

# OPEN EYE GALLERY



## 2 x FREELANCE PHOTOGRAPHERS IN RESIDENCE

### CALL OUT FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

### REFLECTIONS – COVID COMMUNITY RESPONSES:

A brief for socially engaged photographers

### ABOUT THE REFLECTIONS PROGRAMME:

An outcome of the Covid-19 pandemic has been the importance of community-led responses that draw upon local knowledge and resources, and build capacity and channels of interconnectedness between government, community organisations and the public.

Cheshire West and Chester (CW&C) recognise the importance of **communities, culture & belonging** and are inviting artists to explore new and different perspectives, which reflect community responses to Covid-19 in the Borough as part of a cultural programme.

A series of socially engaged artists will develop and deliver projects that articulate responses that encourage social interaction and opportunities to enable deeper community engagement and creativity.

Cheshire West and Chester (CW&C) wish to appoint artists to work on the Reflections Cultural Programme that reflect the experience of Covid-19 and the pandemic on communities across the Borough. This accompanies and complements tree planting carried out in spring 2022 in six parks and open spaces (Winsford Marina, Whitby Park Ellesmere Port, Castle Park Frodsham, Stanney Fields Park Neston, Marbury Park, Grosvenor Park Chester).

The Reflections Programme is not the only Covid-19 cultural project as many organisations and individuals have already carried out work. An important part of the process will be to ensure we recognize and celebrate the breadth of community engagement during Covid-19 in CW&C

through this project and beyond the commissions e.g. enable people to capture personal reflections if they want to. Sensitivity to how people feel and impact on their lives will still be present so the commissioned work and artists approaches need to be mindful on the contexts they are working in.

COVID-19 working and social practices will need to be observed and contingency planning maybe needed throughout the project.

You can find out more about the wider programme including more background information into the research and development about communities impacted by COVID-19 in the borough via: <https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/asset-library/reflections-artist-brief.pdf>

### **ABOUT THIS SOCIALLY ENGAGED PHOTOGRAPHY COMMISSION:**

CW&C are working in partnership with photography organisation Open Eye Gallery for two of the commissions under a key theme of:

#### **Under represented voices – the lives and issues people face has been magnified.**

A commission working with under presented groups to listen and amplify their voices. CW&C aim to be more inclusive and listen more to people who are marginalised, having recently set up a Poverty Team and are working with organisations to create safe spaces and diverse programmes.

#### **Possible Organisations: Poverty Truth Advisory Board - Inspirers, Disability Panel, Minority groups, Body Positive – LGBTQ+, Young People, Fallen Angels**

Open Eye Gallery will deliver this commission as part of the wider cultural programme. We will support the development of community partnerships and establish meetings with key people working with marginalised communities and individuals. Open Eye Gallery will also line manage the commissioned photographers. CW&C will help contact these groups via established channels. CW&C has four different locality areas Ellesmere Port, Chester, Northwich & Winsford and Rural, with Locality workers who provide connections to the local communities and groups <http://www.yourwestcheshire.co.uk>

### **AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME:**

#### **Vision**

To engage creatively with a broad range of communities across CW&C allowing time for meaningful reflection on how Covid-19 has had, and continues to have, impact on individuals and communities.

## **Aims**

- For co-creation to be at the heart of the programme enabling continuous engagement from inception to realising the completion of projects
- To engage with key people including representatives from civic roles, public health and key workers
- Informed approach to reach a range of people and communities
- Ensure engagement with diverse communities to uncover hidden stories
- To complement the tree planting scheme and reflect the importance of connections to nature
- To ensure a permanent record of the impact of the pandemic is captured as part of this process

## **THE ROLE OF THE PHOTOGRAPHER**

- To work with communities to establish how they would like to record their reflections and/or see these presented; working within communities to deliver this
- Focus on people whose experience is not generally reflected in the narrative around Covid-19 – ensure the programme reaches people from diverse communities, for example people who have experienced homelessness.
- To take a collaborative approach - working with colleagues, partners and other stakeholders who have been at the frontline of delivering services and working with communities (e.g. Poverty Team, Localities, Library staff)
- For the programme to be accessible and inclusive - reducing barriers that might prevent some people from participating.
- To ensure that, as far as possible, the outputs from the programme can be preserved permanently
- Contribute up one-two written reflective blogs/ video interviews about the project, for the Open Eye Gallery website, associated Socially Engaged Photography Network (SEPN) and/ or content for public distribution via Open Eye Gallery and C&CW online outlets.

