



The Living Barracks Cultural Programme Artist Open Call

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Introduction

The Living Barracks is a significant cultural development project, in Berwick-upon-Tweed, led by four partner organisations: The Maltings (Berwick) Trust, the King's Own Scottish Borderers, English Heritage and Berwick Record Office.

The Living Barracks Partners are seeking to appoint up to four artists in residence and to commission three major new artworks to be presented in Berwick-upon-Tweed. The Living Barracks Cultural Development Programme is funded by the UK Government and Arts Council England (ACE) and is a programme of multidisciplinary cultural activity taking place across Berwick-upon-Tweed in 2025 and 2026.

The programme's inspiration is the historic site of Berwick Barracks, which is undergoing a major refurbishment to bring all the empty buildings and spaces on the site back into use; providing a striking new home for the town's archives and collections, contemporary visual art and the Kings Own Scottish Borderers Regimental Museum on a single landmark site. The legacy of the Living Barracks programme will support a long-term engagement with the Barracks site.



Living Barracks Open Call Invitation

We are offering a range of opportunities across two strands of activity, to take place between March 2025 and March 2026. We invite expressions of interest from individuals, collectives and organisations working in all artforms and mediums. This is an exciting multi-partner project, and while the development of the Barracks site is taking place, we are looking for artists to undertake residencies and commissions in Berwick-upon-Tweed, that will be inspired by the extensive heritage collections of the Barracks and the town, and presented in spaces across the town. We refer to 'artists' throughout but please be aware that we mean this in the broadest possible sense and we include writers, musicians, visual artists, theatre makers, choreographers, designers and multidisciplinary creative practitioners.

Our aims for the programme are:

- To promote high quality artistic responses to Berwick as a place and to the heritage of our partners.
- To make Berwick a destination for creatives and visitors.
- To contribute to pride in place for local people.
- To grow a national profile for our cultural programme.
- To create opportunities for local artists.
- To ensure environmental sustainability and accessibility for all.
- To deliver artistic work that is high quality and challenging.

Expressions of interest for residencies and commissions need to address all of these aims in some way through the artwork's content, form, production or process. We are openminded and we want to be surprised and inspired.

All residency and commission artists are invited to engage with and respond to:

- The collections and archives of the Living Barracks' partners: The King's Own Scottish Borderers, the Berwick Records Office, the Berwick Barracks site (English Heritage) and the Maltings.
- The people and communities in and around Berwick-upon-Tweed.
- The unique history of Berwick-upon-Tweed and the town's proximity to the border with Scotland.
- The unique architecture of Berwick-upon-Tweed as a walled town on the river Tweed.
- The contemporary life of Berwick and its surrounding rural areas.

Artist Requirements

Applicants should have:

- An established art practice and experience of developing and producing work within the public realm and / or non-gallery settings.
- A practice that responds to and / or is informed by place, social history, heritage history and / or historical sites.
- Experience of working with community members and groups in the development, co-creation or in active participation of artworks.
- An understanding of working in heritage contexts with sensitivity to conservation issues and working with significant listed buildings.
- Can work with and effectively communicate to a wide range of stakeholders to develop and deliver new work.
- Permission to work in the UK.

Strands of activity and overall budget

With reference to guidance set out in this Open Call Invitation applications are invited for:

Residencies: up to £25,000

These residencies are for developing one or more aspects of your practice through, with and alongside the place of Berwick-upon-Tweed and its wider contexts. There must be public engagement throughout which could take the form of workshops, talks, skill sharing etc. and there must be a public outcome such as an exhibition, performance or event of some kind. There is a budget of up to £25,000 available, inclusive of VAT.

Commissions: up to £40,000

Commissions are an opportunity to develop large scale new work in direct engagement with Berwick and its communities. They can also be developed in collaboration with other organisations – e.g, if a new commission that is in discussion or already underway is seeking further funding and could be nuanced for two major presentations. There is a budget of £40,000 available, inclusive of VAT.

Residency + Commission: up to £65,000

Residencies and commissions can be combined to allow for a longer period of engagement and development which will then support a larger scale presentation of the public outcome.

If you choose to apply for a commission with a residency, budgets can be combined so that there is up to £65,000 available, inclusive of VAT.

The Living Barracks Team

Artists will be supported by the Living Barracks Team to realise and deliver the residencies and commissions.

Lauren Velvick – Creative Producer

Claire Beattie – Engagement Producer

The Living Barracks CDF programme is managed by the Maltings (Berwick) Trust on behalf of the Living Barracks partnership.

