BRIEF FOR TEMPORARY ART COMMISSION UNION STREET ENVIRONS

1. INTRODUCTION

Artists are invited to submit proposals for a meaningful temporary art work and/ or project to be situated in the public realm of Union Street and its environs which addresses the distinctive and complex environment of this key connective street within Bankside.

That environment is the built fabric, the cultural and social grain of the street and its environs. Over the past number of years, a range of public realm improvements and other projects have taken place in spaces along or adjacent to the street as part of Bankside Urban Forest.

Five public realm projects have now been delivered or are underway on spaces in and around Union Street. These public realm improvements are the first major projects to be delivered as part of the wider Bankside Urban Forest initiative. Bankside Urban Forest is a name for an imaginative set of projects and actions bringing new life to key spaces in Bankside. Launched in 2007, it is a long-term vision for improving the public realm in Bankside between the Thames and Elephant and Castle. Central to Bankside Urban Forest is recognising the value of working with existing organisations and spaces in the local area in order to develop more collaborative and inventive proposals for public spaces.

The aim of the commission is to complement and reflect the recent/ongoing improvements to spaces like Redcross Way, Flat Iron Square and Great Suffolk Street and contribute further to characterising the sense of place and function of these key 'places of exchange' within Bankside Urban Forest- as a flexible spaces, which supports a range of social functions within Bankside.

Better Bankside has had involvement in a number of public art commissions within the neighbourhood over the last 7 years and now wishes to develop a more proactive and consistent approach to commissioning and working in partnership with others to commission art and creative practice in the public realm.

2. CURATORIAL FRAMEWORK

The commissions are open to individual artists, groups of artists or curators.

The Brief asks for a creative collaborative, strategic attitude, or proposal for a temporary work in response to 'a place of exchange' within the Bankside Urban Forest – a place which brings different people together and a public realm which offers a range of social uses and activities throughout the day. A proposal that will strengthen ties between the public realm and cultural activities encouraging a wider audience to spend time in the space.

The artist can identify a theme or line of enquiry of their choosing but must demonstrate how it is relevant to Bankside Urban Forest and how it delivers, one or some of the their objectives

3. SITE

Union Street is a key east – west street within Bankside. It connects Waterloo in the west to London Bridge in the east, and is a well used route, for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles. A number of north – south streets ('streams') cross Union Street and link the intensively used areas north of the viaduct to the quieter and more local areas southwards away from the riverside.   A number of these streets have undergone recent improvements or are currently on the drawing board to be improved.

A range of key spaces lie on Union Street, including Flat Iron Square, which has recently been pedestrianised as the first part of its transformation. Flat Iron Square is a triangular urban space at the junction of Union Street and Southwark Bridge Road created in the early nineteenth century when Southwark Bridge Road was constructed and the junction with Union Street formed. The space has a distinctive character and sits in the Union Street conservation area.

Artists can identify a single location on Union Street or a number of locations along or adjacent to the street.

This temporary commission will inform the development of further briefs that will be commissioned on behalf of the Bankside Urban Forest Partnership.

4. SITE VISIT

There will be an opportunity for interested parties to meet the commissioner and view the site on Friday 16th December at 12- 2 pm. Meet at Bankside Community Space, 18 Great Guildford Street, London SE1 0FD. Please RSVP your attendance to unionstreetenvirons@gmail.com

5. DURATION

The work must be installed, exhibited or undertaken in the Spring/ Summer of 2012. The duration of the work or exhibition can be negotiated but must be no less than one week. Performance, film or similar works can be programmed over a negotiated period with a number of publicly accessible performances in the public realm.

6. BUDGET

The total value of each commission is £9,000 this is a finite sum to cover all project expenses; artist and all other fees, all materials, installation, exhibition costs and VAT.

