

Going Places: New Faces New Focus

Artist Brief



Project Summary:

Armagh City Banbridge and Craigavon Council seeks proposals from professional artists who wish to participate in the *New Faces New Focus* project. *New Faces New Focus* is part of Going Places, an Art Fund programme made possible with support from The National Lottery Heritage Fund and the Julia Rausing Trust. Going Places is designed to engage and involve underrepresented audiences with museum collections through high quality, collaborative touring exhibitions and public programmes. Over the next five years (2025 –2030) six museum networks will co-create 12 major touring exhibitions (two per network), taking the UK's collections on an epic journey that will result in 40 unique exhibitions made with and for local communities.

Partnered with Aberdeenshire Museum Service and the Open Eye Gallery, Liverpool, Armagh County Museum will engage with marginalised groups to co-curate 2 touring exhibitions. To that end, this brief is for a year-long programme of innovative creative collaboration and engagement for the first network touring exhibition, opening at Open Eye Gallery, Liverpool (September 2026), and touring to Armagh County Museum (January 2027) and Aberdeenshire Museum Service (June 2027). Two artists will be selected to each deliver 20 weeks community engagement, the first beginning in October 2025, followed by the second in February 2026. Alongside this, the selected artists will be required to mentor an up-and-coming artist in facilitating community engagement workshops.

Through *New Faces New Focus*, we propose to utilise socially engaged practice to connect with new communities, explore the museum collections at Armagh County Museum and reflect on how we can begin to make them more inclusive and representative of contemporary Northern Ireland. Focusing on the broad theme of journeys – from migration and exile to the milestones, traditions and celebrations on our journeys through life – we aim to enable communities to tell their stories through meaningful and sustained engagement with collections and heritage. The artists assigned to the project will place newcomers at the centre of the activity, with each artist required to produce their own collaborative piece for the *New Faces, New Focus* exhibition incorporating the community engagement response. Artists and newcomers will share an active role in shaping the exhibition from the outset through co-creation and co-curation. Working with the Curator at Armagh County Museum, objects from the collection will be identified as possible pieces to use in the community engagement activity. Collaboration, playfulness and experimentation are essential to the success of the engagement activity.

Your Proposal:

Your proposal to participate in *New Faces New Focus* should describe your professional practice, your current interest/experience of working with museums and their collections and outline how you would approach the project. Outline your experience to date working with marginalised groups in particular where English is a second language and describe which themes and processes you are particularly interested in. We are interested in proposals that communicate an intent to develop ideas through investigative experimental practice that will produce thought provoking, exciting, contemporary works in response to the collection.

The *New Faces New Focus* community participants will be recruited from across the borough with a diverse age range which may include families. They will meet regularly at the Museum (day and time to be decided) and experience a variety of exciting opportunities to work with museum collections, as well as a chance to become involved in the exhibition planning and installation. Your proposal should clearly outline how you might contribute to the *New Faces New Focus* project.

Fees per artist:

£2,500: to include: (could be increased to £3,500 including £1,000 R&D)

- 10 x artist led 2 hour community engagement sessions (including prep and reflection time)
- supporting the mentee to develop and deliver a further 10 x 2 hour community engagement sessions
- creation of a collaborative exhibition piece (this could be produced within the community engagement sessions, or developed alongside / after)
- 3x research / exhibition sessions (pre and post community engagement)

Up to £600 travel

Up to £650 materials

Selection Process:

A two-stage process will be used to assess submissions for this project.

Stage One: Assessment of written submission

Please send:

- A written proposal, max 1 x A4 page, detailing your approach to the project
- A recent CV
- 6-8 images of your work (video/audio clips also accepted) and/or samples of written research
- An outline budget

Selection Criteria: Criteria	Max Score	Weighting	Max Weighted Score
Quality of previous work and demonstrated capacity to deliver the proposal	5	x6	30
Quality, innovation and relevance of the proposal to the brief	5	x6	30
Potential benefit of the proposed engagement activity for project participants	5	X6	30
Costs: Provide an outline budget	5	x2	10
Total		100	

Stage Two:

Shortlisted artists will be invited to Armagh County Museum to give a short presentation to the selection panel about their proposal.

Stage 2 presentations will take place w/b 29th September 2025

Should you have any queries, please contact: sarah.weir@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

Submissions are to be received on or before **17th September 2025** and returned by email to: **Sarah Weir, Museum Services Manager**

E: sarah.weir@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

Art Fund_



JULIA RAUSING
— TRUST —