



## Young Leaders & Wetherby Young Offender Institution – Artist / Creative Practitioner

### Commission

This is a very exciting time to work with our creative and collaborative team. We have our exciting 'Inspiration for a Fairer Future' project to deliver which will transform our museums and we are also an Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation. Here at Ripon Museum Trust (RMT) we are passionate about delivering our vision to 'use our heritage assets to inspire people to seek a fairer society'. The Workhouse, Courthouse and Prison & Police Museums, all within walking distance of each other, create a rich tapestry which tells the complex story of poverty, crime and justice. Woven from the lives of the real people who were judged, housed and punished within these institutions, these museums offer visitors a unique insight into Victorian society.

### Our Mission is:

- To use the unique trio of the Workhouse, Prison & Police and Courthouse Museums, our collections and the stories they tell to help people explore big issues such as fairness, equality, justice and welfare.
- Through excellent engagement, programming and outreach together we will inspire people to become more compassionate and active citizens, shaping society for the better.
- To work for greater engagement with our heritage which will enrich lives and improve wellbeing.
- To work as one team, with volunteering being integral to our organisation.
- To make a positive impact on the cultural and economic capital of Ripon and its region.

### Project Scope

Ripon Museums Trust is pleased to offer this opportunity for an artist or creative practitioner to deliver eight participatory workshops with two groups of young people.

The artist will deliver:

- Four workshops with the Ripon Museums Trust Young Producers Group, working across our museum sites.
- One workshop with young people at Wetherby Young Offender Institution, delivered four times at the institution.

The project will support participants to explore connections between historical stories and their own lives, experiences and perspectives. The project will focus on themes of fairness, judgement, identity and representation, encouraging questioning, discussion and personal reflection rather than fixed conclusions.



A particular focus of the project will be the Trust's collection of historical mugshots and stories relating to crime and punishment. These photographs provide a starting point for exploring how people have been represented, labelled, judged and remembered.

Participants will play a central role throughout the process. The artist will act as a facilitator, supporting young people to develop and realise their own ideas and creative responses. A strong sense of voice, ownership and pride in the final outcomes is essential.

The project will draw on the Trust's collections of policing, crime and punishment, particularly the historical mugshots. Other objects and materials from the collection, including deaccessioned police uniforms, may also be available for creative use.

We welcome a wide range of creative responses, including textiles, crafts, performance, film, podcasts, visual art, writing, photography or installation.

The artist will be expected to develop an approach that responds to the interests and ideas of each group. We do not wish to prescribe the artistic process or final outcome.

The two groups will work in different settings and may bring different perspectives to the collections.

Selected outcomes will be displayed within the museum.

The Trust is particularly interested in artists with experience of collaborative, community-based practice, especially those who have worked with adolescents and teenagers and/or participants within the criminal justice system.

### **Project Outputs**

The artist will:

- Design and deliver an engaging participatory creative project across two groups of young people.
- Deliver four workshops with the Young Leaders Group.
- Deliver four workshops with young people at Wetherby Young Offender Institution.
- Support participants to interpret and respond to the Trust's historical mugshots and wider collections in their own way.
- Use the collections as a starting point for exploring themes including fairness, judgement, identity and representation.
- Enable young people to express their ideas and perspectives, ensuring a strong sense of voice and ownership.
- Support participants to develop and realise their own creative responses.
- Support the development of a final creative outcome reflecting participants' perspectives.



- Document the creative process, including participants' reflections and responses, subject to appropriate consent and permissions.
- Develop participants' skills in artistic practice, storytelling and heritage interpretation.
- Produce creative outcomes suitable for display within the museum.
- Take part in reflection and evaluation with the Ripon Museums Trust team.

### **Project Outcomes**

Ripon Museums Trust aims for participants to have a positive, meaningful and empowering experience. We hope participants will:

- Feel welcomed, respected and safe.
- Feel their voices, ideas and experiences are heard and valued.
- Have opportunities to question and interpret historical material from their own perspectives.
- See their intentions and ideas reflected in the final work.
- Feel proud to have their work displayed in the museum.
- Gain confidence in expressing themselves creatively.
- Develop new skills in artistic practice, storytelling and heritage interpretation.
- Recognise their contribution to helping visitors engage with the exhibition's themes.
- Feel a sense of ownership over the creative process and final outcomes.
- Experience their perspectives being valued as part of the museum's interpretation of its collections.

For participants at Wetherby Young Offender Institution, the project should provide a positive opportunity for creative engagement, collaboration and self-expression. Participants should not be required to disclose personal or sensitive experiences.

The project should create a safe, collaborative and inclusive space for creative expression, particularly for those with lived experience of the criminal justice system and potentially complex life experiences.

### **Fee**

#### **£3,000 total commission fee**

The total available budget for this commission is **£3,000**.

This is intended to cover the artist's planning, preparation, workshop delivery, development of the final creative outcome, documentation and evaluation, together with reasonable project costs including materials, travel and accommodation where required.



Artists should propose an approach that is ambitious but achievable within the available budget.

The Trust recognises that delivery within Wetherby Young Offender Institution may involve additional practical requirements, including security, induction and restrictions around materials and equipment. These will be discussed and agreed with the successful artist and the relevant YOI staff.

### **How to submit your Proposal**

Please submit a two page or 2.5 minute audio or video proposal by 20/10/2026. Shortlisted applicants will be invited for interview during the week commencing the 26/10/2026. The artist will then be appointed and will commence work in November 2026. Applications should be sent via email or WeTransfer to Curator Laura Allan at [laura.allan@riponmuseums.co.uk](mailto:laura.allan@riponmuseums.co.uk).

The two page or 2.5 minute proposal must include the following:

- something about who you are and about your practice
- an outline of proposed workshops and the intended final outcome
- an approach to engaging young people, ensuring meaningful participation, voice, and ownership
- if you wish, you can also email us with images of your work, a link to your portfolio, website or social media, and your CV

Ripon Museums Trust is committed to ensuring that the recruitment process for this project is inclusive, equitable, and accessible to all artists. We welcome applications from artists of all backgrounds, including those with lived experience of disability, mental health challenges, or who are underrepresented in the arts.

To support this, the recruitment process will:

- be accessible in format, allowing submissions via email, WeTransfer, or audio/video proposals
- offer reasonable adjustments or support for applicants who may need assistance with the application or interview process
- be transparent and fair, with selection based on artistic merit, experience in participatory and trauma-informed practice, and ability to deliver the project objectives
- encourage applications from artists with experience in collaborative, community-based practice, particularly those who have worked with participants with diverse needs and/or within the criminal justice system

If you require any further details or have any queries, please contact Caroline Payette on [caroline.payette@riponmuseums.co.uk](mailto:caroline.payette@riponmuseums.co.uk). We look forward to receiving your application.