

Artist's Brief

Background and Context

Shelanu: Women's Craft Collective is a developing craft social enterprise, supported by Craftspace, of migrant and refugee women producing high quality craft objects, with a focus on jewellery. They are inspired by their adopted home, Birmingham and their experiences of migration. The aim of the Collective is to assist other migrant and refugee women to become more aspirational through creative development, working towards their integration into local communities and for those communities to profit from the rich diversity of the women's experience.

The idea for a collective and social enterprise grew from a series of collaborative projects between Craftspace and the Community Integration Partnership (CIP). CIP supported refugee, migrant and newly arrived women and their children to achieve by maximising their skills and potential within a secure environment. In 2004 CIP formed a long term partnership with Craftspace to enrich the lives of women by delivering a series of high quality arts projects. Craftspace is a charity creating opportunities to see, make and be curious about exceptional contemporary craft. We initiate artistic programmes which stimulate creative excellence, critical thinking and understanding of contemporary crafts in the widest social and cultural contexts. www.craftspace.co.uk/about

The work by the CIP members was exhibited widely including a stand at Origin, the Crafts Council's London fair in 2007. Buyers and the general public were interested in quality craft objects enriched by socially engaged content and narrative. This inspired us to create a crafts social enterprise which would enable women to progress from being recipients and beneficiaries of arts activity to producers who can contribute to the creative economy and develop a more diverse offer to the marketplace. CIP and Craftspace jointly secured a three year grant from the Baring Foundation Refugee Arts Programme towards the core cost of establishing a craft social enterprise.

The development of the social enterprise began in 2009. Due to the closure of CIP in 2010, Craftspace continued to develop the social enterprise alone. Shelanu was launched in June 2011 with investment from Arts Council England Grants for the Arts to undertake skills building creative residencies. Since then Shelanu have exhibited widely across the region and the country, sold at a number of craft fairs, facilitated workshops for community groups and galleries, completed a commission for The Herbert Art Gallery and Museum shop in Coventry and launched a souvenir range for Birmingham.

Craftspace continues to support Shelanu members to work alongside and shadow professional artists and other creative professionals, to build creative, social and business skills. The aim is to enable some members to take up roles within the enterprise in the longer term and others to improve their employability.

It is our intention that the craft social enterprise will become increasingly self-sustaining, less dependent on grant assistance, using the enterprise's surplus to expand and develop the services provided to and by the women within local and national communities. This complements Craftspace's ethos of assisting the Shelanu members to become more aspirational, ensuring that the creative and holistic development of the women is the core of all future policy planning.

**Previous ranges produced by Shelanu: Women's Craft Collective
Routes to Trade 2011:**



Birmingham, the theme behind the Routes to Trade collection, is the women's adopted home city. Birmingham has a remarkable history of trade, resulting in the saying, 'A city of 1000 trades.' This reputation is in no small part due to hundreds of small businesses which utilised craft techniques and handmade processes. Shelanu worked with Birmingham based jeweller Kathryn Partington to explore some of these businesses and the potential of batch production as a sustainable process for the social enterprise.

Migrating Birds 2012:



This range of jewellery is inspired by migration and the women's own experience of moving to a new city. Completed with support from Birmingham jeweller Rita Patel this range is sold through craft fairs and exhibitions.

Caught in the Crossfire 2013:



To coincide with the 'Caught in the Crossfire' exhibition at The Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Shelanu created an exclusive range of 40 limited edition pieces inspired by Coventry as a city of peace and reconciliation for the venue's shop. The commissioned range was influenced by the City's cathedral and the collections within the museum. Each item was sold with a statement explaining the symbolism within the work.

Birmingham Souvenir Range 2015:



Supported by London textile artist Ekta Kaul Shelanu developed a souvenir range for Birmingham celebrates the diversity of their city and is inspired by Birmingham's industrial heritage and reputation as the 'city of 1000 trades'. The collection consists of a shoulder bag, wash bag, tablet case and a coin purse. The souvenir range is designed by Shelanu but made by Textiles by St. Anne's, another social enterprise based in Digbeth, Birmingham. The idea was to create a range which would provide ongoing income while Shelanu members could continue to make jewellery.

The Project

Shelanu: Women's Craft Collective will develop a new contemporary jewellery range which reflects the groups' diversity, place and ethos.

We are seeking a practising contemporary jeweller to facilitate this next phase and lead members through a series of experiences and a design process to produce a commercial, possibly batch produced range.

The previous range, Migrating Birds has given the Collective a distinctive style which they have become known for. The aim is create a range which continues to represent the Collective but also enables individual members to have some design freedom within the making. The current range is wire cut, then finished by hand by the members and enamelled. The core group are interested in developing their jewellery making skills further to develop other processes such as soldering. The resulting range should be both time and cost effective.

