



Cymru yn Fenis
Wales in Venice
Il Galles a Venezia

Wales in Venice

Open Call

2026



Accessibility

Arts Council of Wales is committed to making information available in large print, braille, audio, Easy Read and British Sign Language and will endeavour to provide information in languages other than Welsh or English on request.

If you have any access needs and are thinking about making an application, we can help to make sure that you're supported during the application process. Please contact us at grants@arts.wales to discuss how we can help.

Arts Council of Wales operates an equal opportunities policy.



Cover: Helen Sear, *caetera fumus* (detail)

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Wales in Venice

Arts Council of Wales is pleased to invite Expressions of Interest from organisations working in the visual arts in Wales, to curate and deliver an ambitious and distinctive Wales in Venice exhibition for the 61st International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia.

We particularly welcome proposals that will create international opportunities for diverse artists living in Wales to develop their work in a way that is fair to people and to the planet.

Deadline for applications
Wednesday 4th June 2025 at 1pm

The **61st International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia** will take place from 9 May-22 November 2026. It is recognised as one of the world's most prestigious festivals of contemporary art, attracting audiences of 700,000.

Wales in Venice is commissioned and managed by Arts Council of Wales and Wales Arts International, with support from Welsh Government.

Our ambitious plans to showcase Welsh arts and culture on an international stage, is outlined in our recently published strategy by Wales Arts International, the international arm of the Arts Council of Wales.

Introduction

Arts Council of Wales has commissioned exhibitions at the International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia, nine times since 2003.

Through consistent presence at the world's most prestigious visual arts platform, Welsh artists have not just exhibited – they have sparked international dialogue, challenged perceptions, and demonstrated the dynamic force of Welsh contemporary culture.

Renewing our commitment to **Wales in Venice** for 2026 and future editions in 2028 and 2030, we aim to build on this proud cultural legacy spanning two decades and the urgent need now to sustain Wales's artistic voice on the global stage.

We will take bold steps to deliver Wales in Venice in 2026 to achieve this critically important work.



James Richards

Music for the gift, 2017,
production still

Archive image courtesy The
Schwules Museum*, Berlin

About Wales in Venice

We commission artists to present as a **Collateral Event** of the International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia to celebrate the best of emerging and established artists from Wales.

The project selected for 2026 will kick-start Wales's renewed presence and ambitions at La Biennale di Venezia. It will build on our reputation and experience while introducing new delivery methods and support learning for longer term planning into 2028 and 2030.

The project for 2026 will be selected by a single-phase open call for proposals.

Wales in Venice **aims** to:

- Propel Welsh visual arts onto a global stage, showcasing a diverse and forward-looking Wales.
- Be ambitious, bold and connected to both local and global audiences.
- Create international experiences and connections for galleries, curators and artists that will develop the visual arts in Wales.
- Champion equality of opportunity to remove barriers to participation and recognition.
- Pioneer environmental sustainability in the arts, rooted in principles of social justice and global responsibility.
- Raise the profile of Welsh visual arts, attracting international interest and debate.

Laura Ford
Glory, Glory
Somewhere Else: Artists
from Wales, 2005

Principles for the development of the project are:

- Proactively drive equality, accessibility and Welsh Language across all elements of the project.
- Work openly, ethically and responsibly to measure, minimise and mitigate the environmental impact of the project.
- Uphold industry standard payments and foster a positive working culture.
- Maximise value to deliver exceptional return on investment through strategic partnerships and opportunities to diversify funding streams.
- Maintain strong governance and project management structure within a robust evaluation framework.



What does the opportunity offer in 2026?

- A strong and distinctive presence for Wales at the International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, as an official Collateral Event.
- A unique collaborative approach and supportive environment, providing time and space for creative teams to research, develop and present new work.
- Exceptional opportunity to develop new collaborations and partnerships to deliver the artistic project and engagement programme.
- A welcoming and accessible exhibition in Venice.
- Professional development opportunities throughout the project, supporting individuals from diverse backgrounds and across a range of points in career and practice.
- A bold communications campaign that delivers exceptional media and digital engagement opportunities.
- New networks and connections between the visual arts in Wales and the World.
- A spotlight on the visual arts in Wales that benefits the wider sector.
- New touring and public programme in Wales, sharing international critically valued work to support audience development.
- To challenge conventions of working internationally, to innovate and think critically and creatively about the most pressing issues of our time.

