**Artwork commission for Torquay harbourside**

**1. Introduction**

Torbay has an exceptional literary heritage. For generations the bay’s natural and cultural heritage has provided inspiration for some of the most well-read and celebrated authors, including Mary Shelley, Oscar Wilde, Rudyard Kipling, George Bernard Shaw and Séan O’Casey, through to contemporary figures Adam Nevill, Lesley Pearse, TP Fielden, and Sarah Pearse. The most famous literary connection for Torbay is without doubt **Agatha Christie**.

Born in Torquay, Christie lived and worked here for much of her life, and retained a family summer home in Greenway, now in the care of the National Trust. Torbay has marked the author’s life through walking trails, heritage plaques, and a bust near Cary Green; and is home to the International Agatha Christie Festival. The Council and partners now want to ensure that a more prominent, and permanent, reminder of the bay’s most famous daughter is created for residents and visitors to enjoy and visit for generations to come.

**2. Dame Agatha Christie (1890 – 1976)**

The most published author in the world, Agatha Christie’s books have been printed in more than 100 languages and sold over two billion volumes. Her writing has inspired hundreds of films and television productions, and her plays continue to be performed. The most enduring - *The Mousetrap*, soon to enter its 70th year - was one of the first productions to reopen the West End following the pandemic, a sign of Christie’s continued popularity with contemporary audiences.

**3. What we are looking for:**

Torbay Council, working in collaboration with Agatha Christie Limited, Torbay Culture at TDA, local communities and creative organisations, is seeking a permanent artwork for the Torquay harbour area. This will be created to be installed as part of the harbour renewal and improvement scheme being developed as part of the Towns Fund investment from government.

* The artwork should capture the **spirit** of Agatha Christie, her life and work. We are especially keen to see ideas come forwards which consider her ‘in the round’, as a woman who lived and worked here, who had multiple interests and passions, including the outdoors, nature, people, and places.
* The artwork should consider the needs of the **location and audiences** – external, open to the elements, and public interaction.

**4. Public engagement:**

Torbay is committed to encouraging community engagement through different fora, and we have been developing this approach through cultural programming over recent years. With this project we want to enable the public of the bay to get involved and share ideas. We want to work with an artist or creative maker who was committed to this idea and has experience of working with the public. It is also our intention that the final design is determined by a public engagement process.

**5. Selection process:**

This call is **open to all artists**; we especially welcome expressions of interest from artists and creative practitioners who have knowledge and experience of the locality.

* An **advisory panel** will review all submissions and draw up a shortlist of up to four expressions of interest (EOI). The shortlisting will be determined by the following **criteria** which are equally weighted in importance:
* **Appropriateness** **of the concept**: Does it meet the needs indicated under point 3 - capturing the **spirit of Agatha Christie** and the **needs of the location and audience**?
* **Durability of design**: Is the proposal robust and suitable for the marine environment and open display at Torquay harbourside? Can it be maintained easily?
* **Potential for inspiration**: Can the design provide inspiration for others around which to create activities and community events?
* **Financial costs and public benefit**: Does the proposal provide good value for public money?
* Up to four artists will be invited to develop their **proposals** further and prepare a short **video presentation** (approximately 3 minutes maximum) about their work. This video can include images, diagrams, or any other information to convey the concept to the public. The shortlisted artists will each be paid a preparation fee of £**500** for this.
* Those shortlisted proposals will be shared with the public by Torbay Council which will invite **local people to vote** on their preferred concept.

**6. Timeframe and process:** *(note these timescales may need to be extended or adjusted depending on decision-making processes)*

* The Open Call will go out during September, **with a closing deadline of Monday 18 October at 12:00 Noon.**
* Selection week 25 – 29 October with shortlisted artists contacted by 1 November.
* Shortlisted artists have until 30 November to develop concept and prepare a video presentation. A summary of the video content (e.g. any illustrations/slides) to be provided to Torbay Council as a pdf file.
* Final decision, including public vote to be carried out during December so the artist can be commissioned in January with the intended installation to take place from April 2022.

**7. Fee**: £100,000 exclusive of VAT for the commissioned artwork, inclusive of artist fee and all materials; packaging, transport and insurance during transit to site.

We would also expect the appointed artist to commit to attend and participate in an associated public event – to be organised locally by us or partners – at a mutually agreed date once the final artwork is completed and in situ.

Applicants are asked to indicate the proportion of the budget that will be spent on the creation of the finished artwork.

Note: the fee excludes installation and any associated on-site costs for Council, TDA and project team – these will be borne by client.

**8. Application process:**

The application should take the form of a **statement** or letter of no more than three pages of A4 summarising your work, with up to 5 images of previous commissions.

Applicants should please give relevant **examples** of working on commissions of this type (including where possible information about locations, materials, and commissioning client), and summarise how they have **engaged** with local stakeholders and community groups.

The statement should address the following points:

* What is your **interest** in applying to undertake this commission for Torbay?
* Indicate your interest in **Agatha Christie**, her work, life, achievements, or legacy, and ensure you address the four criteria (noted under point 5)
* Estimated **costings** associated with this commission
* Provisional **timescale** – subject to further discussion.

Artists who are interested in this commission should respond **via Torbay Council’s electronic tendering portal** [**www.supplyingthesouthwest.org.uk**](http://www.supplyingthesouthwest.org.uk)In order to submit a response artists must be registered as suppliers on this portal. Registration is quick, easy to do and free of charge. **The trade (CPV) code artists need to be registered under is 92312000-1.**

If you have any queries these can be directed via the Messaging facility within the published opportunity itself on the above portal, so that they can be passed to the relevant person for a response.

**9. Additional notes:**

An **advisory panel** will support the shortlisting process. In addition to Torbay Council, this will comprise representatives from Agatha Christie Ltd, the International Agatha Christie Festival Ltd, Torbay Culture, and Torquay Town Board.

* Julie Brandon, Director, Artizan Gallery, member of the Torquay Town Board
* Councillor Mike Morey, Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture
* Kevin Mowat, Director of Place, Torbay Council
* Heather Norman Soderlind, Chair of the International Agatha Christie Festival
* James Prichard, great grandson of Agatha Christie and Chief Executive, Agatha Christie Ltd
* Martin Thomas, Executive Director, Torbay Culture

**10. Project management and oversight:**

The project management for this commission will be undertaken by the **Harbour improvements project team** which is currently in place. Nigel Mills (Regeneration Project Manager, TDA) is project lead, and Alan Denby (Director of Economic Strategy, TDA), senior reporting officer.

The joint **Torbay Steering Group** for the Towns Fund and Future High Street Fund investments will have oversight. This is a Councillor led group meeting to ensure the successful delivery of these critically important regeneration programmes.