



# WALES' INTERNATIONAL STORYTELLING FESTIVAL GWYL CHWEDLEUA RYNGWLADOL CYMRU

## **Mycelium Story Hub Evaluation Brief**

**Fee:** £5000 (based on 20 days @ £250 across 18 month project timeline)

**Timeline:** Appointment January 2022, project concludes July 2023

**Deadline to apply:** 14 January, 2022

### **Background/Context:**

Beyond the Border – Wales' International Storytelling Festival together with partners from the National Eisteddfod, Menter Iaith, People Speak Up, Citrus Arts, two individual storytellers and a community representative are working together in an exciting new collaboration to ensure the future of the storytelling sector in Wales, with funding from the Arts Council of Wales' Connect and Flourish fund.

The Mycelium Story Hub is a network of organisational and freelancer partners, committed to sharing practice & nurturing less frequently heard stories from across Wales' diverse communities. The model is inspired by nature's mycelium networks and includes support for producers and a new role of contemporary Cyfarwyddion.

Contemporary Cyfarwyddion will help uncover and share the stories of communities in which they are based for a twelve month residency. The role of the Cyfarwydd is directly inspired by older traditions of the Welsh Cyfarwydd; storytellers who captured and reflected what was happening in their communities, offering subtle guidance through the stories they told. Each Cyfarwydd had an apprenticeship, and went on to become a highly respected member of society, travelling and bringing back news to the courts, reflecting the society of their time.

The Mycelium Hub will also include producers, either paired with Cyfarwyddion to work in partnership in a particular community or developing other programmes or projects, based on areas of priority or potential.

The first year of the project is prioritising Welsh language storytelling and two geographically specific partnerships,

in Carmarthenshire, Beyond the Border's festival's new home, and in the South Wales valleys. There is shared interest in reflecting the resilience, history, politics, dialects and characters of specific communities, finding ways to ensure these communities' stories are nurtured and celebrated.

### **Evaluator Role Brief:**

#### **Purpose of Role**

- to design and deliver evaluation methodologies which the Hub and practitioners can use to capture and draw out learning in relation to the project's anticipated outcomes and goals
- to conduct focused interviews to document the project's strengths, challenges, learning and opportunities
- to interrogate the benefits of new models of work being tested in the project, including:
  - guaranteeing income to artists and practitioners
  - enabling practitioners to take the lead
  - developing a community- focused networked structure to help grow local arts/community ecosystems
  - different systems of practitioner management (with and without organisational partners)
  - impact on Welsh Language
- to produce an independent evaluation report which evaluates the impact of activity, how far the project has strengthened local storytelling ecosystems, delivered benefits to communities, partners and practitioners and which makes recommendations for future development of the project

#### **Person Specification**

##### **Essential**

- Experience of creating evaluation frameworks and methodologies, conducting thorough critical evaluation reports with a demonstrable track record
- Experience of evaluation with multiple project partners
- Understanding of the needs of Welsh language in a bilingual project
- Excellent spoken and written communication and interviewing skills
- Available to work flexibly and remotely for the next 18 months

##### **Desirable**

- Experience of co-creative practices and social impact through arts
- Interest in storytelling as a contemporary artform, including in community settings

You can also apply by video (3 minute recording)

We warmly welcome applications from those who are significantly underrepresented in our sector, such as disabled people, Welsh speakers and individuals from LGBTQIA+, Black, Asian and Global Majority Communities.

### **About the Project:**

From September 2021 to July 2023, the Mycelium Hub is initiating the following new roles

- 2 Associate Cyfarwyddion based at People Speak Up from September 21 to September 22
- 2 Cyfarwyddion and 2 Producers from January 22 to December 22
- 2 Cyfarwyddion and 2 Producers from June 22 to June 23

The Hub plans to support 3 x mini showcase events in 2022 – 2023 (dependent on fundraising).

Each Contemporary Cyfarwydd and Producer will develop a programme of storytelling activity, including storytelling performances and engagement, which reaches more widely and deeply into the community in which their residency is based. Some communities will be geographic, others may be communities of interest. This work aims to:

- enable more partners from across communities to connect creatively with storytelling
- enable more people to experience storytelling as a meaningful part of their daily lives
- enable more people to develop creativity and confidence in engaging with storytelling
- enable the expansion and deepening of the practitioners' own practice and skills through the work they initiate and focused time on their own artistic development.

Each Cyfarwydd and Producer will have ownership to develop their ideas and programme in partnership with their communities, enabling individuals to be proactive and work in flexible ways, responding to the need and potential of each area. BTB is conscious of the diversity of storytelling practice and its manifestation across a broad range of work, health and well being, language learning, education, performance, nurturing new artists, training. As part of storytellers' application, we will ask them to specify the community they are most keen to work with – this could be:

- Community of interest (people linked by a shared interest/work)
- Communities of identity (shared culture or experience)
- Geographical Community (town/street/area)
- Communities of Circumstance (people knitted together by a shared experience)

Throughout the programme, we are keen to support co-creative principles, working with or alongside people and communities to develop skills and showcase people's capabilities, prioritising the involvement and experience of young people and families.

The Mycelium Hub Group will meet at least 4 times a year and support individuals within their roles, Helen Mill from Village Storytelling Centre in Glasgow will act as a Critical Friend to the project. Practitioners will be encouraged to meet independently of the Hub group to network and share practice, as well as to engage with BTB's ongoing strands of practice support including Casglu and Ysbrydoli webinars.

**How to apply:**

Please provide a written proposal (2 sides maximum) plus a CV. Your proposal should include:

- How you meet the person specification with details of your background and experience
- What you would bring to the project, why you want to be involved
- A timetable and breakdown of number of days to be spent on the project/use of fee

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If you have any queries or would like to discuss the role please contact

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