

ELEMENTAL FOREST

TWO COMMISSION OPPORTUNITIES

1 x artist film-maker commission
&
1 x audio content creator

Summary

Forest Economic Partnership (FEP) wishes to commission 2 artists to engage the Forest of Dean (FoD) community in a creative interpretation of landscape & place through an artist's film and an audio work.

- The term 'film' is used to describe a moving image work of any style – documentary, experimental; animation; performance – as long as it meets the needs of the project.
- The term 'audio' could be a podcast; a song; a story; interviews; performance - as long as it meets the needs of the project.

The project will focus public attention on the potential of a Biosphere Reserve (BR) designation for FoD. BRs are areas comprising terrestrial, marine and coastal ecosystems, with a key aim of seeking to reconcile the conservation of biodiversity with its sustainable use. They are sites of excellence for testing interdisciplinary approaches to understanding and managing changes and interactions between social and ecological systems. They “inspire a positive future by connecting people and nature today”. More information about Biosphere Reserves is available in this [video by Chris McFarling](#) or by visiting the [UNESCO website](#).

There are 8 BRs in the UK, and we are engaged in initial dialogue about the potential of the FoD to become the 9th. FoD stakeholder organisations currently involved in pursuing the BR concept are:

- Forest Economic Partnership - Accountable Body
- Forest of Dean District Council - Project Partners

We believe that the possibility of gaining designation as a Biosphere Reserve is a fantastic opportunity to support a sustainable economy in the area, ensuring that the economy benefits from green tourism, and wise use of human and natural resources to underpin our strong cultural offer and identity. There have been intense conversations over the past year about the potential, however we need wider stakeholder buy-in and community support before we can move on to application to UNESCO as a BR nomination. To achieve this, we want to work with artists to enable understanding & garner public support towards seeking designation as a BR.

Project goals

This project has three key goals within this wider agenda:

1. To evoke a sense of place, community, culture and nature

2. To describe the concept of a BR widely to the general public within the Forest of Dean (FoD) district by engaging the FoD community through creative interpretation of landscape & place through moving image and audio
3. To stimulate discussion with a view to increasing public understanding of the benefits of FoD gaining designation as a BR through UNESCO

To evoke a sense of place, community, culture and nature with your approach is most important in the research phase. This will require understanding the community here, listening to others involved on the project and those who aren't, yet, but should be.

HOW - you will need to understand and be aware of the particularity of the Forest of Dean, its background, culture and industrial past, which was founded on the elements.

EARTH stone quarrying, iron ore, coal, ochre

WATER between two rivers - the Severn and the Wye, pools and ponds, some natural, some industrial

AIR the presence of trees and their ability to reduce carbon, improving the air we breathe. Charcoal.

To increase public understanding and promote the concept of a BR the film/audio needs to be accessible and compelling, carrying a narrative that summarises the now, with a view to helping audiences to visualise the future as a BR. To help people understand in what ways becoming a BR will benefit the landscape, economy, communities and non-human creatures. To evoke a compelling future-story.

HOW - you can employ any style of film; audio; animation; documentary; fantasy; podcast; radio play; song etc. Visuals and messages must be clear, crisp, concise and to the point.

To stimulate discussion we need to encourage people to speak about how much people care about the forest and what made it what it is; what it has now and what steps are being made to improve the situation in environmental terms.

HOW we are open to arranging introductions to people you require access to - if you mention who they may be in your application, that will help us to understand your work process. This could be anyone - environmentalists; activists; local artists; young people; elders; specific communities; scientists; academics etc. The film/audio may raise questions that need discussing, encouraging people to have further, deeper, conversations with us. We want viewers/listeners to get in touch, complete surveys. Participate in conversations.

The Opportunity

Both commissions will target audiences through different modes of accessibility. You can apply for either or both (both could work if the audio track from the film worked as a standalone podcast/sound file as well, maybe with modification).

1. Video to appeal visually to all ages – it may be an animation, video film, a performed poem/text, a performance, interactive media or other output, using accessible language and imagery. Output to have potential of online/offline visibility
 - <1 minute video files for online distribution - as a trailer/index pointing to the full film; and
 - Full film: approximately 10 minutes duration - supplied as low res; med res; high res; MP4 and .mov

2. Audio work to be suitable for all ages – in particular to be accessible to the older demographic, using clear strong messaging and information in an optimistic way
 - approximately 10 minutes long - supplied in a suitable format for final distribution method. That may include surround sound if it is to be presented in a public space.

The content needs to be something quirky – catchy – creative - that can be available both online (Twitter, Instagram (& IGTV), Facebook, Youtube, LinkedIn, and websites) and offline, for all ages. We want to provoke discussion and debate. This could be focussed on engaging with emotional attachment to place. What makes The Forest of Dean special & unique in terms of nature and culture, and why should it become a BR?

