

Recruitment Pack

**Curator
Brent Biennial 2024**



Ed Webb-Ingall, *Growing up Brent* (2022). Installation view, Brent Biennial 2022, *In the House of my Love* (8 July – 11 September 2022). Photography: Thierry Bal.

Overview

Curator of the Brent Biennial 2024

Reports to	Director
Hours	22.5 hours per week or 3 days per week with some additional time needed to cover events and offsite activities. (Hours can be worked flexibly)
Salary	Full-time equivalent (FTE) £40,000 pro rata for 0.6FTE; actual salary £24,000 for 3 days per week/ 22.5 hours per week Potential to extend to 5 days leading up to the Biennial
Contract Type	Fixed Term
Commencement Date	April 2023
Term	March 2023 - September 2024

About Metroland Cultures

Metroland Cultures is an arts charity based in and serving the London Borough of Brent. Our vision is that Brent is known globally for its arts and culture, and its people and communities are recognised and celebrated for shaping it. Our mission is to build, share and support art and culture in Brent: supporting communities to amplify stories of Brent life, and working with artists to tell new stories.

Four building blocks inform our approach:

1. We start with Brent people and celebrate what's already here. Our work is grounded in the stories, needs and histories of people. We listen, learn and act with our community. A big part of Brent cultural life is people doing it for themselves. We find ways to support people who are doing this.
2. We connect artists with communities. We bring artists and grassroots organisations together, to hold conversations about what the borough needs, and use art to make it happen.
3. We stand for social justice. We make space for difficult conversations, and work towards dismantling inequality anywhere we find it including at Metroland. We want everyone to be able to access the culture we make.
4. We're on the side of the future. Brent has one of the youngest populations in London so our work has to equip young people with the skills and confidence that they have the right to make art and culture.

Our intention is for our programme to sit at the intersection of art and community, testing and pioneering new approaches that centre partnerships, strategies and approaches for community and artist collaboration. We do this through the Brent Biennial, a young people's programme and an artist development programme. At the heart of everything is a culture of learning, development and transparency with our constituencies.

About the role

Metroland Cultures is looking for a committed, approachable and collaborative Curator to join the team and lead on the delivery of the Brent Biennial 2024. The Curator will develop the conceptual and programmatic vision for the third edition of the biennial. The main outcome is expected to be an exhibition across multiple sites showcasing local, national and international artists side-by-side. Central to the Curator's proposal should be a desire to speak to and from the borough, its communities and heritage, regardless of whether this is to pursue an existent or a new line of curatorial inquiry within the Curator's practice. Partnerships will be key to ensuring that the biennial is rooted in its community while also expanding the breadth and scale of the project through additional reach and resources. It is expected that the Curator will work with already-existent partners set out by the Director, as well as bring their own relationships and networks to create new ones.

The Curator will work in close dialogue and collaboration with the Director to develop the overall project. This will involve implementing innovative approaches with community members and stakeholders to realise the programme and in the commissioning of projects; ensuring Brent people, places and politics are at the centre. The Curator will oversee relationships with all artists and the delivery of the works, and line manage a freelance team including producers, technicians and an Assistant Curator. The postholder will also oversee the budget for the commissions and installation of the full programme and will be expected to contribute towards fundraising. In consultation with the Director, the Curator will also appoint a Curatorial Committee to support the shape of the Biennial to ensure it is locally owned and relevant.

About the Brent Biennial

"Brent has reimagined that international monster, the art biennial, as a simple expression of ongoing commitment to creative engagement."

– [The Guardian](#), July 2022

Metroland Cultures delivers the Brent Biennial alongside a yearly programme of support for artists and young people, through Peer-to-Peer, Metroland Studios and Metroland Young Associates. The Brent Biennial came out of Brent's year as London Borough of Culture in 2020, and has so far commissioned more than 25 projects by local, national and international artists in unusual venues, public spaces and the streets of Brent. In 2022, Curator Eliel Jones alongside a Curatorial Committee made up of artists Adam Farah, Jamila Prowse and Abbas Zahedi, presented [In the House of my Love](#), bringing together artists and community groups whose work in various ways propose strategy for homemaking in the context of hostile environments. The programme also set out a vision for a new type of biennial; *one that seeks to be deeply rooted in Brent, while remaining open to the world* ([E. Jones, ArtReview](#)).

Moving into 2024, we want to continue expanding the definition of what a Biennial can be and provide alternatives; particularly ones that contribute towards the sustainable development of resources and programmes over time. We are also keen to establish models that can be responsive to the difficulties of the current funding climate, centring collaboration, partnerships and co-commissioning. To this end, the Curator will be expected to build on the work, relationships and learnings of the previous editions, and to instil artist and community collaboration at the heart of the project.

Job Description

Main Duties and Responsibilities

- Development of curatorial framework and theme for the Biennial in dialogue with the Director and key community members.
- Research artists, politics, histories, geographies of the borough to explore through the programme.
- Contribute towards fundraising be that through pitches, co-commissioning and partnership development.
- Develop opportunities for community input into commissioning, including through the selection and appointment of a Curatorial Committee.
- Lead on the selection of artists and works in consultation with the Director and the appointed Curatorial Committee.
- Input into the Metroland Young Associates programme, identifying how they can shape an aspect of the programme with the Programme Organiser for Young People.
- Build on the learnings from the 2020 and 2022 editions of the Biennial.
- Build and develop opportunities within the commissions with key Metroland audiences and partners.
- Regularly attend meetings with the Metroland Cultures team.
- Participate and lead (where required) meetings with the local art community and other partners in the borough.
- Negotiate the location of the artworks across the borough with the Director, and secure the venues and sites for the Biennial.
- Responsibility for the production of an international development plan within the agreed budget, and ensuring that the website is able to represent the Biennial's content in the best possible way.
- The organisation of vernissage, walking tours, and public programmes.

