

DareToDream

Dare to Dream Installation - Artist-Maker Brief

Commission Opportunity: Installation Finale Event, April - May 2027

Host Venue: Masson Mills, Derbyshire (Derwent Valley UNESCO World Heritage Site)

Project Link: <https://www.derbyshiremakes.co.uk/projects/dare-to-dream>

1. Introduction

Derbyshire Makes is a countywide cultural programme celebrating creativity, making and place across Derbyshire, working through a network of local hubs, artists, libraries, heritage sites and community partners. Led by **Local**, the programme supports community-led creativity, sustainable making and new ways for people to connect with the places they live, work and care about.

Dare to Dream is one of Derbyshire Makes' flagship participatory strands, inviting collective imagination and creative action as a way to explore shared futures. The 2027 finale will culminate this three-year programme, bringing together hundreds of community-made flags and banners that share dreams for a better Derbyshire.

2. Context

The installation will form the centrepiece of the *Dare to Dream Finale*, connecting Masson Mills, Cromford Mills and Aqueduct Cottage through a physical and digital trail celebrating creativity, sustainability and shared imagination.

The Artist-Maker will begin research in 2026, visiting Derbyshire Makes Festival hubs (Cromford, Belper 250, etc.) and *Sewing Bee* events to:

- Observe and gather materials, themes and community stories
- Identify how participant-made work can be incorporated
- Meet partners, groups and local creatives
- Explore the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site landscape

Scope

A visually impactful, interactive installation at Masson Mills, incorporating banners, flags and textiles. The work should:

- Be pre-installed with selected community contributions
- Include an interactive element allowing visitors to add their own pieces during the finale weekend
- Remain in situ for an agreed exhibition period (April–June 2027)
- Use sustainable, low-impact materials and, where possible, repurpose looms or machinery from Masson’s collection

Potential locations within Masson Mills:

- Ground-floor (large, atmospheric space suitable for installation)
- Tea Room (ideal for workshops / talks)
- Museum space (possibility of displaying work among heritage machinery)
- Exterior wall for a large-scale temporary banner or projection

Access and permissions:

Discussions to be held with Derbyshire Dales District Council and Masson Mills management (Caroline Bowler / Jamie Needle) regarding temporary use of decommissioned rooms and external façade permissions.

Technical considerations:

Fire safety, fixings, load-bearing capacity, visitor flow, accessibility, and any listed-building constraints.

Linked activity:

- Projection or digital display of [The Digital Loom](#) (online archive of participant banners)
- Trail walk between Masson and Cromford, potentially featuring creative walks, flags, canal installations or signage
- Connection to Aqueduct Cottage (Derbyshire Wildlife Trust) for outdoor interpretation and audience engagement

3. Rationale

The installation should celebrate *Derbyshire’s spirit of making* - past, present and future - drawing on the heritage of the Derwent Valley Mills and the creativity of local communities. It will symbolise collective hopes, sustainability, and innovation - linking traditional craft with digital creativity.

Themes may include:

- Machines & Makers → Digital & Industrial Futures
- Craft, community and care
- Innovation and sustainability in Derbyshire

4. Target Audiences

- Local residents, families and visitors to the World Heritage Site
- Schools, colleges and creative learning groups
- Makers, artists and community organisations involved in Derbyshire Makes
- Visitors to the Derbyshire Makes festival and heritage attractions
- Businesses and sponsors engaged through *Dare to Dream* campaigns
- Sustainable travel users: Walkers, public transport users (Bus, Train) cyclists

5. Outline & Deliverables

Activity	Description	Output
Artist R&D (2026)	Fieldwork and engagement during Sewing Bees, Belper 250, and Cromford Hub.	Research notes and concept development.
Public Engagement (2026)	Participation in Festival Hubs; talk/workshop with local creatives.	1–2 community sessions + 1 artist talk.
Installation Production (2027)	Design, fabrication, installation and activation of the Dare to Dream finale.	Design proposals. Temporary installation and interactive display at Masson Mills.
Documentation	Contribution to <i>Digital Loom</i> and online zine (images, text, reflections).	Images and text for promotional material. 1 digital entry.

6. Timescales & Delivery Approach

Phase	Timing	Focus
1. Research & Development	Apr–Jul 2026	Site visits, testing materials, attending Festival Hubs and Sewing Bees, engaging with partners and communities.
2. Design Development & Build	Aug 2026–Mar 2027	Prototyping, securing permissions, sourcing sustainable materials, preparing installation off-site.
3. Festival Engagement	Apr–May 2027	Installation and activation during the Derbyshire Makes Festival; public interaction and live making.
4. Reflection & Legacy	Jun–Jul 2027	Documentation, evaluation, and de-installation. Explore potential for permanent or touring legacy.

7. Artist Fee and Materials

- **Fee:** £10,000 (includes research, engagement, delivery, documentation, travel and expenses).
 - **Materials budget:** Negotiated with producer and host; emphasis on reuse, sustainability, and local sourcing.
 - **Support-in-kind:** Space, materials or transport (from partners and sponsors).
 - **Insurance & tax:** Responsibility of the artist.
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8. Support and Logistics

Artists will receive:

- Curatorial and production support from Local with Cathy Newbery
 - Creative engagement support from artist Sue Reddish
 - Site and technical guidance from Derbyshire County Council, Derbyshire Dales BC, Masson Mills and Derwent Valley WHS
 - Access to community and school networks
 - Assistance with logistics, risk assessment and environmental planning
 - Documentation support (photography / written reflection)
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9. Specification

We welcome proposals from artists, makers or collectives working across installation, textiles, visual art, or interdisciplinary practice.

Essential:

- Proven experience in community and/or place-based projects
- Understanding of sustainability and reuse in creative production
- Ability to manage technical, logistical and health & safety aspects
- Skill set appropriate to the project for example; craft, building, designing, making, performing arts – practical, imaginative, resourceful.

Desirable:

- Knowledge of Derbyshire's making heritage
 - Experience of working in heritage or outdoor contexts
 - Innovative use of digital or interactive elements
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10. How to Apply

Please submit:

- Short statement (max 500 words) describing your concept, approach and relevant experience
- 3-5 images or links to recent work
- CV (max 2 pages)
- Complete the [Inclusion and Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form](#)

Deadline: 5pm Friday 20th February 2026

Send to: makes@derbyshiremakes.co.uk

Shortlisted interviews: Monday 2nd March 2026

Commission start: March/April 2026

If you would like to discuss this opportunity with a member of the team, please contact makes@derbyshiremakes.co.uk

Additional information

- Dates for Derbyshire Makes Hub Festival Programme 2026
 - Cromford - 11th April
 - Chesterfield - 18th April
 - Swadlincote - 25th April
 - Heanor - 2nd May
 - Glossop - 9th May
 - Bolsover - 16th May
- Dates for Dare to Dream Community Sewing Bees
 - Hardwick Hall - 30th May
 - Masson Mills - 10th October
 - More to be confirmed

<https://www.derbyshiremakes.co.uk/>

<https://www.derbyshiremakes.co.uk/digitalloom>

**Derbyshire
Makes**