



Incubate

A residency at Leith Hill Place with the National Trust & Surrey Hills Arts

Surrey Hills Arts in partnership with the National Trust are looking for a dynamic and socially engaged, emerging artist to take up residence at Leith Hill Place for 3 months between August – Oct 2025. We are open to any artform, for example a performing artist, visual artist, filmmaker or writer. We are interested in work that relates to the history or geology of the surrounding landscape with the option to take inspiration from the rich heritage of the house itself.

The residency will be an opportunity for you to develop work and explore connections across the site with support from the host organisations. There will also be opportunities to engage the community in the work.

The National Trust is Europe's biggest conservation charity. It looks after nature, beauty and history for everyone to enjoy and works to tackle climate change, protect historic sites and help people and nature thrive. Leith Hill Place is situated on the Southerly slopes of Leith Hill with spectacular views over the Weald as far as the South Downs. The grounds, including the special Rhododendron Woods, planted by Caroline Wedgwood (nee Darwin) are of note, with many rare and old specimens and unusual trees. There are evocative ponds and streams that tumble off the hill. It was the childhood home of Ralph Vaughan Williams, English composer who was inspired by the flora, fauna, and landscape that he used to walk and cycle round as a young man. More recently, as a boys' boarding house for Hurtwood House school, as a relaxed home from home environment – one of the boarders was none other than Hans Zimmer.

Surrey Hills Arts' mission is to connect people to the Surrey Hills through an imaginative arts programme, meaningful engagement and developing our creative community. We deliver contemporary arts projects that proactively build diverse audiences that connect to the history, geology, and characteristics of the landscape, and advocate positive action and a greater understanding to environmental challenges through direct engagement in community settings. We work in partnership to develop arts-led opportunities that achieve positive health, education and social outcomes and develop local artists of all art forms in creating work related to this National Landscape.

What the residency offers

Space - A bare room on the 1st floor with large window overlooking a northerly view up the paddock towards the Rhododendron Woods and Leith Hill. There is a bathroom next door with capability to wash brushes or larger items. There is a break-out space to make drinks.

The space can be accessed on Wednesday, Friday and weekend days. With prior agreement with NT staff, Tuesdays and Thursdays may also be possible. Parking is available over the road from Leith Hill Place.

£1000 stipend

Regular support including coaching and mentoring sessions from the Surrey Hills Arts team.

A supportive relationship throughout the residency with the Visitor Operations and Experiences Manager at Leith Hill Place who will provide history and reasoning around the brief, landscape and natural history information.

Promotion of your work in our newsletters and social media.

Potential opportunities to showcase your work as part of the National Trust or Surrey Hills programmes.

Your commitment

Open studio on 3 weekend days agreed with the Visitor Operations and Experiences Manager. We would welcome an engagement activity with visitors as part of these days.

Residency showcase once the piece is complete.

Key dates

Deadline for applications: 11th May

Interview day: 10th or 12th June

Residency start date: 4th August

Residency end date: 31st October

Who can apply

We are looking for an artist from any discipline that meets the following criteria:

Required

- Newly emerging artist – within 10 years of training/ beginning of arts career
- Commitment to a socially and critically engaged practice.
- Ability to think and plan creatively and critically.
- Effective communication, interpersonal and facilitation skills.

Access

- We particularly welcome applicants from diverse backgrounds, including race, disability, age, sex, gender, identity, sexual orientation, religion and belief marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity and those with caring responsibilities.
- We are committed to creating opportunities that are accessible to all however, the suitability of the host location Leith Hill Place and the residency space being upstairs with no lifts, might preclude some artists from accessing the space for this residency at present.

Your Application

Please include the following in one pdf document:

- A statement outlining your approach to the residency (no more than 500 words if written).
- A short statement about your practice (max 300 words if written).
- Images and short descriptions of up to 2 recent and relevant projects. These can be recent course work.
- Links to your website or social media accounts if relevant.
- A one-page CV including 2 referees.
- You are welcome to include the above information in a video if preferred.

Please send your application to ali.clarke@surreycc.gov.uk

Additional information

To find out more you can contact:

- Ali Clarke – Surrey Hills Arts Programme Manager – ali.clarke@surreycc.gov.uk
- Catherine McCusker – Visitor Operations and Experiences Manager for Leith Hill Place Estate, National Trust – Catherine.McCusker@nationaltrust.org.uk

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/surrey/leith-hill/visiting-the-house-at-leith-hill-place

www.surreyhillsarts.org