



SIDNEY
NOLAN
TRUST



OPEN CALL

Bleddfa Centre - Artist Residency 2025

Background

The Bleddfa Centre was founded in 1974 as a place for creativity and community by pioneering British theatre director, priest, and writer James Roose-Evans. Located in the beautiful and sparsely populated landscape of Mid Wales between Knighton and Llandrindod Wells, it became a well-established hub for the arts with a commitment to ideas, spirituality, music, and the environment. In 2023 the Bleddfa Centre merged with another nearby rural arts charity, the Sidney Nolan Trust near Presteigne, who now manage the site. We are working with the dispersed rural community in and around Bleddfa to rebuild it as a creative hub.

The Centre comprises of two buildings, the former School and the Hall Barn, both set in significant green space. The Centre is right next to the important historic church of St Mary Magdalene parts of which date back to the 13th century. There is no church or village hall in Bleddfa, and the village pub has been closed for several years, so the Centre provides a vital gathering space and facility in the heart of this community. It is currently only open for specific scheduled events and community use/hires.

Opportunity

With generous support from The Ashley Family Foundation, we are offering a 9-month artist residency commencing in spring 2025 and completing by December 2025. The residency is aimed at artists with a strong socially engaged practice and who are interested in working collaboratively with individuals and community members and regional partners to help generate and promote new creative activity at the Centre.

The goals of the residency are threefold:

- To enable the recipient space and time to develop their creative practice in the social and geographic context of Bleddfa, the Centre, and its history and ethos, also opportunities to share/sell their work as appropriate.
- To support increased access to the Centre and creative opportunities for local/regional communities through enabling and building awareness of a programme of arts engagement/social/wellbeing activities such as workshops, making/chat groups, community-led initiatives – we expect that this will be a mix

of some recipient-delivered activity and enabling other practitioners/teachers to deliver.

- To work with Sidney Nolan Trust, community members and regional partners on collaborative opportunities for arts events/engagement for example artists in SNT's wider programme, the adjacent Church of St Mary Magdalene, Arts Council Wales Nights Out scheme events, Flicks in the Sticks screening.

Through the course of the residency we seek to pilot, test and evaluate a range of creative and social uses for the Bleddfa Centre, and build participation, confidence and networks. From this we hope to establish and embed successful models and partnerships that support a sustainable future with increasing use and accessibility.

The Artist/s will receive a bursary of £5750. A further £1000 is available for working with Sidney Nolan Trust to support public-facing events, workshops and engagement activities. The Artist/s will have sole use of a dedicated studio space in the former village Schoolhouse building which can be flexibly accessed. The Hall Barn venue on the site provides further scope for working with groups, workshops and events.

Please note that there is a one-bedroom holiday let at one end of the School building which we expect to come back into use during 2025 so the artist will need to work in a way that takes account of holiday lettings/occasional SNT use of this accommodation.

Who can apply?

Applications are invited from artist/s living and working in the Mid Wales and borders region who are within 15 years of starting their practice. The opportunity is not limited by artform instead we are seeking an artist/s with a strong interest and prior experience in co-production and community engagement. Ideally you can demonstrate experience of planning events and programmes of public-facing activity. We welcome applications from artist duos/collaborations.

How to apply

Please submit an expression of interest (maximum of two A4 sides) detailing:

- Your interest in the opportunity and your thoughts on how you would approach achieving the outcomes
- Your previous experience relevant to the opportunity

In addition please provide supporting information

- Curriculum vitae (maximum of two A4 sides)
- Up to 8 examples of previous work - images, text or links to video.
- Details of two referees

The application deadline is Tuesday 18 February

Please send applications to antony@sidneynolantrust.org

If you would like to discuss the opportunity or need support with the application process please contact antony@sidneynolantrust.org or 01544260149

Shortlisting and selection

Applications will be shortlisted based on the following criteria:

- Quality of previous work
- Relevance of practice and experience to the opportunity
- Experience in public/community engagement

Shortlisted artists will be invited to attend an interview on Wednesday 12 March. Interviews will take place preferably at The Bleddfa Centre but online interviews will be considered.

[Find out more about the Sidney Nolan Trust](#)

[Find out more about the history of the Bleddfa Centre and its founder James Roose-Evans](#)