

Staking Claims on the Distance

OPEN CALL

Staking Claims on the Distance

Deadline: Friday 20 November, 12 noon

Free to apply

This open call is for artists specifically based in the UK and is suitable for artists at any stage of their careers.

Fee: £600 for each for the 3 selected artist / A further £1700 will be given to 1 artist who will be selected for the overall summer commission

(Before submitting an application, please make sure to read the full details below)

Staking Claims on the Distance is an open call developed through The NewBridge Project's *Overmorrow* programme, which will support 3 artists to develop and present ideas for an outdoor structure that will act as a public gathering space and permanent monument towards the future.

Key Dates:

Open call deadline: **Monday 07 December**

All applicants will hear back by: **Monday 14 December**

Maquettes/diagrams/designs produced by: **Friday 05 February**

Exhibition begins: **Monday 15 February**

Final Artist and Idea selected by: **Friday 26 March**

Exhibition Ends: **April 2021**

Celebration of the Monument: **Summer 2021**

Summary

Public spaces should be antidotes to frenzied cities and bleak, urban sprawl. But neoliberalism and globalism have undermined their civic roles, transforming public spaces into products of spectacle and private interests. For years we have tussled with ideas around ownership of privately-managed public spaces, and the deployment of “hostile architecture” designed to stop people loitering and lingering.

These designs often attack the most vulnerable people in our communities, sending a very clear signal that certain people aren’t wanted. Now more than ever we are seeing individuals and communities across the globe being forced to isolate and separate. Lockdowns have emptied our public spaces or made them

unavailable, with benches and resting places in particular being covered in hazard tape or entirely removed. The pandemic has again raised questions around the use of public spaces, and how they are an integral part of our networked cities whether for recreation, movement, habitat or a sense of place.

*How do we unlock spaces for their true public value? As part of *Overmorrow*, The NewBridge Project would like to commission a piece of public furniture that invites social relationships as a permanent monument to the present. We want to commission a monument that memorialises society here and now by enabling people to encounter each other. This space will encourage welcome without hostility, by celebrating the ideologies around building collective futures.*

From the open call **3** artists will be selected to design a physical (**maquette, 3D model** or **diagram**) of their proposal. These designs will be exhibited in The NewBridge Project gallery in Gateshead along with other supporting material curated by members of the Programme Committee.

As the exhibition draws to a close, **1** of the artists will be selected to develop their concept into a full-size physical structure to be installed in an outdoor setting for public interaction. This will be launched in summer 2021 and

will coincide with The NewBridge Project's move to a new location. Further details about the relocation will be shared at a later date, along with a rolling set of events which will be developed by the selected artist and The NewBridge Programme Committee.

Please find attached the Commissioning Brief, this document has been developed to provide further context about the open call and the ideas and conversations behind *Staking Claims on the Distance*.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Below are some practical considerations to help aid you for when constructing your proposal:

- **Suitable for installation in an outdoor environment** – As noted in the summary this structure will most likely be placed in an outdoor environment and will need to withstand all weather types. Please consider what materials will be used.
- **Strong enough to withstand sitting/standing on by the general public**
- **Inclusive and accessible by design** – The general public will be encouraged to interact with your design, and we would like everyone to be able to access the structure safely. Instead of sitting, you

might find some people will be tempted to climb or stand upon the work.

- **Environmentally responsible and consider its environmental footprint** – Here at The NewBridge Project we are passionate and committed to reducing our impact on the planet wherever possible by understanding the impacts we have on the environment, measuring these impacts and striving to improve and reduce these impacts.
- **Able to move between locations** – Please be realistic in your design, this must be easily transported to the location and easily erected.
- **Enable members of the public to come into contact with each other in a socially distant way** – With uncertain times ahead we would encourage you to think about the current restrictions within social distancing, and how this might manifest within the work. We want people to feel safe when interacting with your work.
- **Vandalism** – Please be reminded that the work will be displayed outdoors in public setting, unfortunately this means we are unable to police this with security and it will be open to the elements.
- **Dimensions** – Please be realistic when developing your idea and the size of the monument. We advise that the footprint should not exceed 2x4m's. Please do not exceed this size as we will not be able to guarantee it being produced or displayed.

HOW TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION:

You can send your expression of interest in a number of different formats, as a written document (ideally 1 PDF), or an audio / video recording (maximum 3 minutes). If there is another way you wish to apply, then get in touch to let us know.

Please provide:

- A brief artist statement about your practice, what interests you about taking part in this commission and what parts of the artist brief you'd like to explore. Please also include a brief outline of your initial idea, we understand this might change and evolve if selected. Maximum 500 words / 3 minutes).
- Up to 5 images of previous works.
- A link to your website or Instagram if you have one.
- Upon applying please complete an Equal Opportunities and Diversity Monitoring form – this will be anonymous and saved separately to your expression of interest.
- The information included in the equal opportunities monitoring form may be taken into account at the final shortlisting stage to help us achieve our

diversity and inclusion goals. This is part of our commitment to taking [positive action](#) to achieve equality of opportunity throughout our recruitment process

Within your application please feel free to outline any particular support or any access needs that might be required. If you have any questions about this opportunity, please get in touch by contacting [Niomi Fairweather](#).

SELECTION CRITERIA

Applications will be assessed and selected by 4 members of NewBridge's Programme Committee - Eve Cromwell (artist), [Jessica Bennett](#) (curator), [Lydia Bailey](#) (artist) and [Matt Pickering](#) (artist) and (Programme Director of The NewBridge Project) Niomi Fairweather. The exhibition team will decide as a group the 3 selected artists and the overall artist for the summer commission.

When selecting the panel will take into consideration:

- Aesthetic qualities of the design and consideration of how the public will interact with it.

