

**Dudley Metropolitan  
Borough Council**  
**Projects & Delivery:**  
Regeneration and  
Enterprise services

**Call for Expressions of Interest  
Brief for Artists  
Metro Art Programme**



Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Extension  
(WBHE)



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

METRO

# ART TRACK

DUDLEY

## Introduction

Art Track: Metro Art Programme is a one-year pilot project to create an expanded programme of designs for public art commissions and public engagement activities for the new Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Extension (WBHE) Metro line which opens to passengers in 2024. The programme will see the creation of artist commissioned designs and project proposals for a series of permanent and temporary site-specific, context-specific, community-specific and medium-specific art commissions for Metro station stops, plazas, infrastructure, public open spaces, pocket parks, community settings and trackside sites of the Metro line.

This new green transport route that connects Dudley and Sandwell with Wolverhampton, Birmingham and the wider region will be a linear catalyst for artistic responses to create Dudley's high-quality designed environment and public realm close to the Metro. Designs for artworks and projects will be made accessible in an exhibition called Dudley Futures in May 2022. Commissions will be progressed beyond July 2022 subject to selection processes of Dudley's Public Art Advisory Group, Metro's building programme and new funding.

Art Track: Metro Art Programme aims to bring together people and place by being a champion of diversity and accessibility of public realm design and artist involvement. The programme will challenge commonly held perceptions of public art, create new artist opportunities and expand the ways artists work within large scale development and regeneration contexts.

## Background

This first stage is a 'Call for Expressions of Interest' competition for artists initial design approaches for public art projects for the new WBHE Metro line that runs through Dudley and Sandwell and opens in 2024. Dudley invites approaches to the design of permanent and temporary artworks and projects using time-based and socially-engaged practice.

In a two-stage process, between 15 - 25 artists will be shortlisted and selected from the open call competition to produce detailed designs. Selection of artists will be overseen by Dudley council's Public Art Advisory Group (PAAG).

Artists shortlisted from their initial Expression of Interest submission will be invited to the second stage process and paid to create a detailed commissioned design proposal. Stage 2 designs will be shown in a public exhibition 'Dudley Futures' in Dudley town centre in May 2022 as part of Art Track's public engagement programme to encourage connection with the local designed environment and artists involvement with regeneration and art in the public realm.

It is envisaged that the final programme of commissions will consist of artworks and public art projects reflecting a balance of permanent, time-based and temporary works, of different scales and duration and with a range of budget levels. Subject to further development, it may be possible that art budgets at realisation stage can be augmented by using construction materials and existing public realm improvement monies.

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Flood Street Metro Stop (cgi by MMA)



Dudley Interchange (Glancy Nicholls/TfWM)

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Merry Hill Stop Lift (cgi by MMA)



Merry Hill Stop location (cgi by MMA)

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## Context

Dudley is currently in the midst of an exciting new chapter in its history with 'Regenerating Dudley' set to bring £1 billion investment into the borough. A number of major projects have already started on site in Dudley Town Centre and look set to pave the way for better opportunities, greater transport links and a more attractive place to live, work, play and do business. These large-scale regeneration projects include WBHE Metro extension, Black Country and Marches Institute of Technology, Very Light Rail (VLR) National Innovation Centre, Castle Hill Vision for Dudley Zoo & Castle, Dudley Transport Interchange, Future High Street project and Brierley Hill Heritage Action Zone.

The Dudley borough is predominantly urban in character, but also contains extensive green space and natural assets and reserves - 18% of the land belongs to the green belt; 14% is public green space; and the area is home to ten sites of special scientific interest, two national nature reserves and seven local nature reserves. Dudley sits at the heart of the Black Country Global Geopark recently awarded UNESCO World Heritage status (2020) and renowned for its rich geological history including Wren's Nest.

Brierley Hill's museums Red House Glass Cone and new White House Glass Cone with its major specialist glass collection along with the British Glass Biennale highlight Stourbridge and Dudley borough's significant role as a centre of glassmaking. Dudley council has a significant track record of commissioning public art since the 1960s. The three main visitor attractions in Dudley are Dudley Zoo and Castle with its world-famous entrance, enclosures and kiosks designed by Lubetkin's modernist TECTON design group; open-air Black Country Living Museum and Dudley Canals and Tunnels Trust. These three attractions are situated within close proximity to the new Metro's Dudley Castle stop. The three-year rolling average number of day visitors to the area was 4.5 million (2017-2019).

Dudley has a rich cultural and industrial heritage and is often referred to as the historic capital of The Black Country, a name derived from its industrial past of coal mines and blast furnaces used for iron and steelmaking. The area was one of the early centres of the Industrial Revolution due to its unique geology, generating wealth from coal and limestone mining, glassmaking, iron & steel. It was also formerly known for nail making, chain & anchor manufacturing and engineering works.

