

# Made in the Middle

## Digital Commission Brief: Capturing stories of craft & making through the lens of migration and diaspora.

June 2024 – January 2025

### The role

Craftspace is looking for a filmmaker/ content producer to engage and feature diverse non-professional craft communities in short form content using 20 stories of everyday/community making from the Midlands.

Although we have stated filmmaker or content producer we are open to other creative proposals.

The commission is linked to Craftspace's Made in the Middle touring exhibition, to create associated digital content that can feature alongside.

### Background

Made in the Middle first launched in 1988. This recurring touring exhibition by Craftspace has a reputation for showcasing exceptional contemporary crafts being made in the East and West Midlands. It explores a wide range of craft processes, expertise, skills and thinking by artists living and/or working in the region.

The exhibition plays an important role in raising the profile of individual artists and excellence in making. Touring to galleries and museums in the region it creates accessible opportunities to see and purchase work by regional artists.

In each version of Made in the Middle the work selected highlights current innovation and trends in craft. Always curated through an open selection process, artists are supported to show work which extends their interests and practice.

The ninth iteration of Made in the Middle will launch at Leicester Gallery at De Montfort University in Leicester on 25 January 2025. It will then tour across the Midlands.

The exhibition will feature work by up to 37 artists who are living and/or working in the region. The work will be a mix of new work and existing pieces.

Work selected will highlight the wide range of innovative and excellent contemporary crafts being made in the Midlands today. We intend to show work that experiments with materials, techniques, form and new technologies. Also

work that reflects the world we live in; it may connect with issues e.g. climate justice or sustainability or reference personal experiences.

In addition to the open selection, Craftspace will be working with an external curator to invite up to six artists whose work will highlight the positive cultural impact of global migration to the region. This section will reflect how the influence of artists from a continuing diverse diaspora of people has enriched creativity in the region.

## Scope of work

The aim of the digital commission is to create shareable short form content which tells stories of everyday making/craft in the Midlands through the lens of migration and diaspora.

It is envisaged that the stories will be sourced from within community craft practice for example, people making for pleasure, cultural/self-expression, well-being, activism or for sale. They will not be professional career based artists.

The content created will reflect the significant increase of ethnic diversity in urban areas of the Midlands and celebrate the ways in which this has shaped its identity and contributed to a global outlook.

We would like the subjects to be young professionals from the global majority and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

The commission could feature people contributing ideas that are more widely informed by skills and techniques brought to the region by migration. We are also interested in identifying community makers who have been influenced by/ have learned their skills through social media or You Tube.

The main aim is to drive new visitors to the exhibition both in person and online by highlighting stories as a means of audience development. The stories may be used to create film content for the exhibition or as part of an online version of the exhibition.

## Services

- To capture and share everyday making influenced by migration
- To develop content to stimulate action on Craftspace social media (do/say/share something)

## Deliverables

To be discussed and finalised at the commission planning meeting, but the commission may include visiting selected craft groups in Leicester, Sleaford, Nuneaton and Birmingham to identify one story of everyday making at each place. These stories could be used to create a social media call out to collect a further 16 stories of people who are developing their craft as a hobby or in their spare time, learning from own migration experience or social media films. (We may exhibit their work in a section of the exhibition.)

- 10 stories could be from Birmingham/Black Country
- 10 stories could be from Leicester

5 stories from each region could be filmed, the remaining 10, may feature through images and text on social media and possibly in the exhibition and/or on the Craftspace website.

Content used on Craftspace's website could be targeted to engage people who can't attend the physical exhibition; a virtual showcase of everyday making.

## Timescale

- 11 June 2024 – 9am deadline for applications
- Week commencing 17 June 2024 – interviews for filmmaker/content producer
- 25 June 2024 TBC - planning meeting for commission content and stories callout
- July/August 2024 – craft group visiting and stories callout on social media
- September/October 2024 – filming from social media response and editing
- November – sign off of content
- November 2024 -January 2025 – sharing of content, inclusion on website/in exhibition

## Terms of Contract

This is a freelance consultancy contract with Craftspace. The budget for fees and any other costs outlined in this brief includes VAT. If you have any questions about the nature or terms of this contract, please contact us.

You will be required to hold public liability insurance throughout the term of the contract.

## Costs

£4000 total including VAT. This is to include fee, travel and production costs.

## Partners/clients for the work

The commissioned person will work closely with the exhibition curator Emma Daker (Exhibitions and Project Development Manager, Craftspace), in developing the digital commission, with support from the Craftspace team.

The Craftspace team will support the commissioned person to identify groups close to the following Made in the Middle tour venues: Leicester Gallery, Hub, Nuneaton Museum and Art Gallery and MAC Birmingham.

## Selection process

If you are interested in applying for this commission, please send:

- a current CV,
- up to 3 examples of your work that are relevant to our interests, these need to be readable on a PC computer, you can send a We Transfer link for these
- a brief outline proposal about how you might approach this commission.
- We will interview from a shortlist of applicants.

Please send these by **9am Tuesday 11 June 2024.**

Interviews will be held by Zoom on Wednesday 19 June.


Send applications to:  
Emma Daker  
Exhibitions and Project Development Manager  
Craftspace  
e.daker@craftspace.co.uk  
0121 608 6668

## Glossary

- Diaspora: The dispersion or spread of any people from their original homeland.
- Global Majority: people who are Black, Asian, Brown, dual-heritage, indigenous to the global south, and or have been racialised as 'ethnic minorities'.

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