

ARTISIT COMMISSIONS 1.0

FEBRUARY 28, 2017

# PLANET B – A GREEN FESTIVAL INITIATIVE ARTIST COMMISSIONS

2017 COMMISSION CALL OUT



PETERBOROUGH ENVIRONMENT CITY TRUST

THE GREEN HOUSE | 4-6 COWGATE | PETERBOROUGH | PE1 1NA

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## PLANET B – A GREEN FESTIVAL INITIATIVE ARTIST COMMISSIONS

### 1. OVERVIEW OF PROJECT

The charity Peterborough Environment City Trust (PECT) exists to protect and enhance the environment, in Peterborough and beyond. PECT has organised a Green Festival in the city for 24 years and aims to continue this into the future as a way of engaging the public on important issues. This year the Green Festival approach will be a series of events, debates, a conference and artistic commissions which seek to ‘earth’ some of the key issues covered in this document. It will support contemporary sustainable interventions; and a deep adaptation agenda. Although seemingly strategic and academic in nature the focus and breadth of the programme will allow people to engage at a variety of levels and be activist at heart. The two week programme will take place over a fortnight from 29<sup>th</sup> July to 12<sup>th</sup> August and will include:

- Smugglers Trail – a day long festival event at the Green Backyard – 29<sup>th</sup> July
- Debates programme covering a range of key issues
- Conference bringing local and international speakers together around themes for the fortnight (12<sup>th</sup> August tbc)
- A series of artists commissions taking place around Peterborough
- Film Festival
- Creation of a festival newspaper with interviews, articles and art works as well as the programme
- Themed workshops, activities and film screenings by environmental, cultural and voluntary organisations in the city

A curatorial team has come together to help programme the festival and will help bring the commissions together.

Planet B (as in there is no Planet B) is the name we have given to the artistic element of the Green Festival.

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### PLANET B COMMISSIONS

We would love to hear from artists of all art forms, activists, academics, networks, organisations etc. interested in taking on commissions and joining us on this exploration. We intend to support 6 - 10 commissions of up to £5k each, part funded by the Arts Council. At this stage, we are looking for A4 Expressions of Interests, setting out ideas and how much you anticipate your project will cost.

To ensure the local relevance of the program we are particularly interested in commissioning projects which will explore the environmental challenges of climate change and the de-growth agenda outlined in the attached framework document. Specifically, locally identified research themes of:

- Migrant workers and the economy of Peterborough & post-Brexit identities of Peterborough
- Access to and the future of housing
- Population, immigration and hospitality
- Connection to the natural environment
- Consumption, resources and waste

## SKILLS REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL COMMISSIONS:

1. Track record of socially engaged practice with experience of working in collaboration with communities and audiences
2. Interest in environment and issues around climate change and the Degrowth agenda (see appendix)
3. Experience of providing work which is accessible yet challenging for audiences and participants - potentially with a focus on activism

## FEE

Each artist will receive a fee of up to £5,000. This fee is to cover research and development (inc the research day), travel and expenses, engagement, production and materials. All of the commissions, where appropriate, should include community-engagement, whether through research, collaboration or the sharing of skills through workshop activity.

## HOW IT WILL WORK

Selected commissions will be required to attend an intensive Research and Development day at Metal in Peterborough on 18<sup>th</sup> April.

The day is intended for artists to fully explore the issues around climate change, the de-growth agenda and festival themes whilst also meeting representatives from the other commissioned projects and community partners.

A further group feedback session designed for the commissions to share ideas in more detail is scheduled for 9<sup>th</sup> May 2017.

Following this day, the selected commissions will have two - three months' development time to complete their projects ready for presentation at the festival. The Planet B team will provide support to each project throughout the process, making links to local community groups and offering access to their facilities if required.

A lead person from each of the commissions will work alongside the Planet B team to curate the commissions into a coherent fortnight-long programme. All of the commissions, where appropriate, should include community engagement, whether through research, collaboration or the sharing of skills through workshop activity.

## TIMETABLE AND DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS

If you are interested in this opportunity, please submit

1. Five images of your work
2. CV
3. Supporting statement- outlining your artistic approach, some suggested areas of interest that could link your practice to the themes (no more than 1 side of A4)
4. Anticipated project cost.

Please send this information to Karen Igho, [karen.igho@pect.org.uk](mailto:karen.igho@pect.org.uk) by 17.00 Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2017

## SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

Successful applicants will hear back by 31st March 2017, with applicants being able to attend the following meetings in Peterborough:

- 21<sup>st</sup> April (times tbc) - Research and development day
- 9<sup>th</sup> May - Project sharing
- 29<sup>th</sup> July – 12<sup>th</sup> August – delivery period for commissions (artists – not expected to be in attendance for the full duration of the festival)

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## ABOUT

### PECT

Peterborough Environment City Trust (PECT) is an independent and innovative environmental charity helping to protect and enhance the environment throughout Peterborough and beyond.

With nearly 25 years' experience working within the city, PECT delivers ground-breaking and innovative projects of local, regional and national significance, enabling change for a sustainable future.

Our vision is for Sustainable Places. By this, we mean that: the natural environment is healthy, communities are involved in their area, health and well-being is improved for all, resource use is responsible and doesn't compromise the needs of others, now and into the future. We champion sustainable practices in order to leave a lasting legacy for future generations.

PECT works with communities, schools, businesses, local authorities and voluntary organisations to deliver projects that make a real difference. For further information visit [www.pect.org.uk](http://www.pect.org.uk)

### METAL

Metal was founded by Jude Kelly OBE in 2002 and was created as an artistic laboratory to champion the need for continual investment in artistic investigation and the development of innovative ideas that could shift the thinking in the UK cultural sector. We provide innovative, multi-disciplinary residency space for artists from the UK and overseas in Liverpool, Southend on Sea and Peterborough.

