

Creative Producer Brief

Call for Proposals

Salford City Council, working with Salford Culture and Place Partnership, is seeking a Creative Producer/Organisation to lead visioning, development and production of a citywide programme celebrating culture and creativity in the City of Salford.

The creative producer/organisation will develop and produce an ambitious creative programme that will authentically engage, empower and co-create with the city's vibrant creative and cultural ecology, dynamic voluntary and community organisations and breadth of communities.

Stage One: Submission of Expression of Interest and Eligibility

Deadline: 12:00 on 27th January 2025

Shortlisted organisations will proceed to Stage Two.

For information, the competitive selection and delivery stages are outlined below:

- **Stage Two: Research and Development**
Grants of £3,500 will be made available to up to eight eligible organisations to develop a detailed programme proposal over five weeks.
- **Stage Three: Proposal Presentations to Panel and Selection**
One proposal from Stage Three will be awarded the Creative Producer contract and proceed through stages four, five and six as outlined in this document.

Duration of Creative Producer Contract: April 2025 – December 2026

Contract value: £100k (£20k to support Development Phase, £80k to support Production Phase)



Context

2026 is an important year for the Salford. The city will be celebrating 100 years since, on the 21st April 1926, the County Borough of Salford was awarded city status. The award followed a campaign supported by William Joynson-Hicks, Home Secretary and Member of Parliament for a

neighbouring constituency in Manchester who, at the time, faced opposition from civil servants who dismissed the borough as “merely a scratch collection of 240,000 people cut off from Manchester by the river”.

Much has changed and today, Salford is a constantly changing city with an exciting future as a thriving cultural, economic and residential location. In the last decade Salford has been on a remarkable journey to emerge as a modern global city, attracting record public and private investment and becoming an engine for growth in Greater Manchester.

The city is a hot bed of creative production boasting leading artist-led studios, workshops and creation spaces as well as museums, art galleries, performance spaces and a buzzing year-round calendar of events. From urban buzz to greenbelt tranquillity, the city is building on the mixture of its waterfront, urban and countryside environments and rich cultural heritage to create places where people want to live, work, invest and visit.

To align with its 100-year birthday, the city and our partners have ambitions to bid to the GMCA in 2025 ¹ to be Town of Culture in 2026 and is actively working towards bidding to become a UNESCO Creative City in 2028 (see legacy section). It is our hope that these three over-arching objectives could be significantly strengthened through delivery of a strategic, co-ordinated and ambitious creative programme – **Salford 2026**.

About us

Salford City Council are commissioning this creative programme. It is important to us that in its design, development and delivery it strongly aligns with our citywide shared strategy for culture, creativity and place. The strategy, entitled '[Suprema Lex](#)', sets out a vision that:

“By 2030, Salford will have earned a global reputation as an open city where creativity and social innovation thrive and feed one another, a city that shares its cultural riches with the world”.

The strategy has been developed in partnership with The Salford Culture and Place Partnership (a partnership of specialist organisations that use their expertise of the creative and cultural sector to co-create, promote, champion and advise on all things culture and creativity in Salford).

Objectives of Salford 2026

The planned programme will be expected to strongly deliver against the objectives of the citywide shared strategy for culture:

¹ **Greater Manchester Town of Culture**. Salford intends to bid to the GMCA for the opportunity to be ‘GM Town of Culture’ in 2026, providing a ‘wrap around’ identity for the year of cultural programming. If successful, this would also unlock additional resource for delivery. *Expected timeline: Bid (May 2025), Notification (Jun 2025), Announcement (March 2026)*. More info: [Greater Manchester Town of Culture - Greater Manchester Combined Authority](#)

- **People at the Centre** - Maximise opportunities for all Salfordians to make, create and benefit from cultural experiences, careers or business
- **City of Makers and Creators** - Work with and promote Salford's creative and cultural industries sector as a national paradigm for creative production, making and selling
- **Placemaking** - Preserve and develop our cultural heritage and build resilience for Salford's cultural organisations and infrastructure.
- **Animating the City** - Foster, showcase and build access to exciting, excellent and enriching arts and cultural provision across the whole city
- **Destination Salford** - Establish Salford as a nationally and internationally acknowledged centre benefitting from rich culture, creativity and heritage

