

# **WOOLWICH CREATIVE DISTRICT TRUST**

## **CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

### **CANDIDATE BRIEFING DOCUMENT**



**OCTOBER 2018**

## 1. Background information

The Woolwich Creative District (WCD) is a key regeneration and cultural project for the Royal Borough of Greenwich (RBG). The site of the Royal Arsenal was released by the MOD in 1997 and the ambition for the site as originally stated in the London Plan was to “play a key part in the transformation of Woolwich and of the Thames Gateway as a whole.”

RBG acquired the leases to four heritage buildings on the Royal Arsenal site in 2014 and a further building in 2017. Together these form some 15,600 sq. metres of new cultural space. The surrounding space was sold to Berkeley Homes for development.

RBG’s vision is to take advantage of the arrival of Crossrail to put Woolwich on the map and to support the economic and social development of Woolwich and its surrounding communities. The project’s aims and objectives are therefore to:

- be deliverable within a reasonable timeframe and budget, with demonstrable value for money;
- deliver the place-making vision of a nationally significant and internationally acclaimed cultural destination, helping to transform the image of Woolwich as a vibrant and exciting place to live and visit;
- provide engagement through education and training opportunities as well as access to high quality arts creation and performance for local communities;
- provide spaces for use by local communities at affordable prices for a wide range of activities from informal classes to wedding receptions;
- be sustainable in the longer term without recourse to significant operational funding;
- create skills and employment opportunities for local people in all aspects of the creative industries including administration, facilities management, design, hospitality and performance;
- promote community cohesion and help to deliver the Council’s commitment to diversity and social inclusion, reflecting the diversity of the borough.

To this end, RBG commissioned two feasibility studies which concluded that sensitive adaptation of the existing buildings, avoiding major interventions, was the best approach to realising the potential of the site. Taken as a whole, there is a remarkable variety of rooms at differing sizes, all of which have individually stunning characteristics.

The complex will accommodate an ambitious combination of performance and rehearsal venues, dance studios, exhibition areas, event spaces, workshops and community spaces, supported by back-of-house functions and public facilities. Resident companies are expected to mix with visiting theatre groups, orchestras, dance companies, community users, visual artists and others. The size and ambition of the scheme are socially and economically important for the immediate locality but are also significant for London and beyond.

The main space in Building 41 (The Ammunition Factory) has been tested and found to have an exceptional acoustic. This will seat an audience of 1200 or a standing audience of up to 2000. It will be used for acoustic music rehearsals, recordings and performance. In addition, it has excellent access and facilities for all users.

There will also be three large studios set aside primarily for professional use and two studios set aside primarily for community use. Adjacent to these will be office and storage spaces for resident companies.

Building 40 (Royal Military Academy) will have three dance studios, with offices and back of house facilities and is set aside for a dance school.

Buildings 17, 18 and 19 (Cartridge Factory, Royal Laboratory Offices and Gun Carriage Shop) are set aside for place-making shows during the first phase of operations.

The design team is led by Bennetts Associates, whose previous cultural building work includes the Storyhouse, Chester, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Hampstead Theatre and the Citizens Theatre, Glasgow. Bonnar Keenlyside is supporting the RBG for activities, operations and business planning and Harper Tackley is advising on the capital and construction elements of the project.

The WCD will be operated by a new trust, currently being established. This will have a Service Level Agreement with RBG to deliver the project's aims and objectives on behalf of the council and people of Woolwich, including job creation and work experience opportunities.

The WCD will be required to operate without subsidy. In principle, given the range of spaces, this is eminently achievable. However, in order to give further profile and potential activity permanently on site, a number of organisations will also be making the WCD their home.

From within the borough, these include the Greenwich Heritage Trust and Protein Dance. Other key local partners will include the Woolwich Contemporary Print Fair. Local arts and community groups will also be main users with dedicated spaces for their use.

New to the Borough will be the Chineke! Orchestra, founded by Chi-chi Nwanoku, which is the only professional BME orchestra in Europe. It has achieved a significant reputation during its first three years with appearances at the Proms and through acclaimed recordings. The WCD will be its first permanent home. Woolwich is more than 40% BME and the profile of the orchestra, with its junior ensembles and ambitions to work in the borough is highly significant.

Punchdrunk will also be developing a base in the new Woolwich Creative District. The flagship project *The Lost Lending Library* is planned for a local primary school and will travel to further schools in the borough over the coming months as part of a wider community engagement programme.

