



Request for proposal  
Marketing Efficiency Project  
**Proposal Deadline 11<sup>th</sup> July 2022**

Proposals should be submitted to Phil Mestecky, Director, Strathearn Arts via email (phil@strathearnarts.org).

**1. Project Overview**

The Strathearn Arts team have identified a number of areas within their marketing activity that require a new approach in order to improve effectiveness in terms of reaching our target audiences and efficiency in how we use our limited marketing resources.

We are seeking help from a skilled and experienced marketer that can demonstrate a clear understanding of our particular market situation, have a firm grasp of the various marketing tools and techniques available and understand how to build robust marketing processes within a small organization.

**2. About Strathearn Arts**

Strathearn Artspace (known as Strathearn Arts) is a registered SCIO established in 2013 with the objectives of establishing an arts centre within the former library building on the corner of Lodge Street and Comrie St in Crieff. In 2019, new offices were created to house 3 part-time staff members that joined the organisation in Spring/Summer of that year. In late 2019, it rebranded as Strathearn Arts although the charity remains, officially, Strathearn Artspace. The rebranding reflected a change in focus from bringing use to “the building” to “promoting the arts in Strathearn”. A new vision for the organisation was created to:

*Provide consistently high-quality artistic experiences which enrich people's lives, bring the community together and put Strathearn on the cultural map of Scotland.*

With brand values of Inclusivity; Reaching Higher; Reliability & Consistency; and Creativity.

During lockdown in 2020, the trustees were successful in securing a 5-year lease for the adjacent shop/office space at 2, Comrie St. This is envisaged as a retail space and box office. In November/December 2020, we operated a Pop-up Shop which gave a retail outlet for 25 local artists and craftspeople. The success of this has encouraged us to pursue a retail offering as soon as lockdown lifts.



As a guide, Strathearn Arts promotes approx. 75 events each year with film screenings, theatre productions, concerts, ceilidhs, tea dances, exhibitions and comedy nights. The hall is also rented out for a range of uses from public meetings to dance classes and from karate clubs to choirs.

Since 2013, the organisation has established itself as a valued resource for the community. This has, until 2019, been achieved entirely through the work of volunteers. The recruitment of staff has signalled a change in outlook and philosophy for Strathearn Arts. As a volunteer organisation activities were necessarily determined by the ebb and flow of available resources and a degree of latitude was afforded the organisation in recognition that it operated on a voluntary basis. The decision to recruit staff was part of a shift towards a more strategic and professional outlook for Strathearn Arts.

### 3. The challenge

We have a broad and diverse audience for our activities that mirrors the broad and diverse programme we offer. Reaching this audience with our marketing messages is complex.

Our marketing mix has evolved from the pre-staff, volunteer era of the organisation and with a number of different stakeholders with a range of views about the best way to market our events.

We would like to develop a marketing approach for both print and digital channels that is optimised for our audiences and, through prioritisation and efficiency, makes the best use of limited budget and staff resources.

### 4. Scope and deliverables

Our overall marketing goals can be summarised as follows:

- raise the organisation's profile
- increase awareness of the programme
- maximise income through driving ticket sales, space rental and retail activity

The project scope is focussed on **awareness** of the programme and **ticket sales**. Within this, it encompasses the full range of our marketing activities including print (Seasonal Programme Brochures, posters, flyers etc) and digital (Digital Display, website, email and social media). It also includes our marketing content management (photos, video content, blurb etc) and how we create, acquire, store and use our content.

#### **Deliverable 1.**



We use paid social media advertising on an *ad hoc* basis, usually when we identify that ticket sales on a particular event are lagging behind expectations.

- We require an evidence-based, best practice recommendation for the use of paid social media advertising for our events.

#### **Deliverable 2.**

Mailchimp is used to reach our emailing list of approx. 1000 subscribers. We feel that this is a low number and should be grown. Our assumption is that this is the most effective way to reach our core audience members.

- Can this be evidenced?
- If it can, we require a campaign to be delivered that will substantially grow this list.

