

## Stories From Tomorrow – Festival Brief

Waltham Forest Council's Culture Team is seeking proposals from a partner organisation, collective or team to deliver 'Stories from Tomorrow' (working title) a new multi-venue festival in Waltham Forest, centred around storytelling in its many forms.

### The National Borough of Storytelling

Waltham Forest Council has an ambition to become the first national borough of storytelling, putting storytelling at the heart of our work with residents and communities bringing generations together. We know that younger children have been impacted by disruption to their schooling due to COVID and there is a particular need for many children in our borough to develop their literacy skills, building a strong foundation for future success and prosperity. One of our key areas of focus for this project is to build on the literacy work already taking place across our schools, and early years settings as part of a wider cross borough programme, led by and reflecting our diverse communities.

Our vision is to deliver an ambitious programme that will positively engage and impact all our residents. As well as contributing towards closing the literacy gap in children, we want to use storytelling as part of how we engage with residents of all ages facing challenging situations to make positive decisions, find pathways to success, thrive and achieve. Although centred around storytelling from a literature and spoken word perspective, we also want to explore other artforms through 'Stories from Tomorrow'. All activities will have equality and diversity at their core to ensure our offer is inclusive, accessible and representative of our communities.

### Key Objectives

- To create a forward-thinking new festival in Waltham Forest centred around sharing, creating and retelling stories.
- To raise the profile Waltham Forest as a cultural destination by developing a programme that will appeal to local people as well as London-wide audiences
- Build lasting, meaningful connections between older and younger residents through intergenerational storytelling
- To platform and showcase existing literacy and storytelling initiatives in the borough to amplify the work already taking place in libraries, community groups, schools and children's centres.
- To encourage literacy and support language development in order to improve outcomes for children and young people
- To inspire young people to have high aspirations and achieve their ambitions
- To increase opportunities for social interactions in order to build connections, raise self-esteem and provide opportunities to remember, imagine, be creative and have fun

### Background

Waltham Forest is a borough in north-east London with a diverse population of over 270,000 residents covering Leyton, Leytonstone, Walthamstow, Highams Park and Chingford. More information about the borough can be found [here](#).

Waltham Forest became London's first Borough of Culture in 2019, recognising our thriving local cultural sector – have a look at some of the highlights of the year's programme [here](#). In 2021 Blackhorse Lane was announced as the Mayor of London's newest [Creative Enterprise Zone](#), and the Council are in the process of designating Walthamstow as a Cultural Quarter, building upon significant existing venues such as the William Morris Gallery and the soon-to-be reopened Soho Theatre Walthamstow. In addition to this, Waltham Forest Council continue to support venues, businesses and creatives in Leyton, Leytonstone and Chingford to deliver a year-round programme of cultural activity across the borough of which 'Stories from Tomorrow' will be one of the highlights in 2023.

## **Brief: Stories from Tomorrow (working title)**

### **The Theme**

130 years ago, Waltham Forest born William Morris published an influential novel *News from Nowhere*, where he imagines London as a future better world – a utopia. We are looking for a partner to create and deliver a new festival that takes the idea of utopia as a starting point to look positively towards the future at a difficult time for so many, through storytelling. Stories from Tomorrow will explore these ideas of utopia and encourage everyone to imagine a better society and a better place and way for us all to live.

### **The Approach**

Residents of all ages will have opportunities to participate, through retelling their own stories, both contemporary and traditional, and engaging with stories from others in settings across the borough. *Stories from Tomorrow* will be a participatory, borough-wide, multi-site festival with activities taking place in small and large venues and spaces across Waltham Forest. Our ambition is for every primary school in Waltham Forest to have the chance to participate, alongside activities in libraries, community centres and cultural venues. We envision a range of hyper-local installations, activities, talks and competitions, taking place across the borough, with larger scale events involving leading and well-known writers, artists, thinkers and speakers. Spoken forms of storytelling will be a particular focus for the festival, and we would be keen to explore the possibility of an online radio station or podcast as part of the programme.

### **Competitions and engagement**

One of the aims of this programme is to inspire young people and children, building on the good work that schools and the Council has done so far to support early years children to strengthen their reading skills, especially in this post-covid period. To this end, we are keen to encourage and stimulate the creative writing talent of young people in the borough, and for their work to be selected by leading writers, collating their stories and ideas in a festival publication and/or other opportunities to platform and promote the work of young people.

### **A focus on Local Writers and Creatives**

We are open to developing a programme that features creatives from across the UK and indeed internationally, but it is important that our delivery partners engage with writers and creatives based in Waltham Forest, celebrating the wealth of talent that exists in our borough and across East London to develop an exciting programme that resonates with the people that live here.

