Creative Practitioner

Mentee Photographer Brief - New Faces New Focus Stage 2

The Commission

Live Life Aberdeenshire's Cultural team wish to appoint an early career, North East Scotland-based photographer to support engagement with Aberdeenshire communities, fostering cultural, heritage-led and artistic outcomes connected to a temporary exhibitions project, **New Faces New Focus,** and the multi-million-pound development of the new Museum of Aberdeenshire. The mentee will be involved for 40 hours over the course of the project, and assist with project delivery and planning, working closely with the LLA Learning and Access Officer and NFNF Socially Engaged Photographer. The work will take place over 4 months from April 2026 in various locations across Aberdeenshire, including, but not exclusive to, Peterhead, Fraserburgh, Mintlaw, Banchory and Inverurie.

Background

Aberdeenshire Council Museums Service (part of Live Life Aberdeenshire/Aberdeenshire Council) has received Levelling-Up funding from UK Government to design and develop the first Museum of Aberdeenshire in Peterhead. This is an extensive piece of work over a number of years and includes the redevelopment of a large heritage building alongside a new modern extension with a temporary exhibition space.

Aberdeenshire Council's Museums Service is taking part in 'Going Places', an Art Fund programme made possible with major support from The National Lottery Heritage Fund and The Julia Rausing Trust, with additional support from a generous group of trusts, foundations and individuals. Going Places aims to engage and involve underrepresented audiences with museum collections through high quality, collaborative touring exhibitions and public programmes. As part of this, we are partnering with two other organisations, **Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council** and **Armagh County Museum** in Northern Ireland (collectively known as ABC), and **Open Eye Gallery** in Liverpool.

Titled **New Faces New Focus**, the project enables us to work with our communities to better understand and represent them in the new Museum spaces. Stage 1 development work took place in summer 2024, focussing on socially engaged photography sessions with Peterhead residents, including refugee and Ukrainian communities. We are especially keen to further develop relationships with New Scots, refugee, and asylum-seeking communities across Aberdeenshire, and we have begun to develop our relationships with these communities.

Context & Vision

In this second stage, a Mentee Photographer is sought to support engagement with relevant communities on the ground in Aberdeenshire, exploring their stories through the broad theme of journeys - from migration and exile to the milestones, traditions, and celebrations on our journeys through life. Output from these sessions will inform planned exhibitions with our Going Places partners and a local exhibition of community work scheduled for 2027. A 'work thus far' community exhibition is also scheduled for July 2026.

We are keen that aspects of the Aberdeenshire Museums Service's photography collection are introduced in the community engagement sessions. In its entirety, this spans over 17,000 catalogued images as glass negatives, lantern slides, original photographs, postcards, and flexible sheet negatives, as well as born-digital images. The collections date from the 1860s through to the present day and the subject matter includes studio photographs, landscapes, candid shots, promotional material, and commercial photography. The collections cover the geographic spread of Aberdeenshire and features scenes from coastal communities, urban centres, and rural hamlets. Named collections include the Shivas Collection, the Broughall Collection, the Morrison Collection, the Bodie Collection, the Ritchie Collection and the Jim Henderson Collection.

In addition to the images, we also have a large collection of photography equipment, dating from the early days of glass plate negatives up to the present digital formats. When used together, the images and technology used to create them also have a story to tell.

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For this project, we envisage appointing a Mentee Photographer with a demonstrable interest in developing a socially engaged photographic practice.

The artist's responsibilities will include:

- Working with Socially Engaged Photographer to contribute to and follow a work plan for the artist's own continuing professional development.
- Working closely with Learning & Access Officer and Socially Engaged Photographer to assist in the delivery of a series of photography-focused community engagement sessions which explore the connections people have to where they live and where they come from.
- In collaboration with Aberdeenshire Museums Service staff, supporting these communities to create new photographic artworks relating to the Museums' collections and their own lives.
- Assisting the communities to design and develop two planned exhibitions, particularly in relation to the display of photographic work.

