



Offaly County Council

PUBLIC ART COMMISSION
Banagher Co. Offaly

Literature

Information Brief



**An Roinn Tithíochta,
Pleanála agus Rialtais Áitiúil**
Department of Housing,
Planning and Local Government

THE BRIEF

Offaly County Council would like to commission a professional writer to deliver a literature project with the potential to have a lasting impact for the community of Banagher, County Offaly, during 2019/2020. We would therefore, like to encourage a proposal that has a community participatory approach to literature.

We are open to accepting a proposal from professional writers of genres including; poetry, fiction, short fiction, playwriting. Engagement with the community is a prerequisite and every effort should be made to involve the community as a whole in some aspect of the proposal. You must keep in mind that not every participant may have a knowledge of a particular literary genre, but this should not preclude them from participating.

The preferred commission will have the potential to have lasting significance and meaning to the community, while also ensuring a strong artistic priority in relation to the writers own developmental practice.

CONTEXT - BANAGHER

Banagher (*Beannchar na Sionna* in Irish) is a small town in County Offaly with a population of approximately 1,700 people, ideally situated on a shallow crossing point on the banks of the River Shannon and close to early monastic sites in the mid-Shannon region. The surrounding callows are home to a large variety of wildlife, with an abundance of flora and fauna.

Before the famine, Banagher had a population of 3000 and was a noted centre for the malting and brewing industries. With the coming of the railway in 1884, its cattle and horse fairs were among the largest in Ireland. Banagher Concrete is now the town's main employer.

With the Shannon, the Brosna, the Little Brosna and the Grand Canal all on the doorstep, Banagher today is a haven for boating, fishing and other outdoor pursuits. Cruisers can be hired from Banagher Marina and holidaymakers boating on the Shannon can avail of the town's moorings to explore the lively town.

Banagher has [many historical sites](#) situated around the vicinity, such as Martello Tower and the famous 5 Arch Bridge; and also a number of historical literary associations. [Charlotte Bronte](#) visited Banagher on many occasions. She was married to a local vicar, [Rev. Nichols](#), and they honeymooned in Banagher, staying in Cuba House (now Charlotte's Way B&B). Another of Banagher's famous literary associations is with Anthony Trollope, who became one of the most successful, prolific and respected English novelists of the Victorian era. He was also the inventor of the post box. Trollope stayed in Banagher from 1841-1844, working as a post office surveyor's clerk. Trollope began his first published novel "The McDermotts of Ballycloran" in 1843. After his marriage to Rose Heseltine from Rotherdam in June 1844 he was promoted and moved to Clonmel. It was in the Shannon Hotel Banagher, that James Pope-Hennessy wrote his celebrated biography of Trollope in 1969/70.

Today Banagher has a thriving poetry and writing scene, and includes groups such as The Banagher Irish Conversational Group (Ciorcal Cómhrá) who recently published a selection of short stories and poetry in Irish, collected from group's sessions, and literary events such as the annual, 'Readings from the Pallet'.

The hugely popular annual festival “That Beats Banagher”, is also an event with appeal for the community across culture and arts.

www.banagher.ie

Funding

This Public Art Commission has been funded from the Kylebeg Banagher Capital scheme from funds made available from the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government under the Percent for Art Scheme. The construction of 8 social housing units at Kylebeg, Banagher are a mix of 2 and 3 bed terrace housing units to cater for people with special needs and/or older age.

Competition Process

This is a one stage competition process. Selection will be made on the basis of proposals submitted, by an independent selection panel.

Budget

The value of this commission is **€16,500** and will be inclusive of all costs, expenses, VAT, insurance and other charges or contingencies.

Assessment and criteria

Proposals will be assessed by a selection panel appointed by Offaly County Council, the members of which will have appropriate expertise in Public Art Commissioning including representatives from Offaly County Council, community representation and external expertise.

A selection panel body will assess proposals using the following criteria.

- **Quality and Originality of the idea** - Artistic excellence, innovation and uniqueness of proposal presented both on a stand-alone basis and with reference to other competing applicants and in relation to the brief. **25 marks**
- **Concept and relevance** - Appropriateness to social and cultural context of the commission. **25 marks**
- **Feasibility** with regards management of time/budget/community engagement. This includes the track record of the artist and demonstrated capacity to manage, and deliver the project as outlined and within budget etc. **25 marks**
- **Impact** – Assessment that the commission will have a lasting and meaningful impact on the community engaged and as a way of raising the cultural profile of Banagher and Offaly. **25 marks**

Offaly County Council reserve the right not to proceed with any proposal under this invitation and consider other appropriate courses of action.

Guidelines for Applicants

- The successful tender will need to provide up-to-date tax clearance certification and will continue to hold this for the duration of the contract
- The successful tender will be required to hold professional indemnity insurance with a reputable insurance company
- The successful tender will be subject to Garda Vetting.
- Tenders received after the date outline below will not be accepted under any circumstances.
- Emailed tenders will be deemed ineligible.
- Tenders that do not include three hard copies as requested will be considered ineligible.

Child Protection

In line with [Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children \(2017\)](#), Offaly County Council is required to ensure that contracts issued to anyone whose work brings them in contact with children are meeting their obligations under the [Children First Act 2015](#).

Any contract issued will be made in adherence to Offaly County Council Child Protection Policy, Offaly County Council Arts Service Child Safety Statement, and Offaly County Council's Health & Safety Policy

Submitting your Proposal

Please apply in writing and include three hard copies of each of the following (**email applications will not be accepted**)

1. A current CV
2. A typed proposal outlining ideas and concepts including how you propose to engage with the community (max 1000 words)
3. A budget which indicates how you will use the funding with headings such as
 - Artist's fee and any other fees
 - Any resources needed (e.g. rental of venues, supply of materials etc.)
 - Any transport/ travel/ accommodation costs
4. Timescale - give a detailed outline of the timescale for the project including numbers of days worked for; research, community contact, plus a preliminary schedule and expected delivery dates - *the tender contract will be based upon delivery of commissioning within a maximum period of one year from signing the contract.*
5. Name two referees

Please also supply supplementary materials which include examples of previous written works, information regarding relevant previous projects or commissions (Up to 3 examples to be submitted)

Application to arrive no later than 3pm on Friday 2nd August 2019

If posted outside the Republic, please ensure adequate time for the proposal to meet the deadline.

Please address your application to

Offaly County Council Arts Office
Public Art Commission/Literature
Charleville Road,
Tullamore,
Co. Offaly

For further enquires please contact 057 9357400 or arts@offalycoco.ie