



## Artistic Director

**Durham BRASS Festival is looking for a freelance Artistic Director to shape the vision of the festival, ensuring a successful and vibrant annual event from 2020 onwards.**

### **Background**

Durham BRASS Festival is a celebration of brass music in all its forms. Taking inspiration from the brass band heritage of County Durham, the festival brings together all musical genres into a vibrant and entertaining 10-day festival which takes place across the County. Engaging with over 42,000 people in 2019, BRASS is one of Durham County Council's portfolio of cultural festivals bringing cultural experiences and regeneration to the North East.

### **The Role**

The Artistic Director is responsible for establishing BRASS as the key event in the calendar for both performers and audiences, bringing scale, ambition and diversity to the artistic programme.

Working with the festival team, and leading on the programming for the festival, our new partner will use their experience and connections to explore partnerships and collaborations with other festivals, create new pieces of work and create a global platform for the festival.

Striking a balance between creating great art, and delivering exceptional audience experiences, you will understand our current and potential audiences, and create a programme which will inspire and delight in equal measure. With opportunities for musicians at all levels to collaborate, share skills, and showcase their work, your aim should be to establish the festival as the home of brass music in all its forms. BRASS must simultaneously celebrate Durham's strong tradition of brass music whilst seeking out creative approaches to introduce new audiences to the genre, exploring how brass moves past the traditional and contributes to many different musical styles: classical, jazz, blues, indie, rock and so on.

New commissions and innovative collaborations are at the heart of BRASS, and past experience has demonstrated that they are one of the most effective methods for attracting and engaging with a non-traditional brass audience. A key element of the new Artistic Director's role will be to identify opportunities to create exceptional new work for the festival.

BRASS is part of Durham Cultural Festivals, which is an Arts Council NPO consisting of three core festivals delivered or commissioned by Durham County Council.

## **Responsibilities of the Role**

- Lead on programming for the main BRASS programme, researching and sourcing performers to make up an exciting and challenging programme which delivers a first-class, professional festival. The festival should be innovative and ambitious with strong artistic credentials, and a strong sense of place in Durham.
- Identify opportunities to commission and create exceptional new work for the festival, using experiences and connections to explore partnerships and collaborations with other festivals.
- Produce a programme which creates opportunities for musicians at all levels to collaborate, share skills, and to showcase work, and which celebrates Durham's strong tradition of brass music, whilst seeking out creative approaches to introduce new audiences to the genre.
- Work within the agreed festival budget, negotiating with producers, agents, promoters, managers and performers to ensure the best possible financial deal for BRASS. Where possible, identify new revenue generation opportunities.
- Ensure that diversity is embedded at the heart of the BRASS programme.
- Ensure that BRASS meets the targets and ambitions identified in the Durham Cultural Festivals NPO Business Plan 2018-2021.
- Act as the figurehead for BRASS, undertaking the role of festival advocacy and acting as an ambassador for the BRASS within the industry.
- Attend quarterly meetings with the Service Manager to report on programming, and progress towards targets and ambitions; and attend the BRASS Steering Group and contribute to any other festival meetings as should be required.
- Work with the festival Producer, the DCC's Festivals & Events team, core members of Durham County Council's Culture team and key stakeholders as required.

BRASS is currently made up of three key elements - a strong international Street Band programme providing free events across the County; a school's programme which in 2019 saw around 16,000 pupils engage with great brass music, and an exciting ticketed and commissioned programme.

We would like our new partner to contribute to the direction of BRASS for 2020 and 2021.

For 2020, we see this as being through new commissions and the main ticketed programme, and for 2021 to have a more holistic view of the whole festival, informing and shaping the street band programme and community and outreach work. We would also welcome the contribution of the new Artistic Director to help shape the future of BRASS beyond 2021, revisiting the vision and mission of the festival and advising on the future delivery of an NPO.

The festival is able to supply general administrative and production support for the role.

### **Budget & Fees**

The Programming budget for artists for the ticketed programme and commissions is £65,000, with an additional amount available to cover production costs for these events.

It is expected that you will be a freelance arts and culture professional with the required experience, or a cultural organisation used to event delivery, and that you can commit the time required for the role. The fee for the role will be £25,000 pa inclusive of expenses. We are looking for an immediate start.

### **Appointment Process**

If you are interested, please submit an application including:

- An up-to-date CV
- Two case studies (max. one side of A4 each) of previous, relevant work.
- Your initial ideas for BRASS, based on the information above (max. two sides of A4)

These should be sent to [robin.byers@durham.gov.uk](mailto:robin.byers@durham.gov.uk) by midnight on Sunday 20 October 2019.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to give a short presentation on their ideas and answer questions as part of an informal interview.