

The Artist Hotel: Knowle West

Brief for artists

September 2015



1. About the project

The Artist Hotel: Knowle West is a collaboration between Knowle West Media Centre, UWE Department for Architecture and the Built Environment and The Factory- KWMC's new digital fabrication space in South Bristol.

The purpose of the project is to bring together art, architecture, and community provenance and participation to explore the concept of what an Artist Hotel in Knowle West could be, including how a hotel:

- could be designed, manufactured and built;
- relates and involves the local community and landscape;
- could be hosted by artists and the local community.

The content and material created through the project will be developed and shared as part of the Bristol Art Weekender and the Festival of the Future City.

The project will involve working with the local community, experienced architects OO Architects and Studio Weave and a group of third year architecture students. We are seeking a small number of artists to work as part of the project team.

2. The brief

The purpose of the project is to explore the concept of an Artist Hotel in Knowle West. This may be interpreted in many ways: a hotel for artists – considering the requirements of artists as guests/residents; or a hotel created in part by artists – considering how the design process may be collaborative with artists and a framework for others to complete as an artistic act in terms of how it is assembled, constructed and hosted.

The consideration of the relationship of the Artist Hotel to the host people and place is a critical one. What role and how could the landscape, assets, character and skill base of the neighbourhood be engaged in the concept, manufacture and hosting of any Artist

Hotel? What is the role of the artist in places outside the city-centre and in developing alternative models for regeneration?

The project also questions what it is to be 'at home' (typically rooted to a place) in relation to what it is to be 'just passing through' (transiting through a place), where the hotel room sits within this binary, and what it means to be a host. Another important conceptual concern is how to approach the notion so frequently allied to people's experiences and perceptions of staying in hotels, that of 'escape'.

The Artist Hotel could be a collective entity with individual rooms spread around a local area, perhaps in spare areas of people's houses – a dispersed building. This would enable guests to be embedded in the community. If the guests are artists this develops the idea of the artist being 'in residence' in line with the professional artist residency. This could generate income for many households and put into use under-used space.

Or, the Artist Hotel could be part of a mixed-use development on land that is becoming available adjacent to Knowle West Media Centre. How could an Artist Hotel challenge the branded experience of hotel chains without incurring the cost or exclusivity of a boutique establishment?

3. Residency opportunity

We are seeking a small number of artists to take part in the project. This is the first stage of what we anticipate will be a wider 2-5 year-long project.

For this stage of the project, the key roles and activities for the artists will include:

- contributing creative and critical thinking to the R&D process;
- providing mentoring and creative input to a group of UWE third year architecture students;
- participating in the Bristol Art Weekender day event, which includes a curated walk of Knowle West, charette-style discussions and some rapid-prototyping using digital fabrication technology at The Factory;
- developing and presenting 'something' that reflects and communicates what an Artist Hotel in Knowle West could be. This could take the form of a performance, participative experience, made item, or something else, that can be shared with an audience at an event in November/December 2015.

There are a number of key dates that the artists will need to be available to participate in, including:

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| 9 th October: | Project initiation and briefing in Knowle West, including a guided tour of Knowle West. |
| 30 th October | Bristol Art Weekender event at The Factory. |
| 16 th November | Opening of exhibition at KWMC, showing photography and prototype of a hotel room |
| TBC | Artist performance: The Artist Hotel Knowle West- this could take place on the 16 th November, but other options are available. |

The fee for this residency is £500 (including expenses & VAT), with an additional materials and performance budget.

4. Contact

For more information about the project and residency opportunity, please contact Melissa Mean on 07984 745 175 or at melissa.mean@kwmc.org.uk.

5. About the partners

Knowle West Media Centre is an NPO digital arts charity. Since it was set up in 1996, *KWMC* has used the arts and digital technologies to support people to imagine and develop ideas about social change, prototype new approaches, and share the learning across the UK and beyond.

The Department of Architecture and the Built Environment at UWE is a broad-based intellectual community committed to an inter-disciplinary approach to the creation and management of sustainable buildings, whether they are in urban or rural environments, residential or commercial, new or refurbished. It is committed to the making of places and buildings at all scales, encompassing regional spatial strategy, construction management, urban design, architecture and the design of interior spaces.

The *Factory* was established in partnership with *Knowle West Media Centre* as a start-up social enterprise that uses digital fabrication with local designers and operators to produce high quality products and develop skills and employment within the area.

00 Architecture has been at the forefront of developing frameworks to enable people to source design that employs digital fabrication techniques to locally produce kits for buildings and furniture. See their projects [OpenDesk](#) / [Wikihouse](#) / [Right To Build](#) for details. Both acclaimed design practices, *Studio Weave* and *00 Architecture* are increasingly working in partnership and are both involved in the Artist Hotel.

All the partners share a belief in the huge potential of urbanism based on community production and the ability of the inhabitants of settlements to be creative within their environments.



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