Bedwyr Williams,
The Northern Hemisphere,
mixed media,
The Starry Messenger, 2013
Photo Anna Arca

How is the project delivered?

Wales in Venice is a partnership between Arts Council of Wales, the **Commissioner**, and the **Creative Team** selected to deliver the project.



The Commissioning Team

The Creative Team will be formally commissioned by the Arts Council of Wales with roles and responsibilities and milestones outlined in a grant agreement with the lead organisation.

The Portfolio Manager leading on Visual Arts will oversee the entirety of the project budget and management of the project, working closely with key members of the Creative Team, but primarily with the person identified as the Exhibition Director.

As Commissioner, we lead on negotiations on the rental of the venue and liaison with the Biennale. We manage administration and budget for the provision of the venue, permissions, Biennale registration and the professional development programme – Invigilator Plus. We also commission, manage and coordinate Press and PR.

We expect to work closely and in partnership with the Creative Team, inviting you to contribute to activities we are responsible for and to include you in relevant recruitment/s. We will Chair Project Management Meetings, throughout, to monitor progress and delivery.

A Steering Group will also be convened to help support the development of the project and will meet on a quarterly basis.

We will build on the reputation and alumni of Invigilator Plus to create a new programme to support individuals facing barriers to international opportunities in the visual arts. We will work with the selected team to develop and integrate the programme into the selected creative project and engagement plans.

We are currently undertaking work to secure a venue for 2026. Technical information and floorplans will be shared with the selected team when available. We are exploring options of around 100-150 sqm in central Venice, subject to cost and availability.

The Creative Team

The make-up of the Creative Team responsible for exhibition delivery and the design of the curatorial framework, is not prescribed. You may wish, as the lead organisation, to curate the exhibition in house to provide development opportunities, or you may choose to include or work with a partner curator or appoint a freelance/independent curator.

The curatorial model you adopt and the scale of your project, should demonstrate benefit to the artist/s, organisation/s involved and should match and enhance the capacity and resources required to deliver your proposal.

We will work with you to help shape the delivery model to support capacity of your team to realise the project, should you be successful. We aim to create a bespoke management and delivery structure which is efficient, effective, has clearly defined roles and underpins the partnership to deliver the project.

The Budget

The project will be delivered on a budget of £400,000 across two years. This covers the totality of the project costs and is divided between the Commissioners costs and Creative Teams exhibition and delivery costs.

For the purposes of the Expression of Interest the budget for the Creative Team is set at £188,000. [A budget template is provided.](#)

Examples of exhibition and delivery costs are included in the budget template. Technical and logistical spend on the realisation of the exhibition should target Wales based collaborators and providers wherever possible.

While it is critical to leverage additional funding, the proposal must demonstrate it is achievable within these resources and demonstrate value for money.

Your budget will be subject to further negotiation should you be successful. This includes access support costs for individuals directly involved in delivering the project. These might include interpreter costs, support workers, or childcare costs. These costs should not be included in the Expression of Interest at this stage.

Tim Davies
Drift, (film still) 2011



Who can apply?

- Organisations that have experience of managing public funds can submit the Expression of Interest. As the lead for the project, we expect you to take responsibility for the budget, financial and contracting matters associated with the delivery of the project and safeguarding.
- Team members can be based outside Wales, including the curator and artist/s, but must demonstrate a deep knowledge of, connection to and benefits for the visual arts in Wales.
- Commercial galleries may form part of the team but should demonstrate clear public benefit and avoid conflicts of interest.

Prior international experience is not a requirement. We do expect teams to have a strong track record of exhibition making, and where necessary can include collaborators and/or mentors with international experience to support learning and delivery.

Eligibility

- Organisations must be based in Wales.
- All organisations must meet our [minimum eligibility criteria set out here](#).
- We have a responsibility to ensure that public funds are managed and spent properly. One of the ways we do this is by ensuring organisations we fund are set up appropriately.

Selection criteria

The selection panel's primary purpose is identifying a creative project that meets the aims of the project and that:

- Demonstrates exceptional artistic quality and international potential.
- Creates tangible benefits for Welsh visual arts practitioners.
- Strengthens connections with both local and global audiences.
- Delivers on our commitments to Welsh Language, Equalities and Engagement.