Schedule

Stage 1:

We are inviting initial expressions of interest from artists and art organisations for each programme strand. This expression of interest should outline in no more than 800 words or a 3-minute video/audio clip the following:

- A short overview of your current artistic practice
- A line to indicate which strand you are applying for, and you may apply for more than one with different projects, or a combination. Use the terminology: **Residency** and/or **Commission**.
- An indication of when you anticipate the residency and/or commission will take place, and whether you can be flexible with dates.
- Details of your proposal and how it responds to the aims and themes of the commission including the history and heritage of Berwick and the Barracks.
- Any community engagement activities related or integral to the work or project and how this will inform or contribute to outcomes.
- Your approach to supporting environmental sustainability and access for all within your proposed work

Please also send:

- A current CV (no more than 2 sides of A4).
- Examples of previous work (max. of 6 jpeg images no larger than 1MB, 1 PDF if writing based. MP4 film if performance/dance based).
- A speculative budget.

Deadline for applications is **Monday 4th November at 9am** and should be sent to Creative Producer, lauren.velvick@maltingsberwick.co.uk with 'Living Barracks CDF programme' in the email header.

Any queries regarding the commission opportunity in advance of submitting an expression of interest can be emailed to lauren.velvick@maltingsberwick.co.uk in the first instance.

There will be an open briefing via Teams on **Wednesday 23rd October** at 11am to outline the project and what we are hoping to achieve, and to give you a chance to ask questions. Access via this link: [Open Briefing](#).

Stage 2:

Expressions of interest will be shortlisted by representatives from The Maltings (Berwick) Trust, The Living Barracks project and relevant communities.

Up to three applicants will be shortlisted for each opportunity within each strand and invited for a further conversation or site visit to find out more about the programme and place, and to then develop a full proposal including a detailed budget. Site visits and online conversations will take place on the week beginning **18th November**.

The detailed proposal should include –

- A detailed description of the project you plan to undertake and / or the work you plan to develop including how it responds to the brief. (2 sides of A4 max or a 5-minute audio / video clip)
- Up to 4 images / sketches, audio clips, text or mock-ups that represent your plans.
- A timetable for delivery including where appropriate planning and development, fabrication, community engagement, permissions and RAMS sign off, install and details of the periods you plan to be in Berwick-upon-Tweed.
- A budget which details, where appropriate: Artist fees (For rates of pay we recommend using Artist Union England rates of pay or similar guidance), Materials, Fabrication, AV Equipment Hire, Technical Support, Site Permissions, Install / De-install costs, Travel and accommodation, VAT, Contingency
- An access rider where appropriate. Additional funds are available for access costs to support the development of the work if required by the artist.

Shortlisted applicants will be paid an honorarium of £300 (inc VAT) to attend the site visit or conversation and to develop a detailed proposal.

Deadline for detailed proposals is **Friday 6th December at 9am**

Further online conversations will be held during the week beginning **9th December**.

Decisions will be finalised and communicated by Wednesday 18th December.

Further Information

The Maltings

The Maltings (Berwick) Trust is the key professional hub for culture and creativity across North Northumberland and the eastern Scottish Borders. Working across three venues - The Maltings, The Granary Gallery and The Gymnasium Gallery - we curate and present a wide-ranging programme for everyone to enjoy. We deliver over 600 events each year including live performances (theatre, opera, music, dance, comedy), workshops and classes, visual art exhibitions, community productions and digital cinema screenings.

The Maltings (Berwick) Trust is a registered charity (No: 701194) and an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation (NPO). We receive investment to support our work from a range of sources including Arts Council England and Northumberland County Council, our Friends, and supporters.

More information at www.maltingsberwick.co.uk

The Living Barracks Project

The Living Barracks is an ambitious multi-partner project, using the heritage asset of Berwick Barracks, designed by the renowned architect Nicholas Hawksmoor, and the home of the King's Own Scottish Borderers since 1881. Standing as part of the immense fortified walls, the Ramparts, surrounding the town of Berwick, the Barracks serves as a powerful reminder of the turbulent history of the Anglo-Scottish Borders. Currently managed by English Heritage, the Living Barracks partners also include the King's Own Scottish Borders, Northumberland County Council and the Maltings (Berwick) Trust.

Since the Spring of 2023 a significant amount of work has taken place supported by the National Heritage Lottery Fund to consult with local people and to plan for the new museum collections, the relocation of the archive and the restoration of the site. A pilot Community Engagement programme has also taken place to trial a range of activities, inspired by the heritage site and the museum and archive collections, with local people of all ages. The Living Barracks project will deliver a thriving cultural hub and visitor destination as a focal point for public life in Berwick-upon-Tweed. The historic Parade Ground and wider site will continue to play an important part in the life of the town as the striking new home for the town's archives and collections, and as a venue for contemporary visual art and public events. Alongside the cultural offer the Barracks will be made vibrant through a mixed use as residential and as a base for local artists and makers, and the wider creative industries. Integral to the project is a commitment to engaging the local community, enabling greater participation with a particular focus on education and volunteering.

Through the Living Barracks Cultural Development Programme, artists and professional arts partners will be invited to take up residencies of differing durations to explore an open interpretation of the Barracks environment, physical spaces and heritage resources. These include the specific resources of the Berwick Archive, The King's Own Scottish Borderers archive and the museum, all of which will provide a stimulus for artistic interpretation and storytelling, to embrace and include the town, its communities, and the wider region beyond.



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