

LEFTCOAST

PROGRAMME EVALUATION

CONSULTANT BRIEF & INVITATION TO TENDER

FEBRUARY 2018



'Bivouac' by Génèrik Vapeur at Showzam! 2016: Dan Martino/Blackpool Gazette

1. What is the opportunity?

LeftCoast (Blackpool) has a programme of arts, culture and creative activity that is working towards the following long term outcomes:

- More people engaged in, inspired by and enjoying the arts
- Increased understanding of the arts and confidence to make informed choices for partner or community
- Increased excellence and innovation in arts (including understanding what works well/less well)
- Increased capacity and capability in arts provision
- Increased revenue for the arts
- Excellence in engaging and empowering communities

We are seeking an external consultant with expertise in evaluation and arts engagement to:

- Design and implement a whole programme evaluation for LeftCoast
- Adopt an outcome focused evaluation methodology
- Develop recommendations for LeftCoast's governance, programming and legacy

LeftCoast is in its second phase of funding from the Arts Council – from October 2016 to October 2019. The evaluation will draw on learning from phase one and deliver a robust methodology for phase two.

2. LeftCoast overview

LeftCoast delivers an extensive programme of arts, culture and creative activity happening across Blackpool and Wyre on the Fylde Coast. It is one of 21 individual projects across England that are part of the Arts Council's Creative People and Places programme (CPP) – see www.creativepeopleplaces.org.uk

We aim to provide opportunities to experience high quality arts and culture that is accessible to all. We're all about creating amazing art on the doorstep. From jaw-dropping spectacle to intimate experiences in neighbourhoods, we want to make art happen. In the process we hope to inspire and support residents and creatives who live, work and study in the area.

LeftCoast has been brought together by a local partnership of organisations including Blackpool Coastal Housing, Blackpool Council, Wyre Council, Blackpool Grand Theatre and Merlin Entertainments.

3. Key LeftCoast programme activities

Our work is comprised of the following key areas:

- **Flagship projects** – *LeftCoast commissions large-scale, high-quality arts and culture to complement the established ‘showbiz’ entertainment offer of the Town. These commissions often include mass participation from local people e.g. DEPART by Circa (2017) and Rush by SouthPaw (2018)*
- **Creative engagement** – *in 2018, LeftCoast launches two year-long Artist in Residency programmes where the Artist lives in a house on the estates we would like to engage with. Additionally, we have a legacy project on the Mereside housing estate and a progressive health project currently under discussion. Projects are commissioned from conversations with residents, community groups and small organisations that would like to make a tangible and positive difference in the places where they live/work*
- **Talent development** – *LeftCoast develops the professional practice of local artists through a series of co-commissions, training sessions, advice and guidance surgeries, associate schemes and Go See opportunities*
- **Partnership working and sector development** – *Working with our consortium partners (see page 1) and local arts businesses such as Abingdon Studios, the Art B&B etc. LeftCoast is part of a wider movement to grow the arts and cultural infrastructure across the Fylde coast; connecting people, leveraging funding, and creating specialist job opportunities/skills development*

- **Perception change of Blackpool and Wyre** – *LeftCoast is part of the Culture Blackpool umbrella brand that aims to promote the town’s sub-culture beneath the mainstream glitz and glamour. It encourages visitors to have an alternative stay in the town by exploring the ‘B-side of the seaside’. Additionally, in 2018, LeftCoast is commissioning a series of artistic responses to a recent article in the Financial Times, ‘Left Behind: Can anyone save the town’s the economy forgot?’*

4. The current situation

During phase one LeftCoast commissioned a number of pieces of evaluation. These focused on individual work strands and provided insights into their reach and effectiveness. These will be provided by LeftCoast on request and / or when the phase two evaluation is commissioned.

Phase two to date has been focused on planning its delivery programme and is currently moving into the key delivery period.

Local evaluation is a requirement of the Arts Council’s funding to LeftCoast. Such local evaluations are expected to respond to the three overarching, national evaluation questions:

- Are more people from places of least engagement experiencing and inspired by the arts?
- To what extent was the aspiration for excellence of art and excellence of the process of engaging communities achieved?
- Which approaches were successful and what lessons were learned?

5. The approach to evaluation

We have created a set of evaluation principles, as follows, and we would like tenderers to consider how they would apply these in responding to our brief.

Finding ways to understand and tell the stories – the evaluation should:

- get under the skin of the programme to understand what works and why, and what the lessons are for practice of this type
- examine how successful the different approaches utilised by LeftCoast (as above) are and the extent to which they reach the intended audiences
- explore how these approaches sit within the context of LeftCoast and its geography

Utilising a 360 degree approach to evaluation – the evaluation should:

- capture feedback from local people (audience members and others who have not been audiences), local artists, key stakeholders in the town, as well as LeftCoast staff, Board members and partners
- triangulate data from different sources to provide insights into the learning about the programme

Applying varied evaluation methods – the evaluation should:

- capture data that is robust, rigorous and of high quality
- be designed to capture the data that is required to shed light on the key evaluation questions and expose the learning that LeftCoast wants to understand about its approaches
- be formative in nature and reflect the action learning ethos of CPP – the evaluators should work alongside the LeftCoast team and provide insights on progress at agreed intervals, helping to facilitate the team's process of reflecting on the findings and incorporating them into forward planning

Demonstrating a 'whole programme' approach to evaluation – the evaluation should:

- respond to the CPP programme evaluation framework, particularly the three overarching questions
 - **Are more people from places of least engagement experiencing and inspired by the arts?**
 - **To what extent was the aspiration for excellence of art and excellence of the process of engaging communities achieved?**
 - **Which approaches were successful and what lessons were learned?**
- seek to understand LeftCoast as a whole programme rather than individual pieces of evaluation
- ensure there is a consistent application of the evaluation questions across different work streams
- report on progress against LeftCoast's logic model

6. Outputs

- An evaluation action plan to be produced before 8th April 2018
- An interim progress update about how the evaluation is progressing (rather than the evaluation findings) before 31st December 2018
- An evaluation report to be produced before 30th September 2019
- A review / reflection workshop following the production of the final evaluation report

7. Consultant criteria

We are looking for a consultant with:

- Experience of evaluating arts engagement programmes
- A focus on outcomes
- Experience of working with teams in operational settings
- Experience of engaging local people in the evaluation process
- Experience of facilitating action planning / reflection workshops
- Ability to travel to various sites around the project area

8. Scoring criteria

Your tender will be scored against the following criteria:

- Experience and track record in evaluations of this type for both your organisation and the individual team members
- Methodology and approach
- Cost

9. Budget

The total budget is up to £30,000 - £35,000 (ex VAT). Please provide a budget for the evaluation that is broken down against individual stages or tasks as outlined in your methodology

10. The tendering process

Please contact Tina Redford (Director) at tina.redford@leftcoast.org.uk if you have any questions about this tender.

All tenders should be submitted to tina.redford@leftcoast.org.uk by 23rd February, 2018

Your tender should be a maximum of 10 sides of A4, with team CVs included as additional Appendices. Please include the following information:

- A brief summary of your understanding of this brief and the context for LeftCoast's work
- How you will approach the evaluation
- An outline methodology that states how you will reflect our evaluation principles in what you plan to do
- A summary of your relevant experience
- Profiles for your evaluation team members
- How you will manage the project
- Your ideas about how you will present the evaluation findings to ensure they have traction and influence
- A budget for the evaluation.

In addition please provide copies (or links to) two of your recent and relevant evaluation reports or products.