The first phase of the building - The Ammunition Factory (large-scale performance and recording venue) and The Royal Military Academy (the Dance School) - will be completed and handed over in early 2020. Detailed planning for the rest of the site, to include more studios and a theatre, will be the responsibility of the Chief Executive to lead on.



The Ammunition Factory

## 2. The Role

The role of the Chief Executive of the Woolwich Creative District Trust will be to establish and develop a sustainable and successful organisation, which delivers the vision, aims and objectives articulated by the Royal Borough of Greenwich for the site. The Chief Executive will build strong, effective relationships with all stakeholders (RBG, Berkeley Homes, artists, users, hirers, audiences, visitors, etc.) and ensure that the WCD is financially viable and artistically and commercially successful.

The Chief Executive reports to the Chair of the Woolwich Creative District Trust and works closely with the Board of Trustees and with the Royal Borough of Greenwich in achieving the organisation's aims.

## 3. Key Responsibilities

### *Leadership*

- In conjunction with the WCD Board, hone and deliver the Business Plan.
- With the Board and external consultant, shape an organisation structure that aligns with WCD's mission and aims and delivers the Business Plan.
- Recruit full- and part-time staff, ensuring the organisation is fit for purpose.
- Promote equality of opportunity and diversity for all staff, users and public alike.
- Work closely in collaboration with creative partners on site to provide an environment in which they can flourish and succeed.
- Lead on business development, actively seeking potential hirers, artistic collaborations and income generating activities that will develop the reputation and profile of the WCD and ensure that all areas of its operation produce the maximum return.

- Ensure the smooth and sustainable operation of the site, promoting best practice in all areas.
- Create a first-class, outward-facing customer service-based operation for users, the public and the stakeholders.
- Provide financial and budgetary leadership throughout every aspect of the organisation.
- Ensure an imaginative and effective approach to marketing, brand management and audience development.
- Demonstrate a commitment to participation and outreach activities within the local community, ensuring that the WCD is open and accessible to all.
- Support the WDC's commitment to sustainability in all its activities.
- Ensure compliance with all legal and charitable obligations and requirements.
- Work in partnership with the Chair of the Woolwich Creative District Trust to ensure the highest standards of governance.
- Develop effective working relationships and positive engagement with all Trustees, attending Board meetings and any other committee meetings or working parties as appropriate.

### ***Strategic relations and representation***

- Maintain close and positive relationships with the Royal Borough of Greenwich and Berkeley Homes.
- Maintain close and positive relationships with resident companies, hirers and users of the buildings.
- Develop effective partnerships beyond the organisation and site.
- Develop good, productive relations with the UK's cultural and creative industries, maximising these networks and partnerships for the financial and artistic success of the WCD.
- Ensure the WCD is represented at all relevant and appropriate forums, locally and nationally.
- Promote and advocate for the WCD, raising the profile with the public and continually seeking opportunities to further the aims and interests of the organisation.



Proposed studio spaces

#### **4. Person Specification**

The ideal candidate will demonstrate substantial successful leadership experience at a senior strategic level within an organisation of similar scale and complexity in the cultural sector, or creative industries. He or she will have a proven track record in growing and developing a business, including generating income from commercial activities, and demonstrable experience in initiating, managing and sustaining successful partnerships with a diverse range of organisations and individuals in the cultural sector. Some experience of managing a building is considered essential.

The key experience, skills and qualities sought are:

##### ***Experience***

- A track record of successful leadership at a senior level, including setting strategy and business planning.
- Proven experience in recruiting, building and developing a team.
- A track record of providing financial direction and management of significant capital and revenue budgets.
- Demonstrable experience in growing and developing a business, including generating income from commercial activities.
- A track record in initiating, managing and sustaining effective relationships with a diverse range of organisations and individuals, including close collaborations with cultural partners across different arts forms, artists and local authorities.
- Experience in building and marketing a brand.
- Experience in managing buildings and operations at scale is essential.
- Previous experience of leading a capital development project is desirable.
- Some 'start-up' experience would be an advantage.

