

Commission for Diversity in the Public Realm, Zoom

25 January 2022 | 14:00 – 16.00

Record of the meeting

Co-chairs:

Justine Simons OBE, Deputy Mayor for Culture and Creative Industries,
Dr. Debbie Weekes-Bernard, Deputy Mayor for Communities and Social Justice.

Attendees

Commissioners

Aindrea Emelife
David Bryan MBA FRSA
Eleanor Pinfield
Jack Guinness
Jasvir Singh OBE
Lynette Nabbosa
Revd Professor Keith Magee ThD FRSA
Robert Bevan
Sandy Nairne CBE FSA

Apologies

Dr Zoé Whitley
Gillian Jackson
Pedro Gil
Riz Ahmed

1) Introduction and Welcome:

- The commissioners were welcomed to the meeting online

2) Commission Overview and Update:

Commission Research

- Urban Design London have been commissioned to speak with all London boroughs to identify policy and practice and any current programmes
- 14 boroughs have been interviewed to date
- 24 people / local authority colleagues attended a workshop on 17 January
- 12 local authority case studies have been collated
- Full report due Spring 2022

Untold Stories

- Round One of £1m fund launched 21 October
- Deadline for applications closed 12 January 2022
- Hosted 25 outreach sessions attended by over 500 people
- Held 50 individual consultations online with potential applicants
- Responded to 60 enquiry forms
- Received 117 applications
 - 74 Grow and Make Happen Larger grants
 - 45 Test and Nurture smaller grants
- Total of £1.8million has been requested
- Received applications for activity in 31 boroughs
- Many interesting and exciting projects
- Assessors will review applications against a set of criteria, panel will determine spread across boroughs, beneficiaries reached, types of projects etc.
- Commissioners were asked to put themselves forward for the panel
- Next steps:
 - Applications are now being assessed
 - Applications will be moderated to check for consistency and fairness
 - Then will be submitted to a panel for recommendation for funding
 - Commissioners to express their interest to the team by **Tuesday 15 February** if they would like to be on the assessment panel.
 - Panel meetings will be w/c 14 March 2022
 - Final sign off and announcements in April.
- Round 2 will open in late Spring / early Summer 2022

Engaging Londoners

- Commission has increased public engagement activities through Untold Stories grant programme
- Public engagement programming vital to delivering activity that Londoners can engage with throughout the year
- Team updated on the progress of developing further strands of activities to engage Londoners.
- Commissioners invited to help shape and be involved in the development stage of these programmes.

3) Contested Heritage roundtable update – Reflections and Next steps

Discussion Topic 1: What makes heritage in the public realm ‘contested’?

- Visible and missing
- Public education & meaningful engagement
- Whose voices and in what spaces?
- What might alternative phrases be – inclusive history, evidence-based history?

Discussion Topic 2: What role (if any) can an initiative like the Commission for Diversity in the Public Realm play in addressing contested heritage in London?

- Listening to Londoners and gathering the evidence
- Helping to build communities of action
- Leading by example and building evidence base

Feedback & reflections

- Need for increased visibility and to reach a younger audience
- Acknowledging the work that came before
- Categorising what is/isn't contested
- Access and Participation – identify where else are these conversations may be happening
- Schools – gateway for explaining and new contributions
- Retain and explain – we need to explain the full British history
- Ongoing annual exploration of discovery
- Create momentum for change
- More history – not less

4) Emblematic Projects Framework

The Commission has set out a set of principles to consider for large scale public art and memorial projects for London.

Emblematic projects are those which:

- substantively change the narrative
- promote learning & engagement
- engender wider cohesion
- demonstrate sustainability
- represent a diversity of rigorous approaches
- educate and inform
- are specific in relating to their location
- enable grassroots representation

Other considerations:

- Historical narrative or representation needs to be evidence based
- Emblematic should stand for process – to transform the way people engage with public realm.

- Memorials should also be future looking.
- Education element should be part of any memorial
- Engage a wide constituency not just from the community of interest but also beyond, for each project

London can learn from national and international examples. These include:

- Ottawa – how the city is managing its commemorative landscape
- France and the research and work done on slaving ports
- New York memorial commission

5) AOB

- Press / media briefing note to be shared with commissioners.
- Date of next meeting: 15 March 2022
- Closing statements, and thanks by Deputy Mayor Dr. Debbie Weekes-Bernard