
EXETER CATHEDRAL - CREATIVE BRIEF – RIDDLER IN RESIDENCE

Introduction

We are looking for an enthusiastic writer, performance poet, storyteller, spoken word artist or lyricist to become a *Riddler in Residence* as part of a wider 3-year National Heritage Lottery Fund project. The ideal candidate will have experience of working collaboratively with communities in a heritage environment.

Project information – Riddler in Residence

There are four Riddler residencies between 2023 – 2025, each one with a different target audience and Riddler. This is the fourth and final of those residencies and will take ‘Thank You’ as its theme. The person selected will be the Cathedral’s *Riddler in Residence* between April - May 2025. The *Riddler in Residence* will use the Cathedral, its green spaces and collections including the medieval votive collection and the Exeter Book (one of the earliest works of English Literature in existence) as inspiration. The ideal person will have a literary and performance track record and a desire to develop their practice and engage with significant cultural heritage buildings and collections.

The Riddler will have the opportunity to explore our collections and to delve into other areas of the Cathedral’s extensive library and archive collections spending time with the Librarian and Archivist.

As June 2025 is the culmination of our 3-year National Lottery Heritage Fund project we would expect the approach to be celebratory in nature and for the successful applicant to work with those partners who have engaged with the project throughout, including Exeter College and St Petrock’s centre for people experiencing homelessness.

We welcome applications from a wide a range of disciplines and are looking for someone who can demonstrate experience of engaging a wide range of groups and individuals and working with underserved community groups in a heritage or other cultural context. Co-creation and heritage learning outcomes are key elements of this project and we expect these to be addressed within any response to this brief. Due to the specifics of this residency, we are looking for someone with a confident approach, performance skills, the ability to inspire and find starting points relevant to potential participants.

Your key point of contact at the Cathedral will be the Community Outreach & Partnership Officer with whom any changes to approach, delivery or programme will need to be agreed in advance of any changes being made. Residency milestones and outcomes will be established with the CO&P Officer at the start up meeting after appointment.

Background to the Wider Heritage Fund Project for your Information

The Riddler in Residence is embedded within the *Exeter Cathedral – the 2020s Vision Investing in our Welcome* project associated with the transformation of Exeter Cathedral. Our capital works will ensure our buildings are fit-for-purpose by improving infrastructure for all our users. A new interpretation scheme and Treasures Gallery will bring the history and purpose of the Cathedral to life for everyone. A detailed Activity Plan sets out how we will engage our communities in co-creating events, works of art and interpretation content.

Our aim as an organisation is to create positive development in the following areas: improving our ability to welcome more people to the Cathedral (facilities and quality of welcome); embedding consultation and co-creation into our work; engaging with new audiences; creating a legacy of community cohesion and partnership working.

Our approach is to work in partnership with groups and organisations on our doorstep.

- We will develop the skills and confidence of our staff and volunteers to deliver meaningful activities for, and with, our communities.
- We will work with creative producers to find new ways to engage people. We will improve the natural environment of the Cathedral for the benefit of all.
- We will use digital platforms to involve children in Devon with primary historic material held in the archives to enrich learning and encourage visits to the Cathedral.
- We will transform our interpretation and visitor experience in order to broaden our reach and appeal. The development of this interpretation will involve diverse voices and bring new perspectives to the history of the Cathedral.

Project Activity is split into two main themes:

Re-imagining the Cathedral

Using the physical asset as the starting point, this area will focus on the historic context of the capital works, improving the visitor experience and making it more relevant to a wider range of people. It will highlight and increase awareness and appreciation of the less visible assets of the Cathedral, including the library and archive collections. The setting of the Cathedral will also be a focus, taking interpretation beyond the building, exploring how Cathedral Green can be improved within the context of environment and biodiversity, and using it as a focus for developing new and meaningful relationships with local communities.

People and Place

This area goes beyond the Cathedral estate and into the community to encourage diverse audiences to explore their connections to the Cathedral and its wider city context. It will look at how more people can easily engage with the Cathedral and its collections beyond a physical visit. Through targeted activities, it will encourage diverse communities to use the stories told by the Cathedral and its collections to explore themes of contemporary relevance.

Within these themes, activities are broadly grouped under three umbrella projects:

- The Welcome Project
- The Creative Cathedral
- Environment and Climate Change

Through research and consultation the following target audiences have been identified:

- *Hyper-local and underserved* – the project will work with partners in order to engage effectively with people who live in adjoining neighbourhoods who face barriers to engaging with heritage. Creative and skills-based activities will be co-created with local partners.
- *Young People (13-25)* – working with young people in and beyond a formal education setting, offering opportunities for creativity, learning new skills and gaining work-related experience.
- *Formal Education settings* (primary & secondary) – working with schools and educators to provide a high-quality set of innovative digital resources for them to use pre- and post-visit as well as in standalone lessons in the classroom. The project will explore ways to bring the archive and library to life in order to enrich the educational lives of students of different ages and learning styles across Devon and beyond.
- *Families (targeting lower income neighbourhoods)* – drawing people to the Cathedral who would not normally visit. Understanding and acknowledging the barriers they face to visiting and provide engaging, creative and enriching activities that appeal to them.

