

Client: Creative Estuary
Clocktower Building
University of Kent
Chatham Historic Dockyard
Chatham
ME4 4TE

Tender Brief

Evaluation of Creative Estuary Phase 2: 2023-26

This document specifies the requirements for the procurement of services to implement a Continuous Improvement culture for Creative Estuary, and the University of Kent. The supplier's ability to meet those requirements will need to be clearly demonstrated during the tender process to provide assurance to the panel that the product is fit-for-purpose.

Statement of requirements.

1. Overview

1.1 Investment in Creative Estuary.

Creative Estuary Phase 2 has been made possible by investment from Arts Council England under their Place Partnership Project Fund. Arts Council supports specific types of projects that aim to make a step change in the cultural and creative opportunity in places through the Place Partnership strand of Project Grants. These are projects that seek to transform an aspect of a cultural or creative offer and the strategic cultural development aspirations of the place the activity benefits, in line with Let's Create.

In addition, Creative Estuary receives and unlocks investment from local authorities in the Estuary to deliver specific projects and to support our Estuary partnership. We also form partnerships with other stakeholders and with local authorities, and the creative sector, to lever other investments to support joint working; this is ongoing work.

1.2 Creative Estuary and strategic partnerships.

Creative Estuary is supported by and reports to the Creative Estuary Advisory Board. Creative Estuary is a programme which is supported by University of Kent. Whilst Creative Estuary enjoys a high degree of independence, the University provides back office support and advice, and provides investment as part of the match funding for the programme. Creative Estuary is supported within iCCi (Institute for Creative & Cultural Industries) within the University. We are exploring the potential to grow our relationship with the University and to move to a position of trading together as partners.

Creative Estuary is a key partner on the steering group of the Create South East programme and is pitching to undertake delivery work.

Creative Estuary is also represented as a core partner on the Advisory Board of Thames Estuary Production Corridor. We are also collaborating with TEPC partners including Thames Estuary Growth Board on strategic delivery.

1.3 Description of Creative Estuary

Our ambition is to transform 60 miles of the Thames Estuary across Essex and Kent into one of the most exciting creative clusters in the world. We are working with the CCIs sector, local authorities, diverse communities, and other stakeholders engaged in placemaking and regeneration to improve the conditions and opportunities for the sustained development of the arts and creative industries in the Estuary. We aim to work with local and regional stakeholders to build a vibrant and prosperous future, enriching communities and strengthening the region.

Creative Estuary is part of the Government endorsed Thames Estuary Production Corridor (TEPC) project, initiated by the [South East Creative Economy Network](#) and [Greater London Authority](#). TEPC was recognised as a key part of the Estuary's future in the Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission report, attracting investment from both the (then) Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). TEPC is an exemplar for cross-sector governance, demonstrating the effectiveness of public and private partnership working to deliver bold ambition.

In Phase 1, Creative Estuary was led by the University of Kent on behalf of a consortium of public sector and cultural organisations. They included the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP), Kent and Essex County Councils, the Greater London Authority, 11 local authority areas represented by Greater North Kent and Opportunity South Essex, South East Creative Economy Network (SECEN), University of Essex, Locate in Kent and cultural organisations Metal and Cement Fields.

Phase 1: 2019-2023

Creative Estuary Phase 1 was made possible through investment from Round 1 of the Cultural Development Fund (CDF) from DCMS (administered by Arts Council England) which had 4 key aims and outcomes:

- Unlock economic growth and productivity
- Strengthen local leadership
- Enhance creative skills
- Make places attractive to live, work and to visit

Originally a three-year project, in early 2019 the University of Kent was awarded £4.3m from the DCMS Cultural Development Fund on behalf of the partners. We were subsequently granted a 12-month extension and a further £442,500 to mitigate COVID19 disruption.

