

Extraordinary Essex Art Commission

Extraordinary Essex

Essex is an extraordinary county for many reasons. It is a place to be forward looking and enterprising. It is a place of opportunity and a place for personal growth. Essex people are the essence and lifeblood of the county. They are authentic, confident and brimming with positive energy.

Over the next 12 months we'll be celebrating Extraordinary Essex as told through the eyes of our residents, businesses and employees. We're proud to serve the people and communities that live, work and study here.

Throughout 2024/25 we will be championing our extraordinary county and we are starting by announcing a special arts and cultural commission.

We are a diverse county, made up of over 1.5m residents living and working across a diverse landscape, from historical towns and cities to rural landscapes and the longest coastline in the UK.

We understand how important creative expression is to residents in representing who and what makes Essex, that's why we are inviting artists, organisations, groups, and individuals to apply for a special art commission which conveys Extraordinary Essex.

Extraordinary Essex Artist Commission:

We are inviting submissions for a special arts commission which will provide the opportunity for artists, cultural practitioners, and residents to create a creative or cultural work which sums up why they think, or feel Essex to be an extraordinary place.

The project must be delivered before 31 March 2025 and must take place within the county council authority area of Essex. Artists, groups or organisations based outside of the authority boundaries are free to make a submission as long as the proposed work, or project is delivered within administrative Essex which excludes the unitary authority areas of Southend and Thurrock. You can view the authority area here: <https://www.essex.gov.uk/running-council/who-does-what-essex/county-council-and-local-councils>

Commission Priorities and Outcomes:

As part of this commission, we are looking for an approach which:

- Celebrates the county of Essex via contemporary art, cultural or creative experience, supports pride in place and advocacy for the county.
- Engages residents on issues which are topical and relevant to the county such as Children and families, health and wellbeing, economy and environment.
- Is socially engaged and seeks to engage new audiences, particularly from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds and communities.
- Has strong engagement elements embedded into the proposal.
- Reflects the aims outlined in ECC's 'Everyone's Essex' strategy: <https://www.essex.gov.uk/about-council/plans-and-strategies/our-vision-essex/everyones-essex>
- Considers the legacy of the project, including the lifespan of any physical works created, and continued means for engagement post-project and considers how the project will be evaluated.

Whilst the quality of the artistic or creative product is important, the commission wishes to focus more on community engagement and co-creation, as opposed to creating work in isolation without collaboration with Essex residents. Any proposal should therefore strongly consider the outreach element and ensure it is meaningfully embedded and articulated in the proposal. In recognition of this element your proposal should also include how you will document progress of your commission, should you be successful e.g. video diaries, time lapse camera, photographic timeline

Budget: £15,000 inclusive of all VAT, materials, and expenses.

Timeline (timeline may be subject to change):

- Applications open at 5.00pm on Friday 19 July 2024.
- Submissions must be received by the deadline of 11.59pm on 16th August 2024.
- Shortlisted applicants will be advised of outcomes by w/c 9th September with a view to supported projects being delivered from 16th September onwards.
- Projects must be delivered by 3rd March 2025

Receipt of your application will be confirmed by the ECC Cultural Development Team.

How to apply:

To apply please read the guidance notes below before you make your submission. As a minimum you will need:

- A project proposal of no more than 1500 words demonstrating how your work will meet the commission's priorities and outcomes. (Entries may be accompanied by video or digital submissions by providing relevant links to work etc.)
- Confirmation of permission. If you are applying to deliver work outside in an open space, or at a private or public site we will require relevant letters of support from partners and any permissions relating to the performance or installation of any work. Failure to supply this will make the application ineligible.
- A detailed budget sheet outlining how the commission will be spent.
- An overview of you or your organisation, including links to any relevant websites and examples of work.
- Please submit proposals via the dedicated webform [Extraordinary Essex Application - Essex County Council \(achieveservice.com\)](https://www.essex.gov.uk/extraordinary-essex-application)

For any further queries please contact: The ECC Cultural Development Team culture@essex.gov.uk

Extraordinary Essex Art Commission Guidance Notes

Please read these Guidance Notes before completing the application form, if you are unsure about any of the criteria of the commission, please ensure you have spoken with someone from the Cultural Development Team.

