

# CREATE GLOUCESTERSHIRE

## ART OF LIBRARIES



### Creative Catalyst Job Description - September 2016

Create Gloucestershire (CG) is a 'not for profit organisation' that hosts a community of 140 plus artists, producers, venues, festivals and organisations. We work together in different ways to re-imagine how to make arts 'every day'; a vision articulated in an eight Pledge Manifesto that you can read about on our website [www.creategloucestershire.co.uk](http://www.creategloucestershire.co.uk)

CG is looking to appoint freelance Creative Catalysts for a new and innovative programme launching across Gloucestershire in January 2017 called the **Art of Libraries**.

This national flagship project, funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Arts Council England and [Ernest Cook Trust](#) is led by CG in partnership with Gloucestershire's Libraries and Information, [Barnwood Trust](#) and [RIO](#), the [Arts Council's](#) South West Bridge Organisation, and will be delivered over three years. The projects aims to focus its work with babies, children and young people up to 25 years and their parents/carers.

**Art of Libraries** is a prototype project to test a new recipe for cultural education in six "early adopter" libraries. Storytelling and reading will be at the core of this new cultural offer, which will be firmly rooted in each community. Artists, cultural organisations, library staff, schools and community activists, working together in new ways, will lead and deliver this innovative programme.

### Background to the project

CG's overall aim is to connect more people in Gloucestershire with a high quality and relevant arts and cultural offer. In the long-term, we think this will make a significant and unique contribution to addressing inequality in Gloucestershire and the impact this has on individual wellbeing, social cohesion and economic stability.

We recognise this is a story of change that will need to unfold across a range of urban and rural geographies, engaging the hearts and minds of a wide cross section of the population.

A vital starting point is growing cultural "habits" from a very early stage in life so that children grow up with art and culture as "every day". **Art of Libraries** sits within this context as a re-imagination of cultural education in Gloucestershire.

Libraries are generally seen as trusted civic spaces and play a vital role in connecting people with ideas, offering free services for some of the most isolated or those suffering deprivation. Across the UK, over a third of the population visit their local library - this figure increases to almost a half in poorest areas. (Library Review, 2014).

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In recent years the Gloucestershire Libraries and Information has become more community focused with an emphasis on partnership working, co-location and sharing resources to revitalise their offer. This project fits well with this new strategic agenda. Through their existing book schemes targeted at babies and toddlers, the service has a relationship from day one that stretches through to old age. They also have a comprehensive geographical reach across Gloucestershire, especially when including their mobile units.

This “reach” gives us the potential for scale and spread that is really exciting. In Gloucestershire in 2014-2015, 2.29 million visits were made to 31 libraries including one mobile unit. The total number of book loans (hard copy and digital) was 2.2 million.

Working closely with local schools and parents, our aim is for libraries to provide a distinct but complementary space for children and young people to explore, play, take risks and experiment. Our new approach is underpinned by three core values and we need Creative Catalysts to model and embed this approach within six libraries.

The **Art of Libraries** will run for two years with a further six months to evaluate and reflect. From day one we need to ensure that the activities we set up in collaboration with library staff, have the potential to be self-organised and/or socially enterprising so the work can continue after the investment from Esmée Fairbairn, Arts Council England and other charitable sources comes to an end. Key to this will be our ability to develop young people as leaders and contributors.

The outcomes we are working together to achieve are:

Outcome 1. To **learn if and how** the **Art of Libraries** pilot has inspired and activated a new approach to cultural education with potential to spread in a way that is both sustainable and allows for a high quality arts offer.

Outcome 2: Outcome 1 will only be achieved if **the library is at the heart of a dynamic set of relationships** across the six local places with a joined up approach to investment and other resources.

Outcome 3. That babies, children and young people who take part come from across **social demographic groups** and have fun and explore their creativity, which in some way continues as a daily cultural “habit”.

## Job Summary

The Creative Catalyst is an enabling and developmental role. By the end of the project, we would like to have vibrant and confident cultural education networks up and running in each of the places that have been part of the **Art of Libraries** programme. These networks will need to spread across the local town/rural hinterland and be able to produce and schedule a year round programme of creative and inspiring work, with the library at

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the heart.

This will require new co-producing relationships across library staff, local community members, educators, parents and children and young people. This won't happen overnight and will require a careful blend of mentoring, risk taking, signposting, business planning, up-skilling, fundraising, brokerage and facilitating.



We imagine our Creative Catalysts will either be artists or creative producers with a strong artistic vision as in our view creative ideas and practice enable ambitious change. They will also need to be skilled community developers, tapping into local networks, ideas and interests and building on them to help create vibrant and sustainable cultural and artistic activity in and around our local libraries.

