MEDIA RELEASE
WEDNESDAY 16 AUGUST

NOTTINGHAM ENTERS RACE TO BECOME EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE 2023

Nottingham has confirmed that it is looking to bid for European Capital of Culture 2023, at a launch event held today (Wednesday 16 August 2017).

The announcement took place in a spectacular luminarium – a structure of luminescent colour and light – created by internationally renowned local artists Architects of Air.

Competing against Belfast, Dundee, Leeds, and Milton Keynes, Nottingham’s European Capital of Culture 2023 bid team is confident Nottingham’s entry will be heavily supported by people across the Midlands and beyond, and is calling on locals to become Nottingham 2023 ‘Cultural Lions’.

Paul Russ, chairman of Nottingham’s Cultural Strategy Partnership and chair of the Nottingham 2023 board said:

“The lions outside the Council House have been a local meeting, gathering and rallying point for decades, we are a proud and inclusive city and urge people of all backgrounds to ‘join our pride’ and help us get to the next stage of the bid by becoming ‘Cultural Lions’.

“Nottingham is an ambitious, young and diverse city with a culture of grassroots collaboration and a history of rebellious innovation.

“As part of the bid, we want to give everyone in Nottingham the opportunity to take part in a project, production or experience and nurture the next generation of creative producers and cultural leaders.

“We’re proposing a ‘cultural change’ programme that will transform the lives of people in the Midlands; harnessing the power of creativity, stimulating innovation, attracting investment and creating new international networks that will redefine our relationship to Europe and the world.”
Nottingham has one of the youngest and most diverse populations in the UK, with an average age of just 34. Once the global industrial centre of lace-making, nine out of 10 jobs in Nottingham are now in the service industry, and the city is in the process of reimagining itself as a creative economy for the 21st Century.

Spearheading the Nottingham 2023 bid is Nottingham’s Strategic Cultural Partnership, with support provided by Nottingham City Council, the University of Nottingham, Nottingham Trent University, Marketing NG and Nottingham UNESCO City of Literature.

Sandeep Mahal, Director of Nottingham UNESCO City of Literature said:

“Our bid will be massively helped by being a UNESCO City of Literature. We are proudly strengthening Nottingham’s ties with Europe and in turn enhancing Nottingham’s status as a truly European city. I have no doubt at all that the city can produce the type of extraordinary, imaginative and inclusive programme that can win this competition.”

Professor Sir David Greenaway, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Nottingham said:

“Creativity and cultural vibrancy is an engine for growth, business and graduate retention and poses huge opportunities for our city, students and public.”

Professor Edward Peck, Vice-Chancellor of Nottingham Trent University said:

“Nottingham Trent has a proud 175-year history of contributing to the cultural and economic development of the region, so we are delighted to be backing the bid and the enormous opportunities that being capital of culture will bring to the City and County.”

Cllr Dave Trimble, Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture said:

“2023 will see the first opportunity for a UK City to become European Capital of Culture, since Liverpool held the title in 2008.

“This provides us with a great opportunity to set a vision for the Nottingham we aspire to be by the year 2023, and has huge potential for attracting investment and growth to the city.”
The city and surrounding county has a history of pioneering new ways of thinking and working together, from the legend of Robin Hood, computing pioneer Ada Lovelace, and the writings of DH Lawrence, Alan Sillitoe and Jon McGregor, to the work of fashion designer Sir Paul Smith, singer-songwriter Jake Bugg, and nationally celebrated theatre makers Adam Penford, Emma Rice and Jenny Sealey.

Reacting to the announcement, Sir John Peace chair of the Midlands Engine, said:

"It’s fantastic that Nottingham is bidding to become European Capital of Culture in 2023, not just for Nottingham, but for the whole of the Midlands.

“Being European Capital of Culture is a huge, year-long opportunity for a city to promote itself and its creative community to the world and to attract significant numbers of visitor from across the UK and overseas, giving a long-term boost to the local and regional economies.

“Art, culture and the creative industries make a surprisingly large contribution to the Midlands economy already and have significant potential to grow, to become more productive and to create more jobs.

“I urge the whole region to get behind bringing the European Capital of Culture to the Midlands.”

A dedicated website and social media channels for Nottingham 2023 have also been unveiled today, providing a platform for locals to show their support by becoming a Nottingham 2023 ‘Cultural Lion’ and keep up to date with bid developments.

The European Capital of Culture programme is an annual competition in which cities from two selected European countries bid for the title. Nottingham’s bid forms part of the Nottingham Cultural Strategic Partnership’s ten-year cultural framework plan and will be developed by Festival & Events International.

In 2023 both the UK and Hungary will host a European Capital of Culture. Nottingham has until 17 October 2017 to produce its bid.

For more information and to show your support visit www.Nottingham2023.co.uk
For further information, contact Emma Houghton or Jozef Soltysik at Cartwright Communications on jozef@cartwrightcommunications.co.uk or 0115 8532110