Essex County Council Extraordinary Essex Art Commission:

This commission is open to cultural organisations, arts and culture practitioners, groups and residents of all types based in, or delivering work within the administrative boundaries of ECC.

Examples of who is eligible to apply:

- Individual artists or artistic cooperatives
- Community groups
- Charities or trusts
- Community interest companies
- Social enterprises
- Public sector organisations (not local authorities)
- Private sector organisations
- Organisations that are part of a local authorities direct provision will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The Project cannot be used to advance and

- The promotion of faith
- The promotion of political ideals
- The reinstatement of reserve funds
- Retrospective payments

If applying as organisation, to be eligible, your organisation should:

- be financially viable.
- have demonstrated an ability to manage your work effectively.
- demonstrate effective policies in equal opportunities, health and safety, equality and diversity, children, and vulnerable adult's protection.

All applicants will need to show that your work, group, or organisation produces work that:

- Is of significant benefit to the people of Essex living within the County Council area
- Is recognised by others to be of local/national/regional significance.
- Has a track record, or the capacity to innovate, take on new developments and make a unique contribution to the cultural infrastructure of the county.

- Has the ability to disseminate good practice beyond the organisation to other practitioners and relevant partners.
- Contributes towards the fulfilment of the aim of the ECC Corporate Plan and its priorities – as detailed above.

For both Organisation's and Artists/Cultural Practitioners, the fund will not support:

- 100% of project costs – Each application will need to demonstrate a cash or in-kind contribution of at least 10% of the grant amount.
- Fundraising events where there is private gain.
- Applications from students unless the project is separate from or does not form part of their studies.
- Applications for support towards the cost of attending courses in Further or Higher Education.
- Support for international touring.
- Capital applications will not be supported by the scheme. Reasonable and proportionate materials and equipment can be supported and will need to be justified in the application.
- Projects in deficit.
- Projects which have taken place.
- Projects whose benefits fall outside of the administrative County of Essex.
- Projects for commercial gain.
- Applications directly from another Local Authority. Local Authorities can be a partner but cannot apply as a lead applicant.
- Schools' projects that are part of the school's curriculum activity. Any schools work will need to be extra-curricular.
- Organisations such as museums, theatres or arts centres that are part of a local authority's direct provision will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Additional guidance on completing the application form:

Section One: Your Details – Organisations and groups

This section applies to organisations only. Please provide contact details for your organisation. All future correspondence relating to the application will be addressed to the contact name. This must be someone from your organisation and should be able to answer any further questions concerning the application.

Please give a brief overview of your organisation and the work it delivers Provide an overview of your organisation, its history, the work it delivers, where it works in the county and how it benefits Essex communities and residents.

Please state your organisation or group strategic aims, what it hopes to achieve and how it will achieve it.

Please give an example of any recent highlights which are relevant to this commission. These could be industry awards and recognition, funding and project successes or a programme of work you are particularly proud of and think advocates your organisation.

Section Two: Your Details – individual artist / practitioner

Please remember to provide relevant contact details in your submission. You should include your name, email address and telephone contact and your permanent location.

Section Three

How much funding are you requesting? Please state how much funding you are requesting.

Summary of your project: Provide a summary of your project, detailing the specific activities and programmes of work that ECC funding will support. State where and when the work will take place, the people it will benefit, and any partners involved. Limit this to 1500 words.

Safety Issues: What are the safety issues relating to your project? If you intend to work with children or vulnerable adults, how will they be kept safe? If your project involves

children or vulnerable adults, you must have an active protection policy and procedures in place.

You are strongly advised to do a risk assessment of your project. This will help you to identify any potential safety issues and problems, and how you will reduce their risk of occurrence.

If you are running a public event, the host venue should have a Premises License (s). If it does not, you must apply for a Temporary Event Licence from your local council Public Licencing Department. Please remember to allow sufficient time to apply for licenses – it can take up to 90 days.

You will be required to ensure that any event or activity you run has the relevant Public Liability insurance in place.

