



Cathedral Quarter Trust – Creative Director Opportunity

Introduction

The Cathedral Quarter Trust (CQT), the delivery organization previously behind Culture Night Belfast (CNB), is looking for a Creative Director to develop a large-scale cultural project for 2023 and beyond.

Managed and delivered by CQT since 2009, CNB was historically one of Belfast's largest free events, a cultural celebration that, at its peak, attracted almost 90,000 local, national and international visitors to the city's historic Cathedral Quarter and wider city-centre.

Following the completion of an extensive Strategic Review in 2021, and after giving much consideration to the recommendations put forward within the review, CQT has decided to step away from the established model of Culture Night Belfast and move in a new direction, with the aim of developing a new flagship event for the city that will both replace and build on aspects of CNB's legacy.

The aim is to develop the new event over the remainder of 2022 and into 2023 with a pilot event to be delivered in Autumn 2023, followed by a full-scale presentation in 2024, to be delivered as part of the Belfast Year of Culture.

We are now looking for an exceptional Creative Director to help us develop and realise this new vision for a flagship event, in line with the review recommendations set out below.

Strategic Review Recommendations

The Strategic Review was commissioned by Belfast City Council in partnership with Cathedral Quarter Trust. It was carried out throughout late 2020 and the first half of 2021 and almost thirty stakeholders, arts and culture organisations and artists were engaged with as part of the review. A summary of the Strategic Review is included in Appendix A.

Key recommendations emerging from the Strategic Review included the following:

- There should be a focus on the development of an outdoor-based cross artform event that was as celebratory and inclusive as Culture Night Belfast had been.
- The event should be based on quality over quantity, with a major centrepiece work forming the focal point of the programme.
- All participating artists and facilitators would be paid appropriately for their work.
- The event should animate the Cathedral Quarter and wider city centre with accessible, high-quality outdoor arts and site-specific projects.
- There should be a focus on instigating exciting partnership projects with the city's cultural venues, artists and organisations.
- Most important of all, it should be about delivering an excellent cultural event for a large, diverse audience.

Wider Context: ‘*A City Imagining*’ and ‘*Belfast Imagining 2024*’

In April 2020 Belfast launched a new ten-year cultural strategy for Belfast, *A City Imagining (2020-2030)*. Developed from years of civic engagement stretching back to a bid to become European Capital of Culture (2017), the themes and priorities in *A City Imagining* emerged from a dynamic process aimed at strengthening, growing and sustaining the creative, cultural and tourism sectors.

- *Theme 1: A City Belonging* defines ‘belonging’ as an individual’s feelings in relation to their sense of identity, their relation to other people around them and their sense of place
- *Theme 2: A City Challenging* aspires to cultivate creative environments and the synergy needed to allow genuine co-creation to take place
- *Theme 3: A City Creating* asserts that risks are necessary and should be supported, especially within the cultural sector

A vital part of *A City Imagining* centres on the Council’s commitment to a year of cultural celebration in Belfast in 2024 – *Belfast Imagining 2024*. In the lead-up to this the city will continue to host a number of landmark projects in 2022 and 2023.

The focused and ambitious year-long cultural celebration in 2024 will assist in maximising cultural tourism derived benefits for the local economy including: increasing visitor numbers and spend across local industries, businesses and communities; improving overall visitor satisfaction levels; and creating a legacy through the international positioning of the city helping to establish Belfast as a cultural destination.

The programme for 2024 will begin development in 2022 and will follow the ambitions set out in *A City Imagining*. The principles of the 2024 cultural programme are:

- New works
- Public Space
- Future Thinking & Innovation
- Our relationship with nature/place
- Collaboration & Co-Design

Belfast City Council are a key strategic partner for Cathedral Quarter Trust and, as well as following the Strategic Review recommendations, the development of the flagship event should also align closely with the themes of *A City Imagining (2020-2030)*, the vision for *Belfast Imagining 2024* and with broader City Council objectives. Key areas of alignment include:

- The development process will primarily be artist/ creative led and will provide new opportunities to build long-term skills and capacity within the local creative sector;
- The event will not only contribute to the programme for *Belfast Imagining 2024*, but will offer opportunities to pilot work and develop skills and capacity for largescale, outdoor public cultural experiences in the build-up to the year-long programme and beyond;
- National and International strategic partnerships will be central to the event and will also offer up opportunities for mentoring, learning and skills development.

Additionally the flagship event will contribute to broader Council objectives including:

- Increased animation and vibrancy in city-centre open spaces;
- Free and accessible for all;
- Commitment to environmental sustainability;
- Promotion of Belfast’s arts, culture, stories and heritage;
- Attracting families and diverse audiences into the city-centre;
- Associated positive economic benefits for businesses.

