

**Charnwood Forest
Landscape Partnership Scheme**

**Brief for the Delivery of a Community Arts Programme
‘Celebrating Charnwood’**

Commissioned by the National Forest Company

**As part of the delivery of a
Landscape Partnership Scheme for Charnwood Forest**

Background

The National Forest Company, acting on behalf of the Charnwood Forest Regional Park partnership, invites tenders from suitably qualified and experienced organisations to deliver a community arts programme. Following a successful bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund by the Charnwood Forest Regional Park Partnership, the Charnwood Forest Landscape Partnership is now underway.

The Charnwood Forest Landscape Partnership Scheme Summary

600 million years ago, a volcano erupted in the ocean near the South Pole. The fossilised remains of the mysterious creatures it buried, capture the first moments of complex life on earth and are found in only two places world-wide: Charnwood Forest and Newfoundland. Since then, Charnwood's ancient rocks have created a mosaic of wildlife-rich habitats and distinctive landscapes, shaped across the centuries by its communities. Today much of this remarkable heritage is hidden from all but the most inquisitive and is increasingly at serious risk of diminishing to the point that it is lost.

The Charnwood Forest Landscape Partnership Scheme will celebrate Charnwood Forest's internationally important volcanic legacy. Eighteen projects will inspire people to explore its rich landscape, understand its diverse heritage, and develop skills to care for it. It will enable the partnership to coordinate management at landscape scale and finally secure the future of this extraordinary place.

The projects will be delivered under three themes: '**Explore Charnwood**', '**Understand Charnwood**' and '**Care for Charnwood**'. The community arts programme, entitled 'Celebrating Charnwood', is one of five projects within the '**Understand Charnwood**' theme (see Appendix 1).

The Brief

The purpose of the 'Celebrating Charnwood' community arts programme is to engage people through a variety of art forms and events to record and celebrate local heritage, stories and traditions and to encourage their active participation in the future of the Forest. We envisage that the successful tenderer will engage with a range of communities and groups in the project area (i.e. within the boundary of Charnwood Forest Regional Park), key target audiences in surrounding urban areas of Leicester, Loughborough and Coalville and the wider public both online and face-to-face. The programme will also include some activity with schools, online collaborations with other global sites with similar fossils, and participation in the National Forest Timber Festival.

For this project, we are looking for an organisation that will adopt an embedded community arts approach to the development of the five-year programme of activities, one which will engage target audiences in a meaningful way and will build trust and commitment over time. The ambition goes beyond delivering artistic activities in a community setting. We are looking for a more radical approach, which carries risks but offers greater rewards. Art will be a means by which the partnership and target audiences can communicate about Charnwood Forest. Ultimately, the community arts programme should help different audiences to engage with decision-making about Charnwood Forest, its management, and its future.

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We understand that the best outcomes will arise from allowing the programme to develop organically alongside the other projects in the wider Scheme and in response to the growing relationship with our target audiences. It is envisaged that the successful tenderer will work closely with the Landscape Partnership Scheme Delivery Team. In this way we can ensure that the community arts programme is integrated into the wider Scheme and can both draw inspiration from the other projects and contribute creatively to them.

The approach and indicative programme (see Appendix 3 and 4) is based on research commissioned during the development phase of the project (April 2018 – October 2019). Much has changed in our world since then and we recognise that, with the uncertainties of the ongoing pandemic, tenderers will want to review and revise this outline and present a programme that can be realistically delivered. This programme should allow flexibility to shift between online and offline activity as circumstances permit. While the Coronavirus pandemic will undoubtedly constrain some activities, it also presents us with new opportunities. Tenderers should consider how to best harness the public's renewed interest in the outdoors and nature.

The term of the community arts programme will be between November 2020 and June 2025. Tenderers should provide a dedicated project officer that can work with the Landscape Partnership Scheme throughout the life of the project. The reason for this is that we believe that the best, long-term outcomes can only be achieved if the individual is embedded in the partnership and sufficient time is allowed for trust to be established between this individual and our key target audiences.

The five-year programme should include the following elements:

- Activities which help the public to understand what the Forest is, where it is, and help us to understand people's experiences and relationships to the Forest.
- Natural History and Fossils - creative responses to Charnwood's geological heritage and habitats.
- Participatory experiences in the landscape - e.g. sketch walks, supported visits with target audiences, nature art.
- Place-based heritage and arts – community-led projects recording heritage, exploring and celebrating place through different art forms.
- Exhibitions (online and offline).
- Schools engagement.
- An international dimension - Charnwood's global connections through an online collaboration with communities living at six global sites with rare Ediacaran fossils.
- A major event, production and/or community celebration in Year 5.

We understand that, in order for the 'Celebrating Charnwood' project to develop with the Scheme and for relationships with our audiences to be responsive, it will not be possible for tenderers to provide a detailed plan now for the full five-year programme. Instead, we would like you to provide us with a detailed plan for the first year of the Scheme (to June 2021) and an outline plan for the subsequent four years (July 2021 – June 2025). We would expect to work with you each year to plan the programme of activities for the following year.

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There are no constraints over which art forms can be deployed in pursuit of these outcomes and we would wish the successful tenderer to use their experience, judgement and knowledge of the key target audiences in Leicester, Loughborough and Coalville to shape their programme. The only stipulations are that there must be elements of the programme which involve outdoor exploration and direct experience of the landscape (e.g. through sketch walks, outdoor performance, creating art with natural materials or similar), that a variety of art forms should be included, and that there must be some elements which focus on Charnwood's geological heritage.

For information, the available budget for the implementation of the community arts programme during the delivery phase of the Landscape Partnership Scheme (2020- 2025) is **£97,500 (inclusive of VAT)**.