### **Duration**

We anticipate that 'Stories from Tomorrow' will take place in early Summer 2023. As part of your proposal, we would like you to consider the duration of the event and suggest preferred dates. You should take in to account other regional and national events and initiatives and school timetables and holidays. It might be that the festival is spread out over two weeks or takes place over one weekend.

Engagement with schools and young people including the launch of competitions and some strands of participatory work should be ready to launch in January/February 2023, with some activity during National Storytelling Week.

### **Partners and Delivery**

We are looking to commission an experienced lead organisation, creative producer or collective to lead on the curation, production and delivery of the festival with our communities. They will be supported by the Waltham Forest Culture team as well as a wider working group across the council.

In your proposal, please outline the scale and ambition of your programme, identifying potential institutional, broadcast, publishing and funding partners, both locally and nationally that might be secured to support the festival.

## Waltham Forest and potential venues

*Stories from Tomorrow* will be delivered across Waltham Forest, with activity in Chingford, Leyton, Leytonstone and Walthamstow. As part of the programme development phase, we would expect you to research and scope out suitable venues for each activity. These might be existing cultural spaces, in parks, on the high street or in new or temporary venues. You will be supported in this process by the Waltham Forest Culture Team who have a good knowledge of the existing cultural infrastructure in the area.

## Project Considerations

- Consider sustainability and the environmental impact across the project
- Consider accessibility, diversity, and inclusion across the project. All venues must be fully accessible.
- Ticket prices to be set at affordable price point with concessions offer available
- Delivered in line with latest health and safety guidelines

## Timeline

Delivery dates listed below for guidance only and an initial project timeline to be submitted as part of your proposal.

Deadline	Action
Monday 21 November	Closing date for submissions
Wednesday 23 November	Commission awarded
Friday 25 – Friday 2 December	Start-up meeting with LBWF
December/January/Feb	Programme development
Jan/Feb 2023	Public/schools engagement begins
Feb/March 2023	Festival programme sign off by LBWF
Feb/March 2023	Festival announcement
March/April 2023	Programme announcement
May/June 2023	Festival delivery
July/August 2023	Evaluation report submitted

## Budget

The maximum budget for this commission is **£90,000**. This must cover:

- All staffing costs associated with the festival
- Development of the programme
- Engagement activities
- Evaluation and reporting
- Marketing and comms (some comms support will also be provided by LBWF)
- Festival delivery costs should include but are not limited to:
  - Festival production team
  - Artist fees
  - Booking fees
  - Venue hire
  - Travel and accommodation
  - Print and publication costs
  - Event infrastructure
  - Licenses
  - Insurance
  - Front of House and security staff
  - Expenses

We encourage you to consider how this budget might be supplemented through additional fundraising, sponsorship, partnerships or ticket income. We would expect that most events and activities will be free to attend. Any events which charge an entry fee must be set at an affordable price point with a percentage of the total ticket allocation set aside to be distributed for free via Waltham Forest community organisations.

## How to submit a proposal

In order to comply with the Council's procurement regulations all proposals must be submitted via the London Tenders Portal - <https://www.londontenders.org/>. If you are not yet registered, it is very easy to sign up by filling in your details here <https://procontract.due-north.com/register>.

You can then find the *Stories from Tomorrow* project by searching for the project reference **DN639745**

Using the invitation to quote form you will be asked to provide a budget for your proposal and answer four questions, as outlined below:

- 1) Tell us about your creative vision for the 'Stories from Tomorrow' festival
  - What has inspired you?
  - How will you meet the objectives outlined in the brief
- 2) Tell us about the 'Stories from Tomorrow' festival content and how you plan on delivering this
  - Give some examples of the artists/commissions you would like to include in the programme
  - Provide additional detail about your headline events
  - Suggested dates for the festival and how many events will be delivered over that time period
  - Expected audience numbers
  - Include an initial project timeline (please upload as attachment)
  - Are there any partner organisations that you are currently working with or can approach to support the festival?
- 3) Tell us about how you plan to engage with Waltham Forest residents
  - Describe your approach to working with schools and young people
  - Provide additional detail about any participatory projects and your engagement plan
  - Expected participant numbers
- 4) Tell us about your team and any previous experience which demonstrates you will be able to deliver the 'Stories from Tomorrow' festival
  - Have you managed similar projects elsewhere?
  - The specific skills and experience and networks that the festival team will bring to this project
  - Outline the roles and responsibilities of the core delivery team
  - Provide links to websites/social media accounts where relevant

Once completed you can submit via the portal. Proposals must be received no later than **5pm Monday 21 November 2022**

## Contact

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this brief in more detail, please submit your questions via the London Tenders Portal. If you are having difficulty accessing the portal, please email [abi.lemon@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:abi.lemon@walthamforest.gov.uk).