



## News release -

### **Egremont Castle Performance Structure, Cumbria International Open Ideas Competition**

The RIBA Competitions Office is pleased to announce the launch of a new international open ideas competition for the design of a new performance structure within the castle keep at Egremont Castle in Cumbria.

The Competition is being promoted by Grizedale Arts in conjunction with Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership as part of the Creative Egremont public art strategy. The aim of the competition is to find an innovative new design for a removable structure which will allow the castle to be used for concerts and public performances. This project forms part of an ambitious regeneration strategy for the West Cumbrian town and is funded by West Lakes Renaissance.

Entries are invited from architects, designers, engineers and students of these disciplines to take part in the competition, which will be single stage and judged anonymously.

For further information on how to enter please contact the RIBA Competitions Office on tel ++(0) 113 2341335 or visit [www.ribacompetitions.com](http://www.ribacompetitions.com).

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#### **Notes to Editors:**

Please ensure that the RIBA is credited when mentioning the above competition. The RIBA Competitions Office organises bespoke architectural competitions that encourage excellence in design, offer value for money, and are run smoothly from inception through to the appointment of a winning design or architect/team. The Competitions Office has vast experience of managing competitions for a diverse range of clients, project types and budgets. The competition process has produced landmark buildings/structures such as BALTIC and The Sage Gateshead, the Millennium Bridge etc. For further details please visit [www.ribacompetitions.com](http://www.ribacompetitions.com)

#### **Competitions Office**

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## **New Open Ideas Competition**

### **Egremont Castle New Performance Structure**

This new open idea competition invites architects, engineers, designers and students of these disciplines to design a new performance structure within the castle keep at Egremont, Cumbria, to hold events and activities.

#### **Introduction**

Creative Egremont is a public art strategy co-ordinated by Grizedale Arts in partnership with the Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership. Rather than commissioning works of art, this strategy seeks to establish and develop a sustainable infrastructure for cultural development, through a number of key projects, such as a castle lighting scheme, a radio station, landscape projects, a mobile folk archive and the reinstating of the town's historic Greasy Pole event.

One of these key projects is to create a new performance structure to go inside the castle keep, a space which is already used for public theatre and concerts but is subject to the vagaries of the West Cumbrian weather.

Creative Egremont is seeking ideas for a structure which will provide a covered stage and audience area for theatrical, literary and musical events. The constraints of the site provide a challenging brief, as the structure must be removable and not have any impact upon the site, which is a scheduled ancient monument.

The two winning designs will be taken forward to a second stage design and form a key part of the Egremont and Area regeneration strategy.

It is hoped that the application of contemporary design will provide a much used venue and promote a modern image of Egremont with a dynamic and forward thinking culture.

#### **Site and Context**

Egremont is an ancient and historic rural market town. Once the principle economic centre of the region, it gradually lost its influence with the growth of nearby Whitehaven in the industrial revolution. More recently its culture has been dominated by the industries of iron ore mining in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century and, more recently, the Sellafield nuclear plant which is four miles to the south.

With the decline of this industry (Sellafield is now being decommissioned) Egremont faces a new future as it moves away from the reliability of industrial labour toward the enterprise and tourist culture of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

As such the Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership has been set up with finance from West Lakes Renaissance (NWDA) to assist the regeneration of the town. The arts strategy and the RIBA competition form an integral part of this endeavour.

Egremont's Norman Castle is a Green Flag scheduled monument and its ruins occupy a prominent position to the South West of the town's historic market place.

Egremont Castle and Egremont itself has its origins in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, when a small stronghold was built on a steep hill by William de Meschines, to defend against attack from Scotland to the north. In 1215 the castle was passed on to the De Moulton family and in 1315 it saw its most violent episode when the castle was besieged by the forces of James Douglas under Robert the Bruce. The Percy family bought the castle in 1522, but by 1578 the castle was in an advanced state of decay.

The castle is now owned by Lord Egremont and managed jointly by English Heritage and Copeland Borough Council in partnership with The Friends of Egremont Castle Group. It lies within an area of small park and garden, which is open to the public free of charge and is a popular recreation area throughout the year.

Community involvement is at the heart of Egremont castle and grounds. The Friends Group are very active and work very closely with the parks department in the management of the castle and grounds, to help promote interest and raise funds. The Friends Group promote community events within the grounds such as Medieval enactments, poetry readings, open air theatre, band and choir concerts and the Christmas fireworks display.

Creative Egremont saw the development of this activity as a key part of the cultural and regeneration strategies for the town. This competition seeks a creative solution to the site, which will create a covered venue for these outdoor events and attract more events and visitors to the town. The aim is to enhance the contemporary function of this historic site, as a valuable asset for Egremont.

