

# Opportunity for artists

## Kresen Kernow public art project

### Summary

Cornwall Council is commissioning a new public artwork for Kresen Kernow, Cornwall's new archive centre, in Redruth. Funded by Arts Council England, the artwork will be inspired by the theme My Cornwall: My Home and will commemorate the temporary return to Cornwall of several historic Cornish manuscripts in 2021. The commission will run from May 2021 and will be unveiled to the public on St Piran's Day (5 March) 2022.

The artwork could be situated indoors at Kresen Kernow or outdoors (see Appendix 1 for photos of potential locations). The chosen artist will work with community groups and the Archives and Cornish Studies Service (ACSS) team to inspire the high-quality artwork which will encourage interaction and engagement, and will draw people to Kresen Kernow and Redruth. The work may be permanent or temporary, but we will be looking for ideas that make a lasting impression of some kind and which represent good value for money. Please read the New Rules of Public Art (Appendix 2) which will give you an idea of the way we are thinking about this commission.

### £35,000 is available for this commission

The procurement of the artist will take place over two stages:

Stage 1 - an open call for Expressions of Interest (EOI) in response to the themes. No concept designs or specific ideas need to be submitted at Stage 1. A panel will shortlist from these EOIs.

Stage 2 - up to five artists will be invited to tender at Stage 2, with a concept design and quotation.

### Context

Kresen Kernow ('Cornwall Centre') is home to the world's largest collection of documents, books, maps and photographs related to Cornwall's history. Kresen Kernow is a state-of-the-art, new archive centre (opened in September 2019), built in the shell of the former Redruth Brewery. As well as 14 miles of shelving to store over 1.5 million of Cornwall's treasured archives, the centre has exhibition spaces, learning rooms and beautifully converted reading, research and community spaces.

In 2021 six Cornish language manuscripts will return to Cornwall for the first time in centuries. For some people these documents – a 10<sup>th</sup> century Gospel book, a medieval poem and four medieval miracle/mystery play scripts – are the foundation stone of Cornish language and identity. One of them, the Cornish Ordinalia, is one of the earliest surviving British play scripts. The manuscripts will form two exhibitions lasting from June 2021 to January 2022 and will then return to the British Library, Bodleian Library and National Library of Wales.

This project is inspired by the journeys the manuscripts have been on, and what it means to come home. For many Cornish people this return and reunion is hugely symbolic. The theme of home also has particular resonance after the events of 2020. The Covid19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, and the reckoning over Black Lives Matter, have led to considerations of what it means to be and feel at home, and how we make our communities inclusive and welcoming for all. The (temporary) homecoming of the manuscripts leads us to consider who has made Cornwall their home, and what it is to be or feel at home in Cornwall today.

This public visual arts commission is part of a wider year-long project to explore these themes and commemorate the return of the manuscripts entitled 'My Cornwall: My Home'. As language is integral to the manuscripts' significance, the ACSS team are also working with The Writers' Block's experienced team of writers to deliver a series of writing workshops looking at themes of journeys, home and homecoming. A wide range of other activities will also be taking place, including workshops, talks and the performance of the full Ordinalia play cycle in St Just in September 2021.

This open call is for a public art response to the return of the manuscripts, the exhibitions and the theme of homecoming, as well as Kresen Kernow's archive collections. The artwork will be unveiled on St Piran's Day 2022 and will help put Kresen Kernow on the map for visual arts and demonstrate the potential for archives to inspire artistic practice. The artwork will commemorate these momentous exhibitions and can be situated either inside Kresen Kernow or outdoors on the public realm (see photos in Appendix 1).

As home to the world's largest collection of Cornish archives, this project gives Kresen Kernow the opportunity to celebrate Cornish identity and pride in our distinct heritage. While the manuscripts will return to their respective institutions at the end of the exhibition, the public art commission is directly underpinned by the need to mark this significant moment in Cornwall's history and ensure there is a reminder of this once-in-a-generation occasion while also sparking hope for future returns, collaborations and celebrations. The winning tenderer will be encouraged to consider the connections between the institutions holding the manuscripts, as well as taking inspiration from the manuscripts' journeys, content and homecoming.

## **Client and stakeholders**

The client for the project is Cornwall Council, specifically the Archives and Cornish Studies (ACSS) team at Kresen Kernow, which sits in the Culture and Creative Economy team, part of Economic Growth and Development.

The ACSS at Kresen Kernow works closely with partners in Redruth, including Redruth Town Council, Redruth Revival and Creative Kernow.

