

Project brief: Partnership NPO Proposal

(Submission of an Expression of Interest for Funding)



served by One Team

Portfolio Holders:

- Boston – Cllr Richard Austin
- South Holland – Cllr Gary Taylor/Cllr Liz Sneath
- East Lindsey – Cllr Steve Kirk/Cllr Adam Grist

Date: 15th May 2022

Introduction:

Arts Council England (ACE) has launched its application guidance for organisations wishing to become a **National Portfolio Organisation (NPO)** for the period 1 April 2023 until 31 March 2026.

Being a National Portfolio Organisation provides opportunities for creative and cultural organisations to plan and deliver over the long term. It is the bedrock of ACE funding and the work of all NPOs is seen as vital to the success and development of the cultural sector.

The investment provides organisations with three-year financial support as they recover from the impact of the pandemic.

Organisations are required to put the public at the heart of their work and be committed to working collaboratively with each other and with other individuals and organisations within communities.

All National Portfolio Organisations will play a central role in helping Arts Council England deliver their strategy, Let's Create. The NPO application needs to clearly demonstrate how we would support at least one of the strategy outcomes and what plans we have to imbed their investment principles.

The 'Let's Create' Strategy has three Outcomes: Creative People, Cultural Communities and A Creative and Cultural Country. Their Investment Principles are Ambition and Quality, Dynamism, Environmental Responsibility, and Inclusivity and Relevance.

A National Portfolio Organisation will take a lead in realising the vision which Let's Create sets out:

'By 2030, England will be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish and where everyone has access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences.'

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership:

Historically ACE investment in some areas of England has been too low, so ACE has set out lists of Levelling Up for Culture Places and Priority Places that they'll prioritise working with. These include:

- Priority Place: East Lindsey and Boston
- Levelling Up for Culture Places: South Holland, East Lindsey and Boston

In 2021, East Lindsey District Council and Boston Borough Council received ACE funding to develop a Cultural Strategy. A Cultural Framework with two place based action plans has been created and is currently in draft form ready to proceed through the Council adoption process. ACE was receptive to extending this piece of work to reflect the new geography of the Partnership and incorporate the

South Holland District Council area. The lack of NPO applications was highlighted to the team during their last meeting with ACE.

An 'Introductory Conversation' was held on Thursday 21 April to indicate an intention for the South and East Lincolnshire Council Partnership to submit an application for National Portfolio Organisation funding. A lead authority would be required to be the accountable body – proposed to be East Lindsey District Council. The Partnership's NPO would focus on three centres – Boston Guildhall (Boston Borough Council), Asycoughfee Hall (South Holland District Council and the Colonnade at Sutton on Sea (East Lindsey District Council).

NPO funding would support a programme of art and culture across the Partnership, as well as enabling an education, research and skills programme to be developed.

The proposition is focussed on our heritage and internationally and nationally significant stories. The growth of the Partnership area from its Maritime, Coast and Fens location continues to impact and influence migration, trade and our 'places'. We boast a very rich base of recognisable, high status events, episodes, histories and critical individuals that sits equitably across all the Partnership areas.

The revenue funding would enable investment into people, programmes and activity, whilst building on the capital investment from the Towns Fund (and future Levelling Up Funding bids).

The application will reference and support the draft Cultural Framework for Boston and East Lindsey. The Consultation and the drafting of the document was commissioned to Tom Fleming Creative Consultancy, who has also supported the team with the creation of the NPO proposal, supporting the bid development process through:

- Support and advice on gathering key data to feed into the bids,
- Helping to shape the narrative and strategic direction and ambition for the bids,
- Reviewing and advising on the activities for the first year of the programmes 2022/23 that must be included within activity templates.

Project objectives(s):

- Secure National Portfolio Organisation status and associated funding
- Support a cultural and place based approach to regeneration, in line with the Levelling Up White Paper
- Link culture with community engagement to support our Partnership objectives

NPO application:

Activity Plan:

- Bring to life the history and international connections of trade through a programme of light installations/displays developed through engagement with schools/educational providers and community groups working together with artists.
- Develop a 21st Century Digital Assets Collecting Policy to ensure that today's stories around cultural diversity, migration and community inclusion is captured. Working with people from lower socio-economic backgrounds and minority groups.
- Work with local businesses to share stories from across our Maritime, Coast and Fens and the heritage of the wider food industry across the districts. Increasing engagement of low skilled and diverse workforces with the arts through food.

- Create opportunity for intercultural exchange to develop a cultural ecosystem brokering connections between communities through arts and culture - providing an opportunity to build the international relationships and connections ahead of 2030.
- Support collaboration and exchange programmes across the Midlands to establish the area as a hub for regional cultural development, with an exemplar approach to the inclusion of heritage within arts and culture.
- Develop a programme of mentoring for local artists with nationally recognised leaders within their media to enable a legacy of learning through arts and culture to connect our Places and Stories across the partnership and bring to life our heritage to instil Pride of Place across our Communities.
- Celebrate the Victorian Heritage of our coastline through nostalgic engagement sessions and festivals to develop cultural trails in the form of traditional seaside heritage.
- Expand the outdoor experiences of our natural heritage and landscapes throughout the seasons linking the districts to international seasonal activities and engage all nationalities within our communities to share their cultural heritage.
- Introduce stronger cultural programming through working with partners to develop touring and visitor experiences to enhance and increase the reach of activities into all communities and create a stronger cultural package for all.

Governance:

We have set out that Culture underpins our approach to place-making and renewal in our new (draft) Cultural Framework. It sets out the following themes: Culture for All, Health and Wellbeing, Cultural Infrastructure and Cultural Places. As part of the NPO Proposal, the delivery of actions for each theme will be overseen by a new Culture Board for the South & East Lincolnshire Council Partnership. This will offer dynamic leadership and a collective voice for culture. This involves representation from each of the three Councils and the County, leading cultural organisations, education providers and representation from freelancers and micro creative enterprises. The SELCP Culture Board is of a similar model to the Creativity Board being established in North East Lincolnshire. This will facilitate joint working from the Humber to the Wash: an unprecedented cultural partnership opportunity for Greater Lincolnshire.

Timeline:

- Deadline for EOI 18 May
- Spring to September 2022: Assessment, balancing and decision-making
- October 2022: Sharing funding decisions
- October 2022 – February 2023: Funding agreements
- **1 April 2023** - The 2023-26 Investment Programme will come into effect