Oversee and support the Technical and Production Team on:

- Planning of presentation, including specific technical configurations, delivery of descriptions of the physical installation/mounting, disassembly/taking down, and packaging of artworks.
- Booking of transportation, packaging of the artwork and the subsequent return to the lenders/ artists with support from the Administrator.
- Establishment of loan agreements between artists, lenders and Metroland Cultures for the exhibition period.
- Delivering timetables for the production of new works.
- Work with artists and/or lenders to agree contracts, production budgets and fees for the commissioned works within the budgetary framework.
- Ensuring that exhibited items are insured from the time of transportation to be received by Metroland, and vice versa.
- The production of new works, where applicable (contact with subcontractors that produce elements of the artworks, the contact person responsible for work in public space).
- With regard to location-specific and distinct new productions, the establishment and negotiation of a separate agreement concerning transportation or destruction.
- Contributing where necessary to the construction and installation of works (both indoors and outdoors), in consultation with the Head Technician.
- Collaborate with the Marketing team on delivery of materials (pictures and texts) for the programme, as well as the delivery of pictures for the website and other information and marketing channels for the media and the public in accordance with the timetable.
- Participation in press viewings and public programmes.

- Working with the marketing team author texts and interpretation for the programme including a framing essay and marketing texts.
- Working with Marketing and Press teams to guide and steer the communication and tone of the programme.
- Working with a freelancer designer to create a visual identity for the biennial.

General Duties

- Keep abreast of best practice in the sector within Britain and globally.
- Represent Metroland at public functions, launch parties, conferences, press nights and fundraising events in agreement with the Director.
- Ensure you adhere to Metroland Cultures policies and procedures with respect to Safeguarding, Health & Safety, Equal and Diversity, Environmental and Data Protection.
- Be willing to undertake any necessary training or development.

Person Specification

Essential

- Commitment to working in Brent and desire to build the programme within the context, history, community and geography of the borough.
- A willingness to work as part of a small and busy team, instilling a collaborative work-ethic and leading by example.
- An established research area to extend into the Biennial framework.
- Experience of delivering public arts and cultural programmes that are inclusive and representative of local people and communities.
- Commitment to social justice and equity in all aspects of working.
- Experience of supporting artists development, commissioning and of working with artists at different stages of their careers.
- Experience of writing to a variety of audiences.
- Experience of successful fundraising from both public and private sources.
- Experience of developing relationships with national and international commissioning organisations for partnerships and co-commissioning.
- The ability to understand and anticipate the artistic, financial and logistical needs of producing and presenting an extensive programme of work and to be able to translate this into financial planning and budgeting.
- Experience of managing complex relationships with stakeholders, communities, artists and partners.
- A willingness to be flexible, understanding and responsive to the community.
- A commitment to working with artists and partners from a diverse range of backgrounds, and to exploring and furthering equity in the Visual Arts.
- A proven leader, who understands the impact of change, and can inspire a team.
- Excellent communication, influencing and negotiating skills.
- Emotional intelligence and appreciation of how to work collaboratively.
- Experience in budget management.

Desirable

- Demonstrable experience of working on place-based programming.
- Lived-experience and/or deep understanding of the context of the borough and its creative/cultural communities.
- Experience of co-commissioning and/or developing artistic programmes in close dialogue with communities.
- Experience of training, mentoring and supporting emerging talent.
- Experience working in a Biennial context.

Project timeline (subject to change)

Research and Development: April - May 2023
Programme Theme & Artists announcement: October 2023
Commissions confirmed: October 2023
Opening weekend of the Biennial: 30th May - 2nd June 2024
Closing weekend of the Biennial: 2nd - 4th August 2024
Evaluation: August - September 2024

How to apply

To apply for the role, please send the following to team@metrolandcultures.com:

1. An up-to-date CV.
2. A covering letter outlining your suitability for the role and your experience to date, referring back to the Person specification. (Maximum two A4 pages).
3. A brief proposal on how you would approach curating the third edition of the Brent Biennial. This could include things such as an outline of your proposed curatorial framework for the delivery of the project; a programme theme, question or research enquiry; or a set of principles and/or ways of working that you would seek to instil. (Maximum one A4 page).

We also ask that you please submit an anonymous [Equal Opportunities Form](#).

To discuss the role, please email team@metrolandcultures.com to arrange a conversation with the Director, Lois Stonock.

The deadline for applications is **Sunday 19th of March 2023, at 10pm**. Interviews will be held on **Monday 27th of March**. Successful applicants will be asked to present their proposed vision and approach for the Brent Biennial 2024 to an interview panel.

For more information about Metroland Cultures please visit:
<https://www.metrolandcultures.com/>

Metroland Cultures is an Equal Opportunities and London Living Wage employer.