

Open Call

Support for creation and touring of new outdoor work in 2024

Without Walls invites artists to submit proposals for the creation and touring of new outdoor work for presentation in 2024.

Without Walls is delighted to offer an Open Call for new projects to be presented in 2024.

Without Walls is the UK's leading supporter of new touring work for the Outdoor Arts festivals circuit. Each year Without Walls presents a curated programme of new work, made up of the best work being made in the UK.

Our Open Call is an accessible invitation for artists to submit ideas for ambitious and exciting new outdoor projects to the festival partners of Without Walls, who are responsible for the selection of the artistic programme. This group is known as our 'Artistic Directorate' and further information about the organisations and people involved is [available here](#).

[A glossary of words and phrases used in this document is available here.](#)

About the Open Call

Without Walls issues Open Calls to ensure that artists have an opportunity to present their ideas to us in an equal and democratic way.

We find that this is a great way of discovering new artists and projects, though the large response that we usually receive means that there are always far more projects than we can support. We very much value the work and time that artists put into their proposals, and we thank you in advance for your interest.

Artists who want to receive creation support for projects that have already received Without Walls Blueprint support still need to submit a proposal through this Open Call process if they want to receive creation or touring support for 2024.

About Without Walls

Without Walls is the UK's leading organisation supporting the creation and touring of new outdoor art.

Our mission is to support excellence through the creation of inspirational new work of the highest quality by UK artists, and to tour this work to reach large, diverse, and new audiences across the country.

The Without Walls programme is selected by a group of festivals that we refer to as our [Artistic Directorate](#). These festivals commission and present the shows that are selected for the Without Walls programme. They are also responsible for selecting which projects receive research and development support through our Blueprint R&D programme.

The festivals that make up the Artistic Directorate each have their own programming interests and specialisms, and each of them presents work to different audiences in different contexts. Each of them invests their own commissioning funds in the Without Walls programme because they have a shared commitment to support artists to create ambitious new outdoor work.

Without Walls presents a curated programme of work, selected by our Artistic Directorate partners – it is not a funding programme. The work that we support must feed into the programming of a wide range of festivals. The fact that our festival partners provide both commissioning support and presentation opportunities is what makes Without Walls different from other opportunities, such as the Arts Council's National Lottery Project Grants.

How we select the programme

All the ideas that Without Walls receives go through a multi-stage selection process.

In the first stage, Artistic Directorate partners come together in sub-groups to review proposals according to artform. Each sub-group comes up with a list of projects that they recommend should be shortlisted.

Without Walls also invites independent artistic assessors to take part in the initial stages of the selection process. This allows us to expand the range of knowledge and expertise in the group and to help ensure that a variety of perspectives and lived experiences are included.

Independent assessors are only invited to take part if they are not involved in any of the projects under consideration. Likewise, all Artistic Directorate partners must declare if they have an interest in any of the projects being considered, either through financial relationships or personal connections.

In the next stage the entire Artistic Directorate comes together as a single group to review the recommendations from each sub-group meeting. The Artistic Directorate then selects a programme that meets the priorities of both Without Walls and their individual festivals. All the partners bring their own expertise and creative priorities to the discussions throughout the process. Each project will need to have booking interest from several Artistic Directorate partner festivals to be selected for the programme.

[For further information about Without Walls, please click here.](#)

Who do we support and why?

Without Walls exists to support the creation and touring of excellent and exciting new outdoor artwork by UK artists. The projects that we're looking for are intended to represent the best that the UK outdoor arts sector has to offer and should have the potential to tour widely in the UK, Europe and beyond.

It is important to understand that Without Walls is a network of festivals. That means that the work that we support needs to be suitable for presenting in a variety of different locations and contexts, including; high streets or squares in towns and cities, public parks and (in some cases) green field festival sites. This means that projects that are very site-specific are unlikely to be suitable for Without Walls support.

We would also encourage everyone to think carefully about the resources required to present their project – both in terms of what you can provide as a company, but also in terms of any additional technical support that festival bookers may need to provide. It's important to understand that when festivals are considering projects that are expensive to present or large in scale, they will expect such shows to be able to generate large audiences.

The Without Walls programme seeks to represent the breadth and diversity of modern Britain and we give particular importance to:

- Work led by Global Majority artists
- Work led by Deaf, Disabled and neurodiverse artists
- Work led by LGBTIQ+ artists
- Work that incorporates an innovative approach to environmental responsibility
- Work that takes an innovative approach to the creative incorporation of access
- Work that can be developed or presented in collaboration with communities

We encourage all artists and companies that are submitting proposals to check out the [resources around these topics that are available on our website](#), particularly our [Top Tips for Environmental Sustainability](#) that we have recently produced in partnership with Norfolk & Norwich Festival.

Without Walls supports both experienced and emerging artists and the work that we support spans a broad range of artforms and subject matter.

The eligibility criteria for submitting proposals to Without Walls is as follows:

- We are looking for work from **all disciplines and genres**, that is **innovative and ambitious** and challenges the idea of what outdoor arts can be.
- The work **must be suitable for touring in an outdoor festival context** and artists should be committed to exploring touring opportunities beyond the Without Walls network.

