



Dorset
National
Landscape

INVITATION TO QUOTE

Sitting Spaces – artist commission

Background

Dorset National Landscape is a protected area of outstanding natural beauty covering nearly half of this wonderful county, known for its rural beauty, wildlife, heritage and culture. It is one of 46 National Landscapes in the UK, which alongside National Parks are the nation's finest landscapes protected so that future generations may enjoy their natural beauty.

Dorset National Landscape partnership has long supported the connection between local produce and landscape management through [Dorset Food & Drink](#), which celebrates those products which result from conservation land management or are inspired by the area's natural beauty.

Sitting Spaces is a concept of the [Dorset National Landscape](#) team which can be realised in 2024 through this area's share of an additional £10M capital funding that government committed to protected landscapes. A budget has been assigned and delivery of the project as a whole is expected before end December 2024.

The Sitting Spaces installation will support an associated Food Trails project, and will help with its aim to attract a wider range of people to use the Food Trail and to engage them in the landscape heritage while they are there. It will also function as pilot to test whether the Sitting Spaces approach could be used at other sites in the future.

The Dorset National Landscape team are therefore seeking an artist (or collaboration of artists), to create a dynamic Sitting Space along the Trail. This will require the design and creation of a temporary, seasonal or permanent installation along the Food Trail as well as curated audience engagement, to encourage more people to connect with the landscape and food production heritage of the area.

The total budget for this commission is £20,000, with an additional £1000 available for each of the 3 shortlisted artists to work up initial ideas.



Sitting Spaces Commission

The idea for Sitting Spaces comes from the ambition to widen the range of people who explore and enjoy the countryside. We are aware that not everyone is able – or wants to – actively explore the countryside (through hiking and cycling for example). We would therefore like to develop an opportunity to more passively enjoy the countryside ... by simply 'sitting'. However, rather than simply install standard park benches in front of a view, we recognise that creative input could greatly add value to the sitting experience!

Alongside giving an opportunity for passive enjoyment of the landscape, the intention is that the creative intervention is an attraction generating a greater number of trail users.

As this is the first Sitting Space to be realised, the outputs of this commission can be defined by the artist (though see note on form below). However, the Sitting Space commission should achieve the following objectives:

- Create temporary or permanent seating structures that are relevant to the place - inspired by the landscape around them, sited safely and sensitively and with consideration for appropriate materials.
- Curate the Sitting Space that actively encourages people to come out to the countryside and sit.
- Elevate the sitting experience through creative, engaging ways of enjoying the landscape.
- Widen the audience to the countryside site by being sensitive to physical and intellectual accessibility.
- Consider the potential and logistics of the Sitting Spaces concept to be rolled out in other locations.



Frome Valley © Sally Fielding



Dorset National Landscape

Location: The Sitting Space will be located alongside the Food Trail. This will follow much of the [Frome Valley Way](#) cycle trail, which runs between Dorchester and Maiden Newton (to be confirmed by the time the artists are shortlisted). If the installation is temporary and transportable, there is potential for it to be installed in different locations along the valley and also temporarily on other food trails or countryside sites in the future (subject to additional budget, see point of note below).

Food heritage: This commission will take inspiration from the landscape and food heritage of the local area. The theme for the food trail will be focussed on the Market heritage of the area – the food grown in the area and the historic (and modern) market culture of Dorchester. The Dorset National Landscape partnership has long championed the link between local produce and landscape management through initiatives like Dorset Food & Drink, which celebrates products originating from conservation land management, inspired by the area's unique terroir.

In addition, the bustling Dorchester markets, including the Wednesday Charter market and the upcoming new monthly Dorchester Artisan Market starting in April 2024, play a pivotal role in showcasing local produce and nurturing community involvement, engagement, and a destination for the county town as a food hub for Dorset tourism.

Members of the Dorset National Landscape and Dorset Food & Drink, Dorset Council Historic Environment teams will be available to share knowledge with the commissioned artist(s) and to make connections with other local experts.

Audience: Broadly, we wish to increase the number and broaden the diversity of people experiencing the special qualities of this landscape, particularly where it can be done without the need of a private car. The Food Trails project needs to increase the number of people using the Food Trail and also to extend the welcome to the countryside to a wider range of people. We have not specifically identified the audience for this commission but is likely to be a combination of people living in or near the valley, visitors from Dorset who are interested in a new experience, people from Weymouth and Yeovil who have access to the valley by train as well as people visiting Dorset from further afield. More targeted engagement and promotion will be agreed with the successful artist as the project develops.

Form: The selected artists/artistic ideas could be a range of style or form. As well as a functional seating installation, audience engagement could include performance, storytelling, sound, light or visual installation and will be determined by a number of factors including the relevance of the artistic idea to place and people, the scale of the work, the viability of it being realised.