Key Outcomes for the Riddler Residency

- Delivery of creative sessions inspired by the heritage of the Cathedral, its collections and grounds, that will engage people that use the Cathedral Green and St Petrock's centre (12 days direct work with participants)
- The creation of a body of work by the Riddler inspired by their time at the Cathedral
- Delivery of a public event to share the work created as part of the residency either as an in-person performance, a digital event, and / or in written form (digital or physical)
- Adhere to marketing deadlines and contribute information for social media coverage and engagement to ensure the project is promoted effectively
- Work with the project evaluator and the wider team on the evaluation of the residency

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

- Proven experience as a writer, performance poet, storyteller, performer, songwriter, spoken word artist or lyricist
- Experience of community engagement, co-creation and devising relevant activities
- Demonstrable interest in, and understanding of, the themes set out in this brief
- Understanding of working parameters within a heritage site
- Knowledge of participatory arts and heritage practices
- Ability to swiftly establish strong working relationships with a wide variety of people and groups
- Creative, positive approach to planning and problem solving

Heritage Fund Outcomes

Heritage Fund Outcome	Outcome No.	Project Outcomes
A wider range of people will be involved in heritage	O.HP.3	Young people, lower income families, socially isolated and vulnerable individuals will participate in cathedral heritage activities for the first time, and will recommend the programme of creative and enjoyable activities to others
	O.HP.4	The co-production and input of young people will be recognisable within the programme of activities and will serve to attract more young people to the cathedral and Activity Plan programme
People will have greater wellbeing	O.W.3	The Project will help to promote individuals' sense of place and identity which will lead to a sense of community empowerment and improved cohesion.
	O.W.4	The project will offer an increased sense of individual well-being and impact physical and mental health by providing opportunities to undertake creative and hands-on heritage activities
People will have developed skills	O.S.5	Participants from our target audiences will learn creative heritage skills associated with storytelling, writing, research, giving guided tours and interpreting history through art, craft and making. Many of these skills will be useable outside this project and are designed to build confidence and contribute to wellbeing
The local area will be a better place to live, work or visit	O.LA.2	The improved interpretation and associated activities will enable the local community to better understand and appreciate the significance of Exeter Cathedral and will provide a greater sense of place
People will have learnt about heritage, leading to changes in ideas and actions	O.HL.1	Attitudes and preconceptions about the Cathedral will be challenged. People will engage in meaningful ways with the Project for its heritage and community value rather than simply as a place of worship.

Project timetable

Milestone	Date
Application deadline	Monday 17 February 2025
Interviews	Monday 3 March 2025 (TBC)
Start-up meeting	Thursday 20 March 2025
Residency, Review & Evaluation	April – May 2025

Contract and Fee

Fee for residency c.22.5 days @ £271 per day over 3 months **£6,097** to include a minimum of 12 days direct work with participants.

The successful candidate will be expected to manage their own hours to ensure that the residency outcomes are delivered on time and within budget. Separate funding is available for materials, publicity and marketing, which will be managed by the Cathedral team.

A payment schedule will be agreed once the Riddler in Residence is appointed.

The successful candidate is expected to have public liability insurance of at least £10 million, undertake Safeguarding Training and successfully complete an Enhanced DBS check.

How to Apply

You can apply with a written proposal (maximum 2,000 words) or via audio or video (max 12 mins). We want to remove as many barriers to applying as we can, so, if there's another method you'd prefer to use please let us know.

Regardless of how you apply, please ensure you include:

- Details of how you meet the specification for creative brief, to include your knowledge, skills and experience.
- At least two examples of similar projects you have delivered.
- An outline of your proposed approach to the project and the methodologies you would apply.
- A breakdown of resources (time and fee) with a proposed timetable.
- Your contact details including address, telephone number and email plus contact details for two referees (references will not be requested without your permission).

The successful candidate will be required to complete an Enhanced DBS check.

Applications to be submitted to: vacancies@exeter-cathedral.org.uk

Deadline for applications: **Monday 17 February 2025**

Selection Criteria

We will assess applications via the following criteria:

- Knowledge, skills and experience that demonstrate the best fit with the brief
- Clarity of approach for delivering the residency
- Evidence of successfully creating participatory projects for a wide variety of people