Possible Themes

We imagine that the programme might start from three key exploration strands that would be developed and honed with involvement across the towns, communities, organisations and voluntary groups in the city:

- **Exploring the Past** (100 years) – Learning, documenting, interpreting and sharing the heritage, histories and told/untold stories of Salford.
- **Celebrating the Present** (Town of Culture) – Empowering the diverse and dynamic culture and communities at the heart of our towns and the city of Salford.
- **Imagining the Future** (UNESCO Creative City) – Harness the energy, creativity and imagination of the city to develop a collective creative vision and mission for the future.

Programme

In the delivery of the programme, we would expect the provider to maximise breadth, reach, impact and legacy by exploring opportunities, for example through a combination of:

- **Alignment** – Working with known events, cultural organisations, voluntary groups and other partners across the city to align and enhance existing activities through adopted themes, identity, marketing or programming.
- **Programming** – Attracting new activities, events and creative experiences that will engage, excite and reflect our diverse audiences
- **Commissioning and/or Producing** – Investing in new creative productions, events, tours, or activity to meet identified curatorial requirements.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Modern day Salford is a vibrant mix of dispersed towns, civic and green spaces and diverse communities, each with their own sense of identity, heritage and a story to tell.

It's vital to us that in the development of the programme, care and attention is taken to relevance, representation, inclusion, equality, equity and diversity so that the programme reflects and engages the breadth of Salford communities.

The successful provider will need to be respectful of the needs and concerns of all those from Salford's diverse communities. We would like culture to reflect all in our city and as such, providers

will be expected to carefully consider how they will support engagement by those facing inequality of access, for example:

- People and communities experiencing racial inequalities
- d/Deaf and Disabled people
- Those living with long-term limiting illness or conditions
- Those experiencing poor mental health and wellbeing
- Younger people
- Older people
- Local residents that are experiencing poverty
- Members of the LGBTQIA+ community

Marketing and promotion of the programme will be supported by Salford City Council.

Application Process and Overview

Grants - Application Stages (early 2025)

Stage 1 – Expression of Interest and Eligibility

Call for initial expressions of interest to produce Salford 2026 using this document as guidance. Deadline for submission to grants@salfordcvs.co.uk is 12:00 noon, **Monday 27th January 2025**. Initial proposals will then be assessed and shortlisted applicants contacted.

Stage 2 – Research & Development for shortlisted applicants

Successful applicants will be awarded £3,500 in February 2025, to pay for Research and Development (R&D) time to develop a full proposal for a Salford 2026 Programme over five weeks. Applicants will then be invited to present their plans to panel in March 2025.

Stage 3 – Award of Creative Producer commission

Successful applicant(s) will meet with the Salford Culture and Place Partnership Team to discuss full plans and receive funding of up to £20,000 to develop the Salford 2026 Programme. On satisfactory completion of the development phase, a further £80,000 will be available for delivery.

Contract - Development and Delivery Period (early 2025 – end of 2026)

Stage 4 – Development Phase*

Development phase of full Salford 2026 programme planning including fundraising and collaboration with SCCP Team from April – December 2025.

Stage 5 – Production Phase*

Production and programme delivery of Salford 2026 year of celebration from January – December 2026.

Stage 6 – Legacy Phase*

Further community engagement, long lasting impact of the programme.

**See Contract Specification for more detail.*

Submitting a Stage One Expression of Interest and Eligibility

Those providers interested in delivering this creative programme should submit an initial proposal to grants@salfordcvs.co.uk.

Fill in the Application Form to include:

- **Name and address** of lead provider/organisation. Primary and (if applicable) secondary **contact details**.
- Whether you are applying as an **individual organisation or partnership** (if partnership, please give details).
- **Bank account details** plus a bank statement to verify your details. This allows us to pay successful applicants swiftly.

