

# Artist Commission Call Out

## West Mercia Youth Justice Centre

Deadline: Monday 10 March 2025, 5pm

### Introduction

In partnership with Severn Arts, and funded by Worcestershire County Council, West Mercia Youth Justice Service is commissioning a visual artist to work with a group of approximately 5 to 8 young people identified by the service to transform an outdoor and an indoor wall of the Tolladine Road Youth Justice Centre, Worcester.

This brief outlines the requirements of the project and gives details of an open day which will be held on Friday 21 February 2025 where artists and arts organisations can view the walls and surrounding space. It will also be an opportunity to meet representatives from Severn Arts and the Youth Justice Service as well as some participants, to find out more about the process and expectations of the commission before applying.

### The Importance of Enhancing the Space

Young people coming to the Tolladine Road centre have told the service that the building “looks like a prison”, “is unfriendly” and “makes you feel sad and bad”. As part of West Mercia Youth Justice Service’s child-first approach, the service listens to feedback from young people and seeks to do something about it; publishing this through a “You Said, We Did” approach.

This project therefore aims to give these young people a voice and the power to be directly involved in making their space feel welcoming, relevant and appropriate, where they can rehabilitate successfully.

Some initial consultation has taken place about the current space and some thoughts about the new space. Here are some comments from the young people:

#### Thoughts about current space



#### Ideas for new space



The young people have also collected some images they would like to use as inspiration:



## The Brief



We are seeking an artist/organisation with an inspiring and inclusive approach, to work with a group of approximately 5 to 8 young people identified by West Mercia Youth Justice Service to co-design two new artworks for an indoor and an outdoor wall at Tolladine Road Youth Justice Centre. The selected artist/organisation will have a strong track record of excellent engagement with young people, experience of working with young people in challenging life circumstances, and an understanding of youth voice and co-creation.

They will aim to transform the space into a welcoming and personalised environment for its users. This will involve facilitating engaging workshops that will enable the project participants to develop their ideas for the artwork. It will also mean working with them to transform the walls using paint or whatever medium is decided collaboratively.

## Specification

This exciting opportunity involves the transformation of two walls at the West Mercia Youth Justice Centre on Tolladine Road, Worcester. The indoor wall is part of the communal space where young people meet with their support workers. The wall is currently painted white/grey and is 5.40m wide and 2.67m high. The outdoor wall is visible upon entry to the building, is currently bare brown/grey brick and measures 8.58m wide and 3.20m high.



The artwork must stay within the designated boundaries, must not include any inappropriate or political narrative and must be reflective of the ideas developed with the young people. The final design will be co-created with participants and must also be approved by West Mercia Youth Justice Service and Severn Arts.

We are looking for artwork that creates a welcoming environment that supports young people's rehabilitation.

Proposals should demonstrate a clear vision and strong understanding of the site, its surroundings and the young people that will see it. Medium and materials used must be weatherproof, durable and low maintenance. The project will take place in an operational area and therefore careful consideration will be needed as to how the artwork will be created.

Please note, we expect the successful artist/organisation to provide a method statement and risk assessment before starting work and plans must comply with the Management of H&S at Work Regulations 1999. We also expect artists to have an up-to-date Enhanced DBS certificate or be willing to undertake the required DBS check.

## The Commission Fee

The fee for this commission is £5,000 inclusive of workshops, planning, design and creation of final artwork, all materials, travel expenses and any equipment needed.

## Timeframe

Open Day for Artists on site	Friday 21 February, 2pm - 3pm
Online briefing for those unable to attend in person	Friday 21 February, 11am - 12pm
Application deadline	Monday 10 March 5pm
Shortlisted artists notified of interview	Wednesday 19 March (If you have not heard back by this date you should assume you have not been selected for interview.)
Interview	Thursday 27 March 2025
Co-creation workshops, approval of final design and completion of artwork on the wall	April - July 2025

## Further Information

We will be holding an Open Day for artists to see the space, meet with stakeholders and participants and find out more about the commission on Friday 21 February, 2pm - 3pm. If you cannot make this session, we will be holding an on-line session on Friday 21 February, 11am - 12pm to answer any questions you may have.

To register your interest in attending either the Open Day or the on-line session, please contact Jude Wild on [recruitment@severnarts.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@severnarts.org.uk) by 5pm on Wednesday 19 February 2025.

For further information about this commission please contact Jen Loffman on **07776 530 562**.

## How to Make an Application

Please send your proposal by **Monday 10 March 2025, 5pm** (any submissions after this time will not be considered).

Please note that the shortlisting and interview process will be led by the young people involved in this project, and they have requested that applications are made in **video** form. Please submit your video application via [WeTransfer](https://www.wetransfer.com) to [recruitment@severnarts.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@severnarts.org.uk) or via WhatsApp on 07776 530 562. If you are unable to send a video, please send a short written application.

Your proposal should include:

- A little about you and any relevant experience of delivering similar projects
- A selection of images or a link to a website or social media account where we can see examples of previous work
- Some initial ideas or concepts
- Your approach to inclusively engaging with young people
- Your proposed timetable for delivering the project
- Materials you might use
- Installation requirements
- A brief breakdown of how you intend to spend the budget
- Confirmation that you will be prepared to complete a method statement and risk assessment before starting work
- Contact details of at least one referee that will be taken up for successful artist

We welcome applications from individual artists, arts organisations and collectives.

## About West Mercia Youth Justice Service

West Mercia Youth Justice Service (WMYJS) works with young people aged 10 – 17 years old who have got into trouble with the police or are at risk of getting into trouble with the police. It is partnership between the Local Authorities, National Probation Service, West Mercia Police, NHS organisations across West Mercia and the Office for the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner. They also work with housing and children's services, schools and education authorities, charities and the local community.

The youth offending team gets involved if a young person gets into trouble with the police or is arrested, is charged with a crime and has to go to court, or is convicted of a crime and given a sentence. They look into the background of a young person and try to help them stay away from crime. When they first come into contact with a young person they carry out an assessment to find out what happened and how they can support them. The aim of the assessment is to identify strengths, needs and problems, so that an intervention plan can be made to support a young person stay out of trouble in the future.

For more information visit: <https://westmerciayouthjustice.org.uk/about/>

## About Severn Arts

Severn Arts, a thriving charitable arts company formed in June 2018, brings high quality music and arts to a wide range of people across Worcestershire. We lead [Herefordshire and Worcestershire's Music Education Hub](#), funded by Arts Council England, teaching music in all types of education settings, on our travelling Music Box and in our music groups, bands and orchestras which meet outside of school. We are commissioned by Worcestershire County Council to deliver the County Arts service and by Worcester City Council to support community festivals and are working in partnership with Malvern Hills District Council and Reimagine Redditch to support the creative sector to grow, increase engagement and develop audiences. Severn Arts is committed to offering new, inclusive arts activities that focus on widening access to the arts for all, with a particular emphasis on children and young people.

For more information visit: <https://www.severnarts.org.uk/>