

## ***Connecting communities and Arts in Parliament***

### **Brief and specification**

**Parliament/The Parliamentary Archives seeks two practitioners/artists working in photography, film or new/digital media to undertake a residency each resulting in the production of original work which will be suitable for display on Parliament's website and/or other sites.**

**The project offers a unique opportunity to work with Parliament's historic Archives, and with professional archivists and community groups based in Norwich or Cardiff.**

**The residencies will build on an existing outreach project *People and Parliament: Connecting with Communities* and set it within the context of the *Arts in Parliament* programme - an innovative and unique project which brings art, music, dance and poetry into the iconic setting of the Houses of Parliament in the Olympic year.**

**The residencies will provide the opportunity to explore selected subject areas with the purpose of producing an engaging standalone digital resource which can be shown on Parliament's website and/or social media platforms.**

### **1 Background**

- 1.1 This brief and specification relates to commissions for two artists to produce new digital visual interpretative work which will link an existing parliamentary outreach project - *People and Parliament: Connecting with Communities* with Parliament's *Arts in Parliament* programme and form a contribution to that programme. The work is being commissioned by the Parliamentary Archives with the support of the office of the Curator of Works of Art at the Houses of Parliament. The Parliamentary Archives holds the records, which date from 1497, of both Houses of Parliament and makes them available for research, informal learning and leisure [www.parliament.uk/archives](http://www.parliament.uk/archives). The Curator's Office is responsible for the management of Parliament's extensive collections of works of art [www.parliament.uk/art](http://www.parliament.uk/art).
- 1.2 *People and Parliament: Connecting with Communities* is an outreach project which was launched by the Parliamentary Archives in 2009. Supported by Parliamentary Outreach the project supports Parliament's public engagement activities and is designed to engage people with the Parliamentary Archives and the history and work of Parliament. It has achieved this by partnering with five regional archive services and by linking archival material held by those services with parliamentary records held at Westminster. During each regional partnership community groups of adults and children have explored how Parliament has affected their communities, and how those communities have influenced Parliament, through subject areas such as taxation, railways, elections, civic improvement and trade. The results of these activities are being made available on the parliamentary website: [www.parliament.uk/communities](http://www.parliament.uk/communities).
- 1.3 The Arts in Parliament Programme is a unique festival of dance, music, and other cultural activities which will be staged in Westminster Hall between July and September 2012. Whilst parts of the programme include projects which have been developed by other institutions as contributions to the Cultural Olympiad, it also features elements which have originated in Parliament itself, including outputs of Parliament's outreach and engagement activities. More information is available at: [www.parliament.uk/artsinparliament](http://www.parliament.uk/artsinparliament).

- 1.4 For the purpose of this project two of the regional archive partners (Norfolk Record Office and Glamorgan Archives) have been selected to each work with the Parliamentary Archives and an artist. The intention is for the artists to work with the same adult community groups which featured in the original partnerships with some new recruitment as necessary in order to provide groups of about twelve individuals each. The subjects originally explored by the groups will form the basis for the commissions.

## **2 Key Objectives**

- 2.1 To produce two digital artistic reflections of the outreach work that the *People and Parliament: Connecting with Communities* project produced (one based around the Norwich partnership and the other based around the Cardiff partnership) and to set it within the context of the *Arts in Parliament* programme by using a different and exciting means of interpretation and access medium.
- 2.2 To demonstrate the role the Arts can play in the interpretation of the work of Parliament.

## **3 Project Partners**

- 3.1 The project partners are:

Norfolk Record Office  
The Archive Centre  
Martineau Lane  
Norwich  
NR1 2DQ  
[www.archives.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.archives.norfolk.gov.uk)

Glamorgan Archives  
Clos Parc Morgannwg  
Leckwith  
CARDIFF  
CF11 8AW  
[www.glamarchives.gov.uk](http://www.glamarchives.gov.uk)

- 3.2 **To facilitate the development of the 'work' each practitioner will undertake a residency in one of these archives (one practitioner will be based in Norwich, the other in Cardiff) as well as spending some time at the Parliamentary Archives.**

## **4 The Requirement**

- 4.1 This is a fascinating and unique opportunity for two artists to work and creatively engage with archival material held by the Parliamentary Archives and two regional archive services, and to work with enthusiastic regional community groups, using Parliament's connections with people and communities as the creative stimulus. The commissions have been inspired by Parliament's response to the Cultural Olympiad and will be an important strand of work within Parliament's wider cultural programme for 2012.
- 4.2 The artists selected for this project will use their art form to produce engaging, innovative artistic responses which through photography, film or new/digital media:

- Explore the subjects which have been researched by each group and in particular Parliament's relationship in the past with people and communities.
- Are inspired, draw on and feature or reflect the archival material previously examined by the groups.
- Are inspired by connections between each group, their locality, the subject matter and parliament.
- Involve the groups in the production process.
- Feature or are inspired by the responses of the groups to the subject and the archival material.

