

Youth-Led Interior Designer Commission Call

Playland, Portsmouth

Artswork, working in partnership with young cultural changemakers at Playland, Portsmouth, is seeking an experienced interior designer to work collaboratively with young people aged 16 to 30 to redesign our youth-led creative space.

We want Playland to feel welcoming, cohesive and more like a home for the young people who use it, while remaining a versatile space that can accommodate exhibitions, performances, workshops, meetings and other youth-led creative activity.

Young people will be central to the design process. We are not looking for an interior designer to arrive with a ready-made solution. We want to appoint someone who can listen, interpret the ideas and priorities of young people, bring professional design expertise to the process and develop the space with them.

A fee of up to £8000 is available for this work, to include the designer/designers time, travel, expenses and VAT where applicable.

A separate production budget for the production/installation is available of up to £8000. This may include furniture, materials, fixtures, fabrication and other agreed implementation costs.

The interior designer will not be expected to pay third-party contractors or suppliers from their professional fee.

Deadline: 5pm on Monday 16 November 2026.

About Playland

Playland supports young people aged 16 to 30 to develop creative projects, build skills and create opportunities for themselves and their communities.

Young people have opportunities to lead workshops in creative skills and practices of their choice and to turn their ideas into reality, whether that means developing an exhibition, leading a community project or exploring a new area of creative practice. For many, this represents their first experience of facilitating or leading creative activity.

We are currently exploring ideas around third spaces, community cohesion, belonging and the future and legacy of Playland through listening consultations with young people. The findings from this work will help inform the redesign of the space.

Brief



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We want to transform Playland into a more welcoming, accessible, cohesive and practical environment that reflects the ideas and identities of the young people who use it.

The interior designer will work closely with Playland's young cultural changemakers and the Artswork team to translate ideas arising from our listening and co-design process into a coherent and achievable design.

The space should feel comfortable and homely while retaining the flexibility needed for a wide range of creative, community and everyday activity.

The commission will include:

- reviewing findings and materials from Playland's listening consultations;
- planning and facilitating an inclusive and engaging co-design process with young people;
- exploring how colour, furniture, lighting, materials and the overall arrangement of the space can create a stronger sense of welcome and belonging;
- considering accessibility, sensory needs and the experiences of neurodivergent young people throughout the design process;
- finding practical and creative solutions to Playland's storage needs;
- ensuring that the space can be adapted for exhibitions, performances, workshops, meetings and everyday activity;
- considering how existing furniture and features can be retained, reused or adapted where appropriate;
- working alongside the commissioned mural artist to ensure that the mural forms part of a coherent overall design;
- working alongside the young person leading the window-design commission and helping the team consider how the window design relates to the wider space;
- developing a realistic plan for realising the design within the available delivery budget and timetable; and
- working collaboratively with Artswork, its contractors, suppliers and other commissioned creative practitioners during implementation.

Design outputs

The interior designer will produce an agreed design package that enables Artswork and its contractors to realise the design.

The package should be proportionate to the scale of the commission and should include, as appropriate:

- a mood board and overall design concept;



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- a proposed layout or space plan;
- an agreed colour, finishes and materials palette;
- recommendations for furniture, storage, lighting and other interior elements;
- specifications or sourcing recommendations for items to be purchased;
- drawings, sketches or visualisations needed to communicate the design;
- identification of any elements requiring fabrication or specialist contractors;
- an itemised implementation budget demonstrating that the design can be achieved within the available delivery budget;
- a clear implementation plan; and
- a final agreed design capable of being realised within the available timetable.

A floorplan and photographs of the existing Playland space can be seen below to help applicants understand the scale, layout and current condition of the space.

Applicants are not expected to produce designs or speculative creative work as part of their application.



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From design to delivery

This is a **design and realisation commission**.

Completion of the commission means that the final agreed design has been physically realised within Playland. It does not mean simply providing a design concept, mood board, specification or set of drawings.

The interior designer will therefore be expected to remain actively involved throughout the implementation period. This will include providing information and advice to contractors and



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suppliers, responding to design queries and helping to resolve practical issues that arise during installation.

Artswork will retain responsibility for appointing and contracting all third-party contractors and suppliers required to realise the design. The interior designer will not have contractual responsibility for those contractors or suppliers.

The interior designer will, however, be expected to work constructively with them, provide appropriate design information and guidance, and help ensure that the different elements come together as a coherent finished space.

Any proposed expenditure from the delivery budget must be approved by Artswork before orders are placed or other financial commitments are made.

What success looks like

By the end of the commission, the agreed design will have been realised within Playland.

The redesigned space should:

- feel warmer, more welcoming and more cohesive;
- feel like a space that young people can call their own;
- visibly reflect ideas and priorities identified by Playland's young people;
- be accessible and responsive to different sensory and neurodivergent needs;
- include improved, practical and appropriate storage;
- work effectively for everyday use, workshops, exhibitions, performances, meetings and events;
- bring the interior design, mural and window design together as a coherent whole;
- make effective use of the available space and existing assets; and
- be practical, durable and achievable within the available budget and timetable.

We recognise that elements of the final design will develop through collaboration with young people and the practical process of realising the design.

Roles and responsibilities

The interior designer will be responsible for:

- leading the interior design process;
- working meaningfully and inclusively with young people;
- reviewing and responding to findings from Playland's listening consultations;



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- developing and agreeing the design with young people and Artswork;
- producing the agreed design outputs;
- preparing a realistic implementation plan and itemised delivery budget;
- liaising with Artswork, contractors, suppliers and other commissioned creative practitioners;
- providing design guidance throughout the implementation period;
- identifying and communicating any emerging design, budget or delivery risks; and
- remaining involved through to the successful realisation of the agreed design.

