



Powered by Dumfries & Galloway Arts Festival

LOVE MICRO-COMMISSIONS

Callout launch: 5th June 2020
Closing date: Sunday 5th July 2020 - midnight

Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival (D&G Arts Festival) is the only region-wide performing arts organisation in Dumfries and Galloway (D&G). Our 10-day festival in May is the largest rural performing arts festival in Scotland bringing performance to people in some of the most remote areas of the UK. Since 2016 we have developed and delivered our year-round programme, Arts Live and we are a promoter and performing arts network that supports venues, artists and promoters from across the region, who in turn enable us to curate a diverse year round performing arts programme.

D&G Arts Festival will support 11 performing artists through 11 micro-commissions for sharing with audiences July 2020 – December 2020. Performing artists could be working in dance, theatre, spoken word, music, live art, comedy, interdisciplinary performance.

MICRO-COMMISSIONS

There are 11 micro-commissions available. Six of the commissions are open to performing artists at any career stage, based anywhere in Scotland. Five of these micro-commissions will be offered to young people between 18-25 who are based in Dumfries and Galloway as part of our Stage-iT programme, with a callout to those ages 15-18 coming soon. We particularly welcome proposals from artists facing additional barriers in their work.

Young artists' commissions x 5

- 1 x £1000
- 2 x £500
- 2 x £300

Open commissions x 6

- 1 x £1000
- 2 x £500
- 3 x £300

For presentation July – December 2020
(Stage iT funded by the Hollywood Trust)

For presentation July – October 2020

We are inviting proposals that respond to the theme of **LOVE**. What we pay attention to grows. We want to pay attention to artists, the resource D&G and its festival have to offer as a place to make and perform your work and we want to pay attention to **LOVE** as...

- ...a catalyst for change (how would you **love** things to be?)
- ...an emotion (what do you **love**?)
- ...a feeling of hope (just add **love**)
- ...a desire to care (handle with **love**)

This invitation is our first attempt to work with artists post-Covid-19 and we want to begin a journey of learning what artists and our audiences and communities might need in this new world through this process.

HOW TO APPLY

- Closing date:** Sunday 5th July 2020 – midnight
- Contact email:** Kim Simpson, Programmer (Freelance) – programme@dgartsfestival.org.uk
- Application:** CV (no more than two pages)
Links to/examples of work (no more than 5)
Proposal (no more than two pages or 10mins of video/sound recording) outlining the idea and how it meets the criteria for this micro-commission
- Alternative formats:** We welcome proposals in formats/languages such as BSL, Braille, sound or video recording or transcribed by phone.

We have a budget for removing any barriers you might face in submitting a proposal. Please contact Kim Simpson on programme@dgartsfestival.org.uk if you would like to discuss this or submit your application by phone.

Find out more

Kim Simpson, who recently joined the team at D&G Arts Festival as Programmer, will be running two Zoom coffee shops while the invitation is open for artists considering a proposal.

14:00 – 15:00 on Tuesday 16th June 2020

11:00 – 12:00 on Tuesday 23rd June 2020

Please email programme@dgartsfestival.org.uk up to 24 hours before the session for the link, including any access requirements you may have.

The rest of this document contains further information that will help you decide if our micro-commission is right for you and to help you with your proposal. It includes why we are doing micro-commissions, how they will work, what we are looking for, who we want to hear from, the selection process and some details about the region of Dumfries and Galloway.

FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE MICRO-COMMISSION

As the commissions are micro we want them to be used to pay artists a fee to...

- ...move forward with a current or stalled project that you **love**
- ...revisit an old project that you **love**
- ...explore or expand a section or theme in a project that you **love**

...and share it with an audience. We would like to hear from performing artists who can achieve something to share with audiences within the fees and time-frames these micro-commissions allow.

We suggest the following as way to think about whether this micro-commission is for you:

- Apply for £300 if you expect to spend 1-3 days on the project
- Apply for £500 if you expect to spend 3-5 days on the project
- Apply for £1000 if you expect to spend more than a week on the project

There is no expectation from us for you to use this for anything other than paying yourself, though you can use the micro-commission for materials if you choose to. This commission amount is also not meant to cover access costs; we have an additional budget for that.

What are we looking for?

As this is a pilot micro-commission, we are interested in the artistic idea and the exploration of different platforms rather than getting the highest levels of production quality or fully finished shows for streaming.

When we select the proposals we will be using these criteria:

1. How strongly the proposal responds to the themes of **love**
2. The relevance of the artistic idea to this time and/or place
3. How likely the proposal is to be achievable with the time, money, support and platforms available for presenting it
4. The impact the micro-commission will have on you as an artist now
5. The quality of impact on D&G communities (specifically not the number of people reached)

We want to include proposals that naturally build in a way to get feedback from D&G audiences (e.g. projects that can happen on social media or that involve direct contact or participation within social distancing guidance) though we see it as our role to think through how this might work, so this is not essential criteria.

