YOUR COMMUNITY. YOUR CULTURE. YOUR CALL.

IP-Switched Evaluator Brief 2026 - 2029

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About IP-Switched

IP-Switched is inviting freelance evaluation consultants or agencies to tender for the position of external evaluator.

As a new Arts Council England funded Creative People and Places (CPP) programme, we are looking for an evaluator to support us to further the programme's community-led approach, reflect on our practice, provide us with insights into the ambitions of our hometown, and support us in sharing our learning.

This contract will cover the full three years of IP-Switched's programme development. The contract for evaluation will run from December 2026 until March 2029.

IP-Switched CPP is an action research programme, and is part of the Arts Council England funded initiative 'Creative People and Places'. There are 46 Creative People and Places programmes, all of which are located where involvement in creativity and culture is significantly below the national average.

CPPs empower local residents to decide what kind of creative activity they want to experience on their doorstep. Each programme has its own distinctive approach that is unique to the people and places that have shaped it and aims to make a lasting change in communities.

Click here for more information - Creative People and Places projects | Arts Council England

IP-Switched is developing its co-commissioning model of working with neighbourhoods across the Ipswich. We will be focusing on the following wards; Westgate, Whitton, and Chantry and Stoke, which have been identified as underserved by the cultural sector.

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The IP-Switched programme comes at a pivotal moment for Ipswich. The town has recently launched an ambitious ten-year cultural strategy.

Click here to read the strategy - Ipswich Culture & Heritage Strategy 2026-2036

Ipswich is also home to the following projects:

- **Pride In Place** is a long-term UK Government programme that puts local people in charge of improving their neighbourhoods. Ipswich has two Pride in Place areas, Stoke Park and Chantry and Whitehouse

- **Clear, Hold, Build** is an innovative framework, developed by the Home Office, to help police forces tackle serious and organised crime. Ipswich's first Clear Hold Build initiative is called 'Maple Together' and is based in the Gipping and Westgate wards.

- **Active Suffolk Ipswich** aims to get people active in three areas: Belstead Hills, Whitton, and Gainsborough.

- **#iWill Movement** is driving Ipswich as a town of youth social action, working together to ensure young people are empowered in shaping and leading the change in their lives and communities.

- **Ipswich Cultural Education Partnership** is a growing network of people who work together to improve access to the cultural education offers for all children and young people in Ipswich.

All of these place based initiatives all feed into the bigger picture.

Our Consortium

IP-Switched is hosted by the New Wolsey Theatre and led by a consortium, who are a group of organisations who are ambitious for the town's future and provide oversight for programme delivery.

IP-Switched is responsible to the consortium, and they hold the project accountable to deliver for our local communities.

As IP-Switched becomes established, more organisations and people will be involved and influence what events and activities happen across the town.

The consortium is made up of the following organisations:

- The New Wolsey Theatre – lead organisation and accountable body
- Jobcentre Plus Ipswich
- Ipswich Borough Council - Vibrant Towns and Communities Support Department
- Ipswich Central (Business Improvement District)
- Ipswich and East Suffolk Alliance (Suffolk & Northeast Essex Integrated Care Board)
- Volunteering Matters Ipswich

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Our approach to evaluation

IP-Switched's core values are to be generous with our learning and to have an 'open-source' approach to sharing our insights.

As an action-learning programme, reflection and sharing our learning must be embedded from the outset. This evaluation must be useful to wider cultural and community providers working in Ipswich, and we will be using data led planning to grow IP-Switched with the input of communities and partners.

Our evaluation must be accessible and welcoming for people who may experience barriers expressing themselves through spoken and written English, as well as those who feel 'over surveyed', or unwelcome in cultural spaces.

We want to find innovative ways to research and share our learning across the cultural, civic and health sectors, as well as with local community members.

Creative Evaluation Commissions

We believe that evaluation should be an enriching and joyful process for participants rather than just an extraction of information, and we hope to see this represented in your proposed methodology.

To support the evaluation process to be a rich creative experience for participants, we have set aside £1,000 in both 2027 – 28 and 2028 – 29 for a creative evaluation commission. This budget will be used to commission artists to create tools for, or respond to, the evaluation process and outcomes.

The role of the artists will be defined in discussion with the evaluator and our community panels and be managed by the IP-Switched team.

Case Study Documentation

To enable us to share our learning with more people, IP-Switched will commission a short case study as documentation (e.g. film, podcast, comic book) at the end of each year.

