

Tender Brief: Project Based Research for a Theatre Company in Residence for Birr Theatre and Arts Centre



INTRODUCTION

Birr Theatre and Arts Centre (BTAC), wishes to engage a suitably qualified / experienced individual(s), to work with the board and staff on a new Theatre Company in Residence project for 2022.

The project is split on 3 phases as follows:

- 1- Conduct and report on a feasibility study for the establishment of theatre company in residence @BTAC
- 2- Develop the concept and brief to recruit a theatre company (based on phase 1 research) for 2022.
- 3- Identify funding options and Assist in the funding applications

The appointed person(s) will engage with BTAC and local arts community through a clear, process of project-based research. This appointment will be on a contract for services basis. Applications are welcome from invited individuals, organisations, or research teams.

Timescale – to complete research by **end of June 2022**. The total fee for the researcher including relevant expenses is **€8,000**.

Application deadline – Friday 11 February 2022

CONTEXT

Central to the arts activity in the town of Birr, is Birr Theatre & Arts Centre (BTAC) which provides a space for performances, visual arts, workshops and rehearsals for professional and amateur artists and audiences living and working in Birr and the surrounding region (Offaly, Laois, North Tipperary). Since opening in July 2000, we consistently deliver a high-quality arts programme to a loyal audience base and have supported artists as they build their careers.

Developing the BTAC as a centre for arts residencies in the county is one of our aims as outlined in our Strategic Plan 2019 - 2024. We successfully hosted a dance residency with Legitimate Bodies Dance Company 2007 - 2013 and now wish to develop further residency opportunity for artists.

KEY OBJECTIVE OF THE PROJECT BASED RESEARCH

1. Determine the feasibility of having a theatre company in residence in Birr
 - 1.1. Examine the impact on existing programme
 - 1.2. Examine how this residency could help develop BTAC's current strategy
 - 1.3. Explore the potential advancement of skills and capacity building needed of staff and board
 - 1.4. Explore the benefits to local artists, arts organisations, and festivals
 - 1.5. Explore how such a residency could find new ways to animate and engage with artists and local communities in a meaningful way, living alongside Covid 19.
 - 1.6. Examine the possibility of the development of a theatre company for Offaly through the residency
2. Identify potential funding opportunities, partnerships, and collaboration.
3. Assist in the development of a theatre company residency brief for funding applications

PROJECT BASED RESEARCHER'S ROLE

- The researcher will Write a detailed work plan for the delivery of the project in consultation with BTAC including an outline and timeline for delivery of events and research completion / theatre company residency brief.
- The researcher will design and deliver a staged research project comprising ample secondary/documentary research as well as primary research through interviews and focus groups of key stakeholders as well as notable examples of companies in residence through Ireland (comparator study).
- The researcher will present regular progress reports keeping the board and BTAC employees abreast of their progress and findings
- The project will need to comply with BTAC's GDPR policy, explain how this will be managed through the process.
- Delivery of programme to agreed schedule.
- Manage all administration in relation to the project.

Please note all meetings will comply with current public health guidelines and take place online if required.

PROJECT BASED RESEARCH WILL NEED TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF:

- Current Strategy of BTAC
- Current programming model of BTAC including access to demographics and audiences, activity, needs, staff, capacity.
- Understanding of local social economic, cultural profile as it relates to BTAC
- Funder and stakeholder priorities and policies including those of local cultural organisations, The Arts Council and Offaly County Council.

EXPECTED DELIVERABLES:

- Provide case studies of models of practice from Ireland that illustrate proposals for future support and development.
- Identify models of best practice and outline gaps that BTAC needs to address
- Outline the resources required for the theatre company in residence as well as the scale of support necessary
- Recommend strategies and propose actions to maximize the likely available resources (infrastructural, human, and financial), considering BTAC existing strategy and requirements
- Provide models of development for funding
- Identify key funders
- Assist the funding applications

ROLE OF BIRR THEATRE AND ARTS CENTRE WITHIN THE TENDER:

- To provide information and access to any relevant information available
- To provide support and guidance.
- To provide contacts for key individuals from arts infrastructural organisations
- To assist with any information distribution via databases / social media
- To provide space and assistance on any agreed events relating to the project

TIMETABLE

The research should commence as soon as practicable and be **completed by 30 June 2022** with staged progress reporting during the interim. The tender contract will be based upon delivery of project within three months from signing the contract [This date may be reviewed if any unavoidable delays to timetable occur due to current health crisis]

BUDGET

Submitted budgets should not **exceed €8,000** including fee (shown as daily rate) travel, VAT and per diems. Please supply a budget as outlined below in 'submitting your proposal', the budget will be assessed competitively in terms of current artist payments rates (see VAI for guidelines).