4.3 It is intended that the commissions will demonstrate the role the arts can play in the interpretation of the life and work of Parliament by contemporary artists.

4.4 By working with the artists we hope the groups will be able engage with a new means of interpreting the history of their communities and their responses to that history.

4.5 We want our audiences to discover, by means of these commissions, how engaging with Parliament's archives and history allows us to discover more about its relevance to our lives today.

4.6 The resulting work should:

- provide an interpretation of, and a response to, the groups exploration of their subject in a way which is likely to engage new and wide ranging audiences.
- Demonstrate the interactions between people, Parliament and communities as evidenced by the subject areas.
- feature in some way archival material eg photographs, maps and plans, Acts of Parliament.
- feature the group participants.
- have a clear relationship to the communities project and fit into the context of the material already produced by the project.
- Be suitable for mounting on the parliamentary website and /or social media websites. In particular the resulting work should meet the requirements of Parliament's Web and Intranet Service which in respect of Parliament's website currently has the facility to manage rich media types including high resolution jpeg images, Flash video, Flash audio, Silverlight Player, YouTube video, SWF files and Flickr images. The Service also has a Parliamentary presence on Social Media channels including Twitter, Facebook, Flickr and YouTube and the facility to embed YouTube film and Flickr sets on pages within the Parliamentary website. Practitioners are encouraged to propose social media sites which might facilitate these projects. Practitioners' submissions should contain as much information as possible about this element of their proposal.
- Meet our requirements for digital preservation. Practitioners' submissions should include as much information as possible about the file formats they would intend to

create, and the successful applicants will be required to liaise with the Parliamentary Archives digital preservation team to enable an understanding of what the output will be, in terms of formats and volumes and delivery channel.

- Be responsive, relevant and non-party political in content.

4.7 We expect the artists to:

- Be capable of producing high quality, innovative and relevant art to a tight timescale.
- Have an ability to sensitively interpret people's thoughts and feelings and translate this into high quality creative work.
- Be professional, working in the broad fields of digital media/photography/film/audio arts and must have experience of working in public and private working environment.
- Have experience of working with adult groups.
- Contribute to any dissemination, evaluation, publications, events and press material associated with the residency, including our website - by giving us permission to use the work in progress and visual documentation of work in progress.
- Have experience of working in a project management environment.
- Have experience of working with heritage institutions such as museums and archives.
- We expect the artist to demonstrate general knowledge of the work and history of Parliament and its regional and community context as well as its relevance to the present day.

## **5 Process**

5.1 The successful artist will need to:

- Discuss their concept and approach with Parliamentary staff and staff from the regional archives and reach general agreement in respect of their approach.
- Research and scope the previously identified archival material at the Parliamentary Archives and the regional archives with the support of archivists.
- Interact with the community groups in workshops at the Parliamentary Archives and the Regional Archives using identified archival material. Meeting space will be provided at these locations for these activities. The dates and times of these activities will be agreed in advance with the Parliamentary Archives and the regional partners.
- Select archival content for use in the commission in collaboration with the archivists and community groups.
- Liaise with the Parliamentary Web and Intranet Service and the Digital Preservation Manager at the Parliamentary Archives.

## **6 Resources**

- 6.1 The Parliamentary Archives and the regional archives will liaise with the community groups, provide meeting rooms for the interactive workshops and provide access to the archival material.
- 6.2 The Parliamentary Archives will fund the travel costs of the visits made by the groups to the Parliamentary Archives.
- 6.3 Light refreshments for the community groups and the artists will be provided by the Parliamentary Archives and the regional archives.
- 6.4 The Parliamentary Archives will arrange for the results of the commissions to be mounted on the Parliamentary website and/or selected social media, and for links to be made to the websites of the regional partners.

## **7 Fees and expenses**

- 7.1 We expect the successful artists to manage a budget of £8,000 each. This will cover their fees, expenses and all associated costs to the artists of the commission. The artists will provide at their own expense all equipment and materials required for the undertaking and completion of the commission.

