

March 2019

Tender Opportunity: Café at Krowji



Krowji is Cornwall's largest creative hub, dedicated to providing studios to a vibrant community of over 200 artists, makers, designers and a diverse range of creative businesses at the Old Grammar School buildings in Redruth.

The tenants of the Melting Pot Café at Krowji are, by mutual agreement, soon leaving for pastures new and we are looking for someone to take on this opportunity and work in partnership with us to revitalise the café.

We are looking for a business that will embrace the context of Krowji as a creative hub and create a friendly and welcoming meeting place for those working in the creative sector as well as local residents and the wider public.

Our café first opened in 2007 under the name of the Melting Pot Café and played an integral role in building Krowji's vibrant community which has become one of the main attractions for prospective tenants. As such we have a readymade customer base of hungry creatives in need of a space where they can enjoy good food and coffee, meet with clients and customers and bump into fellow studio holders to network and share ideas. Whilst our tenants are the core customers it's very important to us that our café is open and accessible to all.

About Krowji



Krowji Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary of [Creative Kernow](#), a not-for-profit umbrella organisation for nine key creative sector projects, including Krowji.

After purchasing the site in 2005, we gradually renovated the dilapidated old classrooms and dining halls of the empty school buildings and converted them into studios. Work on the first phase of major redevelopment, 10 years in the planning, was completed in 2015 with the opening of the Percy Williams Building, a £3.6 million investment supported by the European programme which created 50 new studio spaces, doubling our floor area and enabling the already established creative community to expand and diversify further still.

These spaces have rapidly filled with tenants and the site is operating at full occupancy so Krowji is now proceeding with Phase 2 to meet current demand. Phase 2 will be an extension of the Percy Williams Building which will enhance what is already a vibrant community of creative practitioners and businesses, adding a further 20 new studios. Demolition starts in July 2019 and completion is due in March 2020.

Location

Krowji is centrally located in Redruth, the heart of Cornwall, just off the A30 with convenient public transport links and it's only a ten-minute walk into Redruth's revitalised town centre. [Please click here for a map and directions.](#)

Krowji operates a total of five buildings on site and in addition there is the Windmill Nursery which is in separate ownership and provides another source of café customers. The café is located on the ground floor of our Main Building with level access through the front doors and the courtyard.

The café

The café has previously operated Monday to Friday 9am – 4pm with a late night opening on Wednesdays and occasional gigs and performances at weekends. The main focus is the daytime offer and we'd like to explore the option of opening at 8.30am to cater for morning meetings. We'd also be interested in discussing ideas for quality evening events which are suitable for our working environment and contribute to Creative Kernow's core aim of supporting and promoting creative excellence.

There is an opportunity for interested applicants to put forward innovative catering ideas for our events to supplement the daytime offer. These include our biannual [Open Studios](#) events – one in the summer which is part of the Cornwall wide [Open Studios Cornwall](#) and one in the winter solely for Krowji tenants which is Christmas Open Studios. These events have grown enormously over the last ten years and offer a great business opportunity for our café bringing in up to an extra 200 visitors in a day.

Although our studios aren't open to the public on a day to day basis we receive plenty of visitors to the site every day. In addition to the regular café customers, these include: group tours, clients and customers of our tenants, people coming for meetings/workshops and the general public popping in to see what we do. Needless to say, visitors are delighted to make use of our café.

We have three rooms around the café available to hire on an hourly/daily basis (not restricted to creative activity). They are managed by Krowji and include: Studio 13 which is a smart meeting room, the Art Room which is a creative space for art classes and workshops or informal meetings and a small meeting room which is currently rented by Cultivator, one of Creative Kernow's projects.

There is also a fourth large room which we plan to redecorate with potential for remodelling to create additional storage space for the café if required. We would like to explore options for this space with the new tenants. The café and all meeting rooms have wi-fi which is free for all café customers and you can read more about our rooms available to hire [here](#). These rooms are already well used and we envisage that the new café will enhance this offer and in turn meeting create a healthy income for the new café team.

There is free parking on site and a loading bay in front of the Main Building for deliveries. Staff and tenants have 24-hour access to the site; all buildings are locked to the public outside the Krowji

office hours which are Monday to Friday 8am – 5pm, but as noted above the cafe can operate outside those hours under certain conditions.

There is some catering equipment in place and we have a small budget for renovations and furnishings - we are happy to discuss this with the new provider. The current décor is quirky and creative and although much loved and admired for 10 years it is now looking tired and in need of an update – we feel it is time for a change.

The main seating area (including the bar) measures 24 ft x 29 ft, with a small stage in front measuring 17 ft x 8ft and a kitchen area behind measuring 19 ft x 10 ft (including counter and cupboards). The current layout provides seating for approx. 40 people at one time. There is also a paved courtyard with wooden picnic tables which can be accessed through a corridor at the back of the café.

More information about kitchen equipment and a floorplan can be made available on request.

Highlights

- Over 200 people based on site
- 3 regularly used meeting rooms
- Benefit from Krowji's growing reputation and social media following
- Friendly, honest and flexible landlords
- Central location just off the A30 - convenient for commuters
- Free parking

Our Aspiration

Ideally, we are looking for someone who:

- Has significant experience in the catering industry and has been involved with a successful catering business
- would like to work in partnership with us to create a welcoming and vibrant meeting place for our tenants and the wider public, with flexibility to cater for meeting room bookings
- has a brand ethos that complements our thriving creative hub. For this reason it will be beneficial for applicants to have a basic knowledge of the aims and objectives of Krowji and Creative Kernow
- can offer a good quality, healthy and competitively priced menu that caters for a range of dietary needs with an awareness of environmental impact – moving towards plastic-free would be a distinct advantage.

Financial Agreement

We are open-minded about how we arrange this partnership - in the past we have used a traditional commercial lease and of course as the landlord we do need to see a financial return from it, but our primary aim is to have a thriving high-quality café at the heart of Krowji and so we will want to build regular reviews of performance into any agreement.

How to Make an Expression of Interest

If you would like to visit the site for a tour and an informal conversation about this opportunity, please contact Elisa Harris, Studio Manager: elisa@krowji.org.uk / 01209 313200

We are inviting expressions of interest and ask that you provide a written proposal to include:

- Your approach to the context of Krowji as a creative and cultural workplace, how you see this working in relation to the café and why you are interested in this opportunity
- How you see your business operating in partnership with Krowji and how being at Krowji would support the development of your business
- Details of your proposed staffing structure and approach to management
- Information on your business and the type of food you are producing or intending to produce (please include a sample menu and prices)
- A short statement or CV explaining your relevant skills and experience
- Submission of 3-5 images of your current operation to demonstrate the visual identity of your brand, if applicable
- An outline financial plan for the first three years showing gross turnover levels and indicating what sort of rent / fee / share might come to us as landlords.

There is no length limit, but we suggest that you keep submissions fairly brief at this stage.

Deadline

Expressions of interest should be submitted by email to elisa@krowji.org.uk by **10am on 1st April 2019.**

We will then review the expressions of interest received and draw up a shortlist for interview.