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**DMBC Public Art Curatorial  
Approach, Themes and Formats:**

Innovation, experiment and engineering theme  
e.g. Metro, Black Country and Marches Institute  
of Technology, automated vehicles and Very  
Light Rail (VLR)

Green agenda - art/environment, biodiversity,  
climate change and 'Garden City' type projects  
for corridors, green landscape, pocket parks  
and planting schemes

Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark and  
geological themes

Art/Heritage themes that engender collaborative  
working between those two sectors and in relation  
to Heritage Action Zone at Brierley Hill

Dudley borough's local and global connections  
and economies

Glass making in Dudley borough

Responses to collections of Dudley Museum  
@ the Archives

Memory, History and Identity: the people, places  
and narratives of Dudley borough including  
industrial heritage

Legibility and wayfinding projects that focus on  
transport routes, infrastructure and user groups

Dudley borough's music scene

Contemporary murals and mosaics

Mapping: walking/cycling routes, canals network  
and public art trails

Local distinctiveness in Dudley borough

Metro Art – new green transport theme, time  
theme including clocks/timepieces, linear  
projects for platforms, stops and trackside

Visitor Economy and marketing brands e.g.  
Forging Ahead, Home, tie in with the three major  
visitor attractions Dudley Zoo and Castle, Black  
Country Living Museum and Dudley Canal and  
Tunnels Trust (DCTT)

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**Expressions of Interest:  
Initial Design Approach**

Artists are invited to respond with initial 'Expressions of Interest' applications with their approach to art for the Metro that reflect the sites and contexts of the new Metro line, engaging with the places and people of Dudley borough, Sandwell and the wider Black Country. Artists can propose working in a wide range of media and formats including for permanent, temporary works and time-based artworks/projects.

An initial scoping exercise has identified the following sites and contexts for artworks and projects, however this is not an exhaustive list and varied artist-led site and context approaches as 'Expressions of Interest' are welcomed if they demonstrate a connection to place, people and the Metro.

- a) Landmark sculptures, features for key stops and sites
- b) Hard and soft landscaping approaches to key stops, pocket parks and open spaces e.g. Dudley Castle plaza, Dudley Interchange, Flood Street, Brierley Hill
- c) Clocks, timepieces and/or automaton for key Metro stops
- d) Linear artworks and project proposals for:
  - Metro station stops and infrastructure e.g. shelter panels, roundels, platform surface interventions, repeat artworks
  - Trackside land art, planting schemes, sculpture, installations
  - Light/art commissions: linear trackside and/or features
  - Artist prints, transport posters and billboard sites along route including digital
- e) Wall surfaces – contemporary approaches to murals and mosaic (various sites)
- f) Anamorphic artworks and trompe l'oeil approaches (various sites)
- g) Artworks and project proposals that engage with green agenda, sustainability and climate change (various sites)
- h) Socially-engaged projects with residents and communities of Dudley borough and new Friends of Public Art and Diversity in Design groups

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### **Eligibility**

To be eligible to apply for this Call for Expressions of Interest you must be:

- A visual artist or craft/maker based in the UK or Ireland working in any medium or format including socially-engaged practice
- Not enrolled as a student on a full or part-time course of study at any level

DMBC welcomes applications from artists at all stages of their careers. The Art Track programme of events will be delivered in real life and online. Please state your geographical base in your application as DMBC intends to map Continued Professional Development needs of public art development during this process, particularly but not exclusively in support of West Midlands-based artists and craft/makers. Student engagement with Art Track will be delivered through the Talent Pipeline Initiative working closely with learning sector providers Dudley College and University of Wolverhampton. For further information about Dudley's regeneration and development please visit: [www.regeneratingdudley.org.uk](http://www.regeneratingdudley.org.uk)

### **Submission Requirements**

Please email 'Expressions of Interest' applications to Kathryn Ward, Design & Delivery Manager at [design@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:design@dudley.gov.uk) marking the subject line with Art Track application by:

**Monday 10 January 2022, 5 pm**

#### **Please include:**

- Short CV and statement of experience with contact details (one-page A4 max)
- Statement of approach to Art Track commissioned design or project proposal with indication of format, site, context, materials, timescale, participants (if relevant) and expressing how the artwork/project connects with WBHE Metro line, Dudley, The Black Country (one-page A4 max)
- Attach 5 x images of previous work (max 5 MB each) plus relevant weblinks

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**Timescale**

**Monday 10 January 2022, 5 pm**

Deadline for Expressions of Interest applications

**Monday 17 January 2022**

Invitations to shortlisted artists for Stage 2 designs

**Mon 17 Jan – Mon 7 Feb 2022**

Briefing sessions and Stage 2 design period

**Monday 7 February 2022, 5 pm**

Deadline for Stage 2 design proposals

Please assume that you have not been shortlisted for Stage 2 if you do not hear from us by Monday 17 January 2022.

**Process**

If artists Expressions of Interest are not commissioned for Stage 2 of the design process their submissions will not be retained by DMBC in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

**Equal opportunities**

DMBC is committed to inclusion and equal opportunities in the workplace and we actively encourage applicants from all backgrounds, of different ages, genders, social and economic backgrounds, ethnicities, religions and sexual orientations, and from people with and without disabilities.