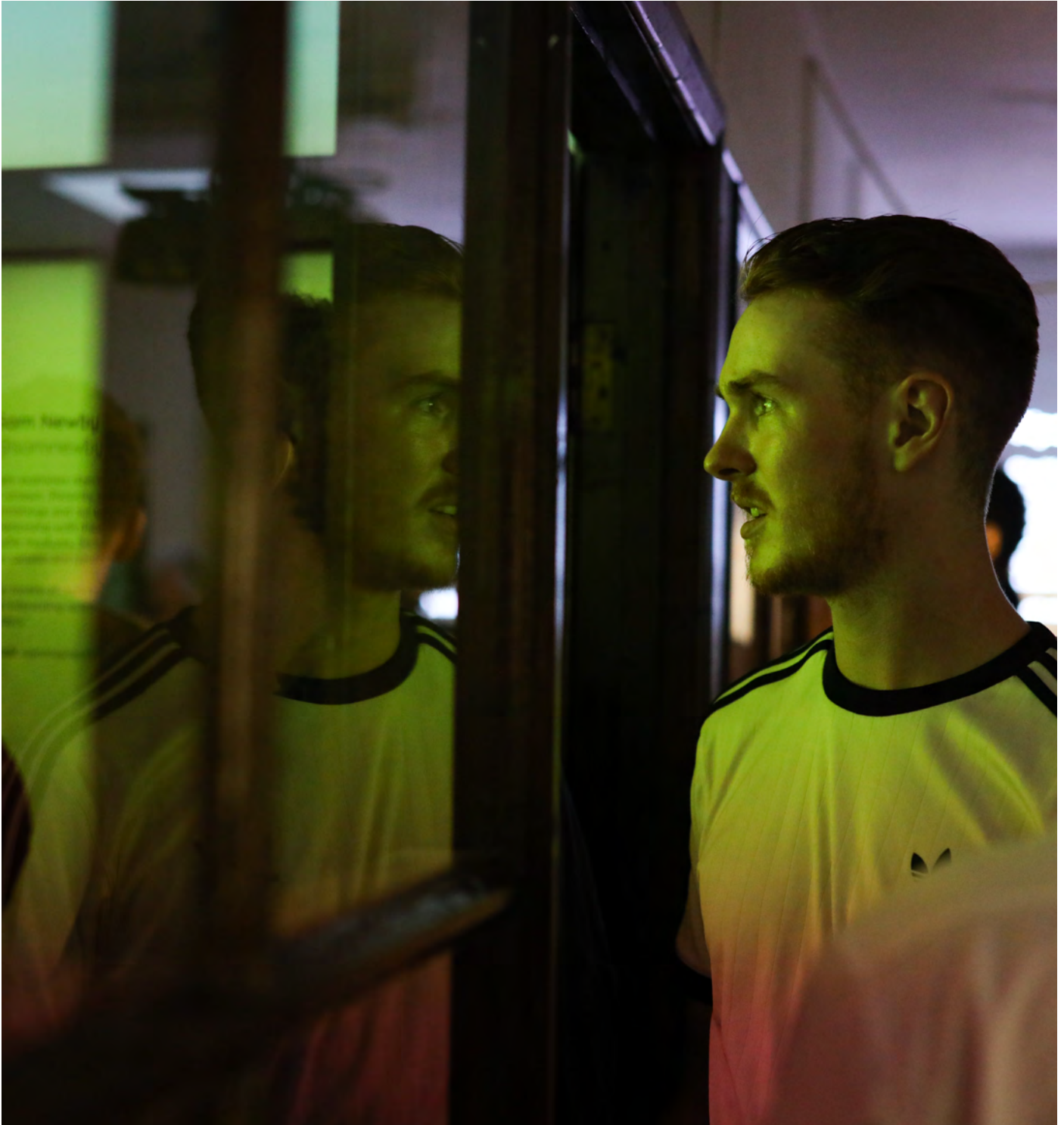


Artist Development Evaluation Brief



Audience member at the Alfred Arcade - Ripe Mangoes 2019

a space arts



The brief

This brief outlines evaluation work required by the charity 'a space' arts as it seeks to assess and evaluate the impact of artist development work delivered over recent years, primarily from 2018 to March 2021.

The final report will assess what barriers artists and 'a space' faced when work started; what has been achieved (outputs and outcomes); what worked well along with identifying what did not work or worked less well; unexpected results as well as lessons learnt. The results of this work should provide an evidence base to assist the organisation in planning and resourcing future artists development activities as well as supporting future funding applications and reporting to existing funders.

Over the coming years we want to expand our artist development work and therefore improving our understanding of the benefits of that work, and how we can improve will enable future planning to be better considered and designed in response to the needs of artists.

To complete the brief it's envisaged a mix of interviews and meetings with staff, trustees and artists together with desk based research and writing will be required.

About us

Based in Southampton, 'a space' arts is a registered charity and has been actively working to support the city's visual artists and audiences since 2000. For over 20 years we have been innovative in the delivery of our work which has included culturally reanimating a series of vacant, often historic buildings, to create studio and gallery spaces. The culmination of this came in 2019 when we completed a 7-year project to refurbish and reopen God's House Tower as an arts and heritage venue.