## **8 The Commissions**

### 8.1 Commission 1

Subject area: The Land Tax Act of 1821

Partner: Norfolk Record Office

Community Group: 'The History Detectives'

During the summer of 2009 a group of adults drawn from Norwich and surrounding towns investigated the Land Tax Act of 1821 which is the longest Act of Parliament held by the Parliamentary Archives (approx 340 metres). The group focused on certain individuals named in the Act who were charged with acting as commissioners with responsibility for the collection of the tax. Using sources held at the Record Office in Norwich and the Parliamentary Archives the "detectives" were able to discover more about the lives and careers of these individuals and how they related to the work of Parliament. The resulting case study is at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/transformingsociety/private-lives/taxation/case-study/>

### 8.2 Commission 2

Subject area: The development of Cardiff docks in the nineteenth century

Partners: Glamorgan Archives

Community Group: Grangetown Local History Society

During the summer of 2011 members of the Grangetown Local History Society in Cardiff investigated the development of the docks in Cardiff using resources held by the Parliamentary Archives and Glamorgan Archives. By referring to Acts of Parliament which instigated the building of a succession of docks and by using maps and plans and other materials they were able to trace the dramatic changes in the in the area around Cardiff Bay as private interests and economic forces altered the local landscape and communities.

A short film describing the project is at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ctjVO6NkogI>

## **9 Ownership and copyright**

- 9.1 Copyright of the project outcome will be assigned to the House of Lords. The future use and retention by the artists of material produced as a result of the commission will be by agreement with the Parliamentary Archives and the regional partners.

## **10 Management**

- 10.1 The artist will be contracted and managed by the Parliamentary Archives which will liaise with the regional archives in respect of the provision of facilities for the meetings necessary to facilitate the commissions and the attendance of the community groups. The office of the Curator of Works of Art will provide support and advice.

- 10.2 Each commission will be overseen by a project board made up of the following:

### **Chair**

David Prior, Parliamentary Archives

### **Board members**

Laura Gardner, Parliamentary Archives

Emma Gormley, Curator's Office, Houses of Parliament

Regional archive representative

Parliamentary web and intranet service representative

Alison Heatherington, Parliamentary Archives

Aileen Walker, Department of Information Services, House of Commons

The main point of contact in respect of the commissions will be David Prior.

- 10.3 The artist may be expected to make presentations to various stakeholders and committees during the period of the commission. This requirement is not intended to be onerous, but will be part of the commission terms, and full support will be given.

## **11 Application and Selection Process**

- 11.1 Please send your application to [curator@parliament.uk](mailto:curator@parliament.uk) by 21 June 2012.

The application should include no more than five A4 pages. The proposal should include:

- A statement expressing your interest in commission 1 or commission 2.

- Your initial thoughts on your approach to the project including a description of your areas of artistic interest and how you propose to apply these to the commission.
- Ideas about how you might develop the commission, and how you might collaborate and interact with Parliamentary staff, regional archivists and the community group.
- Details of the technical specification of the resulting work, with reference to 4.6 above.
- An outline of your understanding of how Parliament has affected people and communities in the past and how this might be reflected in the commission, together with an indication of how this might be made relevant to today.
- Please also include the name and address of two referees, at least one of whom should be a professional contact.
- Your availability for the commission periods.
- An estimated breakdown of the budget.
- A draft timetable, showing the periods you propose to allocate to research and interaction with the group.
- A full CV including examples of relevant past experience, previous residencies, project based work and commissions. Please either provide links to websites where evidence of your work is available or supply copies of the work separately on DVD to Emma Gormley, Curator's Office, Norman Shaw South, London SW1A 0PW.

Please direct any queries concerning your application to:

David Prior [priordl@parliament.uk](mailto:priordl@parliament.uk) (Parliamentary Archives) or Emma Gormley (Curator's office) [gormleye@parliament.uk](mailto:gormleye@parliament.uk)

11.2 A shortlist of artists will be selected on the basis of application for interview. The Interview panel will assess interviewees using the following criteria:

- Quality of proposal and understanding of and adherence to the brief.
- Quality and relevance of previous work and experience.
- Evidence of ability to complete the project in a professional manner.
- Ability to work within the required timetable for the residence and production of the completed work.

## 12 Timetable

Requirement issued	31 May 2012
Deadline for submission of proposal	21 June 2012
Interviews	w/c 9 July 2012
Successful applicants notified	w/c 16 July 2012
Submissions of progress	to be agreed individually on appointment
Submission of work	30 November 2012