We would like our Creative Catalysts to pollinate the pilot libraries by hosting artists and companies that inspire them and that meet, fit with and amplify local needs and interests. Focusing on using stories and reading for enjoyment as stimulus, these artistic interventions will expand and stretch ideas and knowledge using a range of art forms including digital and music technology, visual and performance art.

### **Main Duties and Responsibilities**

1. Develop and facilitate delivery of the **Art of Libraries** project, as agreed with the Project Manager, in a designated library or libraries.
2. Work with library staff to co-develop a broad range of high quality activities and creative programmes suitable for children and young people from the local area that tackle barriers to creative engagement head on.
3. Cultivate good relationships with library staff, identifying areas of professional development that supports and grows their ability and confidence to host and eventually co-programme/produce work that enriches their library.
4. Facilitate artistic activity that nurtures and inspires confidence amongst key stakeholders.
5. Work alongside library staff to support children and young people, delivering any necessary training, facilitation and support.
6. Broker relationships with library staff and key artists, arts and cultural organisations, schools and other community organisations so that long-term relationships are in place.
7. Support the dissemination of learning from this work through co-delivering workshops with other CG organisations and members, as agreed by the Project Manager.
8. Maintain information systems and processes to facilitate progress monitoring and reporting. (These will be provided with support from the Project Manager).
9. Undertake relevant research and data searches in order to demonstrate changes in practice resulting from the project (with support from an external researcher).
10. Ensure that relevant information and data analysis is provided to the Steering Group to support progress monitoring.

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11. Work with CG team to best deliver, promote and market the initiative.



## Person Specification

### Experience

- Have at least 5 years experience working within community based arts practice
- Be a specialist in at least one or more art-forms
- Experience of developing collaborative projects and events
- Experience of working with children, young people and families, ideally in an arts setting
- Experience in developing sustainable networks and working relationships with a range of cross sector stakeholders
- Good knowledge and understanding of an identified local area, organisations groups and networks
- An understanding of the evaluation and monitoring of projects
- Interest and understanding of working in a library service context
- Good understanding of access, equalities and social inclusion issues

### Personal skills

- Passion to bring about social change through the arts
- Highly skilled at inspiring and enabling people from a variety of cultures, ages and backgrounds to engage with the arts and libraries
- Strong communication skills – including verbal, written and non verbal
- Self starter and ability to take own initiative
- Multi-tasker, who can prioritise and juggle a varied work load
- Reliable and trustworthy
- Drivers license with access to car
- Ability to work from home plus possible hot-desking in library (tbc)

### Contract Terms:

**Fixed term contract:** The contract for services is offered on a freelance basis and the successful person will be responsible for their own NI and tax owed.

This is a fixed term contract for a period of 12 months starting in October 2016 (with a 3 month probationary period). The contract may be extended for a further 12 months.

**Fee:** £7,200 *inclusive* of VAT and expenses for 12 months (£600 per month). We anticipate this to involve approximately one day a week, within one library for a 12-month period. There is also the opportunity to work in more than one library.

**Hours:** Times to be confirmed with the Project Manager as required by the role, this will vary. There is likely to be some weekend and evening work required.

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**Responsible to:** The **Art of Libraries'** freelance Project Manager will oversee the project for 2 days a week. In addition to this, each library will have a designated lead for the project that the Creative Catalyst will work closely with.

**Work alongside:** Other CG staff team, wider library staff, local community groups, artists and performance companies, education establishments, and young people led groups.



**Base:** We are looking for Creative Catalysts who will be based in 4 libraries as follows:

Gloucester City Library (with Matson Library)  
Coleford Library (with Cinderford Library)

Dursley Library  
Tewkesbury Library

**Budget:** There is seed funding available for each library to cover additional artist fees and materials that will be allocated in partnership with the Project Manager to ensure maximum leverage with other strategic funds

The successful person should have Public Liability Insurance to a minimum value of £5 million and a current Enhanced DBS check (or be willing to apply for this).

### How to apply:

Please send a CV or artist statement along with an Expression of Interest (maximum 2 sides of A4 sides) to include the following information:

- Examples of your work, showcasing your artistic practice
- The development of artistic ideas within a community based setting
- Your ability to inspire and enable others to engage and stay engaged
- What you envisage to be the challenges of working in libraries and engaging children and young people
- Which libraries you are interested in working in, how many and why
- If you have Public Liability Insurance and a current Enhanced DBS check
- Availability to attend interview on 5 October & induction meeting on 1 or 2 November

Please send by email to: Louise Bardgett, **Art of Libraries'** Project Manager, [louise@creategloucestershire.co.uk](mailto:louise@creategloucestershire.co.uk)

Deadline for application: **Monday 26 September at 9.00am**  
Interviews: **Wednesday 5 October** at Dursley Library



The Library



BARNWOOD TRUST

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