Alongside providing space for artists and thinkers to develop their ideas and further the philosophy of their work, we are interested in how this artistic process and the practice of artists can input into, and potentially influence political and social issues of the day. Through our artistic programme we draw out evidence and ideas for a better understanding of the artist's role in civic life, and ensure that these are shared with a wide and diverse set of partners. These ideas are showcased and disseminated on a regular basis through residencies, exhibitions, events, performance, discussion and publications.

For information on previous projects and our residencies see [www.metalculture.com/artists-area/](http://www.metalculture.com/artists-area/)

### THE GREEN BACKYARD

The Green Backyard is a vibrant community growing project in the heart of Peterborough, which was established in 2009 and is run entirely by volunteers. Green Backyard have transformed a once derelict former allotment site into a beautiful and productive community garden that is open to everyone. They are passionate about sustainability and work to raise awareness of environmental issues by involving the community in informative, practical demonstrations and workshops. Green Backyard work with many different individuals and groups, as well as various schools, businesses and other organisations from across Peterborough and beyond. They became a registered charity in January 2014.

The Green Backyard could not exist without the people of Peterborough working voluntarily together to make our city a more friendly and healthy place to live. They hold a wide variety of events throughout the year; from live music and arts jams to craft fairs and performing arts. Their aim is to not only bring the people and communities of Peterborough together but to help create an innovative and fruitful place for them to thrive.

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## APPENDIX A – PLANET B FRAMEWORK:

Most people want to preserve and nurture the earth as a living system, to treat each other with respect and to share the earth's resources justly and fairly with one another now, and with subsequent generations to come. This kind of fair and respectful global community could also be called a post-growth society: or a degrowth society.

The central idea is that society and the people must be placed on top, and that political and economic institutions must serve them.

### POSITIONING QUESTIONS:

-  What will our neighbourhoods, villages and cities look like in the Post-Brexit future?
-  How do we environmentally tackle issues such as housing; immigration; regional workforce?
-  Can we have vibrant regional economic structures?
-  What can be done to help people connect to the natural environment?
-  What can be done to help people to reduce consumption and the creation of waste?
-  What can we do now to start this process of transition?

### COMMISSIONING CONTEXT:

We want Planet B to be both relevant within the local context of Peterborough, but also to engage with wider contemporary environmental thinking and developments. In response to the latter, Professor Jem Bendell (2016) recently wrote:

1. There has been some progress in past decades, from reducing pollution, to habitat preservation, to waste management.
2. Much valiant effort has been made to reduce carbon emissions over the last twenty years.
3. There have been many steps forward on climate and carbon management, from awareness, to policies, to innovations.
4. Larger and quicker steps must be taken and now can be that there is COP21 and major Chinese engagement on the issues.
5. To support the maintenance and scaling of these efforts is essential. Small steps have been taken on adaptation to climate changes, such as flood defenses and planning laws.
6. Yet these steps on climate mitigation and adaptation are like walking up a landslide. If the landslide had not already begun, then quicker and bigger steps would get us to the top of where we want to be.
7. But the latest climate data, emissions data and data on the spread of carbon-intensive lifestyles tell us that the landslide has already begun.

However, he continued that:

1. The politically permissible scientific consensus is that we need to stay beneath 2 degrees warming of global ambient temperatures to avoid dangerous and uncontrollable levels of climate change, with impacts such as mass starvation, disease, flooding, storm destruction, migration and war
2. If the world does not keep further anthropogenic (human centered) emissions below a total of 1,300 billion tonnes we won't keep average temperatures below that 2 degrees warming.
3. If we are not already on the path to dramatic reductions, we will not keep within this limit.

4. We are not on such a path, with emissions still at around 50 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> a year and the decoupling of growth from emissions minimal.
5. Therefore, we are set for disruptive and uncontrollable levels of climate change, bringing starvation, destruction, migration, disease and war.
6. The implication is that we need to expand our climate work into a deep adaptation agenda, including resilience, relinquishment and restoration while learning why this tragedy is occurring.

It is emotionally difficult at first to take all of this in, but if we are to remain relevant, we will need to open ourselves up to discuss a 'deep adaption agenda' alongside continual preventative efforts to ensure a 'sustainable future' (Chris Erskine 2017).

## A DEEP ADAPTION AGENDA:

Bendell (ibid.) suggests that a deep adaption agenda will involve resilience, relinquishment, and restoration:

- **Resilience** involves people and communities better coping with disruptions. Examples include how river catchments can better cope with rains, or how buildings can better cope with floods.
- **Relinquishment**, involves people and communities letting go of certain assets, behaviors and beliefs where retaining them could make matters worse.
- **Restoration** involves people and communities rediscovering attitudes and approaches to life and organization that the hydrocarbon-fueled civilization eroded. Examples include re-wilding landscapes so they provide more ecological benefits and require less management, or increased community-level productivity and support.

In 2016 PECT conducted a piece of research in Peterborough to find out what people believed were the most important issues facing the city, it was discovered that local people were most concerned about the housing shortage, immigration and population growth; additionally people were concerned about transport in the city, waste and land use and wildlife. To ensure the local relevance of the program we are particularly interested in working with partners who will explore the environmental challenges, via these recently locally identified research themes of:

- Access to and the future of Housing
- Population, immigration and hospitality
- Connection to the natural environment
- Consumption, resources and waste