As part of the contract the lead jeweller will also need to consider how the Collective should present the new range and other work at craft fairs. In collaboration with Shelanu members the jeweller will propose and oversee a design - we envisage utilising a local FabLab for the creation of display furniture.

It is hoped that the resulting range will build on Shelanu's reputation within Birmingham and the wider contemporary craft and social enterprise sectors. An aim for the new range is to be able to sell it easily through web based platforms, to contribute to Shelanu's regular income.

We envisage the design process starting with research visits. The members would also undertake market research workshops at appropriate places within the city to establish what attracts people to buying jewellery and what items of jewellery are currently popular.

Working with the lead jeweller, Shelanu would then apply their skills, expertise and knowledge to create a range which can be produced through small batch production and collectively assembled/finished. Any outsourcing of production would be to

companies within the city's Jewellery Quarter or Birmingham. In the future the new range will also provide on-going skills sharing for new members' induction, supported by existing members.

Throughout the project, documentation will play an important role as a vehicle for reflection, analysis and evaluation.

Maker's Role

- To work with Craftspace and Shelanu to plan a series of practical sessions which use and develop processes of making inspired by the diversity of the membership, the city and the ethos of the group and explore materials resulting in the creation of a distinctive range of (batch production) pieces for sale .
- To work with local businesses for elements of batch production where appropriate.
- To work in a flexible and organic way, facilitating and enabling the Shelanu members to take a lead in shaping the project
- Introduce skills and processes in an open-ended way rather than through a fixed outcome process or being prescriptive.
- Allow for research visits as part of the project.
- To support the reflection and documentation process of the project working with Craftspace to produce documentation
- To work with the group to design and create display furniture for craft fairs
- To maintain an on-going diary for the project to track progress and as part of the evaluation. This could involve using new media and/or blogging
- Undertake risk assessments as required
- To have knowledge/understanding of batch production, new technologies and digital processes within contemporary craft making.
- Possession of DBS certificate and Personal Liability insurance (Craftspace can advise you in achieving this).

Expected Participant Outcomes

- An improved understanding of social enterprise
- An improved understanding of market research
- Improved drawing skills
- Design and production of batch produced jewellery range
- A better understanding of branding
- A clearer understanding of pricing

Proposed Residency Timetable

Deadline for applications: **Friday 18 August**

Interview Date: **Friday 25 August**

Planning meeting: **Friday 1 September**

Below is a draft timetable for the artist attendance at the project.

Social Enterprise and Craft Context:

A social enterprise is a business with social objectives. This means that profits are not paid to shareholders but are reinvested back into the community. A social enterprise complements Craftspace's ethos of innovative ways in which to assist migrant and refugee women to develop their skills and confidence, to enhance integration and add value to local communities, in addition to creating a diverse offer for the craft marketplace.

Shelanu also contributes towards the role of crafts in making an ongoing contribution to the cultural, economic and social regeneration and tourism infrastructure of the country. After the recent catastrophic results of over consumerism, there is a turning towards an appreciation of the individuality of crafts and the way in which they express the maker's personality and ideas. Shelanu members are uniquely positioned to be able to feed off a global view of craft.

It is Craftspace's objective to push boundaries and perceptions of crafts practice, presentation and learning. Craftspace builds relationships between artists, people and organisations and explore crafts in diverse social and cultural settings and deliver through a programme of touring exhibitions, research and participatory projects. Whilst our work is supportive and developmental - enabling the sharing of skills and knowledge - each project is bespoke. Artists, participants and partners are involved in planning, development, collaboration, documentation and reflection.

It is our aim to take the participants through an "entrepreneurial" learning journey. Our intention is not just to enable the participants to design and make the jewellery range, but to identify their target markets, calculate realistic pricing structures both retail and wholesale and develop the enterprise into profitability.

Throughout this process we intend to introduce the women to skills to enable them to become:

- Independent Enquirers
- Creative Thinkers
- Reflective Learners
- Team Workers
- Self Managers
- Effective Participators

We aim to:

- Reinvigorate interest in the Shelanu members to learn creatively, inspiring a desire to produce quality and the desire to obtain the skills to deliver it
- Develop the skills and confidence of the Shelanu members through a process of progression from experiencing, creating and participating through to presenting and producing.
- Give the women the opportunities to evidence learning for themselves and define their interests
- Recognise achievement within the context of the wider community and the women's own family units.

Fees and Budget - All fees and budgets are inclusive of VAT.