WORK PROGRAMME

Researcher will be expected to:

- Write a detailed work plan / schedule and meet with BTAC for briefing meeting.
- Conduct consultations / research in Birr and its environs with local arts communities, arts organisations and local authority relevant personnel.
- Conduct research with other arts centres in Ireland who provide arts residences opportunities.
- Write and submit a draft report including theatre company in residence brief for feedback
- Submit a final edited report as above that is publication ready.
- May be required to present the results of the project.
- We would anticipate that the project based researcher will consult with a wide range of stakeholders and relevant cultural providers, locally nationally and possibly internationally (if relevant).
- The project based researcher would also need to consult directly with Offaly County Council Arts Office.
- We would also expect the researcher to consult with the local arts communities and artists who engage with, have an interest in BTAC, including local arts organisations, local authority staff and councillors.
- Research must include :
 - A literature review of the subject covering the last 5 or 10 years
 - A stakeholder consultation including in-depth interviews, industry roundtables/focus groups,
 - Analysis of a available industry data sets on the subject

REPORTING

The researcher will be required to provide status reports to BTAC as agreed in accordance with pre-determined milestones.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Apply in writing via email to info@birrtheatre.com with the subject line:

Project Based Research for a Theatre Company in Residence for Birr Theatre and Arts Centre to arrive no later than **4pm, Friday 11 February 2022**

PLEASE NOTE:

- Do not send emails above 10MG [up to you to set] and if possible, send weblinks links for supporting material.
- Send application as PDF attachment (one document preferred).

Applications must include each of the following:

1. Outline suitability for the role: a professional C.V., letters of recommendation, and any other information deemed that demonstrates **relevant** experience
2. An outline of the planned approach for the development of the research, including innovative and imaginative project-based events for the gathering of ideas, needs and ambitions of all stakeholders
3. A detailed timescale for the project including numbers of day's work for; research, community / stakeholder contact, administration, plus a preliminary schedule and expected delivery dates - the tender contract will be based upon delivery of project within a maximum period of 4 months from signing the contract.
4. A budget which indicates how you will use the funding with headings such as researchers fee and a breakdown of other fees such as resources, transport, travel, accommodation costs.
5. Please supply supplementary information to support the application via email (note everything is to be in one PDF), these can include evidence of previous work; a short description of relevant previous projects, copies of photographs/audio or visual documentation, press reviews, publications, etc.
6. Name two relevant referees.

Assessment and Evaluation Criteria

Responses to the brief will be evaluated against the following criteria in relation to the applicant.

Category/ Criteria		Weighting (Marks)
1	Evidence of researcher experience – including evidence of ability to design, plan, organise and deliver across the sector	300 marks
2	Evidence of experience in or understanding of a Theatre context, and specifically the requirement of a Theatre / Theatre Company Residency	300 marks
3	Value for money	200 marks
4	Evidence of capacity to deliver within the timeframe	100 marks
5	Communication skills across a wide range of stakeholders with evidence of delivery across digital platforms	100 marks

A minimum qualifying threshold of 50% of the mark for categories 1-3 will be applied. In the first instance a selection panel will assess proposals, this will be based on information supplied. All submissions will be assessed by BTAC and their chosen representative(s).

Shortlisted applicants may be invited to do a short online presentation.

BTAC reserve the right not to proceed with any proposal under this invitation and consider other appropriate courses of action.

REQUIREMENTS

- The appointed researcher will provide up-to-date tax clearance certification and will continue to hold this for the duration of the contract.
- The appointed researcher will be required to hold professional indemnity insurance with a reputable insurance company.
- In the first instance a selection panel will assess proposals, this will be based on information supplied.
- Proposals received after the date outline below will not be accepted under any circumstances.
- In line with *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017)*, BTAC is required to ensure that contracts issued to anyone whose work brings them in contact with children are meeting their obligations under the *Children First Act 2015*.
- Any appointment will be made in adherence to BTAC Child Protection Policy, Child Safety Statement and Health & Safety Statement.

This project is supported by:



PROJECT OUTLINE:

