

Wac Arts 'We Are Open' Commissions - Artist Call Out



About Wac Arts:

Wac Arts is a charity that provides inclusive performing arts activities and training for young people between the ages of 5 and 30. We have been working to promote diversity in the arts, removing barriers to access for over 40 years.

The 'We Are Open' Commissions are to support creative ideas that celebrate our lives and serve to connect communities through arts and creativity.

We have all been navigating through immense change and multiple challenges - some unique, and some universal - and showing remarkable resilience. Even now in yet another lockdown, in the midst of grief and monotony, there is room for hope and for change – for reimagining ourselves, our connection to others and how this can have impact beyond our four walls.

Here at Wac Arts, as a response to the Coronavirus pandemic, we have launched a three-year programme titled **Recover, Rebuild, Reimagine**: an innovative, participatory arts programme designed in response to the changing ways of living, learning and engaging.

This is a creative and healing response to Covid-19, which aims to offer an opportunity for artists, companies, and organisations to reflect on the individual and/or collective experiences of the past year. It encourages us to find creative freedom in this physical and often social confinement, celebrate life, lift our spirits and remind us of the significant power of the arts as a tool for healing - now and beyond the pandemic.

Throughout the next year **Recover** aims to engage large numbers of people through digital, participatory and live projects and performances, ultimately working towards an outdoor large-scale commission of a co-created piece of dance theatre within the 2021/22 academic year.

Recover will focus on the wellbeing and resilience of our communities, reengaging our young people, their families, Wac Arts staff and partners, while reaching new audiences.

All commissions must speak to Wac Arts' statement of artistic principle:

'The positive artistic voice of contemporary Britain: Pioneering. Equal. Open'

Spring/Summer 2021 : 'We Are Open' Commissions Brief

We want to offer a number of commissions to support the development of creative ideas that respond to either one or both of the following themes:

1. **'Recover'** – reflecting on our collective experience of the pandemic, or the specific experiences of certain communities and how we move towards the idea of recovery.
2. **'2m sq. Square Dance'** – reflecting on the experience of social distancing during the pandemic and how this may impact upon when we ultimately come together. *NB. Ideas proposed relative to this theme will be considered for a potential extension, ultimately working towards an outdoor large-scale commission / co-created piece of dance theatre c. spring 2022.*

We are open to digital projects, participation/engagement activities and or public performances, or a combination of them all. We are keen for the artform to be **dance led** (all dance styles welcome) and are open to collaborations with multidisciplinary artforms (circus / spoken word / poetry / film / sound / puppetry / visual arts).

We are open and keen to work with UK based artists/companies who:

- Can interrogate one (or both) of the above themes through innovative creative responses
- Can comfort, connect, heal, entertain and inspire
- Demonstrate high artistic quality
- Interested in new ways of working and exploring new creative processes
- Can create work that is accessible and inclusive - both in output and in practice
- Be able to create work that reflects the diversity of North London and its communities
- Can create artistic work that can reflect /serve the local communities, particularly if participatory or performance ideas/digital projects can have a wider engagement remit
- Put participation and collaboration at the heart of their practice and delivery
- Demonstrate willingness to engage those already involved in Wac Arts or connected to Wac Arts (whatever feels appropriate to your work and the communities you want to engage)
- Are at any stage of their career, but can make a strong case that this commission will make a big impact on their artistic development and their own wellbeing
- Experienced in creating work with/for/by young people with additional or complex needs (desirable – not essential to all proposals)
- Are able to produce work in line with current government guidelines as they evolve and shift over the next year

What we will offer and support with:

We will offer commissioning money from £500 up to £2000.

Producing:

We will support the creation and delivery of the project with planning sessions and check-ins with our Creative Producers and Programme Team.

Space:

If you require rehearsal space and access to young people to RnD content and workshop ideas, we can offer a number of hours on Sundays in our dance studio (Wac Arts building) working with our resident Company of up to 25 young people aged 16 plus. If this is of interest, a proposed timetable will be required, and we shall endeavour to allocate some studio time/The Company to you.

Marketing:

We can help network you into and access Wac Arts communities, our young people or local communities and make introductions as appropriate to your work.

We will promote the commissions by distributing any call outs, classes/talks/workshops as part of the delivery. We will market the end artistic commission and support in promoting this to the intended and wider Wac Arts audiences.

Timeline & Key Dates:

16 February 2021 – Call Out

16 March 2021 - Deadline

30/31 March 2021 - Meet and Greet

April 2021 - Appoint & Develop

May – July 2021 - Delivery

Selection Process:

The selection panel will have a wide range of Wac Arts friends, including residents from the building, key personnel, Youth Voice and Young Producers. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to a 'meet and greet' with key personnel from the Programme Team before any commissions are awarded.

How to Apply:

Please send CV, including links to your work (websites/video links/images) plus a proposal outlining the following (no more 2 pages):

- About you, your approach to your work and why this is of interest to you
- Your idea - specifically:
- Where it will take place
- How it will be delivered - If applicable include a Plan A and Plan B that take in account COVID restrictions
- An outline budget

We will also accept filmed proposals. This should address the above and be no longer than 5mins.

Get in Touch:

If you want to talk through your idea or have any questions, we welcome the conversation. Our Creative Producers will get in touch with you.

Email tia.hassan@wacarts.co.uk