

Recover, Rebuild, Reimagine – artist commissions Invitation to tender



Organisation overview

Thank you for your interest in working with Wac Arts (www.wacarts.co.uk). We're a charity that provides an uplifting multi-disciplinary arts programme to empower young people from underrepresented groups aged 5 to 30, to transform their lives and improve their mental and physical health and well-being.

Wac Arts is a charity driven by the needs of young people and the community for over 40 years: we empower them with the life skills that only the arts can offer. Committed to those facing barriers to opportunity, we harness the power of the arts to unlock the extraordinary potential of our young people.

Wac Arts offers inclusive programmes that celebrate diversity. Our classes are significantly subsidised to ensure accessibility. Providing weekend, evening and holiday programmes as well as a vibrant inclusive programme, our charity transforms young lives through engagement with the arts.

Based in Belsize Park's Old Town Hall in the London borough of Camden, Wac Arts is a creative hub for young people, artists and other arts and cultural organisations. We share our home with myriad arts and cultural sector partners to increase collaboration, creativity and opportunity for our young people and the community.

Background and context

In 2020, we launched a new 3-year participatory arts programme, '*Recover, Rebuild, Reimagine*', in response to the changing ways of living, learning and engaging following the Coronavirus pandemic. This supports our longer-term objectives to 1) engage and grow the number of young people accessing our provision, and 2) evolve our nascent performance and artist development strand.

Year One: *Recover*

In Year One (2020/21), *Recover* focused on the well-being and mental resilience of our community, reengaging our young people, their families, Wac Arts staff and partners while reaching new communities.

We are Open, Wac Arts' Festival of Commissions

In February, we announced the 'We Are Open' Commissions – a creative and healing response to COVID-19 offering artists, companies, and organisations an opportunity to reflect on the individual and/or collective experiences of the Coronavirus pandemic.

The Festival of Commissions (July 2021) was conceived to share the creative output from an intensive period of research and development, presenting work across of hybrid programme – in-person and online.

Festival of Commissions programme included work with six commissioned artists:

- [Blink Dance Theatre, *Drive Thru*](#): a multi-sensory production performed external to a minibus, for minibus passengers (audience) with mild to moderate, profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD). *Drive Thru* launched the Festival of Commissions.
- [Hakim Saber, *Dance Skate Jam*](#): a new experience fusing popular dance forms on roller skates. Partners: Hawley Primary School and Castlehaven Community Association participated in workshops across the lead-up to the event, which included flashmob performances outside Castlehaven's premises.
- [Lukas McFarlane: *Isolation*](#): a dance film in response to the pandemic, launched on 25 July for Wac Arts Festival of Commissions. Activity included a [pre-recorded digital class](#), teaching a section of choreography to people at home. Lukas was one of two guest Artistic Directors for the new Wac Arts Dance Company.
- [Kloé Dean, *Myself UK Dance*](#): delivered an artist development project to explore the effect of the pandemic and a post-pandemic future, supporting two emerging artists to choreograph and share work within Wac Arts Festival of Commissions. Kloé was the second of two guest Artistic Directors for the Wac Arts Dance Company, supporting the company to choreograph work to be shared within the Festival of Commissions.
- [Rhys Hollis, *Protest*](#): a research and development project exploring protest as a bonding, healing and discovery tool for communities and individuals. Partner: Mosaic LGBT+ Young Persons' Trust. A scratch performance of the work was shared within Wac Arts Festival of Commissions.
- [Grace Gibson and Tom Chapman, *Social DisDance*](#): an audio participatory dance piece, inviting participants to download an audio track and congregate on Hampstead Heath to playfully reconnect. Partners: Castlehaven Community Centre (older people's group) and Royal Society for Blind Children.

THREE NEW ARTIST COMMISSIONS (from September 2021)

Year Two: *Rebuild*

Building on the success of our 2021 Festival of Commissions, we are inviting artist(s)/companies to tender for three new opportunities to advance our creative exploration from *Recover* into *Rebuild*.

Our vision is to create a short, dance theatre-led outdoor performance in Spring 2022 involving a co-creation and collaborative process with two lead artist(s)/companies, Wac Arts tutors and young people.

Across the year, the commissioned artists will work with the Wac Arts Dance Company and our inclusive programmes, to co-create and choreograph a performance piece.

In addition, Wac Arts' learning and participatory programme ([Junior](#), [Senior](#), [Wac Nites](#), [Inclusion Programmes](#)) will connect thematically to the commissions as, together, we *Rebuild* our lives. Within this, Wac Arts' artists and tutors will partner with commissioned artists to design thematic schemes of work and activities with and for our young people (forming part of the delivery of the final piece).

The performance will include content co-created with our tutors and young people embracing dance, drama and music. We will engage a dramaturg to facilitate this co-creation process.

Through our outreach programme, we will engage five schools to create and learn sections of choreography, to be woven into the performance.

