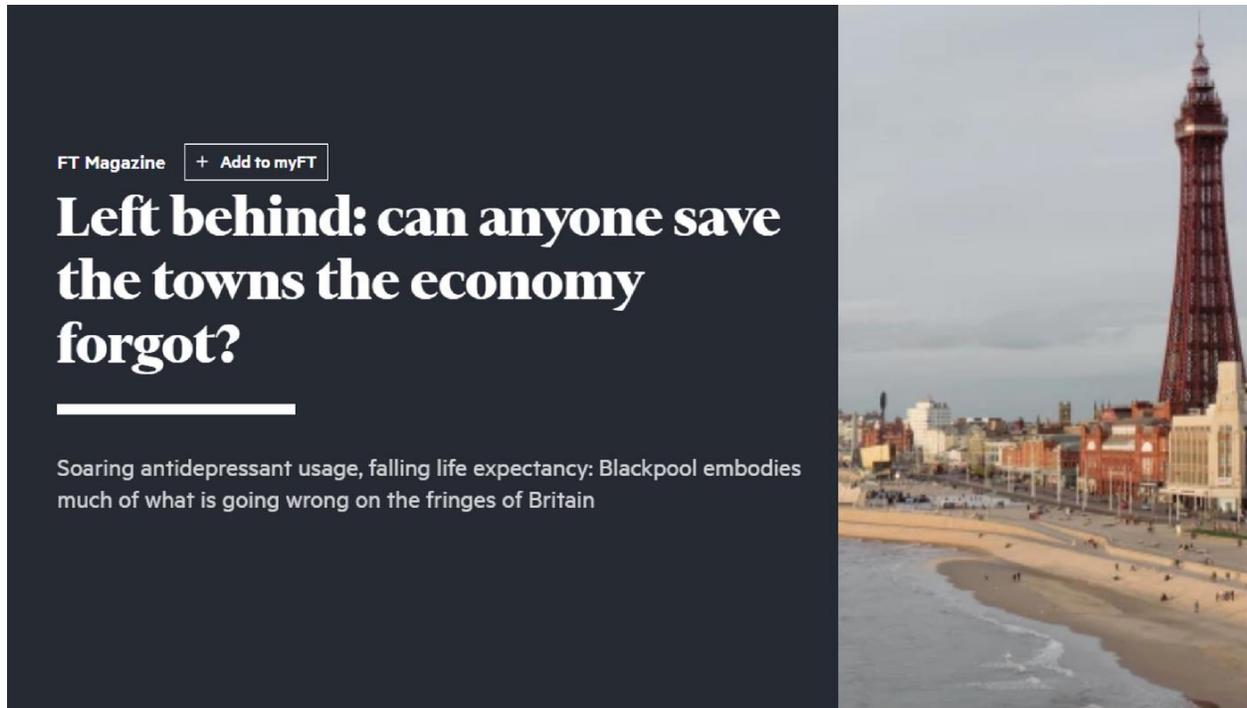


Left Behind – Call for Proposals

Left Behind is a new programme of commissioned art works that are a direct response to the Financial Times article in December 2017 *'Left behind: Can anyone save the towns the economy forgot?'*

LeftCoast are commissioning a series of works across art forms that will be presented as a programme throughout 2018.



Background

LeftCoast (the Creative People and Places project for Blackpool and Wyre), in partnership with the local creative community, feel that we are uniquely placed to invite creative responses to the exploration of Blackpool as a 'half way house' for the UK as outlined in the FT article.

'The story of Blackpool is a story about the failure of national policies to support places on the edge. But it is also a story about how — in the face of necessity — people are trying new ideas to turn things around.'

We feel that the article uses an interesting choice of statistics and narrative to paint a picture that is factually correct and a reality that we see on a daily basis. The positioning of Blackpool and its social and health problems as a national problem, rather than a local, is something we agree strongly with and believe needs to be highlighted. As the article says:

'Blackpool is suffering from a highly concentrated dose of what seems to be going wrong in pockets of many developed countries. Economists in the US often contrast the dynamism of America's coasts with the malaise of its heartlands. But in Britain, it is increasingly on the country's physical edges, in its seaside towns, that you find people on the outside of the economy looking in. Blackpool exports healthy skilled people and imports the unskilled, the unemployed and the unwell. As people overlooked by the modern economy wash up in a place that has also been left behind, the result is a quietly unfolding health crisis.'

However, we also think that the article tells one side of the story of Blackpool, whilst factually correct, there are many different facets, nuances, ambitions, quirks and colours that make up this place and its people. There is a feeling locally that the article has made local communities appear disenfranchised, the done to rather than the done with, and this is not entirely true. Whilst we acknowledge the issues explored in the article, the creative community feel that this is the right time to have a different conversation. If Blackpool is symbolic of national issues and central government are not addressing the root causes, how can we use art and creative approaches to challenge and comment on this?