We are open to suggestion about how this budget should be distributed across the five-year programme, but we expect a similar level of activity throughout. As a guide, we anticipate an annual budget of £19,500. Within this suggested annual budget, we have allowed c.£4,000 per annum for equipment and materials and c.£15,500 per annum to cover staffing costs and any professional fees should the successful tenderer wish to bring in additional artists and/or creatives to help them to deliver specific activities. Continuation of the contract each year will be subject to demonstration of satisfactory progress towards the agreed outcomes at an annual review.

Outputs and Expected Outcomes

Embedded community arts practice is a methodology which does not lend itself to setting targets. The indicators of the success of this project will not be the numbers of people involved but, rather, the depth of the engagement we are able to achieve over time and the range of people that we can draw into exploring, understanding and caring for Charnwood Forest. This project will be focussed more on outcomes than on quantifying outputs. This does not mean that we will not log levels of participation but simply that we will not be trying to reach arbitrary numbers of people from target groups. We will be looking for changes in attitudes, behaviour, commitment, interest in volunteering and willingness to engage in discussion about the future of the Forest.

We would expect to see progress towards the following outcomes:

- Reduction of perceptual, psychological, pre-dispositional barriers to involvement in exploring, understanding and caring for Charnwood Forest
- New ways of engaging communities in discussion and decision-making about the Forest, its management and its future become embedded in the Partnership
- Target audiences will be more engaged e.g. urban communities in Leicester, Loughborough and Coalville, BAME communities, elderly, young people and families
- Wider public appreciation for Charnwood's internationally significant geo-heritage
- New arts events and a range of media types will be regularly used to draw people in and present multi-faceted celebration of Charnwood Forest, its landscape and its communities

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- New, creative, and unexpected perspectives of the Forest and further expressions of its landscape and heritage in art and products
- Increase in outdoor learning and time spent outside by adults and children creatively exploring and learning about the landscape
- Establishment of global connections with communities elsewhere in the world with similar Ediacaran sites. This will add a creative dimension to the existing scientific network.
- A better understanding amongst the partnership of the difficulties some audiences face when accessing the countryside and woodland areas
- Agency vested within local communities and confidence developed to speak out about what they want, need and value in relation to Charnwood Forest Regional Park

A willingness on behalf of the successful tenderer to work towards these more challenging but ultimately more rewarding outcomes is essential and we will expect the successful tenderer to consider how we can best capture and creatively evidence these outcomes through our evaluation processes.

Project timescale

The maximum timescale for completion of the programme is 4 years 7 months, subject to date of appointment, which we anticipate will be on or after 23rd November 2020. The project is to be completed by 30 June 2025.

Tender assessment criteria

The tender will be assessed based on the following criteria:

1. Value for money (25%)
2. Capacity and ability to deliver a creative participatory community arts programme to a high standard and within the timescale (25%)
3. Quality of the tender submission and evidence of understanding of the desired approach and outcomes (25%)
4. Relevant prior experience and networks (25%)

Interviews with shortlisted applicants will take place the week beginning 16th November 2020.

Requirements of the tender

Experience and project personnel

Examples of recent comparable projects undertaken by the tenderer are to be supplied.

Summary CVs of staff proposed for employment on the project are to be supplied.

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Methodology

The tenderer is expected to outline their methodology in the submission. This should include stakeholder engagement with key target audiences, partner organisations and other key stakeholders.

Costs and expenses

The tender should include a breakdown of expected costs (e.g. staff, materials).

Any expected third-party costs should be detailed separately.

Please indicate whether or not VAT is chargeable in your costs and itemise VAT separately.

The budget for this piece of work is £97,500 inclusive of VAT.

Project management

Partnership liaison and project management is to be the responsibility of the successful tenderer.

We will assist with making initial contact with stakeholders and partners. Any site access arrangements are to be made by the successful tenderer with the relevant land or site owner as appropriate.

The National Forest Company's nominated officer for the management of this contract is Dr Julie Attard, Charnwood Forest Programme Manager.

There will be an inception meeting and brief informal updates will be expected by email or telephone on a monthly basis. This will also ensure that the successful tenderer can be kept abreast of developments of other projects within the Scheme. Formal quarterly reports on progress and activity will be expected throughout. These will support our formal quarterly progress reports to the National Lottery Heritage Fund. An annual review will be held each year to discuss progress towards the agreed outcomes. The annual review will form part of the formal contract monitoring process and continuation of the contract each year will be subject to satisfactory completion of this review.

Terms and conditions

This contract will be subject to the National Forest Company terms and conditions (Appendix 2).

Appendix list:

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| Appendix 1 | Copy of Sections 2-4 of the Round 2 bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund |
| Appendix 2 | National Forest Company Terms and Conditions of Contract |
| Appendix 3 | Explore, Understand, Care For ... and Create! (Report detailing the approach and outline programme for 'Celebrating Charnwood') |

**Charnwood Forest Landscape Partnership Scheme:
Community Arts Programme**

Appendix 4 Extracts from 'Celebrating Charnwood' Project Plan

Appendix 5 Landscape Partnership Scheme Timetable

Proposal submission

Proposals providing the information and quotes requested as outlined above should be received at the NFC offices by 12 noon on the closing date of **Friday 13th November 2020**.

Please send to Angela Beech, Head of Corporate Services, *(in a sealed envelope marked 'Proposal in Confidence – Celebrating Charnwood')*

The National Forest Company

Enterprise Glade

Bath Yard

Moiria

Swadlincote

Derbyshire DE12 6BA

Or email to abeech@nationalforest.org with the subject header 'CONFIDENTIAL - Proposal – Celebrating Charnwood'.