Then provide a written outline for the research and development stage (maximum 2 pages) which includes:

- **Description of the lead provider/organisation and partners** including main areas of creative activity, role, track record and experience relevant to the brief:
 - Experience of working in Salford/GM
 - Track record of producing large and complex, multi-stakeholder creative programmes
 - Experience of socially engaged practice, community engagement and/or co-production
- **Up to two case studies of recent 'creative projects/commissions'** that demonstrate your experience/approach. Please provide client contact details for references.

Requirements

- Submission of a completed Application Form (download the form separately from <https://www.salfordcvs.co.uk/live-grants>) and send with your 2-page (max) written outline to grants@salfordcvs.co.uk on or by **12:00 noon on Monday 27th January 2025**.
- Preference will be given at stage one to lead partners based in Salford/Greater Manchester with a significant track record of working in Salford.
- Providers based outside of Salford/Greater Manchester are eligible to contribute to the delivery of any stage when supporting a Salford or Greater Manchester-based lead partner.
- Able to provide/evidence latest accounts or Trustee Annual Reports (TARS).

Stage One Selection criteria

- Relevant track record in delivery of high-quality and complex multi-stakeholder creative programmes, socially engaged practise and co-creation projects
- Minimum 3 years' experience of this or similar work
- Relevant skills, knowledge and experience of proposed staff/team

Contract Specification

The Creative Producer contract is divided into three parts.

Stage Four - Development Phase – April 2025 to December 2025.

Fee: Up to £20,000

- **Research and Consultation** to develop outline themes and creative concepts drawing from the uniqueness of Salford, its heritage, vibrant creative and cultural ecology, dynamic voluntary and community organisations and breadth of communities. Note: We have already commissioned a range of consultation programmes and networks which will enable the provider to benefit from creative and community expertise and insight.
- **Identify and broker key partnerships** to support ambitious co-commissioning, creative collaborations, community co-creation and alignment of existing plans to maximise scale, resources and funding.
- **Design a detailed and costed programme plan** setting out key creative concepts, artists, venues, engagement/participation opportunities and budgets.
- **Lead creative development of the GM Town of Culture bid**, detailing anticipated programme, delivery and partnerships
- **Support for funding applications** (for example Arts Council England National Lottery Project Grant) to extend the breadth and scale of the potential programme. External fundraising support will be secured to help identify, develop and submit applications

Stage Five - Production Phase - January 2026 to December 2026.

Fee: Up to £80,000. In the event that Salford secures Town of Culture some additional funding may be available to support programme delivery.

We would expect the total resource package to be significantly higher following fundraising, sponsorship and partnership work undertaken in 2025. We have set a target of £80,000 from match fundraising, sponsorship and other resources.

- **Curation, commissioning and contracting** of delivery partners, artists and creative team
- **Production and delivery** of programme of events including opportunities for volunteers etc.
- **Monitoring and evaluation** capturing key audience data and evidence to articulate the impact of the year and capture knowledge and opportunities to build ongoing legacy

Stage Six - Legacy Phase – January 2027 – March 2027.

At the heart of our thinking is how we can build a long-lasting legacy beyond the programme. This may be developed through new and interesting creative partnerships, community engagement and co-production models, regional, national and international profile, collaborative governance structures etc.

Two key opportunities to leverage the maximum impact and ongoing legacy, would be to maximise alignment with the below complementary opportunities through the delivery of the programme:

- **UNESCO Creative City of Media Arts.** We are working towards bidding to become a UNESCO Creative City of Media Arts. It would be particularly beneficial if the programme strengthened knowledge, engagement, track record, profile or partnerships in this area.
- **UNICEF Child Friendly.** The City is hoping to become a UNICEF Child Friendly City. We would welcome the opportunity to connect the Creative Producer/Organisation with colleagues working on this programme.

If you have any questions relating to the brief, process and criteria, please contact culture@salford.gov.uk

If you would like support with your application please contact the Grants Team at Salford CVS on grants@salfordcvs.co.uk or 0161 787 7795.