This commissioning process is led by FEAST, part of Creative Kernow.

The ACSS activities team delivers a wide variety of projects, events, activities and outreach and will be able to suggest suitable partners and audiences for engagement, consultation and project development. FEAST will also be available for advice and support throughout the course of the project.

## **The commission**

The commission is to design, produce and install a public artwork at Kresen Kernow. It should attract people to Kresen Kernow and have relevance to the service's work, Cornish culture and Cornish heritage as well as to the theme of homecoming and what it feels like to call Cornwall home today.

The artwork should be developed with a range of inclusive community groups and representatives, with opportunities throughout the commission for workshops and activities inspired by the artist's work and practice. The chosen artist should work with our community to gather and share ideas and inspiration.

The artwork can take any form, following the New Rules of Public Art (see Appendix 2). However, it should not impede access or service delivery, and should be integrated into the building or outdoor space. Consideration will need to be given to materials and maintenance to ensure it does not place any unnecessary burden.

The chosen artist will be expected to work closely with the ACSS activities team to design and shape consultation and related events. The project is due to finish at the end of March 2022, and the artwork must be ready for unveiling on St Piran's Day (5 March) of the same year.

If the planned schedule has to change because of evolving covid restrictions, we will of course work with the commissioned artist to reframe the timetable and programme of work.

We will consider proposals from artists working as a team in collaboration, but the budget will remain the same.

## The budget

The budget for the commissioned artwork is £35,000.

Stage 1 - Expressions of Interest, no quotation is required.

Stage 2 - Detailed Proposal. Shortlisted artists will be invited to submit a concept design and quotation. All the costs for the delivery of the project must be covered within the artist's quoted price, including:

- artist's commission and design fee
- costs incurred for presentation of detailed design at interim stage or further consultations or research
- all expenses, including travel and presentation materials
- all fabrication costs for all works through development, final production and installation
- all installation costs, including plant hire (if relevant) and labour
- transport, storage and security costs
- information about potential future maintenance requirements and costs
- professional fees and legal costs
- public Liability and Professional Indemnity insurances
- VAT

An honorarium of £500 per shortlisted artist will be payable to contribute to costs incurred in developing a detailed proposal (e.g. attending a site visit, concept design and quotation), presentation and interview.

The artist is engaged on a self-employed basis and is responsible for their own tax and national insurance payments, and must have a current DBS check and public liability insurance.

The whole project including submission of all invoices for completed and approved work must be completed before the end of **March 2022**. A draft contract and full terms and conditions will be available at Stage 2.

## Selection process and programme

5 January 2021	Invitation to Stage 1 Expressions of Interest publicised
1 March 2021	Expression of Interest submission deadline
16 March 2021	Invitation to submit concept design and quote, following shortlisting by selection panel (Unsuccessful expressions notified)
March - April 2021	Optional site visit for shortlisted artists (It may also be possible to visit Kresen Kernow during public opening hours.)
24 April 2021	Deadline for Stage 2 submissions, quotation and concept designs
30 April 2021	Presentations of proposals (to panel at Kresen Kernow, subject to government guidance)
4 May 2021	Selected artist informed and commissioned
4 May 2021	Non-successful artists informed
May 2021- March 2022	Project running with monthly reviews and catch ups
2 March 2022	Completion deadline
31 March 2022	Final date for submission of invoices

## **What we are looking for**

At Stage 1, Expression of Interest, we will be considering the experience and ability of the artist to create work that:

- is of evident quality in concept and realisation
- genuinely responds to the exhibitions, manuscripts and identified themes of homecoming and Cornwall as home
- engenders a sense of pride and place, as well as ownership from the communities using the spaces and building
- is inspiring and will attract visitors
- can be delivered on time and on budget

## **What you need to provide**

### **Stage 1 Expression of Interest**

- Approach (1,000 words) – provide information on yourself, your work and how you might approach the project, including your proposed visual art approach.
- Project examples (maximum of three, with 500 words for each). This is to give examples of the type of work that you have completed that may be comparable in some way to this project in scale, type or context. Please explain your role in each project. We are interested in your experience of working within the community as well as your visual art practice.
- CV
- 5-6 images of your work.

### **Expression of Interest – deadline, midnight 1 March 2021**

Submit by email to [feast@creativekernow.org.uk](mailto:feast@creativekernow.org.uk). Please mark your email **Kresen Kernow EOI**. Expect an email acknowledgement of your EOI.

A panel will use the information you submit to judge your suitability for this project, based upon how well you demonstrate experience and ability to meet the key objectives. Up to five artists will be shortlisted. You will be informed of the panel's decision.

### ***For information:***

#### **Stage 2 Detailed Proposal – deadline 24 April 2021**

Up to five shortlisted artists will be asked for further details including:

1. a concept design, with some consideration of design process, siting, installation and construction
2. an inclusive quotation
3. an outline of any maintenance considerations your work might require
- 4 a proposed schedule
5. an outline of how you intend to engage with the local community
6. two previous client references

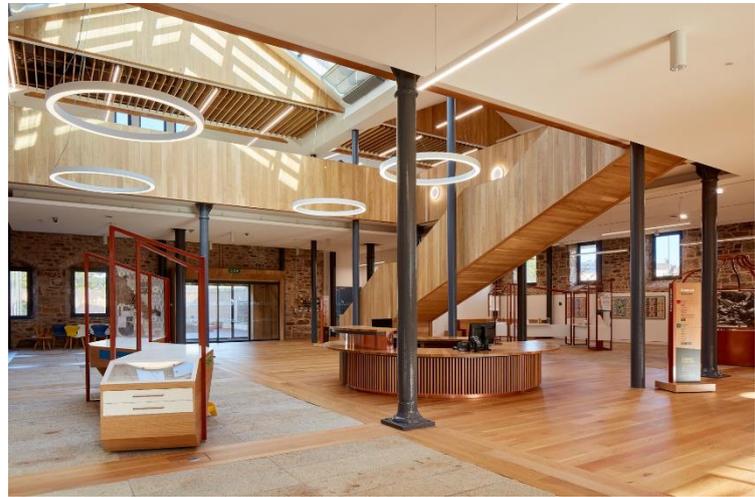
### **Support available**

If you have questions relating to any aspect of this commission please contact the FEAST office by email [feast@creativekernow.org.uk](mailto:feast@creativekernow.org.uk) or telephone 01209 312502.

### **Appendix 1 – Potential sites**

### **Appendix 2 – New Rules of Public Art**

**Appendix 1: Potential locations**



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# THE NEW RULES OF PUBLIC ART

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## 1. It doesn't have to look like public art.

The days of bronze heroes and roundabout baubles are numbered. Public art can take any form or mode of encounter. Be prepared to be surprised, delighted, even unnerved.

## 2. It's not forever.

Artists are shaking up the life expectancy of public artworks. Places don't remain still and unchanged, so why should public art?

## 3. Don't make it for a community. Create a community.

Be wary of predefining an audience. As Brian Eno once said, "sometimes the strongest single importance of a work of art is the celebration of some kind of temporary community."

## 4. Create space for the unplanned.

Commissioning public art is not a simple design-and-build process. Artworks arrive through a series of accidents, failures and experiments and open up the potential for unforeseen things to happen.

## 5. Withdraw from the cultural arms race.

Towns and cities across the world are locked into a one-size-fits-all style of public art. In a culture of globalised brands and clone towns, we hanker after authentic, distinctive places. If we are place-making, then let's make unusual places.

## 6. Demand more than fireworks.

Believe in the quiet, unexpected encounter as much as the magic of the mass spectacle. It's often in the silence of a solitary moment, rather than the exhilaration of whizzes and bangs, that transformation occurs.

## 7. Don't embellish. Interrupt.

We need smart urban design, uplifting street lighting and landmark buildings, but public art can do so much more than decorate. Interruptions to our surroundings or everyday activities can open our eyes to new possibilities.

## 8. Share ownership freely, but authorship wisely.

Public art is of the people and made with the people, but not always by the people. Artists are skilled creative thinkers as well as makers, trust their judgment, follow their lead and invest in their process.

## 9. Welcome outsiders.

Outsiders challenge our assumptions about what we believe to be true of a place. Embrace the opportunity to see through an outsider's eyes.

## 10. Don't waste time on definitions.

Is it sculpture? Is it visual art? Is it performance? Who cares. There are more important questions to ask. Does it move you? Does it shake up your perceptions of the world around you, or your backyard? Does it make you curious to see more?

## 11. Suspend your disbelief.

Art gives us the chance to imagine alternative ways of living, to disappear down rabbit holes, to live for a moment in a different world. Local specifics might have been the stepping off point – but public art is not a history lesson. Be prepared that it might not always tell the truth.

## 12. Get lost.

Public art is neither a destination nor a way-finder. Artists encourage us to follow them down unexpected paths as a work unfolds. Surrender the guidebook, get off the art trail and step into unfamiliar territory.