This will be a key way to share our learning and will be informed by the evaluation's findings.

IP-Switched's work is focussed on answering Arts Council England's Creative People and Places research questions:

1. Are more people from places of least engagement experiencing and inspired by creativity and culture and what are the most effective ways to achieve this?
2. What approaches enable us to deliver on our aspiration for excellence, both in the process of community engagement and the creative and cultural experiences on offer?
3. What else are we learning that facilitates better public engagement in creativity and culture?

04 Evaluation Requirements

Your evaluation methodology must:

- Research and create a report to benchmark Ipswich's current landscape to create insights into the assets, aspirations, and challenges for people living in Ipswich delivered by March 2027.
- Deliver a creative methodology to gather qualitative and quantitative data between April 2027 to March 2029, including participant demographic data.
- Collaborate with IP-Switched to co-create Impacts and Insights questionnaires to meet broader programme aims and funding requirements.
- Include a mechanism to include Sport England's Active Lives survey into the wider evaluation process to meet Suffolk Culture Funding requirements.
- Deliver an evaluation report in April 2028, which includes one case study, and is informed by both on the ground fieldwork, discussion, and desk-based research.
- Deliver an evaluation report in March 2029, which includes one case study, and is informed by both on the ground fieldwork, discussion, and desk-based research.
- Include collaboration with IP-Switched's team, who will commission artists to share evaluation findings via two artist commissions (one each 2027/28 and 2028/29) and three short case study documentations, e.g. film, podcast, etc (one each in 2026/27, 2027/28, and 2028/29).
- Include support for sharing learning and evaluation reports with community members as well as cultural, civic, health, and education sector professionals.

All of these requirements must meet Arts Council England's guidelines. The contract will cover the evaluation from December 2026 to March 2029.

We are particularly excited to read tenders that are open to adaptation in response to ongoing community feedback and...

- Use creative approaches so participants feel enriched by their involvement, for example using tools like storytelling, visual arts, play, etc.
- Have accessibility embedded into the processes, for example using tools that don't rely on fluent spoken/written English.
- Provide ongoing formative feedback for the IP-Switched team to drive forward our shared practice in power sharing and centring community ambition.
- Demonstrate best practice in socially engaged evaluation and an interest in moving this work forward.
- Commit to embedding the principles of equality and inclusion in your methodology processes.
- Provide transparency in processes so participants can meaningfully consent to their involvement.
- Show consideration of how we can usefully share data across sectors, including where possible using tools and metrics recognised by colleagues in civic, social, and clinical settings, e.g. Ripple Effect Mapping.



IP-Switched will be responsible for:

- Gathering, sharing, and reporting on events attendance via ACE Illuminate platform.
- Gathering, sharing, and reporting on demographic data (including freelancers, staff, and volunteers) via ACE annual survey.
- Collaborating with evaluator to co-create Impacts and Insights questionnaires and ensuring respondent requirements are met. We are committed to a minimum of four Impacts and Insights surveys per year.
- Collating data for and completing ACE CPP narrative report.
- Collaborating with evaluator to deliver Active Lives surveys.
- Gathering qualitative and quantitative data identified via ACE requirements and external evaluation methodology, including recruiting and training volunteers to support this process.
- Listening, learning, and responding to evaluation, both external and internal.
- Sharing learning from evaluation for our local community members, as well as the cultural, civic, and health sector peers. This will be through creative responses (e.g. videos, illustrations, comic books etc) as well as case studies, papers, speaking at conferences, attending network meetings, etc.

Evaluation Timeline

Timeline	Key Focus	Outputs
Year 1: January to March 2027	Baseline, set-up, testing and early learning.	Annual Survey Illuminate Platform Impact & Insights Toolkit Active Lives Survey Annual Narrative Report External evaluator baseline ‘State of Ipswich’ report.
Year 2: April 2027 - March 2028	Increasing programme engagement, testing models and improving delivery.	Year 3 IP-Switched Business Plan Annual Survey Illuminate Platform Impact & Insights Toolkit Active Lives Survey Annual Narrative Report External Evaluator report
Year 2: April 2028 - March 2029	Programme engagement, year two impact, sustainability and legacy measures.	Annual Survey Illuminate Platform Impact & Insights Toolkit Active Lives Survey Annual Narrative Report Final External Evaluator report

05 Fees

There is a total budget of £16,000 ex. VAT payable to the evaluator or agency for the delivery of this work.

