

CREWE ARTS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME AND TRAIL 2024 – 25

MURAL COMMISSION: TOWN COUNCIL BUILDING

1. THE OPPORTUNITY

On behalf of Crewe Town Council, Counterculture are commissioning an artist or collective to research, develop and produce a mural on the Town Council Building for Crewe's Art Trail launching in February 2025. This will be 1 of 4 new commissions that will form part of the town centre art trail alongside platforming and celebrating existing public art and creative activity in Crewe. Community engagement will be central to the project and it is essential that the artwork is readily accessible by local communities.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE CREWE ARTS TRAIL COMMISSION

Counterculture are excited to be working with Crewe Town Council to deliver an Arts Development Project and Arts Trail launching in February 2025. The project has been designed to nurture, support and facilitate participation in high-quality creative activities that will culminate in artistic outcomes that showcase the creativity and unique heritage of Crewe. The project will culminate in an Arts Trail launching 14- 17 February 2025 made up of permanent and temporary pieces of work, which will be displayed in accessible locations throughout the town for residents and visitors alike to enjoy. The launch weekend will involve a range of events and public engagement activity to celebrate the project and engage a wide audience in the trail's theme, *Making Crewe*.

3. THEME

The commission should be developed in response to the trail's theme, 'Making Crewe' which was chosen in consultation with priority audiences of young people aged 12-24, local communities and creatives. The theme has been chosen to create cohesion and respond to the town's rich heritage and specific context and we are looking for this commission to focus in on Crewe's industrial history and heritage:

Making Crewe

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Making Crewe is a community-centred arts trail, development project and call to action. Making and ingenuity are part of Crewe's DNA. They have flourished throughout the town's rich industrial heritage—from Crewe Works and railway engineering, the Pimms Lane factory where Rolls Royce cars were produced and Bentley still operate through to lesser-known crafts and industries such as soap making, a brick works, iron foundry, leather works, textiles factories, Whitby Morris Ice Cream Vans and even prosthetic limbs.

Crewe's community is enriched by the diverse and dynamic people who live and work here, whatever their background. The theme *Making Crewe* has been chosen to pay tribute to the town's history of making and the prominent historical figures who have made Crewe whilst, above all, celebrating the communities who make Crewe today. *Making Crewe* asks, how can we utilise the town's unique heritage and histories of making as a springboard to inspire, connect and empower communities today?

Making is an action. A tool for personal and collective agency—from voicing opinions through creative means, to enhancing wellbeing through participation and addressing social issues through art and design. This project will create opportunities for artists and makers of all ages and abilities to participate, build skills, connect with other creatives and be part of Crewe's rich creative ecology. *Making Crewe* draws on the town's rich history of making but is focused on how together, we can make the Crewe of the future by platforming, celebrating and creating with communities today.

4. ARTIST ROLE

We are seeking a skilled mural artist to lead on the design and implementation of an artwork that responds to this theme, in particular Crewe's industrial histories and heritage of making. The mural should be visually recognisable as unique to Crewe, but go beyond the dominant heritage narrative of the railway as this is already well represented within public art in the town. The successful artist must be able to demonstrate experience of successfully implementing high impact mural works that can be easily maintained. The commission will be situated on the side of the Town Council Building along the town's new Southern Gateway where will be enjoyed and seen by a high volume of passersby.

We are open to considering a range of styles or approaches and will be working closely with the Town Councillors to select and appoint the artist. The artist must have the skills and experience to engage with communities as part of the project. This may entail giving creative workshops, artists talks or co-creation activities depending on the selected proposal. We have already conducted some initial consultation and engagement work and can share insights and guidance.

The project lead and producer will provide support to engage with key community partners, organising the practicalities for engagement activities and supporting where needed. It is imperative therefore that the artist commits to working closely with the project team to ensure there is a legacy of skill sharing for those involved in the project. The artist will work closely with the Counterculture team to realise the project on time and to meet requirements of the brief. To encourage local participation, it is desirable

that the artist has knowledge of, or a connection to Crewe however this is not a mandatory requirement and Counterculture will support with the community engagement process. Further information on Crewe, its heritage and culture can be found here:

- [Crewe Heritage Centre](#)
- [Crewe Heritage - Crewe Town Council](#)
- statueforada.com
- [Cheshire Archives and Local Studies](#)

5. **ARTIST FEE**

A total fee of £12,000 for all design, engagement and production is available and must cover the following. We anticipate that this might involve a split of 40% on artist fees to cover design, planning and public engagement workshops with the remaining 60% for materials, equipment and installation costs:

- Attendance at minimum of 5 project meetings
- Close collaboration and communication with the project team and the Town Council
- Research and development of artwork
- Artwork design including amendments following feedback with the project team and as required by key stakeholders
- Implementation & installation of final work
- All materials, equipment and production costs including any required preparation, remedial work for the wall if required and any snagging
- Travel costs and subsistence
- Licence to use a scissor lift
- Delivery of 5 x community engagement activities to include creative workshops or artist talks including an evening event for the local creative community and public engagement activity for the launch of the trail and mural design in February 2025. To be agreed with the project lead
- Artist's own insurance including PLI

**Please note that the artist is responsible for paying their own tax*

6. LOCATION AND RESTRICTIONS



The mural will be on the side of Crewe Town Council's Building—along the route of the new Southern Gateway, the Town Council sign will need to be removed as part of any required preparations. The artist must reflect the following restrictions/ limitations in the final design:

- The artwork should be bold and visually impactful, responding to Crewe's rich industrial history, heritage and culture of making
- The artwork should be readily accessible and be visually recognisable as unique to Crewe
- Materials used must be of sufficient quantity and quality to create a lasting piece of work which will withstand varying weather conditions
- Depending on the technique and painting style of the artist, the wall may need rendering. Please advise whether this is the case in your proposal and outline timeline and budgetary considerations

- Consideration must be given to potential vandalism and all possible steps must be taken to limit the risk of vandalism to the final artwork, including a coat of anti-vandalism paint
- The artwork, and its installation must pass health and safety checks to ensure it will not cause damage to the general public
- The artwork will need to be signed off by various stakeholders including the landowner, Town Council and Town Councillors
- Be feasible within the timeline and resource

7. KEY DATES & TIMELINE

- Closing date for applications: **9am, 14th November**
- Artist Interviews: **w/c 9th December**
- Project initiation meeting: **w/c 6 January 2025**
- Final designs to be agreed by **end of January 2024**
- **Public Launch of the design 14 February 2025**
- Community engagement and participation during the launch weekend **14-16 February 2025**
- Installation **March 2025**

8. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Artists must submit the following Information via email to sarahg@counterculturellp.com by 9am, 14 November 2024. Interviews of shortlisted artists TBC

- A response to the brief, detailing how you would incorporate community engagement into the project, no more than 2 sides of A4
- Breakdown of available budget into artist fee, fabrication/installation costs, travel, materials etc.
- Up to Date CV including relevant qualifications and experience
- A portfolio of previous work related to your application (e.g. web link/ up to 4 pages of images)
- 2 references from previous mural art and/or public art projects

Interviews will take place online. If you are invited to interview, we will liaise with you to arrange a time that suits and endeavour to accommodate any other work or caring responsibilities you may have.

We will share interview questions in advance and confirm who will be interviewing you.

If you have any queries or would like to discuss the brief in more detail, please contact sarahg@counterculturellp.com