Currently the rectangular lawned area within the castle keep forms an ideal open air venue. It is open to the skies but surrounded on four sides by the ruined walls, most dramatically at northern end with the imposing Baillie wall.

The new structure should be designed to be erected in or moved into this space when events demand, yet be removed or packed away when not in use. It is important that the structure does not have a negative impact on the castle fabric or visual aspects of the original structure. There is open air space within the castle grounds, with vehicular access, where the new structure could be stored.

Egremont lies on the west coast of Cumbria, outside the Lake District National Park. As a post industrial region it does not benefit from the tourist economy of the central Lakes and has been targeted for regeneration.

The town's geographic isolation and distinct working culture have developed a unique culture of family and community groups, activities and folk art. The latter is manifest every September in the 700 year old Crab Fair, a curious mix of country sports, idiosyncratic events and contemporary culture. The fair is best known for the World Gurning Championships which forms the finale of the weekend.

This folk culture was featured prominently in the artists Jeremy Deller and Alan Kane's *Folk Archive*, a European touring exhibition of English Folk Culture. As part of the current art strategy, the two artists are working with Creative Egremont to reinstate the town's Greasy Pole (as permanent public sculpture) after insurance restrictions prevented the event taking place after 2003.

The town's music scene is also very developed with a broad range of groups, from Classical Concerts to a wide range of young bands.

This new building will provide a much needed, high profile venue which will further the development of Egremont's culture through increased participation and provision of a destination venue for the whole region.

This project is funded by West Lakes Renaissance (a subsidiary of the North West Development Agency) and supported by Arts Council England North West.

## **Links**

[www.creative-egremont.org.uk](http://www.creative-egremont.org.uk)

[www.visitegremont.co.uk](http://www.visitegremont.co.uk)

[www.grizedale.org](http://www.grizedale.org)

[www.ecastles.com](http://www.ecastles.com)

## **Competition Structure**

The competition will be single stage and judged anonymously. Designs should be submitted on a maximum of two A1 panels accompanied by a short report on not more than two A4 sheets.

## **Jury Panel**

The jury panel will comprise the following members:-

Robin Snell, Snell Associates, RIBA Adviser

Alistair Hudson, Grizedale Arts

Ann-Marie Cowperthwaite, West Lakes Renaissance

Ann Morton, The Friends of Egremont Castle Group

Simon Walker, Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership

David Gaffney, Arts Council England

Joanne Wallis, RIBA Competitions Officer\*

David Southward Vice Chair Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership

\*Joanne Wallis will sit on the panel as observer only

## **Competition Timetable**

The competition timetable, which may be subject to variation, is as follows:

Brief available:	30 June 2007
Question deadline:	30 July 2007
Replies to questions:	20 August 2007
Submission deadline:	1 September 2007
Assessment:	10 September 2007
Result:	14 September 2007

### **Prize Money**

The three design entries judged to be the most successful response to the brief will be awarded £2000 each to develop the designs to a further stage.

### **Eligibility**

The competition is open to registered architects, engineers, designers or students of these disciplines.

### **How to Register**

To register and receive a copy of the competition brief, please send a cheque for £35.00 for professionals or £7.50 for students (including VAT), payable to RIBA Competitions. Please note we do not have credit card facilities.

### **Enquiries**

All enquiries should be addressed to the competition organisers:  
RIBA Competitions Office  
6 Melbourne Street  
Leeds  
LS2 7PS

T : ++44 (0)113 2341335  
F : ++44 (0)113 2460744  
E : [riba.competitions@inst.riba.org](mailto:riba.competitions@inst.riba.org)  
W : [www.ribacompetitions.com](http://www.ribacompetitions.com)

# Competition Conditions

## 1.0 Invitation

Grizedale Arts in conjunction with Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership (under the project title Creative Egremont) invites submissions for an international open ideas design competition for the design of a new performance structure within the castle keep at Egremont in Cumbria.

The competition is organised with the support of the RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects) Competitions Office.

## 2.0 Objective

The new performance structure will hold events and activities for both the local community and visitors to the town. The new structure will have to be removable or collapsible in order to ensure the sympathetic treatment of the castle structure (it is a scheduled monument managed by English Heritage). It is hoped that the new structure will form part of a wider regeneration of the area, providing a landmark architectural project and increasing the volume of tourists visiting the town.

## 3.0 Intention to Build

The competition seeks two designs to be taken to design stage x. One of these designs will be put forward for funding and realisation.