Key Highlights & Achievements from Phase 1:

- Securing over £2m of partnership investment and ensuring further investment in cultural infrastructure in the region
- Establishing the distinctive and credible Creative Estuary brand which is highly visible in promoting the creative sector and the Thames Estuary internationally
- Creating new pathways to creative careers with 101 young people in training and placements through the Re:Generation 2031 programme, led by the University of Kent
- Investing in a Cultural Infrastructure Prospectus and Meanwhile Strategy for Ebbsfleet Garden City
- Pump priming key projects and investing in feasibility studies, such as in Basildon town centre and Chatham at the Docking Station, enabling those projects to secure investment from Cultural Development Round 3, Levelling Up Fund round 1 and National Lottery Heritage Fund
- £554,000 invested in co-commissions which prioritised diversity and inclusion, with 24% of funding allocated to global majority heritage-led organisations or dedicated commission opportunities
- Invested £800,000+ in Estuary Festival in 2021 which generated over £16.8 million of economic activity in the Thames Estuary area and worked with a huge number of partners including: community arts and heritage organisations, local businesses, higher and further education partner institutions, strategic partnerships and 13 local authorities
- Ideas Labs, co-delivered by the Universities of Essex and Kent, developing interdisciplinary and cross-sector collaborations to meet challenges identified in the region, and to generate fundable projects that will enhance the lives of those living, working and visiting the Estuary
- Strengthening the evidence base and case for investment in culture through research, influencing policy development and creating new tools for planners, developers, local government and cultural organisations including the [Creative Estuary | National Cultural Planning Toolkit](#) led by the University of Kent School of Architecture and Planning.

Creative Estuary Phase 2: 2023-2026 has been made possible by investment of £1.15m from Arts Council England, through the Place Partnership Fund, for a further three year ambitious programme to build on Phase 1 and embed good practice.

Phase 2 is focused on the six 'Levelling up for Culture' areas of the Estuary: Swale, Medway, and Gravesham in Kent, and, Thurrock, Castle Point, and Basildon in Essex; and with Ebbsfleet Development Corporation. We are working with each of these local authorities, and Ebbsfleet DC, at local level and across the Estuary, and working with Kent County Council and Essex County Council on the development and delivery of our joint programme. University of Kent continues to be a key stakeholder and investor.

Thames Estuary Production Corridor (TEPC) has entered a period of refreshing the vision and updating governance. Creative Estuary continues to be a key partner in the TEPC and has representation on the TEPC Advisory Board.

Creative Estuary is working more closely with GLA via TEPC and with the Thames Estuary Growth Board to ensure that regional programmes and ambitions are aligned and worked on together to maximise resources, local and regional impact.

Summary of current programme, taken from the ACE bid, Phase 2 workstreams:

i) Creative Assets and Place

Building the skills and capacity of the cultural sector to grow its economic impact, we are working at neighbourhood level to shape regional policy to regenerate neighbourhoods, support local economies, attract visitors & bring people together.

We have established a new **Knowledge Exchange Partnership**, working across regeneration, planning, economic development and culture focused in the 6 local authorities, and with Ebbsfleet DC, to develop and capture best practice for delivering pro-cultural policy & actions.

We are taking forward our Creative Assets report and recommendations, and will continue to develop models and partnerships to provide space for cultural production:

- delivering training to increase skills,
- increasing knowledge & networks to manage spaces effectively;
- using our expertise to develop projects & secure investment;
- building relationships and deliver cross-sector training
- developing shared understanding, trust & new partnerships

ii) Made in the Estuary (Co-Commission Programme including young producer placements)

More artists, producers, and organisations will create new work with, for and by communities. Through our commitment to equality and diversity we'll create a more representative talent pool which will be key to our area's success. Working with new &

established cultural organisations, Creative Estuary's programme 'Made in the Estuary' will deliver two complementary strands.

- Strand 1 Leadership. 'Estuary Leaders and Makers' a peer-led network of organisations & practitioners to develop & support emerging talent & future leaders. The network will connect and enhance existing networks; broker new relationships & opportunities; support creation of new work; encourage work of greater scale and ambition; address gaps in provision/ artform / capacity.
- Strand 2. Content. Building on our current programme co-commissions we will respond to priority places, spaces and communities, leading to the creation of new work & stories for and about the Estuary. We'll continue to target our investment towards BAME led organisations & artists.

We have invested in the start-up of **Estuary Festival** as a new, standalone organisation and we will work in close partnership with Executive & Artistic Director as they develop the programme and framework for the next festival in 2025. This is already delivering impact in one of our priority places, Castle Point, where the organisation will now be based.

Ensuring the **legacy of our Re:Generation 2031 programme**, we'll work with partners to deliver events and activity including with organisations who embed opportunities for young people to co-create. With creative production placed at the heart of communities, creative industries will become more visible to young people giving better understanding of the opportunities for employment and routes into them.

iii) Place Brand and Partnerships

The Thames Estuary will be seen as an area of opportunity, nationally and internationally, where ambition, vision and strong partnerships align to help our cultural sector to flourish and thrive.

