



Open Call:

# Company / Artist Tender for Interactive Heritage Trail at Theatr Clwyd

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## Introduction

Theatr Clwyd is Wales's leading producing theatre and our work travels the UK. At Theatr Clwyd the voice of the community is embedded in our artistic and organisational life and our work has reached 700,000 people over the last two years through 23 critically acclaimed productions and our ground-breaking arts, health and wellbeing work.

One of only four theatres in the UK to build sets, make costumes and create props in house, we are a resurgent powerhouse; pushing theatrical boundaries to create stunning shows. In 2021 Theatr Clwyd was recognised as the best regional theatre in the UK as part of The Stage Awards.

After 49 years, our Grade II-listed building is undergoing major capital redevelopment work, and our new building is due to open in June 2025.

After extensive community consultation and working with acclaimed architects Haworth Tompkins, our transformative redevelopment is delivering much-improved visitor experience and enhanced income-generating facilities within a greener, more efficient, and welcoming building. Our 45-year-old theatre has been redeveloped to create a greener, more efficient and sustainable building for the 21st century.

Our Grade II-listed building is a leading example of a post-war civic arts complex in the UK. CADW cites it as an important example of "the intention to provide universal access to the arts as an essential part of a modern egalitarian state". The Grade II listing is for use and communal value and highlights some specific heritage aspects within the building.

The National Lottery Heritage Fund have awarded funding to Theatr Clwyd to support the completion of our capital redevelopment. As part of this funding, Theatr Clwyd will create an interactive trail, highlighting the rich heritage of the building.

# Interactive Heritage Trail – Company / Artist Commission – The Brief

Funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Theatr Clwyd, this project focuses on making an accessible, Grade II listed architecturally and socially important major community resource. The project will deliver a brand-new, permanent piece of inclusive public engagement work that connects to cultural heritage in a new and exciting way.

We have engaged Lead Researcher Jude Rogers and a Research Assistant to research and collect stories from the public, relating to three interior heritage features of the building. The research practitioners will also collect information from the Regional Archives relating to the building's heritage as a complete entity. The interior heritage features, which will form part of the trail are:

- The original TV broadcast studios for ITV Wales and West, previously known as Harlech Television (HTV) - former employees still engage with the theatre;
- Original working paintframe; one of only a handful left in the UK (and one of the largest) still in active commission;
- Rare handmade acoustic tiles in the main auditorium;

The resultant research and script/story will be presented to an artist or organisation who will use the stories, characters, and historical evidence to create an interactive tool to be used on the trail. This can be digital or analogue and may for example consist of audio segments, firmly rooted in the Theatr Clwyd building and using the heritage aspects as physical touchpoints which link the narrative. We are interested to hear how the chosen artist or organisation might expect visitors to access the self-guided trail (this may be as an audio guide and using some form of digital map, for example) and how they can be transported to Theatr Clwyd's past as they travel through the building.

The artist or organisation, experienced in delivering engaging interactive installations, will be commissioned to deliver the creative idea and technical infrastructure of the installation, which will exist in perpetuity in the building. They should consider the accessibility of the trail from the outset of its creation, including considering how the work will be accessed by those who are D/deaf, disabled, and neurodivergent. We hope this project will allow all users to explore the heritage of our building in a playful and fun way.



*A visualisation of the front of the redeveloped building*

The public art strategy envisages Theatr Clwyd as a platform for existing and new ideas, considering public art in the widest sense; a space for distinctive site specific artworks, which reflect the theatre's character, heritage, community and architecture. The proposed programme includes residencies, events, and permanent artworks, as well as digital media, sculpture, architecture and public space design.

*We will create and commission public art which is inspirational and inclusive. The public art strategy for the new building seeks to enhance Theatr Clwyd's reputation as a beacon of artistic excellence and a home for their community.*

## Themes

We have identified three key themes for public art in the new building:

### Sustainability

The redevelopment is being driven by a desire to create a building that reduces energy use and minimises the impact of the materials used. Further consideration is also being given to wellbeing, adaptability and resilience.

### Community

At Theatr Clwyd the voice of the community is embedded in the artistic and organisational life of the building. Theatr Clwyd have learnt that to deliver meaningful work you have to build trust with a specific, local community and then grow collectively. The artist should look at ways of engaging the community in their process.



