

Applying for Photo Miners Board Membership

Many thanks for your interest in joining our board.

You'll find some information about us below, and we have a simple application form for you to complete here, the deadline is Monday 31 August 2020:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/BNWJSN7>

We'd also like you to fill in our monitoring form. This won't be linked to your application and it will be used by us to monitor the recruitment process.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/HSM3VJG>

This is an exciting time for Photo Miners. We're preparing to make sure we have a big impact for Coventry City of Culture from May 2021 to May 2022. We want to make sure that we create a positive legacy for Photo Miners and the city.

These are also challenging times. We, like many, have been badly affected by the impact of Covid 19 on our work programme and our practice. We successfully bid for an Arts Council England emergency grant to keep us going and prepare for 2021. The challenge forces us and enables us to do things differently.

What are we looking for from our Board Members?

- People who can act as critical friend to the directors on the development of Photo Miners as a business.
- People who can offer guidance on the development of our programme & thinking about our future.

We'd like our board members to come from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences to encourage us to see and think differently.

We are looking for 6 people to meet 4 times a year, initially online. We'd expect you to spend a few hours each month contacting us and each other as the board develops. You'll be encouraged to develop how you work together with our support. We will provide you with induction and support to be involved. This is a strategic and governance role. We welcome volunteers and freelancers to contact us about working with us on a more day to day basis.

Photo Miners, the story so far

Photo Miners is a Coventry based CIC set up in 2016. The three directors are supported by a network of partners, freelancers and volunteers. In three years we have championed responding to photographic archives and photography as an art form within Coventry's visual arts community. Our work celebrates localities, communities and diverse, shared stories by enabling local creative practice and skills development through community workshops. We have a reputation for ambitious and unusual indoor and outdoor activities and exhibitions. We are active in the Coventry Friday 13th independent Artists' network and Coventry Visual Art Forum. We have developed national and international contacts and relationships.

Our key projects so far include:

Imagine Hillfields: our first project challenged the stigma of being from Hillfields through community curation and responding to archives, attracting the attention of the public, creative sector and the City of Culture Trust with 2000 visitors to a one week exhibition.

Masterji: a hugely popular celebration of his photography, especially with the Asian communities, featuring three exhibitions and a book. An integral part of the bid for the City of Culture. Featured in India Vogue, Guardian and Big Issue with a 900,000 Twitter reach.

Tale of Two Streets: a two-year project commission from Great Places, local graduate photographers and street photographer Niall McDiarmid captured the diversity of two of Coventry's historic streets. This culminated in a publication and eight indoor and outdoor exhibitions in unusual locations. Over 500,000 views of the exhibitions across Coventry.

Imagine Willenhall, participatory photographic project reflecting on Willenhall as a post-war housing estate, initially funded by Road to 2021, with follow-on projects focused on new photography with artist Jo Gane, funded by ACE, including, most recently, Imagine Bedworth.

Key changes we are making

Without emergency funding we were considering mothballing the organisation. We are currently unable to run workshops, exhibitions and events in the way we have previously. A grant will enable us to reframe our plans and seize the opportunity in the lead in to Coventry 2021, to develop new ways of engaging our audience. We will make the most of this opportunity to develop our skills and knowledge and strategize how this will work with freelancers, volunteers and partners. We want to become field leaders in adapting to new circumstances for working with the public.

We are using the this grant to:

- Work with our community partners to adapt our planned projects and identify new opportunities and funding.
- Explore how we can use online as a space to engage with the public, including virtual exhibition space and online training support.
- Work with a developer and with freelance artists to plan, experiment and research, so that digital activity complements the physical work and has clear outcomes.
- Purchase computers and software to be efficient and creative with our use of archive material and bring photographic archives to life. Our current IT equipment is under capacity and aging.
- Develop our governance, with the creation of an advisory board.
- Undertake a planned rebrand from Photo Archive Miners to Photo Miners.
- Review and renew our website, including commercial and training opportunities
- Develop our volunteer engagement and freelancer network.
- Plan for the Photo Mine to open for 2021

What is a Community Interest Company?

A CIC is a special type of limited company which exists to benefit the community rather than private shareholders.

The big difference between a charity and a CIC is that a CIC can generate income through trading.

CICs have:

- a 'community interest statement', explaining what the business plans to do
- an 'asset lock'- a legal promise stating that the company's assets will only be used for its social objectives, and setting limits to the money it can pay to shareholders
- a constitution setting out how it works.

A CIC has directors that can involve/devolve decision making to and with a committee. For us that is about creating and developing our relationship with an advisory board.

Contact us

You're welcome to contact one of the directors for more information and to answer any questions you have.

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