Artswork will be responsible for:

- supporting the interior designer's engagement with young people;
- providing relevant information about the building and existing space;
- agreeing the final design and delivery budget;
- approving expenditure before commitments are made;
- appointing and contracting third-party contractors and suppliers;
- managing contractual and payment relationships with those contractors and suppliers; and
- working with the interior designer and young people to make decisions and resolve issues arising during implementation.

Timeline 2026 & 2027:

- **Application deadline:** 5pm, Monday 16 November 2026
- **Shortlisting:** Thursday 19 November 2026
- **Interviews:** Monday 23 or Tuesday 24 November 2026
- **Appointment:** Tuesday 1 December 2026
- **Proposed co-design and design-development sessions:**
 - Thursday 10 December 2026, 6–8pm
 - Tuesday 15 December 2026, 6–8pm
 - Thursday 17 December 2026, 6–8pm
- **Realisation and installation:** 4–25 January 2027
- **Window-design selection:** 19 or 21 January 2027

Applicants may suggest reasonable amendments to the working timetable in their proposal. However, the final deadline of **25 January 2027 is fixed**.



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By this date, the agreed design must have been physically realised within the Playland space, not simply designed or specified. [\[Interior Designer callout | Word\]](#)

Who we are looking for

We are looking for an interior designer who can demonstrate:

- experience of designing welcoming and flexible interior spaces;
- experience of working collaboratively with young people, communities or users through a co-design process;
- an ability to listen to different ideas and translate them into a coherent design;
- an understanding of inclusive and accessible design;
- knowledge or experience of designing spaces that consider neurodivergent and sensory needs;
- a creative and practical approach to making effective use of an existing space;
- experience of working collaboratively with contractors, suppliers and other creative practitioners;
- experience of taking a design through to implementation or installation;
- an ability to deliver high-quality work within an agreed budget and timetable; and
- an approach that enables young people to have genuine influence over decisions, rather than simply being consulted.

We recognise that applicants may bring different combinations of skills and experience. We are particularly interested in applicants' approach to this commission and how they would work collaboratively with Playland's young people.

Intellectual property and use of the designs

The interior designer will retain copyright in their original design work.

As part of the commission, the interior designer will grant Artswork a perpetual, royalty-free, non-exclusive licence to use the final agreed designs, drawings, specifications and associated materials for the purposes of:

- realising the agreed design;
- operating and using the Playland space;
- maintaining and repairing the space and its contents;
- making reasonable future alterations or adaptations to the space; and
- communicating and reporting on the project.



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Artswork may photograph and film the design process and completed interior. Artswork may use these photographs and films in its communications, reporting, evaluation, fundraising and promotional activity.

Where the interior designer's contribution is specifically featured or discussed, Artswork will seek to credit them appropriately.

Any intellectual property connected with the separately commissioned mural or window design will be addressed through the relevant commission agreements.

Detailed intellectual property provisions will be included in the contract issued to the successful interior designer.

Contract, payment and insurance

The successful interior designer will be contracted by Artswork.

Payment of the professional fee will be made in agreed instalments, which will be set out in the contract. Payments will be linked to agreed stages of the commission, including design development and successful realisation of the final design.

The appointed interior designer will be required to hold appropriate insurance for the work they are undertaking. Specific insurance requirements will be confirmed as part of the contracting process.

Third-party contractors and suppliers appointed by Artswork will be responsible for holding appropriate insurance relating to their own work.

Safeguarding

This is a youth-led project involving young people aged 16 to 30.

The successful applicant will be required to work in accordance with Artswork's safeguarding policies, procedures and agreed ways of working. Any DBS requirements appropriate to the role and the nature of the interior designer's contact with young people will be confirmed as part of the contracting process.

The interior designer will also be expected to create an inclusive and respectful environment in which young people can contribute safely, confidently and meaningfully.

How to apply

Please submit:

1. a short expression of interest of no more than two sides of A4, explaining:
 - why you are interested in the commission;
 - how you would approach the co-design process;



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- how your experience relates to the brief; and
- how you would take the project from design through to realisation;
- 2. your CV or a summary of relevant experience; and
- 3. up to five examples of relevant work, or a link to an online portfolio.

We do not expect applicants to develop a design for Playland at application stage. We are primarily interested in your approach, experience and ability to work collaboratively with young people.

Please send your application to Anastasia Alexandru at **anastasiaalexandru@artswork.org.uk** by **5pm on Monday 16 November 2026.**

Applications will be assessed against the criteria set out in this brief by a selection panel that includes young people involved in Playland.

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to an interview at Playland on Monday 23 or Tuesday 24 November 2026. Please let us know if you require access support or reasonable adjustments to participate in the application or interview process.

Enquiries

Questions about the commission should be directed to:

Anastasia Alexandru
Creative Producer for Playland
anastasiaalexandru@artswork.org.uk
Working days: Monday to Thursday

Artswork

Artswork works to empower young people through creativity, giving them the opportunity to explore and fulfil their potential in a future that we are all making together. As an Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation, we work across three strands:

- Activate Young Cultural Changemakers - Putting creative place-making power in the hands of young people
- Activate Creative Careers - Building an equitable and sustainable pathway to creative careers for young people
- Activate Creative Learning - Growing creative approaches to learning in classrooms, workplaces and communities

Artswork aims to engage artists and facilitators that are representative of the communities and children and young people we support. We expect our team and those working on our behalf to commit to our Anti-Discrimination Charter which can be accessed via our website.

<https://artswork.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Anti-discrimination-charter.pdf>



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Thank you very much for your interest

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