



b-side festival 2020

OPEN CALL COMMISSIONS BRIEF

'In its every breath it has everything to do with the place and people.' Festival Visitor 2018

One amazing island

b-side is offering a number of commission opportunities to create new, temporary, site-responsive work in any media for the next festival, September 2020 on the theme of common lands. Proposals can be for any amount up to £4000 - we expect to commission work across a range of contexts, concepts and costs. An additional allowance of up to £750 per commission is available towards travel and accommodation.

Deadline for applications is midnight Sunday 23 June 2019.

THE BRIEF

The b-side biennial festival commissions site-responsive work for public spaces on Portland revealing aspects of the island environment and communities and their relationship to elsewhere. The commissions form the core programme of the festival which this year has the theme of our relationship to and with land under the title of Common Lands. We commission work in any media that is thoughtful, maverick, poetic or just simply beautiful. Check out our website to see more about what we do and how we work www.b-side.org.uk

Portland

Portland is a curious island with a very particular history and ecology offering huge scope for research and inspiration. Located just off the coast of Dorset and approached via a narrow causeway, this hulk of limestone, bounded by steep cliffs and treacherous seas is unlike anywhere else in Dorset. Prior to the first road bridge built in 1839 linking it to the mainland, it was an isolated agricultural community sustained by farming and fishing and with its own unique ways and customs. Many ancient land use and management practices continued long after joining the mainland. However Portland has been dramatically changed and influenced over the years by quarrying and military appropriation and secret experimentation, resulting in what is now widely regarded as an industrial landscape and economy. It is a small island just 1.7 miles across and 4 miles long, it's coastal edges subject to the forces of nature, eroded by the sea, landslips and rock falls, its interior removed by quarrying and mining. With an ever-increasing population, space is at a premium and land use contested. As policies of growth and the impact of climate change collide, the opportunities to develop a sustainable community are challenged. More recently tourism is seen as the growth industry, as former quarries are re-wilded as nature reserves and Portland's unique ecological, historical and leisure attractions are increasingly recognized by climbers, divers, walkers, bird watchers, naturalists, geologists and historians. Portland, as a community and place, encapsulates in miniature the characteristics of what is happening in a wider world context

Common Lands

Over coming months our programme of artist commissions, projects and festival will be developed around a theme with the over arching title of Common Lands. We are regarding the island as a microcosm to explore our relationship to and with land – both here and elsewhere. This includes the physical and environmental context, together with the human and social context. Within this theme we will be focussing

on a number of key research areas (listed below) and are seeking proposals that explore these interwoven themes and relate or respond to the site and context of Portland.

Our Research Areas

- Climate change/crisis – environment and people (human impact/geology/erosion/ sea level rise)
- Migration and Displacement (historic, current and future movement)
- Territory/Borders (islands, enclosures, edges, connections)
- Land Rights & Access (common land/Rights of Way/access land/land appropriation, exploitation)
- Land use (agriculture/food production/growing/gardening/mineral extraction/settlements)
- Nature /Biodiversity (geology, ecology, environment)

INFO

- The festival takes place over a nine-day period with installations and events at a number of locations across the island. The commissions form the core programme of the festival with artists also contributing to talks and other events prior to or during the festival.
- Work can be for indoor or outdoor contexts, intimate or large scale, static, mobile, durational or event based.
- Proposals for artworks and interventions should be site-responsive and temporary, and aim to intrigue and engage audiences.
- We welcome proposals that may involve working with Portland residents and visitors as individuals or groups or equally for more intimate, reflective artworks and encounters.
- Proposals should be for new work but may be part of a larger or on-going project.
- We expect artworks to have a presence throughout the festival or if event based to include a number of performances or audience opportunities.
- Work can be sited anywhere on the Island and artists are encouraged to research and suggest locations as part of their proposal but this is not essential, we will help selected artists find appropriate sites or venues. A number of locations used for previous festivals are listed below however we are completely open to considering any other suggestions.
- Sites should be reasonably accessible. We encourage visitors to explore Portland by foot using public rights of way and public transport where possible.
- b-side is committed to minimising our environmental impact. We encourage artists to consider the carbon footprint related to the production, materials, installation and any activities as part of their project proposals, including to re-purpose or recycle all materials from installations and performances.
- Applications are invited from artists at any career stage and working in any media including: visual art, digital, sound, film, text based work, live and performance art, social media and socially engaged practice.
- b-side values diversity and is working to make the application and commissioning process accessible to all. We welcome proposals from those currently underrepresented in the arts particularly BAME and disabled artists. We will endeavour to work with artists to mitigate barriers to making their work for the festival. We welcome access documents from artists at any stage of the process. More info on access documents <https://www.accessdocsforartists.com/>

