



Summary

Role: Lead Artist

Our Reference: SYS/2026/LA

Project: Stoke Your Story: A World of Fables Rehomed in The Potteries

Funded by: The National Lottery Heritage Fund

Industry: Artistic services (CPV 92312000)

Purpose of the contract: The Lead Artist will be contracted to design and deliver a programme of participatory creative workshops as part of the heritage storytelling project. The role includes planning and facilitating 10 accessible art workshops, guiding participants to create visual interpretations of their traditional fables, and preparing co-created artworks for inclusion in the project's book and travelling exhibition.

Contract management: Reports progress to the Project Manager against agreed milestones

Location of contract: In-person delivery required in Stoke-on-Trent. Workshops will take place at community venues across the city, with locations confirmed in advance.

Value of contract: £3,000 (fixed fee inclusive of all costs, including VAT for suppliers registered for VAT), plus up to £250 additional budget for workshop materials.

Published date: 2 February 2026

Closing date: 16 February 2026

Closing time: 5pm

Contract start date: 2 March 2026

Contract end date: 30 June 2026

Contract type: Service contract (professional services)

Procedure type: Open competitive call. Selection based on value for money, relevant experience, and capacity to deliver the contract.

Contract is suitable for sole traders/SMEs/VCSEs?: Yes

About the Project

Using money raised by National Lottery players, The National Lottery Heritage Fund supports projects that connect people and communities with the UK's heritage. Stoke Your Story: A World of Fables Rehomed in The Potteries is a project designed to identify, record, and safeguard at risk oral fables from refugee and asylum seeker communities in Stoke-on-Trent, using ethical oral history and trauma-informed storytelling methods.

Thanks to National Lottery players, Stoke Your Gratitude C.I.C. will deliver a programme of Story Circles and creative workshops to capture these cultural artefacts, creating a permanent digital archive, a multilingual book, and a travelling exhibition.

We aim to create a powerful and genuine point of connection for the people of Stoke-on-Trent. We will use the simple magic of traditional fables to challenge the easy assumptions of 'them and us'. Through Stoke Your Story, we will bring together our city's longstanding residents and newest arrivals to explore the stories they have brought with them from all over the world. Our goal is to reveal the shared values, like kindness, honesty, and gratitude, that these stories hold, creating tangible moments of empathy and understanding between neighbours. By preserving this heritage in a new book and digital archive, we will provide a lasting resource that celebrates our city's diverse cultures. This project is a vital and realistic step towards building a friendlier and more deeply connected community.

About The National Lottery Heritage Fund

The National Lottery Heritage Fund is the largest funder for the UK's heritage. Using money raised by National Lottery players we support projects that connect people and communities to heritage. Our vision is for heritage to be valued, cared for and sustained for everyone, now and in the future. From historic buildings, our industrial legacy and the natural environment, to collections, traditions, stories and more. Heritage can be anything from the past that people value and want to pass on to future generations. We believe in the power of heritage to ignite the imagination, offer joy and inspiration, and to build pride in place and connection to the past. heritagefund.org.uk

About Stoke Your Gratitude C.I.C.

Stoke Your Gratitude C.I.C. designs and delivers community based creative and cultural projects and works with groups whose stories, experiences, or heritage are underrepresented. Gratitude is used as a lens through which storytelling, arts, and participatory methods are used as tools for connection, wellbeing, social understanding, and community cohesion. We operate at the intersection of heritage, health, and social inequality. The work is about listening, recognising value, and making it visible. The organisation produces tangible outputs including events, publications, exhibitions, and digital content. stokeyourgratitude.org.uk

Key Deliverables

Workshop Design and Planning

- Design and plan a series of 10 engaging and accessible participatory art workshops
- Develop workshop plans that are inclusive, culturally sensitive, and appropriate for participants with varying levels of artistic experience
- Source and prepare all materials required for workshop delivery

Workshop Facilitation

- Facilitate workshops in a supportive, inclusive, and trauma-informed manner
- Guide participants (Story-Keepers) to create illustrations responding to their traditional fables
- Ensure a psychologically safe and welcoming environment for all participants

Artwork Preparation and Handover

- Prepare final co-created artworks for digital scanning
- Coordinate with the Project Manager to ensure artworks are suitable for inclusion in the book and travelling exhibition
- Maintain clear records of artwork attribution and participant consent

Coordination and Reporting

- Liaise with the Project Manager and project partners to coordinate workshop scheduling and logistics
- Provide brief progress updates following each workshop
- Contribute to project evaluation by providing feedback on workshop outcomes

Supplier Experience and Capability Requirements

Minimum Requirements

1. Demonstrated experience as a creative practitioner with a background in participatory arts, community arts, or workshop facilitation.
2. Proven capability in designing and delivering accessible, inclusive creative workshops for diverse groups.
3. Ability to work sensitively and respectfully with participants from refugee, asylum seeker, or migrant backgrounds.
4. Strong portfolio demonstrating relevant artistic practice and facilitation experience.
5. Sound understanding of safeguarding principles and trauma-informed practice in community settings.
6. Capacity to work autonomously, exercising professional judgement and initiative in delivery.
7. Excellent interpersonal and communication skills.

Additional Evaluation Criteria

8. Experience working on heritage, storytelling, or oral history projects.
9. Experience delivering projects funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund or comparable public or charitable funders.
10. Knowledge of the voluntary, community, or heritage sector in Stoke-on-Trent.
11. Evidence of engagement with heritage, literature, or storytelling as tools for social connection or cultural exchange.

Contract Conditions

Employment status: This role is offered as a fixed term contract for services and does not constitute an employment relationship.

Right to work: Contractors must be eligible to work in the UK. Evidence of right to work will be requested prior to contract award.

Right of substitution: The contractor may provide a suitably qualified substitute to deliver services, subject to equivalent qualifications and any required DBS clearance.

Safeguarding: An Enhanced DBS check will be required due to work with vulnerable adults.

References: Two relevant professional references will be requested prior to contract award.

How to Apply

Suppliers wishing to be considered for this contract should submit the following by email:

1. A CV, portfolio, or equivalent summary outlining relevant experience and capability.
2. A short covering statement (no more than two pages) explaining how your experience meets the Minimum Requirements and, where applicable, the Additional Evaluation Criteria.

Contract submissions should be sent to

opportunities@stokeyourgratitude.org.uk

Please quote SYS/2026/LA in the email subject line.

Closing date: 16 February 2026

Closing time: 5pm

Late submissions will not be considered.

Following the closing date, submissions will be assessed against the published criteria. Shortlisted suppliers may be invited to a clarification discussion as part of the evaluation process.

Stoke Your Gratitude C.I.C. is committed to fair, transparent, and inclusive procurement practices. We welcome submissions from sole traders, SMEs, and VCSEs.