Our Place campaign is delivering regional & national impact & strengthening international links, learning from & with others. We contribute to thought leadership through press & national roundtables with developers and investors on culture as a driver for social & economic change.

NB. Outcomes and targets from the Place Partnership bid can be found in **Appendix1**.

2. Project Evaluation

2.1 The Brief

Creative Estuary is looking to appoint skilled and experienced Evaluators to work on the programme until January/February 2026. Freelance consultants and consultancy firms are welcome to apply.

The Evaluator(s) will devise a framework in order to evaluate the aims and outcomes of the Phase 2 programme.

Creative Estuary wants to know whether our interventions, and the investment, changes the understanding, the visibility and the viability of the Thames Estuary as one of the most exciting creative clusters in the world.

Creative Estuary wants the framework and the evaluation, to tell us to what extent our focused programme has further embedded arts and creative industries practitioners and sector needs in the Estuary, and with partners.

At the end of the project we will want to know how far our programme has ignited positive change and, recommendations for what further interventions and support will be needed to continue the work of Creative Estuary and partners.

We would expect the Evaluator to consider the following questions when developing the evaluation framework:

- What is the background to the Creative Estuary programme?
- What are the planned outputs and outcomes?
- How are we delivering the programme?
- What are the challenges and how will they/are they being overcome?
- How well are we delivering against each of the programme's outcomes and key performance indicators?
- What difference can the project make to individuals, practitioners, sector leads, communities and other stakeholders, the University of Kent, local authority partners and other stakeholders?
- What difference can the programme make to communities in local areas and across the Estuary?
- What can be done to maximise the impact of this programme in the future?
- Recommendations for Creative Estuary in the future: How can we build on this programme in a sustainable way, with partners, with the sector, with stakeholders?

2.2 Scope of services required

Phase 2:

- Review the Phase 1 baseline and evaluation report.
- Set a baseline and framework for evaluation of Phase 2.

- To create the evaluation framework for reporting on the outputs and final outcomes of the projects.
- Review Creative Estuary template for data capture and adjust, to align with the framework.
- To decide on the most appropriate methods to capture the information required to provide robust evidence; and collect primary data as necessary from partners and stakeholders. Appendix 1 here provides the outcomes and data targets required by this programme. The Evaluators should be mindful of survey fatigue and consider accessible ways of collecting feedback and data eg talking heads; social media voting; peer review groups, and so forth.
- Create engagement with the evaluation process and facilitate check-in meetings with the programme team.
- Demonstrate how to avoid bias in your approach, your questioning and analysis.
- Draw together the findings of evaluation and documentation gathered at workstream level.
- Collect data at the end of the project to compare the change that has occurred from the original baseline information recorded.
- Provide evidence for future investment by ACE and other Government departments in future programmes of this nature.
- Provide an interim report including draft recommendations to the programme team and to the Advisory Board for discussion and feedback.
- Provide a well-designed and comprehensive end of project report, to be shared with partners and funders, and to be used for advocacy locally, nationally and internationally.

The end of project report will:

- combine all analysis and interpretation of the various data and research information gathered.
- combine qualitative and quantitative data to explain impact.
- provide conclusions and recommendations to enable the programme team and the Advisory Board, and stakeholders to be able to identify and apply lessons learned to future plans.
- incorporate case studies and visual documentation provided by each workstream & partners.
- produce an executive summary with concise headlines in a format easily used

as an advocacy tool, including compelling data and key messages, and ensure that the key messages align with our Place Branding and Place campaigning.

- The end of project report and the executive summary must provide an articulate and accurate narrative journey of Phase 2.
- Provide feedback to the Creative Estuary Advisory Board, and iCCi Advisory Board.
- Work with the Project Director and Executive Team to agree key dates and milestones for the capturing of relevant data; the Evaluators will collect some primary data directly, and some from the programme team at workstream level.
- Identify key risks to enable continuous development and improvement to the delivery of the programme.
- Attend Advisory Board meetings to present on findings (up to 3 meetings whilst work is in progress; for the interim report discussion; and to deliver the final report; this may be online or f2f).
- Provide data, insights, and evidence for the Project Director, Advisory Board, and for use by advocates of our work, to be used for public presentations and publication as required.
- Meet with Project Director regularly (to be confirmed at Inception; this may be online or f2f).

