



Pitch Your Project **LGBTQIA+**

Five community-focused projects have been shortlisted for the latest round of Pitch Your Project bursary scheme, with the public invited to hear their ideas and vote for the project they would like to see receive **£2,000** in funding.

The special round of the bursary scheme has been launched to celebrate **10** years of Southampton Pride and is specifically open to initiatives led by LGBTQIA+ people.

The successful project will receive **£2,000** to help launch a new initiative or contribute to the ongoing work of an existing project, as well as the opportunity to present their work through an exhibition at God's House Tower.

The five shortlisted projects are:

- Transcribe: Everybody Transitions, led by Abigail Parkes
- Queer Southampton: Then and Now, led by Net Ember and Spencer Joines
- Celebrating Our City: A New LGBTQIA+ Pride Flag for Southampton, led by Joy McKay
- The Oracle of Gender Designation, led by Jez Franck
- Gathering in Celebration: Sharing Songs of Hope for the Next 10 Years of Southampton Pride, led by Kuch Bhogal

Transcribe: Everybody Transitions

Transcribe aims to provide paid opportunities to early career writers that will support their development artistically, empower trans+ people to share their experiences, and enrich awareness of the community. In 2027, the project will commission eight writers to create a brand-new short piece on the theme “Everybody Transitions”, and one trans+ artist, to illustrate an anthology of the written works. This theme aims to look at the ways in which all people, cis and trans+, go through transitions during their life. Through exploring this, we hope to decrease othering of the trans+ community, increase empathy, and combat media-driven bias and misinformation.

List of other contributing artists, community groups or confirmed partners:

Ri Baroque (She/They) – Project Lead

City Eye – live streaming of event and recording of process

Mayflower Studios – host for sharing event where works will be performed

About the people behind the project:

Beyond Reflections is a charity committed to providing practical, emotional and wellbeing support to trans+ people and their loved ones, as well as creating opportunities for trans+ people to engage with sports, arts, research, and more. All our work is guided directly by the needs of our community, so we are constantly growing and adapting our services and projects to meet these needs. We have more recently become more involved with the arts as we know this is a powerful medium to increase visibility of real trans+ experiences, provide opportunities for our community and celebrate trans+ joy.

Website and Social Media:

- @BeyondReflectUK – <https://www.instagram.com/beyondreflectuk/>, <https://www.facebook.com/BeyondReflectUK>
- <https://beyond-reflections.org.uk/>



Queer Southampton: Then and Now

Queer Southampton: Then and Now is a community-led project exploring Southampton's trans+ and queer histories through five monthly workshops, bringing together local trans+ and queer people to learn, share knowledge and build a community archive. Led by Carabiner Club Southampton and THEIR Initiative, the programme will explore oral histories, self-archiving and creative research, with sessions led by trans+ and queer specialists. The project will culminate in a public exhibition at God's House Tower, connecting local histories with contemporary creative work and inviting audiences to contribute their own stories.

List of other contributing artists, community groups or confirmed partners:

- Carabiner Club Southampton
- THEIR Initiative
- ZEST Collective

About the people behind the project:

Net is an artist, co-director of the ZEST and founder of THEIR. Their work focuses on the plasticity of society, and the plasticity of the self. Spencer is a graphic designer and a founding member of Carabiner Club. His passion is making art accessible and inclusive for all. Net and Spencer run collaborative events through THEIR & CCS, and have a love of creating trans+ & queer inclusive arty places in Southampton together.

Carabiner Club Southampton is a volunteer-led, transmasculine/ men-centred FLINTA+ community that hosts monthly social meet-ups. THEIR Initiative supports trans+ creativity and artistic excellence through activity-based events that connect people to skills, opportunities, and to each other

Website & Social Media:

- @their_initiative - https://www.instagram.com/their_initiative/
- @carabiner_club_soton - https://www.instagram.com/carabiner_club_soton/
- @zestartcollective - <https://www.instagram.com/zestartcollective/>



Celebrating Our City: A New LGBTQIA+ Pride Flag for Southampton

Flags are often used to show pride in community, signal where you are welcome. But they have become divisive; from being painted on roundabouts to the (withdrawn) proposal to ban many flags being flown from City council buildings. These flag politics often feel aimed at the LGBTQIA+ community.