- Artworks will be expected to reflect the aims as defined above.
- Artworks will be expected to meet all health & safety requirements, particularly if designed to be presented in the public realm (including PPE needs if required).
- Covid19 brings with it more complex Health and Safety issues - each work will require a risk-assessment. With Covid19 in mind, we require all artists to work within the government rules at the time of production and presentation.

We remain hopeful that we may be able to deliver to the public widely, in schools, cinemas, village halls etc. but lockdown doubts have made us target distribution through online and mainstream media. Should that situation change, we would love to present in physical spaces and invite discussions in physical places.

Each of the digital products will engage people's interest to varying extents. Some will simply view the content and learn more about what a BR is, and why we want to nominate this place as one. For others, it is hoped that the emotive impact of seeing their place represented back to them in film or sound will stimulate and inspire a sense of civic pride, evoking further interest and engagement in the BR concept.

We actively encourage people to raise questions and debate. The presentation of the artworks will direct a deeper evaluation, one that sets out to engage a number of people to have a voice, and directly participate, by providing their thoughts and ideas back to the consortium. A much smaller group may be asked to dig even deeper into the concept development. The learning will inform our application for designation of BR status with UNESCO.

Support

You will be supported by an experienced visual arts producer and an engagement manager, working as a part of the team. Carolyn Black ([Flow Contemporary Arts](#)) will support you to make contacts with people at the start of your contract, during your research phase. She will provide curatorial support as you develop and realise your ideas and represent you where needed.

All consultation shall be conducted by another team of specialists. We will provide all marketing and create QR codes for posters, online use and amplify all on social media.

Who Can Apply?

Applications are invited from individual artists, or artist teams with experience of working in the public realm. You will have experience of researching, producing and delivering work in the field of artist's film and/or audio and presenting it to the public in appropriate contexts and channels. It is likely that you will have a personal practice that communicates the importance of environmental issues. It is desirable that you are informed about climate change and the natural environment and aware of its fragility. You must be over 18 years old and have a track record in delivering professional work.

Timeline

- Deadline for expressions of interest: 5 July 2021
- Interviews: Week commencing 19 July 2021
- Selected artists appointed by: TBC Dates to be agreed between artists and the commissioning team.
- Contract duration: 10 weeks (approximately)
- Target launch of works: 1st October 2021

Fees

Design, production and delivery budget per commission: £3000 + VAT if applicable. It is your responsibility to inform us if you are registered and to provide a VAT invoice.

This fee needs to cover all expenses - including artist fee, research, planning, site visits, content creation, materials, production, necessary equipment and editing/production tools, digital delivery of fully-functional artworks (online/offline) and overseeing of installation (if required). There is a separate budget for marketing, which shall include seeking placement on media platforms.

The contract shall be on a self-employed basis. You are also required to provide evidence of public liability insurance.

Payment Breakdown:

- £500 to be paid on contract - invoice required - within 30 days of commission
- £2000 to be paid - invoice required - within 30 days of approval full proposal*
- £500 to be paid - invoice required - within 30 days of completion and delivery

Selection Criteria

Led by our objectives for the project, applications will be scored against the following criteria:

CREATIVE APPROACH – 60% weighting

1. How you will approach research and consultation to evoke a sense of place, community, culture and nature
2. How your idea will provide information on, and promote the concept of a Biosphere Reserve widely to the general public within the Forest of Dean district
3. How your film/audio will stimulate discussion about the Biosphere Designation proposition

TRACK RECORD – 40% weighting

1. Track record of professional practice, preferably in relation to environmental messaging
2. Evidence of quality of production and presentation
3. Ambition appropriate to budget and timescale

How To Apply

We anticipate that you won't know exactly what you will do on the point of application, as you will need to spend some time familiarising yourself with the project and the place. We therefore request:

1. An Expression Of Interest (EOI) up to 2 sides of A4 that describes how you will approach fulfilling the criteria listed below. We want to understand what inspires you and what you think the outcome might take the form of.
2. A CV no more than 2 sides A4 to evidence appropriate track record
3. Links/references/websites and other evidence of previous practice
4. Up to 4 visuals – still, moving image, sound files

The full application must not exceed more than 6 sides of A4.

Applicants are welcome to apply for both elements. In such a case, your EOI should specify whether you are only applying for both or are happy to consider only one should you be shortlisted.

If you find writing an application challenging, please contact us and we can discuss other ways of presenting. If you choose to submit a video/audio application, we will still require a digital copy of your CV.

Email the above with BR ART APPLICATION as subject line to fep@fdean.gov.uk by the deadline: 5 July 2021

If you have any questions regarding the general project please contact Mikki Liddiatt with BR CONTRACT ENQUIRY as subject line.

If you have any questions regarding curatorial requirements please contact carolyn@flowprojects.org.uk with BR ENQUIRY as subject line.