- Accessibility, the structure must be an invitation for all ages and abilities to be able to interact and enjoy.
- Practicality within the context of budget.
- How ideas within the artists brief have been explored through the design.
- The longevity of the structure, is sturdy enough to exist for a long time?
- How the work will be transported between locations and secured within those locations.
- The environmental impact of the construction of the design.

BUDGET:

3 artists will be selected to design a physical (**maquette, 3D model or diagram**) of their proposal

From the open call there will be an initial fee of **£600** to support **3** selected artists to design a physical (**maquette, 3D model or diagram**) of their idea. This must cover artists fee, materials, cost for shipping the model, transport and accommodation to attend exhibition opening if you are from out of the region.

Taking part in the project is flexible, but we suggest a minimum requirement of 2 and a half days of making and 1 scheduled meeting with the exhibition team during

the process (if you are applying from out of the region, these meetings can be via video call). The meeting will be an opportunity to check in and establish if any extra support is needed.

As noted in the summary **1** artist will then be selected to develop their concept into a physical structure that is on display to the public. This artist will receive a further **£1700**, which will further support artists fee, design, materials, cost for shipping the structure.

Due the implications of Covid-19 it may not be possible to host an exhibition opening within The NewBridge Project gallery space. Usually we would take the opportunity to invite artists, members and communities into the space to help celebrate and welcome new works – further details of what is possible will be updated and shared when we have more information.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- If you would prefer this information on paper, please get in touch and we would be happy to post a paper copy to you.

Eligibility for Applying

We encourage applications from all backgrounds, communities and industries, and are committed to having a team that is made up of diverse skills, experiences and abilities. We actively encourage applications from disabled artists and artists of colour, and value the positive impact that difference this has on our teams. We are committed to equality and diversity within our workforce and all opportunities provided by The NewBridge Project.

This open call is for artists specifically based in the UK and is suitable for artists at any stage of their careers. We are looking for applications from artists from all backgrounds and experiences, please don't hesitate to contact us should you have any questions.

The NewBridge Project

[The NewBridge Project](#) is an active and vibrant artist-led community supporting the development of artists and curators through the provision of space for creative practice, curatorial opportunities and an ambitious artist-led programme of exhibitions, commissions, artist development and events.

Overmorrow

This exhibition is part of an ongoing festival developed and produced with The NewBridge Project: Programme Committee. Taking place from October 2020 – April 2021, the festival will include a series of commissions, talks, screenings and events which explore our collective futures with audiences, members and communities. Please check The NewBridge Project website for further information.

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Commissioning Brief

As part of *Overmorrow*, The NewBridge Project are commissioning a piece of public furniture to be installed in an outdoor environment, that invites social relationships and acts as a permanent monument to the present.

The recent toppling of the statue of Edward Colston in Bristol following 2020's Black Lives Matter demonstrations in the wake of the killing of George Floyd at the hands of the Minneapolis police and countless others, has given greater visibility to the debate around public monuments.

This debate is not new, and is too often focused on the individuals memorialised, failing to address the more important questions of why we build monuments, who and what we choose to memorialise, and what our changing attitudes and attachments to these monuments reveal about our own values as a society.

Both in the UK and across the world, monuments are built to those who have accrued great wealth or power, or as a demonstration of the might and reach of the state. Installed in our public spaces, they often become

symbols of nationalism and fail to reflect the society they stand to.

Public Space

Our public spaces are increasingly privatised: manipulated by wealth, power, and the state. From 'hostile architecture' that restricts our movement within public spaces; to the contested monuments standing over our public squares; to the invisible lines traced across our towns and cities that restrict our rights and speech: our public spaces are no longer a common.

Increasingly, public spaces are less places for meeting, exchange and dialogue, and more assets to exploit and generate profit for the private sector and ultimately financial and cultural capital for the state. Though not often inclusive by design, people reshape these spaces and structures through their interactions – gathering on steps, benches, playgrounds and squares for meeting and conversation, play and protest.

Overmorrow Monument

As part of *Overmorrow*, The NewBridge Project is commissioning a permanent monument to the present. Rather than memorialising an individual, we want to commission a monument that memorialises society here

and now by enabling people to encounter each other – a bench, forum, platform, playground. It will serve as a piece of infrastructure that is a direct invitation to stay and enjoy, a welcome without hostility.

The monument will be designed to be interacted with and activated by the public and will be installed in an outdoor environment. We would like the monument to be enjoyed by different communities, so it can activate new environments. Its' ambition is to reflect the values of *Overmorrow* – one that imagines a better, more equitable and more open world; that promotes solidarity, mutual support and nurturing social relationships – to disrupt the idea of what a monument can be.

Monument audio works and public events

The Overmorrow Monument is a live object that is designed to be activated and continually added to. The NewBridge Project will work alongside the selected artist to help support and deliver a series of public events throughout the summer of 2021 centred around the monument.

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'Some years ago I was talking to Le Corbusier about Peter Yates with whose work he was familiar, this boy can see things said he, but to me it seemed more relevant that Peter could do things. In his paintings he prodded the depths rather than depicting the surface. Simmering passions behind the stony immobility. Cathedrals like rocks and rocks like cathedrals. From the vision of his beloved Durham locked in the mist of time to the Ultramarine rhapsody of Cyclopic islands. By staking claims on the distance he excites the imagination. Simplicity, directness and purity give his work the power. That was Peter Yates my friend the poet architect. The song is over but the chords go on vibrating'.

Staking Claims on the Distance has been cited from the origins and legacy of Gordon Ryder and Peter Yates's Kenton Bar Estate, Newcastle upon Tyne.

For further reading:

https://www.ryderarchitecture.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/ARQ_Ryder_and_Yates_Paper.pdf.