#### **Deliverable 3.**

Our online presence consists of our website and Eventbrite pages for ticket sales. We are unhappy with the duplication of effort that this requires and also the website visitor experience.

- We require a new approach which improves efficiency, user experience and grows ticket sales.

#### **Deliverable 4.**

Seasonal programme Brochure. Currently, content and images are provided by Strathearn Arts to an external designer. They produce a layout and design for approval. They then arrange printing. Strathearn Arts arranges distribution via Royal Mail and with volunteers.

- We require detailed and costed recommendations for a more effective and streamlined process for the production of our seasonal brochure.

#### **Deliverable 5.**

Currently, we produce A3 posters for all of our events using a template design. These are distributed around the locality. This approach has not been validated and, as our programme increases in size, it may not be sustainable.

- We are seeking recommendations for the use of posters including: Are posters an effective way to reach our audience (compared to other methods)? Which type of events benefit most from having a poster? When is the optimal time to distribute posters ahead of an event? How should we prioritise when we have numerous events to promote?

#### **Deliverable 6.**

We currently have very limited and ad hoc PR activity. Our events are picked up by a number of listings sites but we have not identified the key ones that we are not picked up by. We have good contacts at our local newspaper and usually can get the coverage we request.



However, outwith Strathearn, we have very limited media contacts that we can channel stories to.

- We require a review and recommendation of our listings sites and a significantly expanded media contacts list including print and online media.

## **5. Other requirements**

Proposals should be modular, with timeframes and cost estimates for each deliverable separated and separable within the project.

## **6. Selection criteria**

In reviewing proposals, the trustees will place emphasis on the following areas:

- Experience in the arts sector, especially working with smaller regional arts organisations
- Match of skills and experience to the deliverables and requirements of the project
- Track record of the implementation of marketing tools within organisations
- Evidence of understanding of and empathy with the brief
- Efficiency, responsiveness and clear communications
- A modular approach as described above
- Cost
- Local knowledge of Crieff / Strathearn or a similar local community an advantage

## **7. Project timeframe**

11<sup>th</sup> July – Proposal deadline

18<sup>th</sup> July – Proposal selected

21<sup>st</sup> July – Planning meeting with the team

25<sup>th</sup> July – project begins

30<sup>th</sup> September – project completed



## Vision:

Provide consistently high-quality artistic experiences which enrich people's lives, bring the community together and put Strathearn on the cultural map of Scotland.

- **Consistently high-quality artistic experiences**
  - We are organised, professional and reliable in the delivery of our programme and our services
  - We have built a vibrant, high quality, innovative and coordinated programme of art, events and performances
- **Enrich people's lives**
  - Our activities bring physical and mental health and well-being benefits to all
  - It is stimulating, engaging, inclusive, thought-provoking and fun
  - It provides valuable opportunities for social interaction, not only for our users, but also for our volunteers
- **Bring the community together**
  - We engage with and provide shared experiences for all ages, and address inequalities and disadvantage wherever possible
  - We support and promote the development of a thriving creative community of artists and groups in Strathearn
  - We provide a focal point for local arts and culture policy, funding and awareness of the cultural landscape and activity in the area
- **Put Strathearn on the cultural map of Scotland**
  - Driven by our programme and our facilities, and through our coordinating role in the local artistic community, Strathearn has developed a wide reputation as a cultural destination
  - We actively engage in the Scottish cultural "scene" (e.g. agencies, promoters, producers and other venues) to tap into new opportunities and raise awareness of our work

## Values:

### 1. Inclusivity

We are welcoming, open and transparent. We encourage interaction and keenly engage with and support our communities.

### 2. Reaching higher

We are energetic, passionate and determined to improve the quality of what we do and how we do it.

### 3. Reliability and consistency

We strive to be consistent, efficient and professional in all we do. Our customers, colleagues, partners etc trust us, respect us and know they can rely on us.

### 4. Boldness

We are proud of all that has been achieved so far. We have already made a big difference to many people in Strathearn. We are confident that we can continue to build on this in the future.

### 5. Creativity

We are innovative and open to new ideas in our programme and our processes. If it doesn't work – we learn, improve and innovate again.