

Aberdeen Art Gallery micro-commissions

Open call: Creative brief 2021



Introduction

Aberdeen Art Gallery (Aberdeen City Council) is Winner of the Art Fund **Museum of the Year** for 2020/21. We want to share our award with Aberdeen's creative community.

We are now inviting creative practitioners (artists, makers, musicians, dancers, designers, writers and performers) to submit proposals for a series of micro-commissions. We use the term **micro-commissions** to set the scene for all involved – the finished works might be small scale, and the time spent developing and producing does not have to be long and drawn out – this is a chance for you to respond quickly to this opportunity.

Summary

We are asking for proposals that say something about your lived experience in Aberdeen, addressing themes that might include social justice, climate change, identity, diversity, well-being, migration and diversity.

This is the second of two rounds.

The open call starts from 4 April 2021 with a deadline for submission 23:59 Sunday 9 May 2021

We expect to award 2 commissions @ **£3000** and 4 commissions @ **£850**

The first rounds awardees are Lise Bos, Helen Love Partridge and Noon Abdelrazig, Anne Marquiss, Jo Gilbert, Ursula Mathers, Nicola Seal. More information can be found below.

Depending on the artwork produced the resulting work may be displayed at Aberdeen Art Gallery or shared in a public performance, online or in the public realm beyond the Gallery. There are opportunities for single-artist displays, group shows, interventions and side-by-side comparisons within existing collection galleries, as well as music, spoken word and dance performances.

The micro-commissions created will become part of Aberdeen Archives, Gallery and Museums collections. See below: **Ownership of work** on Page 3.

About the wider programme

This programme aims to deliver four key objectives:

- Support for the local creative sector
- Enhance the permanent collections and improve the representation of locally based practitioners
- Promote and enhance audience engagement with the local creative community
- Develop staff and collaborative relationships with the local creative sector

By creating a series of small-scale commission opportunities (micro-commissions) we aim to provide more opportunities for the local creative sector, increase the diversity of artists represented in the collection, re-interpret existing collections through new comparative works, give staff the opportunity to learn more about the local creative communities: their practice, challenges and barriers, and ultimately enhance our audience experience through new works that better reflect their own experiences.

Who can apply?

Applicants must:

- Be aged 18 years or over
- Be living in the AB postcode area
- Be an artist/creative individual who shows talent and/or potential in any art form (this includes, but is not limited to, visual, dance, drama, performance, written word, sound or music artists)
- Evidence a desire to develop and an ability to reflect upon their practice and personal development
- Be able to create, develop and/or present a new piece of artistic work to the programme timetable
- Demonstrate an ability to profile their work and communicate their practice to an audience

What the commissions cannot support

- Applications for artwork already started or planned to start before the notification dates. Awards cannot be funded retrospectively.
- Artworks which support or promote religious or political activity. If your work engages in these themes please contact the Aberdeen Archives, Gallery and Museums team to discuss prior to application.
- Artists currently undertaking full time undergraduate study in an arts or creative practice subject area. Artists must have completed their studies by the application deadline to be eligible to apply for a commission.

Please ensure that you meet these criteria and explain clearly if your contact address does not reference an AB postcode.

Creative brief

Your lived experience in Aberdeen – linking to or expanding on the existing collection.

We would like the micro-commission programme to stimulate engagement and dialogue about the collections of art and history. Submissions should respond to the collection, creating new works that relate to existing collection objects and themes or that highlight gaps within the current collection. We are particularly interested in proposals that address social justice, climate change, identity, diversity, migration and representation.

Successful applicants will have access to the museum's collections, specialised curatorial expertise, as well as opportunities to share their work with audiences through the public programme of talks, events, performances, workshops and displays in our venue(s) and online. This may be possible in person, with appropriate risk assessments and PPE under current Covid guidance or may need to rely on virtual access using live streaming platforms and file sharing. We expect the final pieces to enter the collection and would be keen to discuss how this might work with non-traditional artforms.

How to apply

Submission process

Submissions should be short and succinct – responses to the main application questions can be in written, audio or video format but should address all of the points in the supplied downloadable application form available as a Word doc and a PDF at <https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/AAGM/opportunities>.

If written:

- Completed applications can be emailed to: AAGMcurators@aberdeencity.gov.uk.
- Please use “micro-commission [YOUR SURNAME]” as the subject/title of your email.
- For submissions over 5MB, please submit via www.wetransfer.com to the above email address

If recorded:

- Please ensure that you complete the required (BLUE) sections of the written application form.
- Your recorded application should answer all the questions indicated in the written form. Please ensure you respond to these prompts clearly, and structure the content in relation to them.
- Please ensure your recording is **no more than six minutes long**, which is the equivalent to the word limit for written applications.
- A recorded application should not be overly produced. This is not an opportunity to demonstrate your skills in production or to showcase your work, but to clearly communicate your planned professional development activity in an accessible format.
- Examples of work included in an audio/filmed application will not be considered as supporting material. Please follow the guidance at the bottom of the application form.
- Your recorded submission should be saved in MP3 or MP4 format and sent to AAGMcurators@aberdeencity.gov.uk via www.wetransfer.com.
- Please ensure your message title includes “micro-commission [YOUR SURNAME]” and the name of your file includes [YOUR SURNAME]

Support

If you would like further support in completing your submission form, there will be virtual information and Q&A session at 18:00 on Tue 13 April supported by Lesley-Anne Rose (programme facilitator) and will be recorded if you can't make it. More information will be shared via the Archives, Gallery & Museums social media channels. No question is silly – if you don't know the answer, we can guarantee someone else doesn't know it either.