Key Responsibilities

Creative Direction

- To develop, produce and implement a clear and compelling Artistic Vision for a new flagship event and associated projects;
- To lead on concept development and creative direction for a flagship event;
- To work closely with colleagues in Belfast City Council in planning and supporting delivery a broad range of city-based events.
- To work closely with Belfast City Council and other stakeholders in developing initiatives and projects aimed at building capacity and expertise within the events sector;
- To explore and develop a Commissioning Strategy and Framework based on the Artistic Vision;
- To work closely with the Director of CQT, the CQT Board, Belfast City Council and other stakeholders to develop and deliver the artistic vision and creative programme for flagship events in 2023 and 2024;
- To develop and grow creative partnerships and collaborations with artists, cultural partners, participants and stakeholders;
- To work closely with colleagues in to deliver a unique high-quality cultural experience based in and around the Cathedral Quarter;
- To develop and oversee community engagement and participation activity as appropriate;

Fundraising

- To work closely with the Director of CQT to develop an effective plan for fundraising and sponsorship;
- To nurture and develop positive relationships with funders, sponsors, stakeholders and clients;
- To work closely with the Director of CQT on developing, managing and delivering sponsorship related campaigns and activity;
- Provide input for completion and submission of all relevant funding applications and associated reporting and documentation;

Management and Planning

- Oversight of the planning schedule for delivery of the event annually;
- To work closely with the Production Manager and other colleagues on all aspects of production, operations and risk management;

Branding, Marketing, Communications and Evaluation

- To work closely with the Director of CQT, Board and external consultants on the development and introduction of a new identity and associated branding for the new flagship event, identity to be rooted in the Artistic Vision and event concept;
- To contribute to development of all marketing and communications plans and associated collateral as required;
- To support the CQT Director in ensuring that all funder, sponsor and stakeholder requirements are met across all programme marketing and communications activities;
- To contribute to all evaluation as required in collaboration with the Director of CQT and other stakeholders.

Finance and Resources

- To work with the CQT Director and CQT to ensure robust budget management for the event;
- To work with the CQT Director to ensure all agreed financial income targets are met including funding, sponsorship income and earned income;

- Oversight of purchasing and procurement in line with CQT Financial Procedures;
- Oversight of contractual agreements with contractors and suppliers as required;
- This list is for guidance only and is not exhaustive.

Additional Duties

The Creative Director will report to the CQT Director and will work for Cathedral Quarter Trust leading on shaping and developing a unique, authentic flagship event for Belfast that will address all these considerations and more.

This role will play key part in Belfast City Council's wider strategic plans for development of the City Events portfolio from 2023 onwards including city-led St Patrick's Day, Maritime Festival, Halloween and Christmas events and programmes.

Through implementation of the city's cultural strategy there is a new approach to delivering these events by developing these programmes through co-design in partnership with cultural organisations, city stakeholders, artists and citizens. These events will be a key part of the city's cultural programme, with enhanced capacity and budget to take a more ambitious approach to their design and delivery from 2023 onwards and especially for the planned year of cultural celebration in the city in 2024.

In this role the Creative Director will work closely with Council's new Creative Programme team and City Events Unit at particular points of the year, as agreed with Cathedral Quarter Trust, to provide input, collaborative opportunities and expertise in the wider City Events Portfolio as a whole.

Person Specification

This role will be awarded on a freelance basis and applicants should ideally be registered self-employed. Applications will be accepted from individuals and collectives. The successful candidate will be expected to commit to the role up to 31st March 2025 however it should be noted that the contract will be renewed annually subject to funding being awarded. It is envisaged that hours worked on the contract will be on an as required basis and will be no less than an average of 28 hours per week.

Fees are payable as follows (pending annual confirmation of funding).

- 1st January 2022 – 31st March 2023 £8,250
- 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024 £33,000
- 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025 TBC

How to Apply

Applicants should provide the documents outlined below:

- A covering letter (max 500 words) outlining their experience and suitability for the role.
- An up-to-date CV to include relevant experience of two comparable projects and details of two referees. CVs should be no more than 2 A4 sides in length.
- A personal statement (max 500 words) outlining their creative approach to the role and how they would go about developing the concept for a flagship event with an indicative programme budget of £150,000.

Shortlisted applicants will be invited for interview and will also be required to give a presentation.

Deadline for submissions:

5pm Friday 2nd December 2022 by email to:

s.picken@cqtrust.org,

Susan Picken, Director, Cathedral Quarter Trust and Culture Night Belfast

Interviews to be held week commencing **12th December 2022**

All queries should be emailed to Susan Picken in the first instance.

For further information on Culture Night Belfast please visit www.culturenightbelfast.com

For further information on Belfast 2024 and *A City Imagining (2020-2030)* please visit www.belfastcity.gov.uk/culture