In addition, we will also consider how it:

- Demonstrates exceptional partnership working, securing new opportunities and potential investment for Wales.
- Helps meet our [Wellbeing objectives](#) including our commitment to Climate Justice.

An overarching goal is achievability in the timeframe to meet the Venice Biennale deadlines and deliver a presentation Saturday, May 9th to Sunday, November 22nd, 2026.

Timeline

- **Deadline for Submissions: Wednesday 4th June 2025 at 1pm**
- **Shortlisting notification: 16 June 2025**
- **Interviews: 23-24 June 2025**
- **Commission announced: mid July 2025**
- **Project Development and Production: July 2025 – April 2026**
- **Opening in Venice: 6, 7, and 8 May 2026**
- **Public Presentation: 9 May 2026 – 22 November 2026**
- **Touring: 2027/2028**

Sean Edwards
Undo Things Done,
installation view, 2019
Photo Jamie Woodley



Application process

You will need to upload your Expression of Interest to the portal.

Please ensure that this is uploaded in a single document (Word or pdf) that does not exceed 250MB. Text should be no smaller than 12 point.

Your Expression of Interest must include the following:

1. A curatorial and artistic proposal in response to the opportunity (maximum of 5 sides of A4 or 25 minutes of [audio or video](#))

This should include:

- Exhibition proposal and the curatorial framework for artist/s selected. Include what artist(s) might choose to make/do and elements of new work. If there are site specific aspects these should be described generically.
- Outline of relationships between organisations and individuals involved in the overall artistic vision and programme.
- Approach to engagement and digital programmes and activities in Wales, including touring.
- Consideration of the **aims, principles** and the **selection criteria** for Wales in Venice.

2. Artistic track record (maximum 2 sides of A4 per artist)

- Evidence of artist/s work, to include CVs and up to four examples of previous/current work as still images, text or links to a video showreel, per artist.
- Showreels should be a maximum of 4 minutes and available online from 4 June to 1 July 2025. All video and audio material must be provided as links to websites, Vimeo or YouTube. Please remember to include security information if links are password protected.

3. CVs and short biographies of team members (maximum 4 sides of A4)

- To include personnel, organisation/s profile and key staff and/or co-opted and freelancers proposed to be involved in the delivery of the project. This includes curation, project management, technical and learning and engagement activities.
- Identify an **Exhibition Director** in the team that will be responsible for reporting to the Commissioner on all aspects of the project including budget management.

4. Outline budget ([use the template provided](#))

- An indicative budget, include potential targeted additional income, sponsorship and strategy to support the exhibition, in cash or in kind.

5. Confirmation of availability to meet the project timeline (maximum 1 side of A4)

- Evidence that key team members, including the artist/s and organisation/s endorse your proposal.

Submitting your Expression of Interest

1. You'll need to use [our online 'portal'](#) to make an application.

If you haven't done so already, you'll need to register for access to the portal. You can [find out how to register here](#).

If you're unable to access the online form or require further assistance, please contact us at: grants@arts.wales

2. Complete a Wales in Venice application form on the online portal.
3. Upload your Expression of Interest to the online portal. After we receive your application, we'll send you an acknowledgement.
4. If your application is eligible, it will proceed to assessment.

The Selection panel (to be announced) will be made up of invited members of the Wales in Venice Steering Group and visual arts professionals with extensive international experience.

The panel is responsible for shortlisting and selecting the project for Wales in Venice exhibition at the 61st International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia. The panel's decisions are final.

5. If your application is shortlisted, we'll send you details to participate in the interview. If you've not been successful, we'll write to explain why and offer an opportunity for feedback.

Deadline for applications: Wednesday 4th June 2025 at 1pm

Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

What if I need access support?

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If you need access support, you can [find out more about what we can do and how to arrange it on our website](#).

Back cover:

Cleave 03 (Transmission: Visions of the Sleeping Poet)

Cerith Wyn Evans, 2003

Image: Polly Braden © the artist.

What if I have a question?

If you have any questions about the opportunity or would like to discuss your ideas and eligibility, please contact our Wales in Venice team.

You can do this by email, through our website or social media: walesinvenice@arts.wales

You can contact us in a number of ways



Telephone: 03301 242733 (all calls charged at local rates)
10am-4pm Monday to Friday



Website: arts.wales



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