I want to work across the many LGBTQIA+ communities in Southampton running workshops to co-create a new flag proudly celebrating us. The final large, quilted, fabric flag will be revealed at God's House Tower alongside a multimedia exhibition featuring collages, photos, videos and testimonials created during community-based design process.

About the people behind the project:

Joy McKay is a Queer, Deaf, Southampton-based artist who explores symbology and identity in their practice through painting, collage and using found objects. They believe being an artist gives them a unique voice and try to use this in promoting equity and visibility.

They have recently been inspired by how people demonstrate their identities through flags and have been sending positive messages through tiny artworks left for members of the community to pick up for free at art galleries, exhibitions and Pride parades.

Their work often results in what they like to term 'political whimsy'.

List of other contributing artists, community groups or confirmed partners:

Southampton Sapphic Social, Carabiner Club, Create Connect, Breakout Youth and Solent LesBi Queer Social Group

Website & Social Media:

- <https://joymckay.wordpress.com>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/joystixx2806/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61560848892793>



The Oracle of Gender Designation

The Oracle of Gender Designation is an interactive installation that playfully explores the complexity, joy and absurdity of gender through games, ritual, performance and participation.

In the current political climate, it has become clear that solidarity needs to be built between marginalised groups, and with this in mind the plan is to develop the next iteration of the Oracle with a particular focus on accessibility. Using sound, storytelling, visuals, technology and accessible design, the Oracle will develop into an immersive installation that enables more people to participate - with accessibility at the heart of the space, rather than as an add-on.

We also wish to open the project up to wider collaboration, making it a truly community-created experience by inviting local trans, non-binary, intersex, gender non-conforming and wider LGBTQIA+ community members to contribute through workshops.

Participants will help create new divinations, tactile objects, poems, soundscapes and interactive experiences, becoming part of the continuing evolution of The Oracle.

List of other contributing artists, community groups or confirmed partners:

- Jez Franck (they/he) - installation, game builder, lead artist
- Nicola Anne Beck/Great Aunt Tranni, (she/they) - writing, poetry and installation design
- Tinqabot (Bik Bickmore) (he/him) creative technologist
- Devin Valentine (he/him) - musician, 3D print design, soundscape & visuals

About the people behind the project:

Jez Franck is a multidisciplinary artist whose socially engaged practice explores identity, belonging, ritual, play and the strange systems humans create to make sense of ourselves and one another. Working across installation, assemblage, performance, participatory art and storytelling, they often use found and repurposed materials to create work that invites people to become active participants rather than simply observers.

Website and social media:

- <https://www.instagram.com/oracleofgender/>
- <https://www.pinterest.com/jezfranck/the-oracle-of-gender-designation>
- <https://janifranck.wordpress.com/>



Gathering in Celebration: Sharing Songs of Hope for the Next 10 Years of Southampton Pride

Marking a decade of Southampton Pride, this project will transform LGBTQIA+ community members' stories into an exhibition of songs, images and writing themed around the idea of hope for the future.

Five participants will be invited to share their experiences of Southampton Pride over the last 10 years using the theme of hope for the future. Their words will be used as material for a series of songwriting workshops, which will culminate in a performance at a celebration event at God's House Tower in August 2027.

An accompanying exhibition will weave together recordings, lyrics, photography, and interview fragments into an immersive installation, letting visitors journey through ten years of community history and hope. Rooted in collective storytelling, this is a creative gift back to the community that inspired it.

List of other contributing artists, community groups or confirmed partners:

If successful, The Edge Nightclub and The London Hotel

About the people behind the project:

Kuch is an interdisciplinary artist whose work is about being a queer British-Punjabi man who both wants to belong to a community but also to live a life of sensual freedom. He is interested in stories, psychology, and the potential of art to improve wellbeing. Kuch enjoys working with text, images and music and his work celebrates the complexity and contradictions of what it means to be a human body-mind. Kuch is also a group facilitator, educator and psychiatrist.

Website and Social Media:

- Instagram: @kuchbhogal
- www.kuchbhogal.com