2.3 Tender responses:

We would like you to submit the following information:

- Your delivery plan and timetable to outline the evaluation of the programme, from the initial gathering of baseline data to the ongoing capturing of information throughout the Delivery phase. (Max 4 pages)
- To explain your methodology and what models you think are most appropriate for this programme (Max 4 pages)
- Provide two examples of similar work experience of delivering the evaluation of complex cross-sector, culturally led projects, with a diverse range of collaborators/partners.
- Please state what fees and budget you would propose for the work, showing a clear breakdown between fees for the Framework and the Evaluation. Please itemise the VAT. The Client expects that the total including VAT will be in the range £30,000-£35,000.
- Please provide CVs for all key personnel responsible for delivery of the work.
- Please show the breakdown/distribution of hours by named team members.

- Please provide details of two referees, one of whom is your current or most recent key client, and indicate at which stage you consent for these references to be taken up.

2.4 Assessment criteria and weighting by which the Evaluator(s) will be selected:

Criteria	Weighting
Quality of the application and alignment to Creative Estuary programme; and understanding of the brief, the context of the work programme in the Thames Estuary.	60%
Demonstration of how the proposal offers value for money and is an efficient use of resources for the evaluators and for the client.	20%
Range and depth of knowledge and experience across these areas: working in the arts, culture, creative industries sectors; economic and social impact; advocacy and/or lobbying; evaluation strategies for multi-partnered projects.	20%
Total	100%

The Client also requires written confirmation and assurance from the Evaluators that they can:

- deliver completion against the timeframe.
- work with a diverse range of local people, creatives, stakeholders and partners.
- provide evidence of an ethical code for delivery of the work and with our stakeholders.

It is sufficient to provide a letter in answer to these requirements and to include the fee breakdown.

2.5 Budget

The Client anticipates that the budget for the Evaluation framework and delivery will be in the range £30,000 - £35,000 inclusive of VAT and expenses.

2.6 Timeline

Deadline for submissions 12noon Monday 2nd December 2024.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend an **online interview Thursday 5th or Friday 6th December 2024.**

Interview Panel: Lorraine Cox Creative Estuary Programme Director; a representative from Creative Estuary Advisory Board; Natalie Reuter Creative Estuary Project Officer.

Project Inception meeting ideally to take place pre-Christmas 2024.

Review of Phase 1 Evaluation report, and, delivery of Baseline and Evaluation Framework Phase 2 and Plan - end January / early February 2025.

Interim report including draft recommendations no later than early December 2025.

Final report – end of January 2026 or no later than the end of the first week of February 2026.

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[Creative Estuary | LinkedIn](#)

[Creative Estuary | Instagram](#)

[The Thames Estuary Production Corridor | London City Hall](#)

[Home - Thames Estuary](#) **Thames Estuary Growth Board**

Appendix 1

OUTCOMES

Cultural Communities- Villages, towns and cities thrive through a collaborative approach to culture.

Cultural infrastructure. Spaces, organisations, models

With our partners in the 6 LUFC priority places, we will design and deliver local exemplar projects to significantly enhance activity & impact for those communities. Building skills & capacity of the cultural sector to grow its economic impact we'll work at neighbourhood level and shape regional policy to regenerate neighbourhoods, support local economies, attract visitors & bring people together.

O/cme iv: Communities, local gov. & cultural organisations will level up their places, addressing uneven provision of opportunities & infrastructure. Our 6 Levelling Up for Culture (LUFC) priority places will have pro-cultural policies and actions jointly developed with Creative Estuary.

How: Our focus is 6 LUFC places: Thurrock, Basildon, Castle Point, Gravesham, Medway & Swale. We'll deliver projects to significantly enhance activity and impact for communities, demonstrating new models & ways of working, eg. locally shaped commissions, including residencies & activation of pop-up / meanwhile space with opportunities for participation to strengthen social cohesion.

We'll establish a new **Knowledge Exchange Partnership** working across regeneration, planning, economic development & culture & including Ebbsfleet Development Corporation, to develop & capture best practice for delivering pro-cultural policy & actions.

O/cme v: Our region will have highly visible and sustainable new spaces for cultural production. The Estuary will have the human & physical cultural capital that it needs.