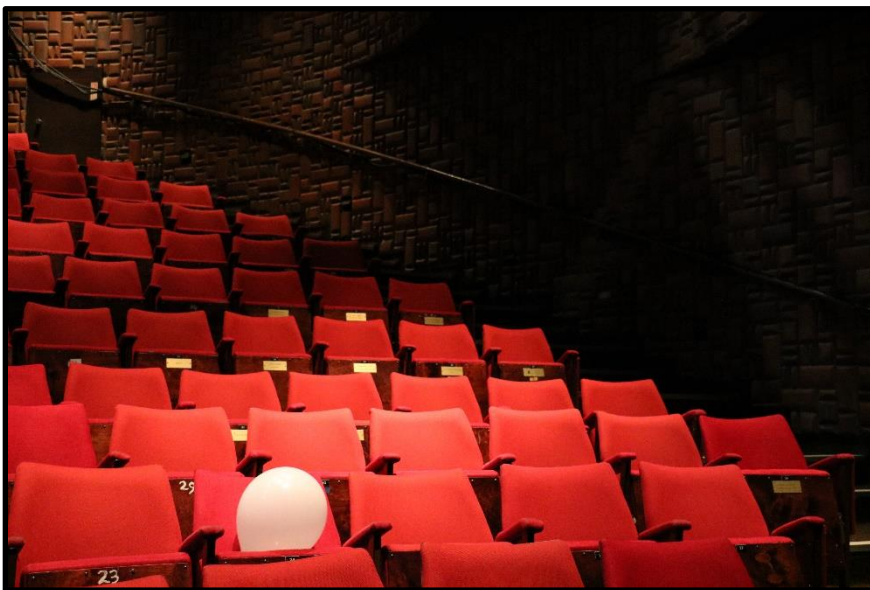
## Playfulness/Joy

There is an aspiration for the building to be joyful and fun to interact with both adults and children. Theatr Clwyd believes that people being able to engage with the building through play will encourage social interaction and social learning.

We hope this commission will encourage our visitors to participate, to feel, to think, to adventure, to use their imagination and to build their own experience of visiting the new building.



*Photographs of the paint frame*



*Photograph of the acoustic tiles in the main auditorium*

# Selection Process

This is a two-stage selection process.

We would particularly like to encourage applications from individuals or teams with members who are bilingual or who speak Welsh as a first language. We welcome proposals featuring a creative approach to language and storytelling, utilising Welsh, English, BSL and other minority languages in Wales. The final project will need to be delivered in both Welsh and English. If you or your company do not work in the Welsh language, then Theatr Clwyd can support with the bilingual delivery of the work.

Please note, we are also open to collaborations from artists and organisations who may bring different skills and who wish to put in a joint application.

We will host an online Q&A session on **Friday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2025, 11.30 - 12:30**, where you will be able to ask our Chief Executive, Finance, Operations & People Director, and Producer any questions you might have about the project. If you wish to attend the Q&A session, please email [sam.longville@theatrclwyd.com](mailto:sam.longville@theatrclwyd.com) and we will send you a link to join.

## Stage One

The first stage will shortlist artists and/or organisations through an expression of interest assessment, looking at previous work and initial responses to the brief.

To apply, please submit the following to [sam.longville@theatrclwyd.com](mailto:sam.longville@theatrclwyd.com) by **Friday 21<sup>st</sup> February at 17:00** with the subject heading **THEATR CLWYD NLHF TRAIL COMMISSION**:

- An expression of interest explaining why you would like to be considered for this project on no more than two sides of A4. The expression of interest can also be submitted as a video (no longer than 2 minutes).
- Up to date examples of recent work submitted as a pdf.
- An up to date CV - maximum of 2 pages – or website.
- The name and email address details of 2 referees, at least one of whom can comment from first-hand experience of your professional practice.
- Your own contact details including phone number and email address.
- Total file size should not exceed 6mb.

Candidates will then be shortlisted based on their expression of interest by the Lead Researcher Jude Rogers, and Theatr Clwyd's Capital Campaign Director and the project's Producer.

## Stage Two

These shortlisted artists/organisations will be invited to prepare a concept idea for presentation to a selection panel consisting of our Chief Executive, Finance, Operations & People Director, Lead Researcher and Producer. Each shortlisted candidate will be paid a fee of £400 to develop their concept.

**Interested artists and organisations will need to be available on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2025 to present their Stage Two ideas to the selection panel.**

Travel expenses will be paid for attendance. If you have any specific requirements to enable you to attend the presentation, please inform us after you have received notification of being shortlisted.

The panel will assess interviewees using the following criteria:

- Evidence of understanding of the commission brief
- Quality and relevance of previous artistic work, including ability to provide a creative response to a brief
- Evidence of good communication skills
- Artist / organisation's proof of right to work in the UK

## Timescale

The building is due to open in Spring 2025, an indicative timescale is shown below which will be coordinated with the architect and contractors work onsite.

Online Q&A Session:	Friday, 7th February 2025, 11:30 – 12:30 - <i>Please email <a href="mailto:sam.longville@theatrclwyd.com">sam.longville@theatrclwyd.com</a> if you wish to attend.</i>
Deadline for Expressions of Interest	Friday 21 <sup>st</sup> February, 17:00
Shortlisting	w/c 24 <sup>th</sup> February
Shortlisted Artists/Teams notified	Tuesday 4 <sup>th</sup> March
Shortlisted Artists Develop Concept Designs	Start of March
Stage Two Panel Interviews	Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> March, 13:00-17:00
Appointment of Artist	April (exact date TBC)
Test runs take place	July (exact dates TBC)
Project sign off and completion	Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup> August

## Budget

The total budget for this commission (to include artist / organisation fee and any community engagement, workshops, programming, coding, fabrication, delivery and installation) is £12,500. This does not include travel and accommodation if required and is inclusive of VAT.

Please send any queries and applications to [sam.longville@theatrclwyd.com](mailto:sam.longville@theatrclwyd.com) with the subject heading **THEATR CLWYD NLHF TRAIL COMMISSION.**