##### ***Skills and qualities***

- The ability to bring together and 'curate' a number of creative enterprises to make something greater than the sum of its parts.
- An effective communicator, able to extend WCD's profile and influence, and build positive and productive relationships that gain the respect, trust and confidence of staff, partners, users and other stakeholders.
- An innovative mind-set, with the ability to think beyond traditional ways of doing things and make changes happen.
- Able to demonstrate sound financial management and commercial acumen.
- Well-developed networking and advocacy skills, with the ability to broker and maintain trust-based relationships with a wide variety of individuals and organisations.
- A commitment to community, learning and participation and access for all.
- A strong commitment to equality of opportunity and diversity.
- Ambition, energy, drive, tenacity and resilience: an ability to deliver under pressure and at pace.
- Personal conduct, integrity, political sensitivity and credibility that commands the confidence and respect of staff, RBG, local communities, external partners and stakeholders.

## 5. Summary of Terms and Conditions

**Contract** – full-time, permanent

**Salary** – an attractive salary is offered commensurate with a position of this importance

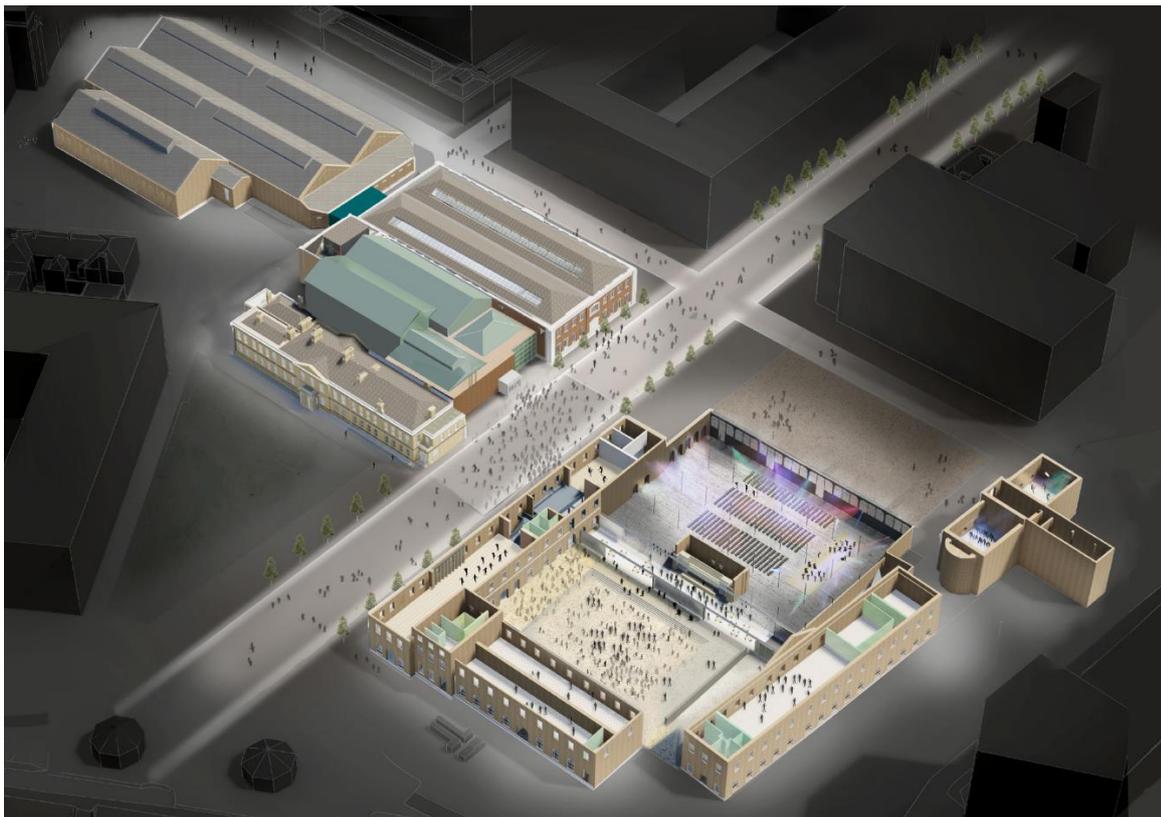
**Pension** – a pension contribution will be offered by the Trust

**Holidays** – 25 days plus statutory Bank Holidays

## 6. How to Apply

If you would like to apply, please send a cv and letter of application stating why you think you are suitable for this position to our recruitment consultant, Heather Newill, Director AEM International, at [hnewill@aeminternational.co.uk](mailto:hnewill@aeminternational.co.uk) (preferable) or by post to AEM International, 10 Church Street, Framlingham, Suffolk. IP13 9BH. All applications will be acknowledged.

**Closing date for applications: Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> November 2018 at 5.00pm**



Full site plan