How: Taking forward our Creative Assets report we'll develop models to provide space for cultural production: delivering training to increase skills, knowledge & networks to manage spaces effectively; using our expertise to develop projects & secure investment; relationship building & cross-sector training (local gov. w/cultural sector) developing shared understanding, trust & new partnerships

O/cme vi: The cultural sector will have the skills to grow & sustain their activity be resilient, connected organisations. Our professional cultural sector will generate new ideas, work in partnership & have access to finance to grow their businesses.

How: Utilising our existing research we'll support & deliver projects including; hubs for performance & createch - eg in Chatham at RAFA building; test makerspace & markets eg Basildon Robin's Building; leadership training on business models & growth, part of South East Create Growth.

O/cme vii: The Thames Estuary will be seen as an area of opportunity, nationally and internationally, where ambition, vision and strong partnerships align to help our cultural sector to flourish and thrive.

How Our Place campaign delivers regional & national impact & strengthen international links, learning from & with others. We contribute to thought leadership through press & national roundtables with developers & investors on culture as a driver for social & economic change.

Outcome Creative People: Everyone can develop and express creativity throughout their life to bear in mind in terms of resourcing

We will enable people at all stages of their lives to design, develop and increase their participation in high quality creative activities. This requires connected organisations, spaces, & skilled practitioners and to ensure it is fit for the future, improved pathways towards creative careers. In addressing Creative People here & Cultural Communities above (our key focus), we define our proposed outcomes & indicate how we plan to deliver them. These are interconnected to deliver lasting change.

Outcome i: People will have access to high quality culture in local, accessible and affordable spaces. From high streets and town centres to industrial areas and green spaces, communities will realise their full potential.

How: We'll support communities ensuring that arts, culture and the creative sector are key drivers. For example in Northfleet we'll deliver a cultural programme supporting local people to tackle identified challenges & needs, whilst strengthening the network of creative producers and activating new community spaces.

O/cme ii: More artists, producers, and organisations will create new work with, for and by communities. Through our commitment to equality and diversity we'll create a more representative talent pool which will be key to our area's success

How: Working with new & established cultural organisations, 'Made in the Estuary' will deliver two complementary strands.

Strand 1 Leadership. 'Estuary Leaders and Makers' a peer-led network of organisations & practitioners to develop & support emerging talent & future leaders. It will; connect & enhance existing networks; broker new relationships & opportunities; support creation of

new work; encourage work of greater scale and ambition; address gaps in provision/ artform / capacity.

Strand 2. Content. Building on our current programme co-commissions we will respond to priority places, spaces and communities, leading to the creation of new work & stories for and about the Estuary. We'll continue to target our investment towards BAME led organisations & artists. Examples co-commission - alongside training & mentorship towards small scale theatre & work for outdoor audiences, focused on BAME artists with Applause and Queen's Theatre.

Estuary festival 3rd edition in 2025. We'll support the new delivery vehicle through set-up, continuing to work in partnership & shaping opportunities for Estuary artists, makers & producers to be part of the festival, showcasing our region's talent.

O/cme iii: With creative production placed at the heart of communities, creative industries will become more visible to young people giving better understanding of the opportunities for employment and routes into them

How: We'll work with partners to deliver events and activity with organisations including Ideas Test and BasildON which embed opportunities for YP to co-create these events with training and funded placements, building on our successful Young Producer model.

Appendix 2: Data

How many people will experience this project?

Creative practitioners - 300

Active participants - 500

Volunteers - 100

Live audiences/ visitors - Those who are present during the live presentation of a creative product such as a live show or an exhibition 200,000

Streaming audiences - 250,000

Digital audiences - 1,500,000

Total 1,950,900

Note: Our projections are based on evidence gathered over the past 3 yrs. Estuary 2021. 208,764 visits, digital audience 107,584, 265 artists 2,817 participants (1,081 YP), 248 students across 8 universities, 24 schools & HE/FE partners took part in over 224 workshop sessions. Co-commissions. 28 orgs, delivering 44 commissions, 348 practitioners. Live audience: 41, 968 & estimated 3million ppl experienced the Basildon mural. Digital - 7m ppl saw EVEWRIGHTS's commission on BBC. Ebbsfleet co-design

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engaged over 200 ppl in workshops & 11 events in Ebbsfleet - audience 55,794. Re:Gen 2031 worked with + 40 practitioners, 30 YP employed in 27 entry level opportunities & 73 YP took part in 6 training programmes. With Ideas Test & Creative Basildon we will develop structured volunteering opportunities.

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