

Manchester
Literature
Festival

Manchester Literature Festival – Website Brief 2024

About Us



MLF began trading in 2006 and was built on the legacy of its successful predecessor, Manchester Poetry Festival. Providing unique and imaginative opportunities for audiences to experience high quality live literature, the Festival takes place annually in October in a variety of prestigious and atmospheric venues across the City, and also presents a Spring programme and signature/special events outside the Festival period.

A firm believer in the transformative power of words and stories, MLF showcases and commissions some of the most interesting voices in fiction, poetry, literature in translation, song writing, activism and culture. Featuring both established and emerging writers, the Festival provides a platform for women writers, LGBTQ+ writers, working class writers and Global Majority writers to reflect the rich diversity of Greater Manchester.

Previous MLF guests have included Booker Prize-winning novelists Margaret Atwood, Roddy Doyle, Bernardine Evaristo, Damon Galgut, Howard Jacobson, Marlon James, Ben Okri, Arundhati Roy, George Saunders and Douglas Stuart; Poets Laureate Simon Armitage, Carol Ann Duffy, Seamus Heaney and Jackie Kay; Children's Laureates Malorie Blackman, Lauren Child, Michael Morpurgo and Michael Rosen; musicians Viv Albertine, Brett Anderson, Guy Garvey, Johnny Marr, Thurston Moore, Arlo Parks, Neil Tennant and Tracey Thorn; actors Richard Armitage, Rob Delaney, Sheila Hancock and Ruth Jones; comedians Jo Brand, Susan Calman, Sarah Millican and Graham Norton; prominent activists, feminists and disruptors Patrice Cullors, Angela Davis, Reni Eddo-Lodge, Mona Eltahawy, Edward Enninful, Dara McAnulty, George Monbiot, Gloria Steinem and Vivienne Westwood.

As well as our annual Festival and Spring programme of events, MLF also delivers a year-round Creative Learning programme, nurturing the next generation of readers, writers and creative practitioners. We provide safe spaces for children and young people to develop

confidence in their own identity and respect for each other, learn to express themselves, and experiment and take risks with their own creative development.



Key Features of Website

Our current website www.manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk is hosted on the Cluster platform managed by [Pageplay](#) and the system is in the process of being mothballed so we are looking for a new provider to build, maintain and host a CMS website for us.

We want the new site to feature many of the same elements and content as our current website, including the following:

- Stylish Home page with panel links to key events/projects that will be regularly updated
- Easy to use What's On event listing pages including links to venue websites and white label external box office provider's site – see our [2023 What's On](#) archive page for reference
- Pages providing information on our Creative Learning activities and other projects
- Pages showcasing MLF New Commission including downloadable PDFs and embedded Vimeo and You Tube videos
- About Us pages
- Support Us section profiling our funders and sponsors and links to external Donations and Membership pages
- Programme archive
- Recruitment adverts
- Social Media links including Twitter/X, Facebook, Instagram, You Tube and Vimeo
- Photo gallery from past events

We will be reviewing the current content with a view to creating a more streamlined navigation for users and updating copy and images where appropriate.

We also want to introduce a search function and make external links open in new tabs, so audiences aren't drawn off site.

Target Audiences



Existing and potential audience for Manchester Literature Festival events wanting to book tickets and/or find out more about the events.

Schools and families wanting information on our Creative Learning programme.

Funders, sponsors, donors and members (existing and potential).

Press.

Social Media followers.

Industry peers and partners including publishers, other festivals, and arts and cultural organisations.

Key Objectives

We want a new website that:

- Provides a stylish, user-friendly, showcase for MLF's activities giving current and potential stakeholders a clear and attractive overview of our work;
- Attracts increased web traffic (average page views and time spent on the site);
- Increases ticket bookings (via external box office provider/partner venues);
- Encourages increased donations and memberships;
- Provides a clear navigation and improved customer experience;
- Has an easy to use/intuitive content management admin site to enable staff to upload and edit content.

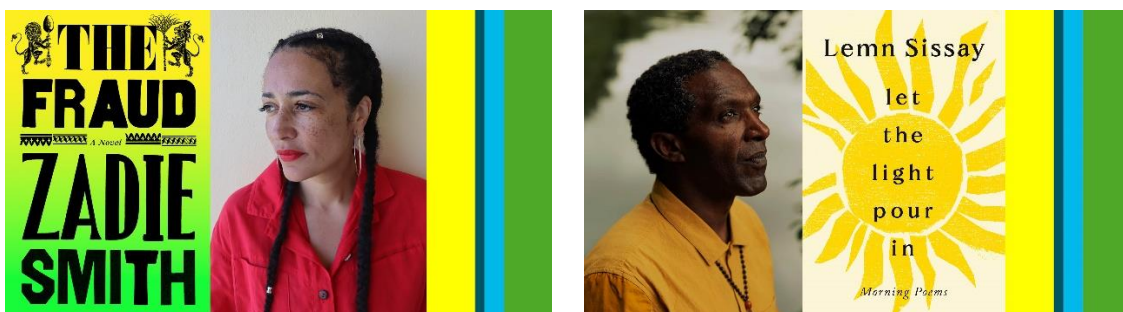
Technical Requirements

- The site content/display must be responsive across all devices from smart phones to desktops.
- The site must be WCAG compliant – the navigation and content needs to be as inclusive and accessible as possible and compatible with audio and braille browsers.
- We want a site that is clean, streamlined, quick to load with a low carbon emission rating (according to www.websitecarbon.com our current site is 84% cleaner than

other websites testing, producing just 0.16g of CO2 every time someone visits the site).

- Appropriate cookie settings consent.
- Google Analytics 4 tracking embedded.
- Standardised inbuilt formatting of font (size and type) for headers and main copy when adding content to CMS fields.
- Standardised image templates for use on event and project pages with inbuilt photo editing facility in CMS.
- Ability to embed video and audio content from other platforms such as Vimeo, You Tube and Instagram.
- Ability to hide events from navigation and review page before publishing function.

Branding



There will be additional budget available to commission any necessary new branding assets/graphics for the website. MLF has a long-established relationship with Mark Studio design agency who have developed our current brand identity.

Sites we like

How the Light Gets In: <https://howthelightgetsin.org/festivals/london>

HOME: <https://homemcr.org/>

Contact: <https://contactmcr.com/>

Manchester City of Literature: <https://www.manchestercityofliterature.com/>

Poet in the City: <https://www.poetinthecity.co.uk/>

Kings Place Arts Centre: <https://www.kingsplace.co.uk/>

Cuirt Festival of Literature: <https://www.cuirt.ie/>

Cambridge Literary Festival: <https://www.cambridgeliteraryfestival.com>

Budget

- Up to £8K for the website build and staff training on how to use the CMS.

We will require the chosen agency to provide a hosting service and ongoing maintenance and support. Regular updates to content will be made in-house, via the site's CMS, and this system should allow as much flexibility as possible to manage the content of the site. Please include a quote for website hosting and ongoing site maintenance/support costs in your proposal.

Timeline

Proposal deadline: 31 January 2024

Meeting with shortlisted agencies: w/c 12 February 2024

Project start date: ASAP on appointment

Beta testing new site: April 2024

Go live: June 2024

How to respond to the brief

If you are interested in working with us please send a proposal, including links to examples of previous work, details of the initial build and a quote for ongoing hosting and support costs, to Cathy Bolton, Festival Co-director, at cathy@manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk by **5pm on Wednesday 31 January 2024.**