Link to full FT article:

<https://www.ft.com/content/b6dbf34e-c987-11e7-aa33-c63fdc9b8c6c>

Brief

We would like to commission work that explores the themes highlighted in this article. Work created can be a challenge, a comment, a provocation or an observation, we are not asking for solutions, but how, as artists, are we uniquely placed to frame a different conversation? We welcome proposals for projects of any art form that adds to this conversation. Proposals should in some way reference the personality of the town.

As discussed in the article there are, identified health and social problems, but it is also a place of humour and humanity, a place of fun, welcome and acceptance.

Blackpool is uniquely positioned in the national consciousness, with many people having different relationships with it. People who live here know their Blackpool, people who have visited for a holiday have their version of the town and people who have come half way across the world to dance in a ball room competition have yet another experience of the place. Likewise a person living in a similar seaside town but who may have never visited Blackpool will have a good understanding of the nuances of this conversation as it is played out in coastal towns up and down the country. As illustrated in the FT article, the same could be written about many fringe towns in the UK, but Blackpool is used as a familiar place to highlight the national debate.

Proposals are welcomed from artists working in any media, working locally, nationally or internationally, ideas will be assessed on quality, relevance and potential.

Proposals should consider locations, spaces, physical and or digital presentation options – but don't worry if you're not sure about how feasible ideas are at this stage. If you are selected we will work with you to support the delivery of the work in the most appropriate contexts.

Artists based locally (Blackpool, Wyre & Fylde) will be able to access further support to realise ideas. We want to ensure we give everyone the chance to feed into this conversation so please contact us at LeftCoast if you feel you need more advice, support & guidance to realise the idea in your proposal.

Engagement

We are not specifying the level of local engagement we wish to see in these proposals. We believe that there is a spectrum of engagement opportunity possible in proposals, from a socially engaged proposal with an emphasis of process and co-creation, to a work that appears in Blackpool with no prior engagement but works to make people think or connect with a place differently. For the programme we are interested in all approaches as long as they are thematically relevant. If you have any questions about the level of engagement required for LeftBehind proposals then please contact one of the team at LeftCoast.

Context

This commissioning programme runs alongside LeftCoast programme for 2018, all of which thematically links to the notion of Left Behind.

In Dec 2018 we will hold a symposium which will be an opportunity to discuss what we have been doing across the town and invite relevant partners such as public health and housing associations to be part of that conversation. We see these commissions as an important part of the symposium; giving us the opportunity to present what has happened as a whole.

If you do not feel you want to respond to this brief with a proposal, but would like to be involved in the symposium in other ways, then please get in touch with us using the contact details below.

Time frame

We would like these commissions to be completed between April and Dec 2018 ideally, works have to have started before December 2018 in order that they can be included in some way within the Symposium conversation. Please suggest a time frame for delivery within your proposal submission.

Budget

We are looking for proposals from £500 to £5000. We will commission a minimum of 4 ideas, but have the potential to commission more.

Application Process

To apply please send us:

A proposal:

Up to one side of A4 outlining your proposed way of creating a new work in response to the FT article. Please tell us:

- The idea
- Which element of the FT article it is responsive to
- Does your idea engage with a certain community, if it does, ideas on who they might be and at what point in the process are they engaged.
- What are your outcomes, how do you see the work manifesting – is it an intervention in the street, a show, a billboard etc.

We are looking for works that are bespoke to place but are happy to accept proposals of ideas that may have happened elsewhere so long as the content can be appropriately framed or adapted to make the work relevant for this brief.

Information about you:

- Your CV & a couple of paragraphs about you and your work.
- Contact details –e mail, phone number, address
- Up to 4 examples of relevant previous projects with a maximum of 6 images.

(If you don't have any documentation of your work or a CV, please tell us as much as you can about what you have done in the past that might be relevant and why you think that this commission is right for you)

Timeframe:

- A suggested time frame for delivering your proposal between April & December 2018.

Budget:

- A suggested budget for your proposal, broken down into fees, materials, production. **Please include your daily rate as part of this breakdown.**

We welcome proposals by Deaf and disabled artists.

Please send your proposal applications as one PDF to kay.trayford@leftcoast.org.uk **by 5pm on Thursday 19 April.**

Alternatively you can send applications in the post to:

LeftCoast, Unit 15
FYC Creatives, 154 -158 Church Street, Blackpool
FY1 3PS

Questions or queries please telephone: 01253477973 or email: kay.trayford@leftcoast.org.uk