This will be split into instalments across the period of contract until March 2029.

YEAR 1: DECEMBER 2026 – MARCH 2027

Payment 1: £750.00 - 25% initial project scoping and baseline research.
Payment 2: £750.00 - 25% research to be agreed with the IP-Switched delivery team.
Payment 3: £1,500.00 - 50% research to be agreed with the IP-Switched delivery team and on delivery of the baseline evaluation report.

ANNUAL TOTAL 26/27: £3,000

YEAR 2: APRIL 2027 – MARCH 2028

Payment 4: £1,625.00 - 25% research/fieldwork to be agreed with the IP-Switched delivery team.
Payment 5: £1,625.00 - 25% research/fieldwork to be agreed with the IP-Switched delivery team.
Payment 6: £1,625.00 - 25% research/fieldwork to be agreed with the IP-Switched delivery team.
Payment 7: £1,625.00 - 25% payable on delivery of the 27/28 annual evaluation report

ANNUAL TOTAL 27/28: £6,500

YEAR 3: APRIL 2028 – MARCH 2029
Payment 8: £1,625.00 - 25% research/fieldwork to be agreed with the IP-Switched delivery team.
Payment 9: £1,625.00 - 25% research/fieldwork to be agreed with the IP-Switched delivery team.
Payment 10: £1,625.00 - 25% fieldwork to be agreed with the IP-Switched delivery team.
Payment 11: £1,625.00 - 25% payable on delivery of the final evaluation report

ANNUAL TOTAL 28/29: £6,500

In addition to the above direct payments to the evaluator, the IP-Switched delivery team will collaborate with the evaluator to coordinate the below resources and budget:

Year 1: December 2026 – March 2027

- £500.00 – evaluation resources, to be identified by the evaluator.
- £500.00 – evaluation equipment as required e.g. tablets.

Year 2: April 2027 – March 2028

- £1,000.00 – Creative evaluation commission
- £1,000.00 – Case study documentation

Year 3: April 2028 – March 2029

- £1,000.00 – Creative evaluation commission
- £1,000.00 – Case study documentation



06 Application & Timeline

To tender for this brief, please send an expression of interest to hello@IP-Switched.co.uk, including -

1. An outline methodology detailing how you would meet the needs of the evaluation brief and timescales (no more than two sides of A4) and a budget breakdown.
2. Your C.V. or text that outlines:

- Your experience of creating evaluation frameworks, support in implementing and analysing results, particularly highlighting your experience of evaluation in the field of arts and/or community engagement.
- Details of those who would be involved in the delivery
- Two to three examples of reports and/or case studies you have produced.
- Two references.

Timeline

- Application Deadline - Monday 7 December at 9am
- Online interviews – week commencing Monday 14 December
- Evaluation kick-off meeting – week commencing Monday 11 January

We are particularly interested in proposals that –

- Take influence from best practice outside of the cultural sector.
- Centre community voice and spotlight underrepresented audiences.

We welcome applications from people of all backgrounds, especially from Black, Asian and ethnically diverse backgrounds, those who identify as D/deaf and disabled people, neurodivergent people, members of the LGBTQIA+ community and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

We open to exploring support and development needs and will make reasonable adjustments to enable applicants to participate in the selection process, and for the successful applicant(s) to carry out their role.

Meet the IP-Switched team



Melissa Matthews

Programme Director

Melissa is a born and bred Suffolk girl. She has forged her career in the county over the past 14 years. Working both locally and internationally, Melissa's career has been committed to using creativity as a catalyst for social change - and generally building community gardens at every opportunity.

Eleanor Root

Head of Community Partnerships

Eleanor grew up on a small island and moved to England to study history. Her background focuses on communicating with a range of audiences, nurturing community partnerships, and evaluation.
She's worked in Ipswich since 2015 and is a self-described super fan of Suffolk's county town.

Segan Lawal

Creative Producer

Segun Lawal won his first dance competition at the age of 10 in Devon! His love for all things creative has evolved over the years and his passion is understanding audiences, building strong artistic programming and creative producing. After years of international engagements, he now calls Ipswich his 'creative home'.

If you have any questions at all

Don't hesitate to ask Eleanor -
hello@IP-Switched.co.uk

CREATIVE PEOPLE AND PLACES
LOTTERY FUNDED
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ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND