

Design Commission – The Gayle Lounge in the Hat Factory Arts Centre, Luton



Image 1: The Hat District, Luton photo credit; Shaun Armstrong

Introduction

The Culture Trust, Luton is a progressive and entrepreneurial arts and cultural charity with a mission to connect communities through meaningful culture and creativity. We produce and present a year round programme of activity across The Hat Factory Arts Centre, Wardown House Museum & Gallery, Stockwood Discovery Centre, and a number of creative workspaces across The Hat District.

Through our programme and projects we actively promote the value of arts and culture in creating sense of place, cultural regeneration, wellbeing, community cohesion and in improving the quality of people's lives. We provide creative opportunities and activities for young people and those from marginalised communities to inspire engagement and generate new skills and cultural interests.

The Culture Trust, Luton is seeking a professional interior designer/designer to reimagine the 'Vaults' basement space in the Hat Factory Arts Centre, transforming it into a flexible and inspiring LGBTQ+ community and performance space.

The re-design the Vaults will build on the relationship between the LGBTQIA+ community, their allies, and local cultural, social and hospitality venues. It will encourage social networking and befriending, and act a hub for creativity, connectivity, information and signposting. In partnership with Gayle Europe, and supported by Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation, this new space will present a programme of arts, workshops, discussions and performances, that support a more visible LGBTQ+ community in Luton, and specifically across the Hat District.

Commission Brief

To produce options, costings and installation method statements for the redesign of the space. These shall be presented to the selection panel who will select a preferred scheme. Upon approval, the designer shall be required to oversee the ordering of materials and project manage the installation to meet the Trust and Luton Borough Council compliance and building regulations. The designer will have oversight of the realisation of designs into concept drawings and will support during the installation period.

The designs for the commission are planned to be exhibited on Saturday 25th June, to launch as part of PRIDE in Luton.

The commission is open to all, however we particularly welcome submissions from designers who identify as LGBTQ+ and who have a connection with Luton.

The **re-design** should incorporate the following:

Seating: flexible seating that can be used for various performances formats, networking, talks and workshops.

Lighting: flexible and imaginative lighting that can be appropriate for both an evening 'lounge' set up, and a more brightly lit performance and workshops.

Interior Signage: a creative way of signposting to information and to promote relevant events, opportunities and cultural experiences.

Look and feel: something to give the space a vibrant, warm, and welcoming aesthetic

[Click here](#) for a virtual introduction to the 'Vaults' from Michael of Gayle Europe. Please see appendix A for photos of the 'vaults' space.

The design will:

- Be sympathetic to the original features of the building whilst being clearly identifiable as an LGBTQ+ space
**The design cannot change the structural elements and fire-exit compliance needs to be factored into the designs. Also please note some of the elements in the space are listed and cannot be changed.*
- Be visually striking with an emphasis on colour and promote the idea of inclusivity
- Allow the space to be versatile and adaptable to different types of events
- Contain an area for artistic self-expression and communal creativity
- Contain an area for LGBTQIA+ information signposting

The selected designer will be expected to:

- Upon appointment, visit the space and meet the partners
- Work closely with The Culture Trust and Luton Borough Council to ensure the designs, materials and installation meets regulations.
- Identify and support the Trust in purchasing the materials (using a separate budget) and coordinate delivery to the Hat Factory Arts Centre. We prefer to support local suppliers where we can.
- If required, work with The Culture Trust to identify any installation and construction partners. All sub-contractors shall need to be separately procured through the Trust.
- Meet regularly to review budgets and project progress.
- Project Manage the installation as specified in the agreed designs

Commission budget

A design fee of **£3000** (design and project management, attending meetings and fully inclusive of travel, admin and other costs incurred).

£5,000 - £7,000 inclusive is available for materials, labour, fixtures and fittings, and furnishings. We encourage the recycling of furniture, art and ephemera held by the Trust.

Project Time line

| Stages | Notes | Timeline |
|-------------------|--|---|
| EOI | Submit initial concept ideas for this commission Share examples of other artistic work/portfolio designed and completed by you. | By 12 noon on Thursday 26 th May 2022 |
| Selection Process | Interview by panel | Monday 30 th – Wed 1 st June 2022 Notifications sent Wed 1 st June 2022 |

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| <p>Design development</p> | <p>Present 2-3 options to the panel who, through discussion with you and a review of costs, will select a final preferred scheme.</p> <p>Provide a finalised cost breakdown of the project budget</p> | <p>Thu 2nd – Mon 13th June 2022 (12 days) Presentation on Tuesday 14th June 2022</p> |
| <p>Final Design shared for feedback</p> | <p>Shared at LUTON PRIDE, seeking feedback from visitors in order to make any final changes that will meet customer needs.</p> | <p>Saturday 25th June 2022</p> |
| <p>Installation and refurbishment Work</p> | <p>Overseen by the designer but operationally led by the Culture Trust and engaging volunteers.</p> | <p>Dates to be determined by design.</p> |
| <p>Completion</p> | <p>We would like the works to be concluded at the earliest possibility, but without compromising quality.</p> | |

How to apply

To apply please submit to following to rachael.donlan@culturetrust.com by 12 noon on Thursday 26th May 2022

Your CV

A short cover letter detailing your approach to the design commission

Two examples of recent relevant work including pictures or videos

A Gayle Lounge concept/vision for the vaults space that responds to brief; including visuals, images, drawings, colour palettes, and narrative explaining the functionality of the space

The Hat Factory Arts Centre

In September 2019 we reopened the Hat factory Arts Centre after a £2m redevelopment and created **A space for everyone**. We commission local talent and leading artists from across the UK and present a year round diverse programme of live music, contemporary dance, theatre, film and workshops.

We believe in nurturing local talent and giving young artists a platform to share their talents tell their own story. With a diverse programme of events throughout the year, we pride ourselves in presenting work that is locally relevant and nationally important. The Hat Factory welcomes over 150,000 visitors a year and 8000 pass along Bute Street and the Hat Factory doors every day.

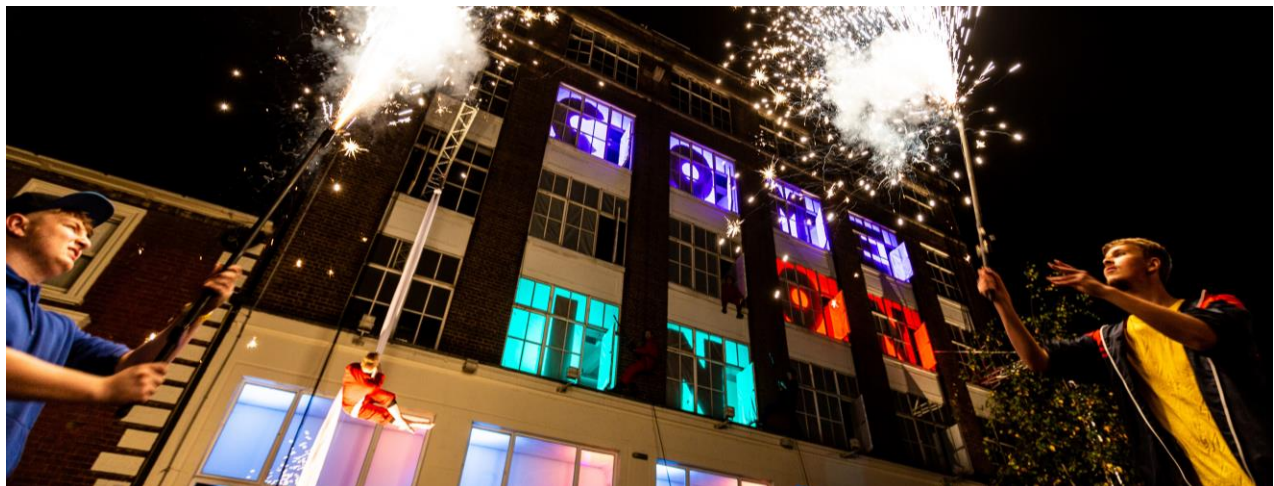


Image 2: Hat Factory Re-awakening 2019, photo credit; Shaun Armstrong

Gayle Europe

Gayle Europe is an independent LGBTQ+ beverage company launched in celebration of the legalisation of Gay Marriage. However Gayle is more than just a Queer beer. Their message reaches far beyond race, sexuality or creed; it's about embracing diversity, of accepting and celebrating everyone's right to express their freedoms. It's one of unity, of family and friends. Their story is a celebration of being human. Gayle. Brewed With Love.

Gayle's unique brew is a nod to the LGBTQ+ community's sense of pride and a cause for acceptance, standing together and embracing diversity, equality and self-expression. At the very heart of Gayle is a call to action, to love one another and to celebrate the power and beauty of diversity.



Appendix A – The Vaults photos



