

Spike Island

OPEN CALL 2028: SOUTH WEST-BASED ARTIST COMMISSION

Spike Island is pleased to invite applications from artists based in the South West of England to develop a major new commission to be presented in our galleries in summer 2028.

This is an exciting opportunity for an artist to realise ambitious new work(s) that they might not otherwise have the resources or opportunity to make. The successful artist will work closely with Spike Island's curatorial and technical teams to develop, produce and present the commission.

We welcome proposals from artists working in any medium and at any stage of their career.

THE OPPORTUNITY

The commission will be presented in Spike Island's galleries as part of our summer 2028 exhibitions programme.

The successful applicant will receive:

- An artist fee of £4,000
- Production budget of £8,500 (exclusive of VAT) to produce and fabricate the new work(s). This budget is intended for materials, fabrication and other direct production costs required to realise the new work(s).
- Spike Island will separately cover exhibition-related costs outside the production budget, including installation, transport, insurance, travel and accommodation, per diems, documentation and deinstallation, within the limits of the budget available
- Curatorial and technical support from Spike Island's team throughout the development, production and presentation of the commission
- Where appropriate, access to Spike Island's residency studio (for artists who do not have a studio at Spike Island) and/or edit suite for research or production
- Promotion through Spike Island's website and social media channels before and during the exhibition

WHO CAN APPLY?

This opportunity is open to artists who live and have their primary studio practice in the South West of England. For the purposes of this opportunity, we are using the Arts Council's area designations, which are outlined [here](#).

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We welcome applications from artists from all backgrounds and working in any medium, including painting, sculpture, moving image, photography, drawing, performance and installation.

Artists at any stage of their careers are eligible to apply. However, we are not able to accept applications from artists who are currently undertaking an undergraduate course.

We particularly encourage applications from people who identify as D/deaf, disabled or neurodivergent, come from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds and/or experience racism. Spike Island is committed to anti-racism and to addressing inequality in the arts sector.

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

We are looking for a strong and ambitious proposal for new work(s) created specifically for Spike Island's galleries, to be presented as part of our summer 2028 exhibitions programme.

Proposals should reflect the ethos of Spike Island's programme, which is underpinned by a belief in the power of art to provoke new thinking, spark curiosity and inspire a more equitable and generous worldview.

We invite you to consider how your project connects with Spike Island's values of:

- Boldness
- Openness
- Ingenuity
- Connection

The proposed commission should have the potential to engage Spike Island's diverse audiences and connect with the wider context of Bristol and the South West

Your proposal does not need to be fully resolved. We are interested in hearing about your ideas, ambitions and approach, and in understanding how the opportunity to work with Spike Island could support the development of your practice.

Proposals must, however, be feasible and deliverable within the available budget and timeframe.

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SELECTION CRITERIA

Applications will be considered against the following criteria:

- Artistic quality and ambition – the strength, originality and potential of your practice and proposed commission.
- Relevance to Spike Island – how the proposal connects with Spike Island's programme, values, galleries and audiences.
- Feasibility – whether the proposal can be realistically developed and produced within the available budget and timeframe.
- Potential for development – how the opportunity, including Spike Island's curatorial and technical support, could enable the artist to develop their practice or realise a work that would otherwise be difficult to make.

ACCESSIBILITY

We recognise that text-based applications do not suit everyone. We are committed to removing barriers to applying and welcome applications in different formats.

If you would prefer to apply by video or audio, or require an alternative application format or reasonable adjustment, please get in touch with Diana Lage at diana.lage@spikeisland.org.uk or on 0117 929 2266.

Alternative application formats will be considered on an equivalent basis to written applications.

If you are shortlisted, we will also work with you to identify and accommodate any access requirements for the interview and selection process.

You can also submit an access document, if applicable, outlining any access requirements you would like us to take into account during the application or selection process.

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HOW TO APPLY

To apply, please complete and submit the application form on the Spike Island website

This form asks you for:

- Your name
- Your contact information and postcode
- If you are submitting an audio or video application, a link to where this can be accessed
- A CV outlining relevant experience, recent exhibitions and art-related projects (2 pages maximum)
- A proposal for the new commission (maximum 750 words), clearly outlining your intentions and explaining why you think the project is relevant to Spike Island
- Sketches and/or images relating to your proposal (up to 5, if available)
- An exhibition budget, outlining how you would spend the £8,500 production budget
- A portfolio of recent work, including 10–15 images and/or up to 3 links to moving image or sound work, with relevant captions. You may include a download link to a file-sharing platform such as Dropbox or Google Drive, if appropriate
- Your access document, if applicable

DEADLINE TO APPLY: Sunday 13 December 2026 at 23:59 GMT

All applicants will receive an automated email confirming that their application has been received successfully. Following submission of your application, you will be prompted to complete an equal opportunities monitoring form. This information will be separated from your application and used for monitoring purposes only.

Applications will be reviewed by Spike Island's Programme team against the selection criteria outlined above.

Shortlisted artists will be invited to attend an in-person or online interview during the week commencing Monday 18 January 2027. Questions will be sent in advance.

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by Monday 1 February 2027.

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We will hold an online information session on Friday 6 November 2026 at 11am.

The session will provide more information about the opportunity and give prospective applicants the chance to ask questions. It will be led by Clémentine Proby, Curator, and Diana Lage, Assistant Curator: Exhibitions and Public Programme.

[Click here to book your place for the Information Session.](#)