

Macc Pow Proposal

Next year as you may know will be our tenth year of the festival, where we have seen incredible changes, support, and attendance since 2016 and our relatively small event in the Heritage Centre. Since then, and also during the two years of the pandemic, we have become a part of the comics and art community in general, in ways that I could have only hoped. I always feel support from the town initially is a given, but our job was to build on that each year, and give those who attended a reason to come back and see every event as a step forward from the last.

Since the councils support, we've managed to secure more than one room in Town hall, a vital ingredient in the event. This has allowed us to increase our list of attendees from the world of comics, this year having two full rooms of creators from all over the country, and even the US. Creators know to keep our event marked on their calendar, and I feel in terms of success and how we support others, we are on par with both the Lakes international comic art festival, and Thought Bubble in Harrogate.

The continued and extra support, allows us to invest in other creators. This year we offered more workshops outside of the Town hall, placing comics creators in the Library, Flour Water Salt, and B&V Trading pet shop, all offering different creative experiences free to attend. Whether it be drawing Minnie the Minx with the BEANO's Laura Howell, or having your five minute portrait whilst waiting for your coffee, by doing this we not only gave the public unique opportunities, but once again supported the arts and those that create.

Next year we want to continue that, to put creators in those places again, and to further our reach with new ideas on how to improve the festival.

We also used the funding to publish a brand-new comic for children called GOOF that launched at the event, and supported a number of creators by giving them paid comics work. That publication also exists outside of the festival, and continues to connect with readers young and old. This was another unique element to the festival, and one that we are very proud of.

We have also been offered the opportunity to host a MANGA art exhibition that will not only run for the festival, but for six weeks in total, given the venue of choice (hopefully the Silk museum) the chance to welcome visitors in to experience this over the summer holidays. This exhibition comes at a cost, and so we are hoping to get some additional funding to cover both the transport of the pieces to Macclesfield, and also the price of hosting it. This ideally would be in addition to allow our continued support of creators, and not have to forgo that aspect to pay for this. This exhibition is curated by the Lakes Comic Art Festival and comic's historian and journalist Paul Gravett, and further strengthens our bond with that event.

We also have a plan to bring an American creator Tom Scioli over especially for the festival. It would be Tom's first time attending a UK comics event, and a real coup for us. We also have

plans to work with MADS theatre to have them create a short play based around his biography on Stan Lee from last year. This would be performed as part of the festival weekend, in the Town Hall building as part of the Saturday programme. I am currently looking to find additional support to cover the costs associated with this, but also am keen to see if the council feel this could be something they could assist with. By doing this, it would allow us to change our title to MACC-POW! Macclesfield's international comic art festival, further strengthening our position in the comics community.

A big part of our funding goes back to Cheshire East to pay for room hire. Although we totally understand there must be costs, those costs impact on our budget in ways that I feel could be used in other ways, supporting more creators, offering more elements to the event, ultimately feeding the town with a great festival, and supporting local businesses as we have done from the very first year. Our relationships with those businesses is key, and next year I hope to sit down with them to discuss their involvement and how we can work together and make this festival an even greater success.

So with an additional support next year, it will allow us to cover those costs, but also improve on the event.

MACC-POW! Has fast become an arts festival that people come to Macclesfield for. For the day, for the weekend, and from other countries to support, and I hope we can continue to make it even better with your support.

Funding request (in line with 2024 funding): **£4500**