Calanais Residency Brief 2026 27

Urras nan Tursachan (UnT) invites applications for its 2026/27 residency at the iconic Calanais Standing Stones on the Isle of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides. The residency offers an opportunity to develop new work or research inspired by Calanais and its connection to astronomy and dark skies.

Location and duration

Calanais, Isle of Lewis, Outer Hebrides

The successful applicant will be based at the Calanais Visitor Centre for three weeks in February 2027, around our dark skies events. Final dates will be agreed with the successful applicant. Further time can be allocated beyond the time at Calanais, as required and agreed, for delivery of the legacy piece.

Grant funding

Thanks to The National Lottery Heritage Fund, we are offering a £10,000 grant. Applicants should detail in their application how they propose to spend the funds to support their heritage project. The grant is to cover travel, accommodation, living expenses, materials and creation of the legacy piece.

Focus

UnT is open to projects exploring the astronomical, archaeological, cultural or artistic significance of the Calanais Standing Stones.

- Key objective: To foster new learning and create original work or research inspired by the Calanais Standing Stones and their connection to astronomy and dark skies.
- Provide new opportunities and activities to brings the Calanis Standing Stones to new audiences as well and supporting existing audiences and community engagement.
- Applicants are free to develop a self-guided project of their choice relating to the key objective.

Expectations

The successful applicant will develop new work, engage with the public and create a legacy piece for the Calanais Visitor Centre. The application should:

- Outline the scope of the proposed work and how it will be undertaken.
- Outline four proposed public engagement activities during the applicant's time at Calanais, such as workshops, talks or lectures, guided tours or walks, or demonstrations.
- Detail the finished legacy piece, such as a research report, artwork, virtual reality experience or an item for inclusion in our new exhibition.

Potential legacy pieces could include an interactive exhibit, educational materials, astronomical visualisations, a community research initiative, a virtual reality experience, a research publication or an art piece. The proposed legacy piece should align with UnT's goals of improving heritage research, visitor and community engagement, and live and digital experiences.

Eligibility

This opportunity is open to specialists and creatives from any field, including art, archaeology, astrophysics, geophysics, astronomy, anthropology, digital media, multimedia design, storytelling, writing and other artistic, heritage or research disciplines.

Support and resources

In addition to the £10,000 grant, Urras nan Tursachan offers the following support as required:

- Assistance with accommodation arrangements. Applicants should include accommodation costs in their proposed grant budget.
- Support with connections to local contacts, as outlined in the application.
- Setting up and marketing the proposed public engagement activities.
- General support from the UnT team during the residency.

Application process

Please submit applications to Heritage Manager kathryn@calanais.org, including:

- A cover letter.
- A CV detailing background, experience and examples of related work.
- A proposal outlining the project, how the work will be undertaken and the finished legacy piece.
- A proposal for four public engagement activities during the time at Calanais.
- A proposed budget breakdown showing how the £10,000 grant will be spent.

Timeline

- Application deadline: 5pm, 7th Dec 2026.
- Selection process: mid December 2026.
- Residency announcement: 16th December 2026.
- Residency at Calanais: three weeks in February 2027, with final dates to be agreed with the successful applicant.

Applications and enquiries

Contact kathryn@calanais.org to submit your application or ask any questions about the residency.

About Urras nan Tursachan

Urras nan Tursachan is a local charity established to preserve and promote the heritage of the Calanais Standing Stones. The residency supports new learning, creative work and research, alongside opportunities for visitors and the community to engage with this heritage.

We wish to thank The National Lottery Heritage Fund for funding this residency and look forward to receiving your application.