

Connection & Creation: Artist Development Opportunity

Do you want to make work while exploring your artistic identity as a disabled and/or neurodivergent creative?

Blue Elephant Theatre is seeking to collaborate with two Southwark-based disabled and/or neurodivergent emerging artists.

Supported by Southwark Council's Culture Together Fund, this opportunity will offer artists:

- Practical upskilling, for example in areas like fundraising, marketing or budgeting
- Sessions to explore what you uniquely offer as an artist
- The chance to work on and share a children's storytelling piece

Blue Elephant Theatre has been producing theatre and supporting emerging artists in Southwark since 1999. We recently surrendered our theatre building so we are experiencing a transformation of our own and exploring what we will become too.

We want to create a project that is bespoke to the needs and interests of the artists we work with but this call-out is particularly for artists who:

- Consider themselves emerging/early career or are in a period of transition in their careers
- Are Southwark residents
- Identify as neurodivergent and/or disabled – but are likely to have non-complex needs. Blue Elephant Theatre believes that there is a gap in support for independent neurodivergent and disabled artists with non-complex needs and that this is where our skills and approach are most useful.
- Have adequate availability for this project from August to December. It will probably work out as the equivalent of eight or nine days' time (fuller breakdown below).
- Are happy to take part in workshops with young people with additional needs in a school setting
- Are interested in creating children's theatre. The opportunity is probably best suited to theatre/storytelling artists but is open to all in the performing arts. Blue Elephant Theatre can write a script based on the artist's ideas if this is helpful.
- Are able to have video calls.

As part of the project, there will be:

- Sessions with the Executive Director – part-mentoring, part-skill-building, these will largely be via video call and happen approximately twice a month from August to December.
- Two workshops with young people with additional needs in two school settings – these will be planned with and happen with an experienced facilitator. These workshops can be about exploring your practice or your idea for the piece you are creating. This is part of the opportunity to consider your strengths and identity as an artist. Artists will be paid £150 (inc holiday pay) for the workshops.
- Equivalent of five days to work on a short piece of children's theatre/storytelling and perform it at a library in Southwark. Performances will be during UK Disability History Month which runs from 16 November to 16 December. Blue Elephant has a lot of experience in creating 'pop-up no-tech' children's theatre and so this is where we can really help support the development of a small show/piece of storytelling. Artists will be paid £750 (inc holiday pay) for this time. The length of these days and how they are organised will depend on the artist's needs.

There is a small budget for materials, other artists (£500 – for example for a director or another actor to perform the piece or to make it a two-hander) and for supporting access needs (£200).

If you are interested, please complete this [Expression of Interest form](#) and this [anonymous monitoring form](#). You can also send a video or voice recording of your Expression of Interest to Niamh at niamh@blueelephanttheatre.co.uk. The questions are:

- Please briefly describe your practice/career to date
- What are the biggest challenges you face in becoming the artist you want to be?
- What would you like to get from this project? (It's fine to be vague)
- What access needs do you have, if any?
- Please confirm you meet the criteria of the funding and are a disabled and/or neurodivergent artist living in Southwark.

The deadline for Expression of Interest submissions is Thursday 6 August (at 23.59). We aim to share the outcome by end of day on Thursday 13 August 13 but will update all applicants if there are any delays to this timeline. If you have questions about this project, please email Niamh at niamh@blueelephanttheatre.co.uk.