We will also be selecting proposals that ensure a mix of performance work that will appeal to different audiences in our diverse region (more information at the bottom of this document).

Why are we doing micro-commissions?

At D&G Arts Festival, like everyone else in the performing arts, we are attempting to understand what artists and our audiences and communities need and what is possible in the new world of Covid-19.

While we have commissioned artists before, it has usually been fewer artists and for live projects to present within our festival or within one of the network of venues we work with year-round. As we grapple

with the changes that our world and the performing arts sector are navigating, we want to evolve some of our ways of working and explore new platforms and channels as a way to make and present work. We want to work with artists to try out some project ideas online, outdoors, digitally, remotely and to understand the distinctions between these.

We want to share your work with our audiences between July and October 2020 so we can begin to understand what they think. The young people we work with through Stage-iT commissions will have a little longer, till December 2020, to share the work with audiences.

You can read more about D&G Arts Festival, our audiences and the region at the bottom of this call out.

How will the micro-commissions work?

As well as some money, we can help you make the proposal happen with:

- Support from the programmer to develop the idea
- Support from the programmer and communications manager to identify and present your work on the most relevant platform, which may include:
 - post / letter, telegram, postcard
 - outside / garden, street, countryside
 - online / blog, video, podcast, email
 - phone / text, call, video
 - something else...?
- Access to the team's time and skills to deliver the idea in D&G
- A chat with our programmer at the end of the project including any feedback gathered from audiences and communities in D&G
- Where relevant and in line with government guidance on Covid-19 we can help access a physical space somewhere in D&G for socially distanced thinking/making/rehearsal time

Who do we want to hear from?

For the open micro-commissions, we want to hear from performing artists at any career stage, based in Scotland and in particular those living and working in D&G. For the Stage-iT micro-commissions, we are specifically seeking five artists based in D&G aged 18-25.

As a rural festival working in an urban-centric performance sector we recognise the urgent need to centre the work of marginalised artists as an essential act for achieving equality in society. We will be actively seeking proposals from artists who are experiencing exclusion or facing additional barriers in their careers or practice on the basis of:

- Race
- Disability (inclusive of neurodiversity and mental health)
- Socio-Economic background
- Geography
- Age
- Nationality
- Ethnicity
- Religion and belief
- Parental and caring responsibilities
- Sexual orientation
- Gender and gender expression (inclusive of gender reassignment/affirmation)

Selection process

The proposals will be entered into our admin system and then sent to a panel that will comprise D&G Arts Festival staff, members of the Youth Performance Group and artists with a connection to D&G. They will read the proposals before attending a panel meeting to discuss and select the six artists we will work with.

More about D&G, D&G Arts Festival and our audiences

D&G as a region includes four districts that comprise rural areas, villages, towns, coastlines, rivers and forests. The local economy is primarily based on agriculture and forestry. Agriculture and woodland accounts for 95% of the area! It is rich in diversity of place and people, history, natural beauty and is the home of Wigtown Book Festival, The Stove Network and Spring Fling amongst others. For those who don't know D&G, to give you a sense of its size, you could fit Glasgow into it almost 37 times.

Dumfries & Galloway Arts Festival supports people in some of Scotland's most remote rural areas to experience all that performing arts has to offer. Despite the enormous challenges associated with rural arts programmes, we reach over 4,000 people across every postcode of Dumfries and Galloway each year. We do this by working with artists, venues and partners across the entire region to bring our performance work to communities. We think this micro-commission will lead to us reaching more people in our region.

We want the people of Dumfries and Galloway to feel loved. Here's a bit about what we know about the people of D&G and our audiences.

- We have an established older audience and a growing audience of young people in the region. With an older population than the Scottish average, young people are under-served in many ways, and yet their engagement and retention in the area is critical for its future.
- Over 20% of our population lives in remote rural areas, and a third in settlements with less than 500 people. There is little travel infrastructure in the region further alienating certain groups and communities and we see this as a chance to start connecting with them in different ways.
- There is a wide gap between the most socio-economically enriched and deprived in this region and we want to value all of the people that live here and connect and build understanding between people who live different lives.
- Almost a quarter of our community is disabled or lives with a life-limiting illness. It is especially important, in a rural and disconnected context that we take time to work in ways that connect with people who make up such a large part of our community, offering a choice to experience the performing arts.

While we don't have data on all marginalised communities in our region, we see ourselves as part of a Scottish, UK and global society which is diverse. We see our responsibility to work with artists who bring a range of lived experiences to their work in order to reach those audiences in our region that currently feel our work is not for them and tell a range of stories from different perspectives about the world that we all live in.