7. TIMETABLE

Call for submissions:	Thursday 1st December 2011
Site Visit:	Friday 16th December 2011, 12 –2pm
Deadline for submissions:	Monday 23rd January 2012, 5pm
Exhibition of proposals:	Monday 30th - 6 February 2012
Selection during the week of	1st February 2012
Artist appointment:	Mid-February 2012

Commissions to be complete and delivered by Spring/ Summer 2012

8. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Submissions can take the form of a proposal for a project or artwork or can describe a proposed approach to how a project will be developed. The timescale is relatively short and all projects must be viable to be delivered in the timeframe.

The submission requirement is for NO MORE than 4 x A4 sheets including all text and images for the proposal or proposed approach. In addition every submission must include a practice profile (up to 20 A4s) to show previous work that is relevant to this project. If the art works shown are gallery works please describe how they are relevant to this commission.

The submission A4s (not the practice profiles) in whole or parts may be publicly exhibited.
The Better Bankside webpage (www.betterbankside.co.uk/union-street-commission) will hold an updated FAQ page providing further information that is requested by respondents. For all enquires about the project please email unionstreetenvirons@gmail.com

Proposals and accompanying material must be submitted digitally to unionstreetenvirons@gmail.com **by 5pm, Monday 23rd January 2012.** Submissions must not exceed 5MB

An opportunity to meet the client is available on Friday 16th December, 12-2pm.
Meet at Bankside Community Space, 18 Great Guildford Street, City of London, London SE1 0FD

9. SELECTION CRITERIA

Assessment of submissions takes place against the following criteria:

An artist(s) will be selected on the following criteria:

- Response to the brief (Impact and synergy on other initiatives in the area)   20%
- Quality of past work   10%
- Quality of approach / proposal   30%
- Degree of meaningfulness to Bankside Urban Forest   20%
- Track record of deliverability,   20%

A diverse range of practice will be considered and can include, object and image based work, participative and social engagement projects, performance, sound, light projects and film.

Selection will be on the strength of the proposal and the cohesion between the proposals as a coherent response to the brief as well as the quality of the idea as a meaningful and relevant response to the wider context of Bankside Urban Forest.

It is intended that a critical mass is achievable through alignment with other events and initiatives within the Bankside Urban Forest such as South London Art Map "Last Friday" series as well as city wide initiatives such as the London Festival of Architecture, 2012, "The Playful City" and London 2012 Festival.

10. SELECTION PANEL

- Representatives from the commissioning client, - Better Bankside
- Representatives from the steering group
- A Bankside stakeholder as artist and/or curator representative
- An artist, arts officer or Arts Council representative independent of Bankside
- A representative from a local business
- Southwark's Public Art Officer

11. SELECTION PROCESS

There will be a two-stage evaluation process. All proposals will be available to the selection panel, however the project manager will make recommendations of those that should be considered as part of a long list for consideration. The long list of recommended projects will be determined with a weighting to ensure all proposals are feasible and deliverable within the timeframe.

The proposals will then be assessed by the panel on the criteria set out above.
Artists will not be asked to present their proposals and selection will be entirely on the strength, clarity and feasibility of the idea as submitted on paper and track record.

12. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS TO THE BRIEF

Artists are advised to review the following contextual information with the brief:

- Bankside Urban Parks Report (http://www.betterbankside.co.uk/images/download/14_Bankside_Urban_Forest/BanksideUrbanParksReport.pdf)
- Union Street Conservation Area Study (www.southwark.gov.uk/download/4998/union_street)
- Flat Iron Square Stage D report (http://www.betterbankside.co.uk/urban-forest-projects/1987-flat-iron-square)
- Redcross Way project information (http://www.betterbankside.co.uk/urban-forest-projects/1988-redcross-way)
- Jellyfish Theatre project information (http://www.oikosproject.com/the-jellyfish-theatre/)
- Union Street Urban Orchard project information (http://www.unionstreetorchard.org.uk/)
- Urban Physic Garden project information (http://www.physicgarden.org.uk/)
- Draft Forest Principles (http://www.betterbankside.co.uk/images/stories/buf/Principles.pdf)
- Great Suffolk Street Stage C Report (draft – to follow)