Outputs and Outcomes:

Outputs are the tangible products and activity created by your work and are quantifiable, focusing on the deliverables. For example, an older people's art project might work with 20 residents of a care home over 12 weeks, delivering 12 half day sessions.

Outcomes are the changes, benefits, learning or other effects that happen because of your work. They can be wanted or unwanted, expected, or unexpected. For example, the above-mentioned older people's art project could lead to improved confidence with the participants and reduce social isolation.

Audience and Participation: Please state any anticipated audience and participant numbers for your programme of work / project.

Geographic Reach: State the geographic reach of your work, is its impact solely on one area of Essex or does it affect other areas. Does it have a regional, national, or international reach?

Evaluation: State how you will evaluate your project. What will you do to ensure you can demonstrate in real terms the impact of your project? How will you gather this information and use it to show the results of your project work?

Section Four – Essex County Council’s Everyone’s Essex: The Plan for Essex 2021-2025 <https://www.essex.gov.uk/about-council/plans-and-strategies/our-vision-essex/everyones-essex>

State how your work will meet Essex County Council’s Everyone’s Essex: The Plan for Essex 2021-2025. It is important in your application you take account of this strategy. You should ensure your answers are focused and specific and that you demonstrate how you will be able to contribute to ECC’s aims through your activity/s. It is not expected that you will be able to contribute to all the points in the strategy; however, we would expect you to be able to demonstrate activities for at least one.

Section Five – Equality and Diversity: Essex County Council are committed to positively advancing equality, fostering good relations between different groups and tackling discrimination. In this section, please outline how your proposed programme of work will consider the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010) aims as outlined in the application form.

Section Six – Project Finance

Please provide a project budget, detailing the specific programmes of work that our funding will support in Essex. Please detail any other income that our work will help to support, in terms of earned income, in-kind support and funding bids to other organisations.

Organisation’s Only – Supporting Information

Please provide all the supporting documentation as requested, we will be unable to accept your application if you do not supply everything that is requested.

Commission Awards:

Agreement letters will be sent to all successful applicants, outlining payment instalment amounts and timelines, evaluation, marketing and publicity requirements and any specific conditions ECC deems necessary and appropriate for the programme of work.

ECC will pay 90% of funding in advance on receipt of a returned, signed agreement letter with relevant bank details. The remaining 10% will only be paid once the project has been completed and a report submitted to ECC.

How your submission will be assessed:

An Assessment Board will make recommendations about the award of funding to the ECC Cabinet Member. The Board will consist of ECC Portfolio Holders and Officers.

Applications will be assessed on how they meet the following criteria:

- How the project meets ECC's Everyone's Essex Priorities
- Audience and Participation engagement
- The geographic reach of the proposed work. Does the work focus on one or more area or local authority? Are there any county wide benefits?
- Evaluation Planning
- The extent to which the work will lead to:
 - A more robust and confident cultural sector in Essex, with support ranging from individual artists to established cultural organisations.
 - Match funding from other partners and funders.
 - An increase in audiences and participation with Essex's cultural organisations and projects.
 - An increase in the county's physical and mental health and wellbeing as more people have access to cultural activity and the many benefits it brings.

Applicants will be informed in writing whether they have been successful or not and any special conditions that might have been attached to the grant will be included.

Decisions about grants will be made within available resources.

Essex County Council reserves the right to withdraw a grant in whole or in part, even after notification of approval, in appropriate circumstances (if, for example, circumstances have fundamentally changed from those indicated in the application or the authority receives further information which fundamentally alters the value or appropriateness of the project). The organisation must inform Essex County Council of any changes in circumstances that may affect its operational abilities e.g., administration/receivership, loss of expected funding, changes to the organisation's aims and/or constitution.

Notes:

You may not canvass members or officers concerning your application.

You are advised to read the checklist at the end of the application form to ensure that you have completed all the necessary stages prior to posting. We will unfortunately, be unable to return supporting materials. You are advised to keep a copy of your application for your own records.

Applications can only be made via the dedicated webform whereby you can also attach the supporting information.

Once submitted you will receive emailed confirmation and a reference number. You must ensure you have received a reference number for your submission from us to ensure it has been received successfully.

For further guidance or advice on applications, please contact culture@essex.gov.uk