- Ideas can be adaptable in scale, suitable for either daytime or evening presentation and may also include promenade or processional elements.
- Without Walls exists to support the development of new and ambitious work by **UK artists**. We can support projects that are developed in association with international artists but **the lead partner for the project must be based in the UK**.
- Most projects that feature in the programme will have received creation funding from us. However, in some cases we will support the touring of a project that has already raised its creation costs, provided the show has not already touring in the UK, and provided it clearly meets our priorities.
- For projects touring in 2024 please note that **the work should be available from May – September 2024**, and should be available to tour to Without Walls festivals that are interested in presenting the show ([indicative dates from the 2023 programme are available in the Touring section of our FAQs](#)). It is expected that shows commissioned for 2024 will also be available to tour from April – October 2025, allowing them to tour to [TNP festivals](#) if required.

If you're thinking about submitting ideas to Without Walls, then it's a good idea to look at the previous shows that we've supported to get a sense of the kind of work that we're looking for. [You can check out the projects that we've supported in the past on our website.](#)

Finance & Budgets

Without Walls provides financial support for the creation of new work. The funds that you received from us will be made up of a combination of direct cash support from Without Walls and co-commissioning funds from our festival partners. **When submitting your proposal you should list the total amount of funding that you require from both Without Walls and our festival partners as a single combined figure.**

It is unusual for Without Walls to support 100% of the costs of any project. Our creation funds normally make up 20% - 60% of any project. For larger projects Without Walls would normally be one of several funding partners.

We will consider the potential audience reach of our projects when assessing our level of contribution. It is unusual for us to support the development of a show that is expensive to create and present, and that doesn't reach a large audience. If your show is designed for very small audiences please be clear about how many times a day the show can be presented and how wide an audience it can reach.

Important information regarding Match Funding and ACE National Lottery Project Grants

Without Walls is supported through Arts Council England funding. This means that Without Walls funds cannot count towards the minimum 10% match funding threshold required by ACE National Lottery Project Grants. If you are considering apply for ACE National Lottery Project Grants then we recommend that you consult the ACE enquiries team, or your existing Relationship Manager, for advice on eligibility.

Submitting your Proposal

Access Support

Without Walls is committed to ensuring that all our processes and events are as accessible as possible.

Our guidance materials are available in a range of formats (including easy read and large print). Please let us know what your specific requirements are, and we will do our best to support you. We accept proposals submitted in audio or video format if that suits you better.

We are also able to provide staff support and access bursaries to help you complete your proposal. If you would like to discuss this please contact Tess Farley on tess@withoutwalls.uk.com providing an outline of your access requirements or give us a call on 0161 843 5270. **Please provide us with any access support requests by Monday 26th of June at 12pm.**

Creative Case for Diversity Monitoring

The Without Walls submission form asks several questions related to [Arts Council England's Creative Case for Diversity](#).

The questions relating to the Creative Case ask whether a project is 'led by' a particular group of people. Without Walls will consider a project to be 'led by' a particular group if the following criteria apply:

- For organisations – at least 50% of the Board and Senior Team identify as belonging to the group in question.
- For project team and artistic collaborators – that over 50% of the senior creative team identify as belonging to the group in question. The senior creative team might include: writer, director, choreographer, designer or other lead artist.
- For devising groups or ensembles – that over 50% of the company identify as belonging to the group in question.
- For individual artists – that the lead artist / applicant identifies as belonging to the group in question.
- For partnerships between individual artists or companies and producers – that the above criteria apply to both the artistic team and producing organisation. Where this is not the case and the above criteria apply only to the artistic team, but not the producing partner, then the proposal must demonstrate that the project will be artist-led and that the artist(s) are empowered with regards to management of resources.

This means that some projects may be able to answer ‘Yes’ in more than one category.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Without Walls has prepared responses to some of the questions that we get asked about the Open Call process. [The answers to many frequently asked questions can be found on our website](#). If you still have questions that you would like to ask, then you can contact us by emailing proposals@withoutwalls.uk.com or by calling 0161 843 5270.

We will host an online Q&A on Friday 23rd June from 11am – 12:30pm. This will be a chance to ask questions directly about the Open Call. [Registration for this online event is available on the website](#). The session will be captioned and BSL interpreted.

How to submit your proposal

Please ensure you have read the relevant eligibility and guidance criteria.

All submissions should be made online via the [Creation and Touring support page](#).

Please note that you will not be able to save your submission as you go along, so we recommend that you work on a draft and copy the contents once you have a final version that you are happy to submit. [A submission form template is available to download here](#).

When you have finalised your submission, please click on ‘submit’. You will then receive an email confirming that your submission has been received.

Following the first round of Artistic Directorate meetings we will contact everyone to let them know whether their project has been shortlisted for 2024 or not. If your project has been shortlisted, then it’s possible that we will come back to you at this stage to request further information or clarification of any points that we weren’t clear on.

Timeline

Online Q&A:	Friday 23rd June, 11am -12:30pm
Deadline for all submissions:	Friday 14th July, 12pm (midday)
Shortlisting Notifications:	Mid to late September 2023
Final decisions:	Mid-October 2023