Throughout all our projects supporting visual artists has remained central to our work, with a range of support offered including exhibition and commissioning opportunities, bursaries to support professional development and/or making new work, along with one-to-one mentoring, establishing peer networks, funding workshops.

In 2018 the organisation became an Arts Council NPO, formalised our artists development programme and expanded the geography of this remit to include all visual artists in the SO postcode area.

Following a restructuring in 2020, the staff team currently consists of 7 core members, including a centralised Creative Programming Team who lead on delivering all artist development activities. The charity is governed by a board of 9 trustees who offer a range of skills, expertise and experiences.

Please see www.aspacearts.org.uk for further details.

Mission statement

Following the 2020 restructure the 'a space' arts took the opportunity to update its mission statement, as stated on the website:

We work to support visual artists and cultural audiences in and around Southampton to create a city where artistic communities can flourish.

At the heart of our work are three aims:

- To support and champion the work of visual artists and create opportunities for them to thrive by establishing financially sustainable careers.
- To bring a visible change to the city's visual arts community by delivering co-created projects with previously under-represented artists.
- To create opportunities for the public to engage with, learn from and be inspired by the work of visual artists.

To achieve our mission we are committed to authentically working with others to develop new projects that culturally reanimate spaces and further support our local communities and artists. Our current portfolio comprises: Artist Development, RIPE, Public Art, Tower House, The Arches Studios and God's House Tower.

Aims for the work

The aim of the evaluation work is to give the organisation a better understanding of the impact our work has on artists, how this has benefitted their careers, practice, professional development, or if it hasn't and why? Below are an initial set of questions, a refined, final list and approach to evaluation will be agreed with the appointed consultant:

- What has been the artists experience of working with 'a space'?
- How is 'a space' perceived by the artists we support?
- What benefits have artists gained through the opportunities offered by 'a space'; have they returned for additional support, was the experience good or bad? What has been the longer term outcome or impact of this for them?
- What barriers did the artists face in participating in 'a space' activities? Why did they participate with some activities/opportunities and not others?
- Which activities or initiatives were most successful, which were not? Why?
- What was the quality of experience from working with 'a space'? What were the staff like, what were the venues like to work in, what was the audience like?
- Has the artist been left a genuine benefit / improvement to their work, and would they recommend us to other artists?
- What was the legacy of their experience and what did working with 'a space' help them achieve?
- What barriers and challenges are artists facing (or anticipate facing) post-covid? How can the organisation respond to these and better support artists post-covid?

- Which types of activities will artists require in the future? And why? Whats changed?
- What attracted the artists to work with 'a space'? Which of our communications best raised awareness of our artist development activities and why?
- How can 'a space' better communicate and connect with artists in under-represented communities across the city?
- Have artists development activities been adequately resourced? If not, what were the impacts? What resources are required to increase artist development work in the future?

Monitoring

The project has a short completion time and therefore only one review point has been included in the initial project timetable. The main point of contact will be Daniel Crow (Director) who will be supported during the start up and mid point review phases by key staff and trustees. The final report will be shared with the full board and external partners (where required).

Consultant

We are looking to appoint a consultant (or consultants) with experiencing of working in and evaluating arts activities, ideally within the visual arts. The ideal consultant will be experienced, methodical and able to work independently whilst delivering the agreed brief.

Tender process

All applications must be made via email to dan@spacearts.org.uk and include the following elements:

- An outline of the approach and methodology stating how the consultant will address the initial questions listed in this brief.
- An up to date CV including relevant examples/experiences and references.
- A fee proposal not exceeding the stated amount available.

All applications must be received before the closing date of 09:00am on Monday 17th May

Timescale

A final report is required by Friday 30th July 2021 to assist the organisation report to funders in summer 21 and plan future activities, therefore the proposed timetable is:

- May - closing date for applications Monday 17th May 09:00am
- May - consultant appointed Wednesday 19th May
- May - start up meeting to agree methodology and begin evaluation work - date to be agreed
- June - evaluation process with mid-point review around Wednesday June 30th
- July - evaluation process with final report around Friday 30th July

Contract award criteria

All applicants will be reviewed by the director and key trustees and assessed against the following criteria:

- Approach to the brief and methodology for conducting the work
- Value for money
- Past relevant experiences

Budget

A budget of £5k is available to complete this work with interested parties asked to submit a fee proposal up to this value. We envisage the work being the equivalent to circa 12-15 days over the project period. As a freelance opportunity the person appointed will need to be responsible for their own National Insurance and tax. This freelance brief is funded by the organisation.

Contact

Please contact Daniel Crow, dan@spacearts.org.uk or 07780 602230, with any queries or questions.

Available resources

The organisation will make all existing resources available to the appointed consultant including:

- RIPE impact reports and infographics
- Arches Open Studios impact reports
- Artist Development survey results
- Artists - contacts with artists can be made/established on behalf of the appointed consultant
- Staff / Trustees can be available for interviews, meetings etc.