

Connected Coventry

A Tech Reuse Arts Fund from Virgin Media O2

This is an £18k funded opportunity for eligible* creatives, makers and artists of Coventry to design an engaging installation telling the stories and ambition of #CovConnects: building a digitally included city by reusing of old technology. Thanks for your interest in being part of our creative call.

The Background – about #CovConnects

#CovConnects and Virgin Media O2 have partnered to establish Coventry as the first device reuse city for social good and electronic waste (e-waste) reduction.

Around **fourteen thousand residents in Coventry are completely offline** (no access to the internet), and **6 in 10 are smartphone-only users**, without a laptop or computer. Imagine how limiting this can be. In contrast, e-waste is soaring, with UK households sitting on £10 billion of unused tech. The UK is the second largest producer of e-waste in the world per capita. To find out more about e-waste, check out the [User/Used E-waste e-zine](#).

Coventry City Council is addressing this problem with support from Virgin Media O2. The #CovConnects Device bank, run by Coventry City Council, was founded in 2022. The premise is simple, to take devices from local organisations and pass them to people in the city who need them. The device bank securely data wipes thousands of devices from the Council, NHS and University of Warwick (including smartphones, tablets and laptops). This IT is redistributed to over 190 bespoke programmes across the city, through the voluntary sector, Council and NHS services to help people get online safely, with their own device.

We know we are only scratching the surface, with many Coventry residents still not able to engage with the online world. We are looking to further scale-up our reuse city, ensuring local tech stays local: **From Cov, For Cov.**

What is the creative call?

Use your creativity, storytelling and reused technology to **showcase the positive impact of digital inclusion**, or the barriers created by exclusion, through a compelling art installation. The piece should **move viewers to support Coventry's digital device reuse mission**: it might encourage them to donate devices, to get involved, to influence their organisation to donate funding, or encourage their organisation to apply for devices.



Registered charity no. 1158700

Desired outcomes of the commission:

- Emotional Resonance: Demonstrates lived experiences of digital inclusion and/or digital exclusion
- Local Relevance: Strong Coventry focus (From Cov, For Cov)
- Clarity of Impact: Highlights how reusing tech improves lives in varied ways
- E-Waste Focus: showcase the power of old tech and that tech can be reused

Specific requirements of the application:

- Applicant contact details, and a business/charity/CIC number, if applicable
- At least 2 drawings or sketches with proposed dimensions and materials
- A clear description of your creative idea and how will meet the desired outcomes, explain any other public engagement and learning outcomes
- Budget breakdown of how the £18,000 will be spent to deliver the installation. This must include your creatives fees, production costs, insurance, materials, additional contractors and any potential build-space hire you require.
- Project timeline for delivery of installation in July
- Method statement covering: Fabrication and installation, Health & safety considerations, sustainability approach

Installation deliverables:

- Be a stand-alone piece able to weather the outdoors over a period of weeks during the summer (IP44 certified)
- Be able to be transported in a long-wheel based van to enable touring
- Stand out during daylight and darkness! Illumination will be expected in some form and the venues hosting the piece will have power supplies (or you can use batteries or solar power)
- Use old tech in the creative process and ensure the piece can be recycled/broken down sustainably should artwork be discontinued

Timeline

19 th February	Expression of Interest opens
19-26 th February	Drop-in with Hubbub and #CovConnects to ask questions
26 th February	Fund goes live
26 th March	Fund closes at Midnight
10 th April	Successful creative(s) selected by the judging panel
10 th April - July 1 st	Build time
approx. 2 nd July	Installation picked-up to go to outdoor space
End date TBC	Installation in situ, potentially various locations in Coventry



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Judging criteria to choose the winner:

A judging panel will be drawn from Virgin Media O2, Coventry Culture Works, Coventry City Council and Hubbub to select the most impactful installation design, with applicants contacted on 10th April. The panel will review applications based on the criteria:

- Does the installation sensitively involve real stories of local people? This could be highlighting positives or utilising negatives of scenarios to help audiences understand the local situation and importance of #CovConnects' aims.
- Has the artist used features that bring a strong Coventry feel? For example, through images, architecture, voices, maps, histories, habits, icons etc.
- Does the artist highlight how being/not being digitally included impacts local lives?
- Does the piece involve the use of old tech within the installation? Could 'waste' be remodeled into something beautiful?
- Has the artist fulfilled the deliverables requirements (listed above)?

What can Coventry City Council and Virgin Media O2 help with?

- Marketing support and shareable promotional assets. We are hoping to generate significant PR around the installation, so we ask that you are comfortable giving quotes or be photographed/filmed by media.
- Case studies of local impacts of tech reuse in Coventry and contacts with community organisations working in this space to help with the story telling/ lived experience element.
- Potential to connect you with organisations that can provide workable old technology for artistic purposes.
- Support for the artist/organisation to get a 'waste carrier' license, should this be required due to collection and storage of e-waste

FAQs

We welcome any questions regarding this call-out for proposals, using the email address: tatfund@hubbub.org.uk

This funding call is the start of the outreach to the arts and creative sector in Coventry, we have a long way to go and more ideas building, so if this is not for you, keep your eyes peeled for other opportunities.

*Please review our Terms and Conditions document to ensure you are eligible to apply for this fund.



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