You can also contact Lesley-Anne Rose (programme facilitator) directly by email to la@lesleyannerose.co.uk or by phone at 0771 934 3805 or **Helen Fothergill (head of collections)** hfothergill@aberdeencity.gov.uk or 07920 275 612.

Selection process

A panel comprising Council officers and Council-appointed panel members, including representatives of the creative sector, will assess and select awardees. All decisions made by the panel will be final and not subject to appeal. Shortlisting will take place over two weeks, and applicants will be informed of panel decisions during the **week commencing 24 May 2021**.

Fees

The creative practitioners selected to complete their proposed micro-commissions will receive an upfront fee of:

Award level 1 – first payment 90% of £3000 fee = **£2700**

Award level 2 – first payment 90% of £850 fee = **£765**

10% of the full fee will be payable on delivery/performance of the final work at one of our agreed venues.

Award level 1 – final payment 10% of £3000 fee = **£300**

Award level 2 – final payment 10% of £850 fee = **£85**

Any payment will be subject to the terms and conditions of the contract which as standard is 30 days after receipt of an invoice, and will require the commissioned creative practitioner to be registered on the council’s payment system. Please note that final contractual arrangements will be determined through discussion with the commissioned creative practitioner. These discussions will include resolution of long-term usage and display, licencing (if applicable) and copyright agreements.

Remember to value your own time as part of the creative process, budgets are not solely to cover materials!

Ownership of Work

The copyright and all intellectual property rights in the works remain vested in the creative practitioner. Ownership of the finished work will remain with Aberdeen Art Gallery once the project has been completed. The intention of Aberdeen City Council is to accession the final work into Aberdeen Archives, Gallery and Museums’ permanent collection. We expect to discuss how best to do this with digital or performance-based works. We would also take the opportunity to discuss further acquisition of preparatory material. NOTE: If the contract is not fulfilled Aberdeen City Council reserve the right to reclaim all monies paid to the awardee.

Programme calendar

LEGEND	Apply	Selection process	Hand over final work
	Deadline for proposals	Agreements & set up payment	Display (TBD)
	Q&A session	Development & creation	

Apr 2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

May 2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Jun 2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Jul 2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Aug 2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Sep 2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

Round 1 Awardees

Lise Bos, analogue photographer (£3,000)

Lise Bos is a non-binary analogue photographer. They explain: "The darkroom has often been a refuge for me. I've really missed it during lockdown. I have ADHD, so it's been extra challenging working from home, and I found I feel much better when I'm working on a creative project, so I'm incredibly excited to start working on my micro-commission. Having moved to Aberdeen from the Netherlands, I want to explore what makes people feel connected to the city, what makes them feel at home here."

Helen Partridge Love, ceramics and glass maker and Noon Abdelrazig, spoken word artist (£3,000)

Noon Abdelrazig is a Sudanese Aberdonian spoken word artist and medic, and **Helen Partridge Love** is a ceramics and glass artist also from Aberdeen. They plan to collaborate to draw attention through poetry and art to the slavery connections in the history of Aberdeen. Helen said: "I applied for the micro-commission because the criteria fitted perfectly to the idea, not the other way around. I am often deterred from applying for funding because briefs can seem like shackles to creativity but this one just floated into place."

Anne Marquiss, jeweller (£850)

Anne Marquiss is a practising jeweller based in Aberdeen and says: "This special commission gives me a different opportunity to make a piece that will be shown rather than worn. It will be an honour to respond to individual women artists in the Gallery collection, conveying my interpretation of their thinking. I hope my piece will offer a signpost for tomorrow's women, creating timely symbols of where we've come from and where we can definitely go."

Jo Gilbert, spoken word artist and writer (£850)

Jo Gilbert is a spoken word artist and writer from Aberdeen. Jo has won multiple poetry slams and has had work commissioned for festivals, art installations and film. Jo says: "As soon as I saw the micro-commissions, I wanted to apply straightaway. The Art Gallery has been many things to lots of people over the years, a cultural diary staple, a shelter, a refuge and a gateway to the arts amongst others. How exciting to be given an opportunity to not only write about the collection, but also have your work become a part of its story."

Ursula Mathers, painter (£850)

Ursula Mathers is an Italian-American artist who has exhibited her work internationally. She will explore the role of women in the Aberdeen Art Gallery collection, and says: "I am interested in responding to the theme of female identity by exploring women's work and the female experience in representational paintings and contemporary interpretations of the feminine aesthetic. I identify with this project as a woman, a mother and an artist, but also as an activist for women's rights. It's a critical time to re-evaluate women's roles in society especially within the context of the Covid pandemic, when women are juggling so many responsibilities."

Nicola Seal, potter (£850)

Nicola Seal is a scientist turned potter. Nicola explains: "I have a long-term illness, which has limited my abilities to socialise in real life and, like others, Covid has exacerbated this. The internet is absolute lifeline for keeping in touch with friends and family, and for making new connections. I want to express my gratitude for these social connections through sculpture. I've been a huge fan of Aberdeen Art gallery since the renovations, we really have a world class Art Gallery in our city. When I heard about the micro-commissions, I knew I wanted to apply. The chance to get my work in the Gallery was just so exciting."