The Reflections programme is timely as people are already losing the chronology of the narrative but want to reflect and remember the achievements made as well as the trauma and turbulence of that period.

Things are still quite difficult and people are acting differently so working through organisations and groups with information of peoples lived experiences is the route we are adopting. Through these people and services mapping the community groups and individuals who have acted locally, and areas of work, have come to the fore. This has provided a picture of activity and areas of work that can be celebrated and amplified and has informed the focus of the commissions.

## **Experience**

The selected photographers will have experience of:

- Socially engaged photography practices, including legal and ethical practices such as safeguarding and appropriate consent.
- Working with a wide range of people of different social cultural backgrounds.
- Working with young people and children.
- Facilitating photography workshops in schools and in communities.

The successful applicant will be expected to have up-to date DBS clearance and their own public liability insurance.

### **Timeline**

Date	Stage
August 2022	Photographers shortlisted
Monday 5 September 2022	Photographers' interviews (online)
Mid September 2022	Inception meeting – timetables to be agreed between project team and artist
Mid September 2022	Selected photographers begin research process
Timetable to be agreed with artist	Creative engagement and Support Creative programme development
Autumn period	Detailed designs for project outputs
Autumn-Winter	Temporary projects/ installation / pop up displays (where appropriate)
	Documentation
Mid February 2023	Celebration/sharing events in the green spaces before CW&C enters pre- election purdah
March 2023	Project completion and Evaluation

### **CONTRACT, FEES AND BUDGET**

The artist will be appointed on a commission contract with Open Eye Gallery. This will include details of copyright, moral rights, insurances, fees and payment schedules.

- Artist fee - £7000 each (based on an estimated 34 days of engagement including planning and prep, at £200 per day plus one day for contribution of evaluation)
- £1500 each for materials - (Please note this part of a wider budget of £5000 shared between 3 projects as part of the wider programme so there may be some flexibility in this budget as each project develops)
- Artist travel and expenses - £1000 (shared between both artists)

- There is an additional budget for participant access costs which Open Eye Gallery will manage

## **APPLICATION SUBMISSION AND SELECTION PROCESS**

Application submissions include:

- A precise statement outlining their approach to the commission (no more than one side of A4)
- 10 digital examples of relevant work
- A CV including evidence of prior community work
- Contact details for two referees
- Completion of an equal opportunities and monitoring form

You can complete the equal opportunities monitoring form via:

<https://forms.gle/JAGw29STyWiDR8T68>

**PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR COMPLETED APPLICATION TO [jobs@openeye.org.uk](mailto:jobs@openeye.org.uk) by 10AM, MONDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> AUGUST**

As part of our ongoing commitment to supporting the development and championing of socially engaged photography practice, we can provide feedback on applications if unsuccessful via email if requested.

### **More about the co-commissioners**

#### **Open Eye Gallery**

From Grassroots to Global, the Open Eye Gallery is more than just a gallery. Launched in 1977, Liverpool's Open Eye Gallery was one of the UK's first dedicated photography galleries. We're actively rethinking what a gallery can be. We produce exhibitions, long-term collaborative projects, publications, festivals, and university courses — locally and worldwide. We welcome over 85,000 visitors to our gallery every year, over 200,000 to projects in other venues, and many more to our online spaces. We proactively take risks to spark crucial conversations and enable creative expression.

We work with people to push for social change. We're taking a lead on socially engaged photography nationally. Bringing different voices, photographers and communities together, we establish projects where the collaborative process is just as important as the final product.

## **Chester and Cheshire West Council - Cultural Services**

Cheshire West and Chester's Cultural Services bring together museums, heritage, arts, archaeology, archives and local studies. Our aim is to create places where culture transforms people's lives; to engage, inspire, and enable people to express themselves and connect with others. We also seek to support wider social and economic benefits including improved health and wellbeing, employment and education opportunities, alongside contributing to the local economy.