Commission One – up to £5,680:

Dance company specialising in inclusive practice required for artist residency and co-creation of new dance theatre production.

Deliverables:

Artist residency

- Up to 10 x 3-hour artist in residence sessions, within Wac Arts' inclusive programmes for neurodiverse young people, including those with mild to moderate, and profound and multiple learning disabilities, ages 11-18 and 18-30.

NB. Wac Arts workshop leaders and assistant leaders will be in attendance.

Co-creation, rehearsal, and performance

- 3 days co-creation with lead artist/s for Commission 2 (including 1 day co-creation with Wac Arts artists and tutors)
- 3 days creation and rehearsal
- 2 days rehearsal and performance

NB. Deliverables are provisional and may be subject to change during the co-creation process

Commission Two – up to £10,170:

Dance artist/company required as guest Artistic Director(s) for Wac Arts Dance Company for co-creation of new dance theatre production, including delivery of schools' outreach programme.

Deliverables:

Guest Artistic Director(s) for Wac Arts Dance Company

- For up to one academic year, deliver training in dance and choreography at Wac Arts.
NB: two terms confirmed (total 18 x 3-hour sessions). Proposals should include costs for 18 weeks' delivery

Co-creation, rehearsal, and performance

- 3 days co-creation with lead artist(s) for Commission 1 (including 1 day of co-creation with Wac Arts' artists and tutors)
- 3 days creation and rehearsal
- 2 days rehearsal and performance

Schools outreach

- Delivery of dance sessions, teaching sections of choreography at 5 schools, each receiving 10 hours over a ten-week period

NB. Deliverables are provisional and may be subject to change during the co-creation process

Commission 3 – up to £2,500:

Dramaturg required to facilitate co-creation process with lead artists and Wac Arts tutors.

Deliverables:

- 8 days minimum facilitating the co-creation and rehearsal process
- Composing, curating, and rehearsing content for performance

Our objectives are to:

- Establish Wac Arts' reputation as a producer of innovative new work
- Enhance and broaden the creative learning and participation experience for Wac Arts' participants
- Support the development of Wac Arts artists and staff delivering within inclusive provision
- Engage our artists, tutors, and staff, to work collaboratively cross-programme
- Seek ways to integrate and strengthen inclusive practice across Wac Arts' learning and participation programme
- Support artists to develop their practice, co-creating with communities, and working collaboratively with Wac Arts
- Understand our beneficiaries' creative, learning, and developmental needs and how we can ensure that our charity maximises its impact through our practices and behaviours
- Reach young people yet to be engage with Wac Arts and promote pathways into our well-established learning and participation programme
- Reach new audiences

Tender documents - what should be included in your proposal

Artist(s)/companies applying for either commission(s) should submit the following information **by no later than 10.00 BST on Monday 27 September:**

- A budget detailing costs for the deliverables listed for any commission for which you wish to apply.
- CV, or link to online portfolio / website, demonstrating previous work and track record.
- If applying for Commission 3, CV, or link to online portfolio to evidence track record in producing and/or directing mass participatory outdoor arts performances.
- A one-page summary or five-minute video covering:
 - What it means to *Recover* and *Rebuild*, emotionally and creatively, and how you would approach this in a co-creation process with
 - Other artists
 - Wac Arts participants

Additionally, please complete our online [equality and diversity form](#).

We will evaluate proposals using the following criteria (in no particular order)

- Vision and ambition articulated in response to theme (*Recover and Rebuild*)
- The cultural fit between the artist/company and Wac Arts
- Relevance to our young people, families, and community
- Cost effectiveness

Contact

Please do get in touch with us if you have any questions or would like further clarification before submitting your proposal.

Dawn Rotheram (Director of Development) and Lydia Entwistle (Engagement Officer) via admin@wacarts.co.uk

Timeline

10 October 2021	Wac Arts Dance Company taster and audition day (term delivery dates and times available via www.wacarts.co.uk)
Nov/Dec	Co-creation day(s) TBC
November	Wac Arts' artists and tutors begin co-creation with young people on programme
Jan to March 2022	Lead artist(s) for Commission 2 to deliver schools outreach
Feb	Planning/refining with dramaturg
Easter	Rehearsal
Post-Easter	Performance

Submission requirements

Tender documents should be sent by email with "Tender for Artist Commissions" in the subject line.

Please email tender submissions **by 10am on Monday 27 September** to: admin@wacarts.co.uk

All tender documents submitted to us will remain confidential.

Please declare any interests or connections you (or any sub-contractor you intend to use to provide the training) have with Wac Arts employees or trustees.

Enquiries and feedback

Any queries about this tender can be submitted for the attention of (FAO) Dawn Rotheram, Director of Development and Lydia Entwistle, Engagement Officer to admin@wacarts.co.uk

Following the process, feedback to bidders will be available on request