

## April 2013: Brief for makers

We are looking for a team of makers to work with communities in the borough of Rushmoor, Hampshire on the *Craft Connects* project.

### About the project

*Craft Connects* aims to increase the integration of service personnel, veterans and their families with the local community within Rushmoor borough. Its ambition is to be a dynamic and innovative arts project, using craft as a catalyst to deliver a programme of new craft-making activities in neighbourhoods across Rushmoor. A team of skilled makers will act as *animateurs* enabling people from military and civilian communities to interact through quality arts experiences during 2013. We will foster creative networks across the borough, establishing sustainable models of practice, helping to make Rushmoor a healthier and happier place to live. Projects will be co-created with communities with each project leading to a series of neighbourhood exhibitions and events as well as borough-wide celebrations, highlighting Rushmoor's local distinctiveness. It is not possible to predict the exact shape that the projects will take.

### Project Aims

The project is funded by the Ministry of Defence through the Hampshire Community Covenant. *Craft Connects* will use craft to integrate the service community into civilian life – the aim which sits at the heart of the Community Covenant. We have deliberately focused on craft as a way of engaging the most people from the widest variety of backgrounds. Craft has traditions in every world culture with processes, materials, tools and designs recognisable across barriers of language, culture or religion. Craft can, therefore, provide an excellent and levelling platform for working with diverse communities. Craft is well suited to mixed ability groups and can be accessed by people with very different approaches to learning.

By using making to explore the relationships between the various communities within Rushmoor, the project becomes accessible to Gurkha veterans and their families who do not speak English; to the spouses and children of service personnel who may feel isolated and would respond well to an unthreatening way of engaging with other sections of the community. The project will provide opportunities to link Nepalese craft traditions with those of the military and with Rushmoor's own craft heritage and will highlight the opportunities for making available within the charitable and voluntary sectors.

### Project Beneficiaries

*Craft Connects* will benefit individuals, communities and organisations and we estimate that the project will reach over 5,000 members of the local community (either as participants or audience) broken down as follows: 560 armed forces personnel; 400 veterans; 640 military spouses; 720 members of the Nepalese community; 2400 children & young people and 1,680 other community members.

### Project Outcomes

We expect the project to have an impact on individual participants in terms of establishing new friendships and networks as well as developing new general skills and specific craft skills. We would also like to see participants choosing to continue their involvement in craft whether through a community project, study or employment. We also believe that the project will have a positive impact on communities through improved social cohesion and feelings of well-being. We hope this will make them well-placed to continue and develop the work undertaken during the residences.

### Partnership Working

*Craft Connects* seeks to embed craft activity within Rushmoor so that the links formed between its communities can continue into the future. Partnership will be vital to help to ensure this sustainability and we have had initial conversations with a number of organisations who are keen to get involved with the craft residencies and on-going activity. The project is designed to be led by the participants and so it is not our intention to be prescriptive about whom the partners might be. Instead, we will ensure that each residency is well informed about the resources available to them and leave them to connect with relevant partners.

## Sustainability

*Craft Connects* seeks to embed craft activity within Rushmoor so that community links continue into the future. To invest in the future sustainability and infrastructure of craft in Rushmoor, we would like to create a variety of self-sustaining activities (e.g. creating saleable products, developing after school arts clubs, a local makers' network or linking projects with local venues to curate craft exhibitions). To enable communities to identify further opportunities and set-up their own arts projects we will identify three trainees. In addition we will develop links with local organisations and companies (through Rushmoor's Community Matters Partnership) able to provide volunteers for the project. Through engaging these community champions, activities will be embedded into the local community ensuring continuity and an increased sense of ownership and commitment.

## About you

Our ambition is to create work that is both community led and of the highest quality. We are looking for individual Makers who have experience of participatory arts, a track record of excellent work in their field and a demonstrable ability to communicate their craft to others. Selection will be based on the quality of your craft practice and your ability to translate that practice into a community context. We have funding for five residencies of ten days and would be open to applications from makers looking to take on one or two residencies or from practices/ groups of makers or practices interesting in delivering all five.

We expect you to take the creative lead in delivering your residency, helping to achieve the central aim of integrating the service community into civilian life through your craft practice and community engagement skills. You will also play a role in:

- **project management**  
Working with local authority contacts, community champions, partner organisations, members of the local community and the project coordinator to ensure that your residencies are well organised, of a high standard and inclusive.
- **professional development**  
Throughout the project you will be expected to foster creative contacts and networks across the borough, with a view to starting conversations and establishing relationships that might continue once the project has finished.
- **mentoring**  
*Craft Connects* has a small budget to develop the skills of those members of the local community with an interest and aptitude for delivering their newly acquired skills to others. An important part of your role will be to act as mentors to these trainees.
- **documentation & evaluation**  
You will also be asked to record your experience in the *craft connects* blog as the residencies evolve. You will also be required to capture information about project participants and obtain feedback on the residencies.

## Responding to the brief

Please email the following information by midday on Tuesday 7 May 2013:

- your CV
- up to three images of your work
- a statement of up to one side of A4 outlining your specific interest in this project

Interviews are scheduled to take place on Tuesday 14 May 2013. Please let us know in your application if this date will cause you a problem. All residencies will take place between June and November 2013 with the precise timescale evolving in response to the demands and constraints of the individual projects. The daily rate paid to Makers is £200 including expenses (but excluding VAT). There is a small additional budget of £1,000 per residency available for materials and exhibition.

Jane Friend

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