There is a fee of £3,750 (inclusive of VAT) based on a daily rate of £250 including travel expenses. The artist's contribution to the project should total 15 days including: ½ day for pre-project planning meeting, 12 days for workshops, 2 days design process and ½ day review meeting.

There is also a budget for materials and processes of up to £1500, which will be managed by Craftspace. This budget also includes the materials for the first batch for sale. There is an additional budget of up to £400 for craft display furniture.

APPLICATION PROCESS:

Please send the following information:

- Current C.V and up to 6 visuals of your work: Jpegs should be no larger than 1MB
- Complete the attached application form which asks for a description of how you might approach the project
- Fill in and return the monitoring form

Please email your application to:

Emma Daker: e.daker@craftspace.co.uk

If you have any queries please email or call Emma Daker:

e.daker@craftspace.co.uk 0121 608 6664

Deadline for applications: Friday 18 August

Selection Process:

Craftspace and Shelanu will make an initial shortlist of makers from applications received. Informal interviews will take place Friday 25 August. The planning session will take place on Friday 1 September.

We particularly welcome expressions of interest from disabled and culturally diverse artists.

Date	Activity
Friday 1 September	½ day planning
Friday 8 September	Session 1
Friday 15 September	Session 2
Friday 22 September	Session 3
Friday 28 September	Session 4
Friday 6 October	Session 5
Friday 13 October	Session 6
Friday 20 October	Session 7
Friday 27 October	Session 8
Friday 3 November	Session 9
Friday 10 November	Session 10
Thursday 16 November	Session 11
Friday 24 November	Last session 12
Date TBC	Project review

About Craftspace

Craftspace is an award-winning organisation, pioneering approaches to engaging a diverse public with exceptional contemporary craft:

- We champion and support makers to take an active and creative role in civil society.
- Our work positions craft beyond conventional boundaries, including its enhancement using emerging digital technologies.
- We aim to connect creative practice with diverse communities through collaborative research. Together we explore the power of craft to promote social innovation and social justice.
- We extend the reach of our successful initiatives through national and international partnerships.
- Through our thinking, actions and advocacy, we provide national leadership to the sector.

Please visit www.craftspace.co.uk for more information.

Values

People

- We are committed to developing people's skills, knowledge and creativity at all levels whether they are staff, participants, makers, project partners or clients.
- We aim to devise projects and services in collaboration with partner organisations and clients, which have lasting and positive impacts upon both individual participants, whole organisations and their wider communities.

Products and services

- We believe that quality and innovation is characterised by working inclusively in creative partnerships, by placing access at the centre of our operation and also by challenging boundaries and preconceptions around crafts practice, presentation and learning.

Audiences

- We value process and participation as a meaningful and engaging way to facilitate learning about and experiencing crafts.
- We believe that the exploration and showing of crafts in a wide range of social and culturally diverse contexts makes it more relevant to all our lives.

Craftspace 

Developing people, ideas and opportunities
through contemporary craft

PERSON SPECIFICATION

In considering expressions of interest we will be assessing the extent to which applicants' qualifications, past employment and/or experience equip them to undertake the project.

Applicants should be able to demonstrate the following PERSONAL COMPETENCES

- A belief and passion in the value and role of making in learning and community settings.
- A demonstrable respect for difference and the culture and values of others.
- A belief in the attainment of high quality experiences and learning in the arts through participation in process.
- Artistic practice in which high quality is a principle attribute.
- A high degree of self-motivation and ability to work to deadlines.
- An innovative, creative, dynamic and equitable approach to work.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills
- Good written, oral and presentation skills.
- A high standard of personal organisation.
- The ability to facilitate a collaborative process and to work within a team.
- A willingness to share and transfer skills in a variety of ways.
- A professional manner in working in an exclusively female environment, with both children and staff.

Applicants should also be able to demonstrate that they have the following KNOWLEDGE and SKILLS

- Proven skills and experience in working with people from a range of diverse backgrounds in a participatory and facilitative way.
- Proven experience/knowledge of working with new technologies and digital processes within contemporary crafts.
- Proven experience of working with historic collections in a contemporary way.
- Knowledge of commercial product lines and selling direct to the public.
- Knowledge of safe working practices in a health and safety context.
- Good understanding of equality issues and ability to apply that to all areas of the work.

Desirable but not essential:

- Experience of working with culturally diverse and disabled people

Other requirements:

- Ability to travel to or be based in Birmingham
- Own insurances (e.g. public liability, personal insurance)
- Enhanced DBS check (Craftspace can cover this cost if an application needs to be made).
- Willingness to act within Craftspace's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy.
- Eligibility to work in the U.K and declaration of any spent and unspent criminal records.