

#OctopusStory Open Call for Proposals

Project Background

Portsmouth is a city surrounded by the sea. Changes to the health of the ocean have an impact on the city, from pollution to rising sea levels we are as affected as the creatures that live in the water.

A nine-month long project is working with people across the city to produce a large-scale immersive audio-visual installation and theatre performance inspired by the 'Octopus Medicine' poems by Becci Louise. This will encourage audiences to develop a connection with the ocean, both as an otherworld and an eco-system upon which our own, terrestrial lives, thoroughly rely.

In November 2022 the flagship event of the project will take place at Portsmouth Cathedral. Over 3 days immersive theatre, video projections, soundscapes and performance will take visitors on a journey to an undersea world full of magic and mystery.

Project Requirements

The project is issuing an open call for proposals to respond to one or more of the requirements for a giant octopus and three separate installations.

The work will be installed inside Portsmouth Cathedral. Performances will last around 50 minutes. During the three performances there will be around 200 people in the building. The work needs to be suitable for all 200 people to experience in the time available without noticeable queuing.

The Cathedral will be open for services and may be open to the general public during the day. The proposals must be robust enough to deal with people touching it or be designed to avoid this. If barriers are included to prevent people touching the artwork this cannot compromise the aesthetic of the proposed work.

Portsmouth Cathedral is a listed building and a place of worship. Installations cannot affect the fabric of the building and must be respectful of its primary purpose.

The project has no specific requirement in relation to the materials used and welcomes creative ideas that take a broad interpretation of 'installation'.

It is recommended that you read the short poem book 'Octopus Medicine' by Becci Louise to inform your proposal. The book can be purchased from <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/octopusstory/backers#start> or borrowed from any of the libraries in Portsmouth.

The expected fees shown for each item are to help you produce appropriate proposals. The project budget is exceedingly tight and the amount available is less than the total maximum fees. The project considers cost as important as the creative idea. You can submit differently priced proposals for any requirement (e.g a lower cost and a more expensive option).

Applicants will be selected based on the best overall combination of proposals that falls within the budget available.

There is an under investment in arts in Portsmouth. The project has a preference to award the work to people based in this area subject to finding suitable creative ideas within budget.

The project will have riggers on site for the installation of artwork who can help with the set up of anything that needs specialist rigging.

The project is working with a lighting company who will illuminate the Cathedral, octopus and installations. Any audio in your proposal needs to consider there may be an ambient soundscape in the Cathedral as part of the overall event.

Giant Octopus

The project needs to commission or hire a replica of a giant octopus at least 5 metres in size. The octopus doesn't need to be realistic but should avoid cartoon or comic book depictions of octopuses. It is not yet known how the octopus will be displayed but it may need to be suspended so a lightweight solution may be preferred. The octopus will be displayed within the Cathedral so does not need to be weatherproof.

Expected budget: £600-£1600

Camouflage installation

The project requires an installation that responds to the following:

An octopus melds with its environment, blending with its surroundings, adapting quickly to new situations. It becomes a part of its world. I think we can learn, from the octopus, how to integrate ourselves back into the natural world without harming it or ourselves. An octopus lives in harmony with its habitat. We need to learn to do the same.

It is anticipated that the footprint of the installation would be around the size of a family car. All essential elements of the installation must be provided e.g. the project is unable to provide plinths etc.

Expected budget: £500-£1000

Collaboration installation

The project requires an installation that responds to the following:

An octopus has whole body awareness; it has nine brains (one central brain, and one brain in each arm). There is so much neurological matter in each of their arms that scientists have speculated each arm might have its own personality. We can also learn to collaborate with others and work together as a team to solve the worlds environmental problems.

It is anticipated that the footprint of the installation would be around the size of a family car. All essential elements of the installation must be provided e.g. the project is unable to provide plinths etc.

Expected budget: £500-£1000

Curiosity and play installation

The project requires an installation that responds to the following:

Octopuses love to learn. They are endlessly curious, they love to play, they solve problems and investigate the world, we can learn and research about nature so that we can live in harmony. I think we need to learn to be more curious and playful.

It is anticipated that the footprint of the installation would be around the size of a family car. All essential elements of the installation must be provided e.g. the project is unable to provide plinths etc.

Expected budget: £500-£1000

Timeline

Responses should be submitted to octopusstoryportsmouth@gmail.com by 10am on Monday 22nd August

Applicants will be informed of the outcome by 9am on Thursday 1st September.

Completed work must be available for inspection by Friday 14th October. Appointments will be made with the successful applicants.

Work must be delivered to Portsmouth Cathedral on Monday 14th November for installation.

Work must be collected from Portsmouth Cathedral on Monday 21st November.

Responses

Please send details of your proposal to octopusstoryportsmouth@gmail.com by 10am on Monday 22nd August

Your proposal be laid out in the following format in a single document (e.g. Word, Powerpoint, PDF etc).

SUBJECT: Which requirement you are responding to

DESCRIPTION: A description of your proposal which should be a maximum of one side of A4

SIZE: Approximate dimensions of your proposed solution

COST: Cost including VAT (if applicable) for the time and materials required for production and delivery/collection of the artwork.

LIGHTING: Whether you have any specific lighting requirements

PROPOSAL IMAGES: A minimum of one and maximum of four sketches or other representation so your proposal can be visualised

MATERIALS: Images of the materials proposed so your proposal can be visualised

PRIOR WORK: A maximum of six images of prior work relevant to this proposal, including approximate sizes and budget

LOCATION: Town/City where you are based

ECONOMIES OF SCALE: If your application covers more than one requirement you need to respond to each requirement separately. If there are any economies of scale these must be listed in a single 'economies of scale' section at the end of your document and set out the discount to your costs if you are awarded more than one piece of work. The project will review each response to each requirement independently and applicants proposing solutions to more than one requirement might be successful in fewer areas than they proposed.

If you do not receive a response confirming receipt of your proposal please contact Angela Parks 07976 240 708 or octopusstoryportsmouth@gmail.com