## 4.0 Competition Format

Submission of designs which will be assessed anonymously and two winning designs selected for further development funding. One of these designs will be chosen to be taken forward as part the regeneration strategy.

## 5.0 Eligibility

The competition is open internationally to architects, designers, engineers and students of these disciplines. Collaboration between disciplines is actively encouraged. No member or employee of the promoting body nor the jury panel shall be eligible to compete or assist a competitor.

## 6.0 Jury Panel

Robin Snell, Snell Associates, RIBA Adviser  
Alistair Hudson, Grizedale Arts  
Ann-Marie Cowperthwaite, West Lakes Renaissance  
Ann Morton, The Friends of Egremont Castle Group  
Simon Walker, Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership  
David Gaffney, Arts Council England  
Joanne Wallis, RIBA Competitions Officer\*

\*Joanne Wallis will sit on the panel as observer only

In the event of a jury member being unable to continue to act through illness or any other cause, the promoter in consultation with the RIBA will appoint another assessor.

## 7.0 Public Consultation

Prior to the assessment of designs the schemes will be displayed locally for public consultation. Comments raised through this exercise will be made available to the jury panel.

## **8.0 Assessment Criteria**

The proposed designs will be assessed against the following criteria:-

- The visual impact and aesthetics of the proposed design
- Sympathetic treatment of the castle structure
- Economy of design
- Innovative solution to the restrictions of the context
- Removability
- How well the proposed design works in context
- Functionality/ease of use
- Anticipated ongoing maintenance considerations

## **9.0 Prize Money**

Three 3<sup>rd</sup> stage design contracts of £2000

## **10.0 Timetable**

The timetable for the competition, which may be subject to variation, is as follows:

Question deadline:	30 July 2007
Replies to questions:	20 August 2007
Submission deadline:	1 September 2007
Assessment:	10 September 2007
Result:	14 September 2007

## **11.0 Submission Instructions**

A1 boards : Competitors should submit their design proposals on a maximum of 2 A1 lightweight boards, to include all illustrations, drawings and descriptive text. The first board should mainly describe the building and the second board should mainly describe how the structure is used and operates.

A separate report should be provided on not more than 2 A4 sheets.

Declaration : The declaration form signed, and placed in the 'official envelope' provided with the competition documentation.

Models will not be accepted although photographs of models may be included on the boards.

See 'anonymity' section below.

The promoter and the RIBA Competitions Office will exercise all reasonable care but will not be responsible for loss or damage to drawings that may occur either in transit or during exhibition, storage or packing.

Competitors are advised to retain copies of the designs submitted.

## **12.0 Submission Method**

Submissions should be contained in a single package and sent, carriage paid, addressed to the RIBA Competitions Office, 6 Melbourne Street, Leeds LS2 7PS, clearly marked 'RIBA/Egremont Castle.

Competitors requiring proof of delivery should enclose in their package a stamped, sealed envelope addressed to a third party (to preserve anonymity). This will be posted on receipt of submission.

### **13.0 Anonymity**

Packages and the designs they contain should be sent in without name, motto or distinguishing mark of any kind and be accompanied by the declaration form provided, which should be placed in the 'official envelope' provided. The RIBA will place a number on each drawing and on the official envelope. The envelope will not be opened until after the selection has been made.

A successful competitor must be able to satisfy the assessors that he/she is the bona fide author of the design he/she has submitted.

### **14.0 Disqualification**

A design shall be excluded from the competition:

- If received after the latest time stated under submission method;
- If, in the opinion of the assessors, it does not substantially meet the requirements of the brief;
- If a competitor shall disclose his or her identity, or improperly attempt to influence the decision;
- If any of the mandatory requirements of the competition conditions and brief are disregarded.

### **15.0 Copyright**

The ownership of copyright in the work of all competitors will be in accordance with the Copyright and Patent Act 1988, that is copyright rests with the author.

### **16.0 Announcement of Award**

At the conclusion of the competition the RIBA will publish the winning names after communicating it individually to each of the competitors.

All the designs may, by agreement, be retained for a further period by the promoter for the purposes of exhibition and publicity.

The promoter or the RIBA may publish illustrations of any design, either separately or together with other designs with or without explanatory text.

### **17.0 Questions**

Questions relating to the competition brief and conditions must be addressed in writing to the RIBA Competitions Office to arrive on or before.....

A statement in response to all questions will be circulated to all competitors w/c.....

### **18.0 Registration Fee**

The registration fee is non-refundable. Registration fees are inclusive of VAT.

### **19.0 Enquiries**

Any enquiries relating to the general conditions of this competition should be addressed to the RIBA Competitions Office and not the competition promoter.

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