The artist will be supported by the Live Life Aberdeenshire Learning & Access Officer, NFNF Socially Engaged Photographer and other members of the Cultural Team.

Outcomes and Outputs

1. Continued professional development with a focus on socially engaged practice in the context of heritage settings.
2. Gaining confidence and hands-on experience working in community settings and partnerships.
3. Support work with the key communities toward co-creation of photographic content for a temporary exhibition at Aberdeenshire Farming Museum (July 2026) and planned tours to our New Faces New Focus partner organisations.

Timeline

The work will take place over 4 months from April to July 2026. The sessions will take place at a variety of locations across Aberdeenshire, including Peterhead, Inverurie, Fraserburgh & Mintlaw.

The start date will be April 2026 (exact date to be agreed) following appointment and will conclude with the opening of a midpoint exhibition at Aberdeenshire Farming Museum before 21st July 2026.

The following outline timeframe is indicative only and is to be confirmed with the selected candidate following appointment:

- April 2026: Practitioner to join Learning & Access Officer and Socially Engaged Photographer in Engagement sessions, meeting the communities to build trust and relationships. Practitioner will work with Socially Engaged Photographer to set SMART goals for the menteeship and establish a work plan to achieve this.
- May 2026: Practitioner will continue to support the delivery of engagement, receiving 1-1 mentoring sessions with Socially Engaged Photographer.
- July 2026: Practitioner to support planning, installation and co-curation of 'work thus far' exhibition at Aberdeenshire Farming Museum. Practitioner to submit a self-reflection of menteeship process.

Finance & Contractual

Artist Fee: **£1,469.60** (Inclusive of VAT)

Broken down as:

33 delivery hours at £36.74 (Scottish Artist's Union rate).

With £257.18 towards travel, insurance and PVG costs.

This sum includes all fees, travel and subsistence costs incurred by the artist.

To be paid as follows:

£734.80 on signing of contract.

£734.80 on agreed completion of commission, including delivery of self-reflection, July 2026.

To apply

We are inviting submissions from an early career, North East Scotland-based photographer who has a demonstratable interest in photographic practice. You should submit:

- A current CV which demonstrates your interest in and experience of photographic practice.

- Up to ten JPEG images of previous work.
- A cover statement of up to 500 words indicating why you are interested in this menteeship and how it will benefit your practice.

Please submit all the above items as one pdf. Any links to online work or moving image should be included in the pdf.

Applicants need to be registered on, or be willing to join, the Disclosure Scotland PVG Scheme.

Applicants must be able to independently travel to various locations across Aberdeenshire. Primary locations will be Mintlaw and Peterhead with occasional travel to Banchory, Inverurie and Fraserburgh.

Applications should be titled **Mentee Photographer – New Faces New Focus Stage 2** and sent electronically, by email, to amy.miller@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Submissions deadline is 23:59pm on 23/03/2026.

Informal enquiries can be made prior to submission by contacting Grace Hill at grace.hill@aberdeenshire.gov.uk by email or tel: **01467539215**.

Applications should be titled **Mentee Photographer - New Faces New Focus Stage 2** and sent by email to **Amy Miller** at amy.miller@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Selection process

Submissions will be assessed by the LLA New Faces New Focus panel. Interviews will take place in person, on 1st April 2026.

The selection panel intends to make an appointment based on submissions but reserves the right not to choose any artist.

GDPR Statement

Please be aware that by submitting an application by email to amy.miller@aberdeenshire.gov.uk you are agreeing to the processing of your personal data in accordance with http://publications.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/dataset/arts-and-heritage-privacy-notice.

MORE ABOUT THE CONTEXT OF THE COMMISSION

Going Places is a UK wide programme led by The Art Fund supporting 23 organisations across the UK to engage under-represented audiences with museum collections through collaborative touring exhibitions. The New Faces, New Focus partnership is one of 7 partnerships currently developing a proposal for developing national tours to take place 2025-2030.

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