- Commissions offer up to £4000 to make work for the b-side 2020 festival. This covers the artist fee and all costs including all materials for production, installation and de-installation of work.
- We expect to commission across a range of budgets from £1000, with a maximum of 3 awards at the £4000 level.
- Artists may submit up to three ideas at varying costs within the £4000 commission budget maximum. Please submit a separate application for each idea.
- An additional allowance of up to £750 per commission will be payable towards travel and accommodation expenses for initial residential research days in October, installation/de-installation of work and attendance for 4 days during the festival.
- Applicants are welcome to bring additional funding from other sources to support their proposal if it is greater in ambition than our commission levels allow. In certain circumstances we may be able to help source additional funding.
- Artists will be selected on the basis of their outline proposal and will then have further opportunity to research and develop the final work.
- Each commission opportunity includes an introductory residential period on Portland in October 2019 allowing the selected artists to research and develop their final proposal. This initial residential period will provide opportunities to get to know the area with talks, walks and introductions to communities and individuals that artists might work with. Artists will have the opportunity for individual exploration of Portland as well as contributing to discussions between the curatorial team and selected artists.
- Successful applicants will be expected to attend the initial residential research days 18-20 October 2019 and be present for a minimum of 4 days during the 2020 Festival. Past festivals have shown us that audiences and artists get much more out of the experience if the artist is present with their work and able to engage with visitors during the festival.
- The selected artists will have access to curatorial support, installation assistance, venue/site facilitation and help with finding accommodation. Artists will also have the opportunity of using our b-side shop front 'project space' - Outpost, in Fortuneswell, Portland for use as private or public facing research, meeting or work space and engagement venue prior to the festival.
- Although primarily looking for proposals linked to the Common Lands theme we are always open to considering any great ideas or proposals and may be able to help source funding.

SUMMARY OF DATES

Deadline for proposals	Midnight Sunday 23 June 2019
Shortlisted artists notified	6 September 2019
Interviews	Week commencing 16 September 2019
Residential research & development days	18 – 20 October 2019
Final proposal confirmed	May 2020
Work installed	Week commencing 31 August 2020
Festival launch event	Evening of Friday 4 September 2020
Festival	Saturday 5 - Sunday 13 September 2020
De-install work	Monday 14 September 2020

LOCATIONS AND RESEARCH LINKS

These are just a few examples of sites used for previous festivals. Additional sites will be developed and negotiated in discussion with artists in response to commission proposals.

Chiswell Community Garden

<http://www.portlandhistory.co.uk/chiswell-walled-garden.html>

The Esplanade and Quiddles café, Chiswell

<http://www.portlandhistory.co.uk/chesil-cove.html>

<http://www.geoffkirby.co.uk/Portland/680730/#Esplanade>

High Angle Battery

<http://www.portlandhistory.co.uk/verne-high-angle-battery.html>

<http://www.geoffkirby.co.uk/Portland/690730/#HighAngle>

Fancys Farm

<http://www.portlandhistory.co.uk/fancys-family-farm.html>

www.fancysfarm.co.uk

The Engine Shed

<http://www.portlandhistory.co.uk/the-old-engine-shed.html>

The Stadium Bowl

<https://www.portlandhistory.co.uk/portland-stadium-bowl.html>

<http://www.geoffkirby.co.uk/Portland/695725/#Sports>

The Governors Community Garden (The Grove)

<http://www.portlandhistory.co.uk/governors-community-garden.html>

Easton Gardens

<http://www.geoffkirby.co.uk/Portland/690715/#Gardens>

<http://www.portlandhistory.co.uk/easton-gardens.html>

St Georges Church

<http://www.portlandhistory.co.uk/st-georges-church.html>

<http://www.geoffkirby.co.uk/Portland/685720/#StGeorgesChurch>

Portland Bill area

<http://www.geoffkirby.co.uk/Portland/675680/>

<http://www.portlandhistory.co.uk/portland-bill.html>

<http://www.portlandhistory.co.uk/ministry-of-defence-magnetic-range.html>

<http://www.portlandhistory.co.uk/culverwell-mesolithic-site.html>

More info on Portland:

<https://www.portlandhistory.co.uk/introduction.html>

<http://www.geoffkirby.co.uk/Portland/IndexMap/>

This Dorset Explorer website mapping system is useful for exploring many different layers of information on Portland.

<https://explorer.geowessex.com/>

HOW TO APPLY

Applications must be made online via Curatorspace applications portal [APPLY HERE](#)

Please complete the online application form giving the following info:

- A brief summary of your idea (250 words max)
- A detailed description of your proposed idea (500 words max)
- A summary description of your practice (300 words)
- Proposed location if known or type of site/venue preferred
- Amount applied for and outline budget
- The resources and technical support you will need access to
- Images (10 max) or weblinks illustrating your proposal and /or previous work

Your proposal and description of practice may be submitted EITHER in writing using the online form OR as a video recording uploaded to YouTube or Vimeo (max length 5 mins)

If you cannot make an application online then please contact amanda@b-side.org.uk for alternative options.

Deadline: Applications to be submitted no later than midnight Sunday 23 June 2019

- All applications will be acknowledged on receipt.
- All unsuccessful applications will be notified at earliest opportunity.
- All shortlisted artists will be notified by 6 September and invited to an interview (via Skype) week commencing 16 September
- We regret it is not possible to give feedback for unsuccessful applications

Please note selected artists will be:

- Required to attend the initial residential research days 18-20 October 2019
- Present for 4 days during the 9 day festival period of 5-13 September 2020 (not including installation/de-installation days)
- Expected to play an active part in audience engagement with their work as part of their research and development or during the festival.
- Responsible for transportation, installation/de-installation of their work

b-side equalities monitoring form

We'd like to ask a few questions, which help us understand who we are reaching and how we can improve access to our opportunities. We are a grant funded organisation and it's important to both us and our funders to see who we are reaching and if there are any gaps we can address. Please click the link below which will take you a short survey. This part of the application is anonymous. It will be detached and will not be read alongside your main application. We don't believe people fit easily into boxes so we have selected a non-categorising method below. You are welcome to write Prefer Not to Say for any answer.

[Click to contribute to b-side equalities monitoring](#)

www.b-side.org.uk