we're open to ideas

Lincoln Arts Centre
Artistic Policy

In this document you will find information about how we programme, commission and development new artistic work.

Lincoln
Arts
Centre

About Lincoln Arts Centre

Lincoln Arts Centre is the University of Lincoln's public arts centre with a focus on talent development, creative health, and research. We're interested in what the future has to say, and our focus is on contemporary practice in the performing and visual arts.

We are committed to working in partnership with other arts and non-arts partners to develop co-commissions that enable new work, and which strengthen long-term relationships.

We aim to be a home for the next generation of artists and new artistic ideas. Whether that be introducing someone to their first experience of live performance, or helping make their professional debut, or introducing new artistic concepts or ideas.

We want people to be able to learn, make, debate or create with us - and we want to programme or commission artistic works that inspire, challenge or delight people.

You can see our multi-year programming priorities outlined in the next few pages.

Our vision

A world transformed by creativity

Our mission

To nurture the next generation of artists and ideas, creating work that inspires, challenges, and delights, especially sparking young imaginations to lead happier, healthier lives.

Art
Conferences
Dance
Digital
Film
Music
Science
Spoken Word
Talks
Theatre
Workshops

Auditorium
Cafe Stage
Digital Stage
Studios
Gallery
Tech Lab
The Campus
The City
The County
The Country

Programme priorities
2026-2028

We aim to facilitate a variety of activities as mentioned in the previous page and, whilst we welcome all proposals, we particularly keen to receive submissions in the following areas - as we see less submissions for these:

High quality & accessible performance work that will fill a 444 seat auditorium.

Supporting creative health interventions.

The best events for children, young people and their families.

Programming process

We have an 'Open to Ideas' submission window and draw on experience from across the University of Lincoln when reviewing these - whether that be programming, commissioning or developing work. This is facilitated by the Creative and Executive Director. This approach has a dual purpose:

1. To shape and develop a multi-disciplinary arts programme
2. To increase awareness of artistic works/ideas to foster collaboration.*

The process aims to increase awareness and collaboration in a more efficient way. If you submit an idea, work in progress, or finished product, it might be seen by academics from the University of Lincoln and other partner organisations – as well as by Lincoln Arts Centre.

Other organisations often ask us about any submissions we've received when looking for work themselves, and our 'Open to Ideas' framework means we're able to share your ideas with them. This allows more people to discover your work and results in less overall labour for all involved. While we can't realise every idea ourselves, we can collaborate with others across Lincolnshire to bring more of your projects to life.

**Even if that means the work does not present at the arts centre. We recognise our strong ability to connect people and see it as our duty to foster a local ecology.*

Left to right:
Glass, Jacob Kay (Photo: Phil Crow)
Technically Speaking Conference (Photo: Richard Hall)
A Super Happy Story (About Feeling Super Sad), Silent Uproar
A Christmas Carol, Lincoln Arts Centre (Photo: Phil Crow)

THE BEST EVENTS FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES / SUPPORTING CREATIVE HEALTH INTERVENTIONS / HIGH QUALITY & ACCESSIBLE PERFORMANCE WORK THAT WILL FILL A 444 SEAT AUDITORIUM.

Clockwise from top-left:
Out of The Deep Blue, Autin Dance (Photo: Tom Morris)
Verse and Vibes, Lincoln Book Festival (Photo: Richard Hall)
Camp Phoenix, Associate Artist Zest Theatres
Social Prescribing Photography Exhibition (Photo: Richard Hall)

THE BEST EVENTS FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES / SUPPORTING CREATIVE HEALTH INTERVENTIONS / HIGH QUALITY & ACCESSIBLE PERFORMANCE WORK THAT WILL FILL A 444 SEAT AUDITORIUM.

The Calander of Hopeful Things, Georgie Jones (Photo: Olly Ventress)

Our programme includes

Produced/commissioned work

Professional shows, conferences, symposiums or visual art commissioned or produced by Lincoln Arts Centre.

Work made by students

Performances, exhibitions, workshops and artwork created by students from University of Lincoln.

Visiting touring productions or visual artworks

Finished professional performance or visual art works.

Community Productions

Local dance schools or amateur dramatic societies that usually hire our spaces.

We like work that is...

You should also consider the following when thinking about approaching us. We like work that is...

Distinctive

Lincoln has broad cultural offer, with many venues of a similar size across the city. We complement and don't compete. So, your work should be a good fit for Lincoln Arts Centre, our values and our mission.

Inclusive

Your work needs to proactively reach and represent under-represented voices - and break down barriers to participants in both its form and its content.

High Quality / Inspiring

We need to develop our audience locally, nationally and internationally. Our programme should make our audience's eyes widen with wonder - or make them reflect deeply.

Global

Our programme should take action to safeguard our planet and environment.

Our artistic year

We mainly programme across two seasons each year which are curated around a chosen theme. This theme has been determined by robust data analysis of the greatest challenges within Greater Lincolnshire. The themes are always advertised many months in advance of programming.

When we programme (roughly)

Month	Focus
November to February	Season #1 (Autumn)
April to July	Season #2 (Spring)

Submitting your ideas

We welcome your ideas! If you have a creative practice that you think will fit into the programme, **complete the online form below**. You can submit finished works for programming or tell us about ideas in development. Please do not send original artworks or unique documents.

It's wise to submit any finished works for programming up to ten months in advance, and ideas in development between one and two years in advance.

If there is an opportunity for us to see your work, let us know. We welcome invitations to see new work and will do our best to attend.

Whilst we try our best to respond to each submission individually, we can't guarantee that you will get a response. The vast majority of proposals won't be taken forward in any way and we're sorry about that. However, we will contact you as soon as possible if we are able to take your proposal further.

Click to open the online form.

Or copy and paste: https://wkf.ms/3MvMSzs

Types of deal

We have a budget for commissioning and programming new work within our highly curated seasons and, where possible, seek to work in partnership with other arts and non-arts partners to enable new work, which strengthen long-term relationships.

We sometimes programme visiting work on a 'split deal' basis too, usually for one or two nights (Thursdays to Sundays). Due to the nature and variety of our spaces, this is not always possible.

If you have a 'work in progress', we also have nine slots available each year at our 'Demo' nights. These are paid at £300 a day, and you'll present twenty-minutes of work in progress.

Brief tech capabilities

We have a variety of presentation spaces including our main auditorium, gallery and studios, a cafe stage, a digital stage and an outdoor area. Each space is quite versatile.

Brief marketing capabilities

We have a Development and Communications Manager that can occasionally work with colleagues in other areas across the University. We market shows on our website (and in print, where applicable). We can also access listings across the University and the local area. We'd usually have a shared agreement about audience potential.

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Supported using public funding by
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Lincoln Arts Centre