**Re-Connect: Horticulture Skills (Open Brief)**

**Re-connect Project funded by National Lottery Heritage Fund will engage our local communities through creative and innovative activities that will inform a refreshed customer-centric welcome for our heritage sites across Luton (Wardown House Museum & Gallery, Stockwood Discovery Centre, the Hat Factory Arts Centre and the Hat District Creative Industry Cluster). This brief and the creative community activities shall promote the Heritage Lottery Investment Principles ‘Save Heritage’ and ‘Inclusion, Access and Participation.**

**Section One: The Brief**

This brief is a **Horticulture Skills freelancer** with experience of gardening, growing, heritage and managing volunteers. The aim to grow audiences, participation and engagement in accessible garden related activities that promotes traditional skills and the care of our Grade II listed Garden at Stockwood Discovery Centre, Luton.

The **Horticulture Skills freelancer** shall be part of the creative community engagement programme, developing work with the community themed around ‘improvements’ with the aim to re-connect existing users and neighbouring communities with the heritage of our sites. Inspired specifically by Stockwood, this brief focuses on encouraging visitors to engage with the garden design past, present and future and the greenhouses. The IHF ‘Improvement’ garden is listed Grade II and is noted to be the biggest collection of IHF in England. We recognise that the collection and the garden as a whole needs conservation, repair and re-interpreting. The **Horticulture Skills freelancer** shall form part of the heritage assessment of the garden with Buttress and contribute to community led master planning. The activities and plan shall be developed with the volunteers and community and shall be launched and celebrated at a Re-Connect Stockwood Event in July 2025.

**Working with:** The Project Manager, Lead artist, Head of Museums, Collections and Heritage, schools, community groups, volunteers, staff, Heritage landscape Architects, and gardeners.

**Reporting to** Project Manager

**Fee:** For this brief there is a fully inclusive fixed fee of £6,000 for the planning, developing and delivery of activities at Stockwood across the growing season, developing and leading a new local volunteer’s programme. There is a separate £2,000 budget for materials and event costs and there is additional funding Volunteer support and training.

**Timescale** March 2025 – May 2026

Established in 2008, the Culture Trust, Luton is a vibrant and progressive independent charity and our mission is **‘to connect communities through culture’**. We do this through our accredited museums, theatres, galleries, creative workspaces and Arts Centre in Luton. We attract over 240,000 visits per annum to our sites: The Hat Factory Arts Centre, Hat House and Hat Works creative workspace, Wardown House Museum & Gallery and Stockwood Discovery Centre Gardens & Museum. We present multi-cultural and year-round programme of events, exhibitions, workshops and performances. We co-produce activity with our community, partners, Museum Makers volunteers and team of cultural experts. We support creative talent and skills by providing opportunities, platforms and cultural career progression. We care for a collection of over 90,000 museum objects and 1.5 million photographs and maps. We hold the most extensive and complete hat and headwear collection in the UK and the best collection if Ian Hamilton-Finlay sculptures in England. We own and care for listed heritage sites, buildings and gardens and we are committed to the adaptive re-use of heritage for cultural purposes and community use. As a charity, we are able to use our valuable core funding from Luton Rising and Arts Council England to lever additional funding into cultural activity in Luton, heritage care and conservation and in celebrating our diverse communities through culture. For more information about the Culture Trust, Luton visit [www.culturetrust.com](http://www.culturetrust.com)

**Section 2: Key Responsibilities**

* **Grow participation**: The aim to grow audiences, participation and engagement in accessible garden related activities that promotes traditional skills and the care of our Grade II listed Garden at Stockwood Discovery Centre, Luton. To encourage local communities to visit and regularly use Stockwood and to encourage people visiting our café to venture further into the grounds.
* **Develop Volunteering at Stockwood Gardens**: As part of our Museum Makers programme, to grow and support a cohort of regular volunteers to collaborate and share gardening and heritage experiences by regularly meeting at Stockwood, working to grow varieties of food, herbs and spices in our greenhouses for our Catering team to serve to our customers. To enable the heritage garden volunteers to help us in our gardens, greenhouses, vegetable plots and contribute to the future planning of the garden. To support volunteer recruitment and retention.
* **Grow in-house skills and expertise**: The Horticulture Skills freelancer with experience of gardening, growing, heritage and managing volunteers shall help the Culture Trust improve the heritage aspects of our gardens, working with the team and contractors on retaining and celebrating heritage importance.
* **Skills, training and workshops:** To develop a year-round programme of events that will re-connect Stockwood Visitors and local communities with the hidden heritage across the site’s walled garden, woodlands and hidden area.
* **Heritage Garden Care and future planning:** To work with the Re-connect design teams and Head of Museum, Heritage and Collection on ‘auditing’ the gardens and structures with a view to developing a short and medium term plan ahead of capital investment.
* **Contribute to the evaluation of impacts by collecting data.**
* **General:** To attend bi-monthly project meetings in Luton and report on progress and to gather data and KPIs on milestones and lessons learned to ensure continual improvement, induction attendance, reporting, record keeping, documentation, administration and meeting attendance. To work flexibly and positively to achieve the objectives of the project and over-all business plan and charitable objectives of the Culture Trust, Luton whilst adhering to Trust policies and procedures. Maintenance of public and professional liability insurances for the duration of the project.

**Section 3: How to apply**

Freelancers are asked to submit an application for this fixed term contract. It shall be assessed against the following information which you will need to supply in one document (PDF) or bound printed submission.

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| **Dates:** |  |
| 14th March 2025 | Deadline for proposals |
| Start of April 2025 | Contract starts |
| May 2026 | Contract ends |

Your application should provide us with the following information;

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Assessment area** | **The information you should include in your tender** | **% of assessment** |
| **30%**  **COST:** | **For the fully inclusive fee of £6,000 to provide** a full break-down of costs - this should include your day rate and allocation of days throughout the year. To itemise other costs included in this fixed fee.  Value for money (30%) | 30% |
| **70%**  **EXPERIENCE, SKILLS & ABILITY** | **A letter of application and CV demonstrating the following:**  Skills & Experience to deliver the Key responsibilities in section two and ability to produce Evaluation reports and impact assessments to a high standard (50%) | 70% |
| **Two references** from a client or an organisation who has commissioned or employed you for work similar to this brief.  Excellent track record of working to deliver to client expectations (10%) |
| **Availability** to meet timescale, outlining the start and finish date (10%) |
| **Please send your submission to** [**privacy@culturetrust.com**](mailto:privacy@culturetrust.com)**, or by post to Cheryl Beattie-Bray, Head of Finance and HR, The Hat Factory Arts Centre, 65-67 Bute Street, Luton, Beds, LU1 2EY to arrive no later than 14th March 2025.** | | |