The art works will be installed outdoors on one or more site along the Food Trail. This can be a permanent installation or a temporary/mobile structure which is rolled out on a number of occasions during the summer and early autumn. If a temporary/mobile structure, the artist will be responsible for transport, insurance and storage; and costs of these must be covered within the commission budget.



Timescale and Contract Management

The Dorset National Landscape team are looking for freelance artist(s) with experience of creating functional and engaging artwork in an outdoor countryside setting. Selection will be a two-part process with the following timescale:

- Initial Expression of Interest required by **9am on Tuesday 9th April 2024**
- Three artists will be shortlisted and notified by **9am on Wednesday 10th April 2024** and a fixed fee of £1000 each will be available to attend a site visit and work up a proposal of outline ideas/designs.
- The site visit (approx. 3 hours) will take place on **Thursday 11th April 2024**.
- The 3 shortlisted artists will make a presentation of their proposal of outline ideas / designs on **Friday 3rd May 2024**, which will be used to make the final selection. The presentation will need to show:
 - An understanding of the Brief; and how you intend to address it with your proposal
 - Understanding of the Dorset National Landscape purposes and aims, the area and communities
 - Confidence that you can deliver within budget and timeline and with health and safety awareness
 - Value for money
 - How this opportunity will help you to develop personally and professionally.
- The contract will be awarded by **Monday 6th May 2024**.
- The installation must be completed by end July 2024 and engagement activities (if appropriate) programmed until end September 2024.

The Dorset National Landscape team have a good track record of working with artists and arts organisations. You will have one point of contact within the Dorset National Landscape team, which you can use for troubleshooting, support and for regular updates on progress. Other members of the team will be available to help with landowner liaison, advice on ecological sensitivity etc.

Budget: A total of £20,000 is available for this commission, to include material, time and travel, and if a temporary structure its storage and movement between a given number of locations.

Experience: Artist(s) will need to have experience of working in non-traditional venues/sites and have experience of or interest in engaging with audience/communities. As there is both an installation and engagement element to this commission, application by collaborations between two or more artists are welcome. Understanding of /passion for the landscape and/or the food heritage of the area is desirable but not essential.

Quality: To ensure artistic quality, Dorset National Landscape will make the selection supported by Cleo Evans who will work with the appointed artist and also oversee the design, build, installation and programming elements.

Points of note: We would like to treat this commission as a pilot for longer term project reaching other sites in Dorset. We will therefore evaluate the creative process as well as the output and interaction with audience to use as evidence for future funding bids. You will not be responsible for evaluation but it



Dorset National Landscape

would be useful if you can document the process and outputs through your preferred platform(s) e.g. photography, videography, blog, social media.

Terms and conditions for the awarded contract: Dorset National Landscape Partnership is hosted by Dorset Council. Dorset Council's standard contract terms apply.

Before the Council engages a contractor to provide services, it must ascertain whether the contractor's employment status meets the requirements of the IR35 tax rules relating to services provided through an intermediary. Should the Council determine that the contractor is to be regarded as employed for tax purposes, the Council is required to deduct income tax and national insurance contributions from payments to the contractor. (See Chapter 10, Income Tax (Earnings and Pensions Act) 2003.)

Bidders will fully co-operate with the Council to provide all necessary information to enable the Council to accurately determine employment status. Note: The intermediary may be liable for tax and national insurance contributions if fraudulent information is provided.

By providing us with a quotation you agree to be bound by Dorset Council Terms and Conditions ([Standard Purchase Order Terms and Conditions April 19 \(dorsetcouncil.gov.uk\)](https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/standard-purchase-order-terms-and-conditions)) which will apply to any contract awarded to you after you have provided us with our quotation.

How to apply

If you are interested in this commission, please submit an Expression of Interest to us by **9am on Tuesday 9th April 2024**. The Expression of Interest should be no more than 3 sides of A4 and should outline why you are interested, who would be involved, what approach you would take for this project, what relevant experience you have and links to examples of your work.

Please email your Expressions of Interest to Sue Dampney, Dorset National Landscape sue.dampney@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk. If you have any queries, you can call Sue on 01305 228242.

We will select a shortlist of 3 artists from these Expressions of Interest and £1000 will be awarded to each to cover time in developing outline ideas, site visit and presenting these to us.

Assessment of Expression of Interest

Evaluation Criteria	Weighting
Understanding of the Brief	20%
Understanding the Dorset National Landscape purposes, aims, area & communities	20%
Confidence that you can deliver (track record, safety etc)	20%
Approach to the commission	20%
Opportunity to develop, personally and professionally	20%



Dorset
National
Landscape

Assessment of Shortlisted artist presentations: Dorset National Landscape Partnership is hosted by Dorset Council who are not bound to accept the lowest priced or any quote and shall not be bound to accept the supplier as sole supplier. Full details of presentation requirements and assessment criteria will be given to shortlisted artists.