

## AWARD 2023 Application Guidelines

Following the success of AWARD in 2021 the exhibition will be presented as the centrepiece of the British Ceramics Biennial, taking place in Stoke-on-Trent from 23rd September – 5th November, 2023.

Application Deadline: Midnight 12th October 2022.

AWARD 2021 Winner  
Stephen Dixon  
*Transient: The Ship of Dreams and Nightmares.*





Photographer ©: Jenny Harper

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## What is AWARD?

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*“AWARD is the leading exhibition of contemporary ceramic art in the UK. It celebrates ground-breaking, progressive practice and allows artists to challenge themselves and the ceramics status quo.*

*This headline exhibition of the BCB festival takes audiences on a journey with contemporary ceramics, solidifying the role of clay as a rich material for storytelling, experimentation, playfulness, risk taking and activism.”*

– Clare Wood, Artistic Director & Chief Executive,  
British Ceramics Biennial & AWARD Panel Member

AWARD is the British Ceramics Biennial’s headline exhibition. It is a prestigious exhibition formed from an open submission that celebrates the vitality of contemporary ceramics practice in the UK.

A panel of experts who are integral to the growth and innovation of contemporary ceramics come together and select ten artists to exhibit in the BCB festival.

Each selected artist will receive £1,000 towards a presentation of their work as a central component of the 2023 BCB festival. From the ten selected artists, one prize winner is selected, announced and awarded a £10,000 cash prize during the festival.

# What are the ambitions of AWARD?

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- To celebrate artists at a critical moment in their practice
- To platform ambition and creative risk taking within contemporary ceramics
- To acknowledge the talent and achievements of those advancing contemporary practice
- To be diverse and inclusive, reflecting the richness of ceramics practice
- To consider and explore the environmental impact of ceramics practice

# Who is AWARD for?

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AWARD invites applications from UK based individual practitioners, collaborators or collectives who use clay as their primary creative material.

The AWARD exhibition seeks to have a positive impact on the practice of the exhibiting artists. We seek to support artists who want to make best use of the opportunity, who may wish to tread new ground, use the momentum of the exhibition to focus or make a step change in their practice or to present work in ways it hasn't previously been experienced.

## What do the shortlisted applicants receive?

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Each of the ten selected artists will receive £1,000 towards the exhibition of their selected work as part of the flagship AWARD exhibition at the 2023 BCB festival.

AWARD exhibitors will benefit from a national PR and marketing campaign, curatorial support, programme management support and one-way (return) transport of exhibits. The AWARD winner will receive a cash prize of £10,000 and a place on the 2025 AWARD selection panel.

They will be invited to exhibit in the 2025 BCB festival and they will benefit from additional marketing.

## What is expected from the shortlisted applicants?

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Artists are invited to apply for AWARD by submitting a proposal, which outlines what they wish to exhibit. The artists selected must produce the work in line with their proposal.

The £1,000 fee is provided to facilitate the costs involved in the production of the agreed work. It is understood that the proposal may change through the creative process. Any such changes should be discussed with BCB.

The artists should budget for transporting the work to the BCB exhibition site. Artists are responsible for installing and deinstalling their own exhibit. Reasonable practical support from the BCB team will be provided where possible.

We recognise that artists may wish to propose work that will require additional funding or resource, however, this is not an expectation of the exhibition.

## Who is eligible?

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- Those based in the UK between January 2020 and September 2023
- Those working as an individual artist, a collective or in collaboration. A collaboration may take place between an artist and arts organisation, between artists or between an artist and community group in the creation of the proposed exhibit
- Those working professionally before September 2020
- Those proposing work that uses clay as the primary medium and is based on the exploration of ceramic process. Areas of practice may include but are not limited to studio pottery, design, socially engaged practice, sculpture, performance, installation, objects, film and audio

ALSO ELIGIBLE: Previous AWARD exhibitors.

If you have any questions regarding eligibility, please get in touch:  
[apply@britishceramicsbiennial.com](mailto:apply@britishceramicsbiennial.com)

## AWARD 2023 selection panel

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AWARD exhibitors are selected by a panel of leading professionals who are advocates for contemporary art and making, and who bring a variety of perspectives to the decision-making process.

The AWARD 2023 selection panel is:

- Selection panel chairperson: Alun Graves – Senior Curator Ceramics and Glass Collections V&A
- Stephen Dixon – BCB 2021 AWARD Winner, Artist & Professor Emeritus, Manchester School of Art
- Dr Guan Lee – Founder of Grymsdyke Farm, architect and lecturer
- Jenni Lomax – Curator, writer and visual arts and education consultant
- Clare Wood – Artistic Director & Chief Executive, British Ceramics Biennial

## The selection criteria

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- The quality of the proposal
- The quality, strength and ambition of the artistic practice
- The potential impact of the proposal on the development of the artists' practice
- The potential for the work to connect with audiences

## Key dates AWARD 2023

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June 2022	Applications open
12 October 2022	Deadline for submissions (midnight GMT)
November 2022	AWARD selection panel meet and candidates informed
Jan 2023 onwards	Studio visits to selected artists
Mid-August 2023	Delivery of work to exhibition venue
22 September 2023	Festival launch
23 September 2023	AWARD exhibition opens to the public
October 2023	AWARD winner is announced
5 November 2023	AWARD exhibition closes to public
Nov/Dec 2023	Collection and dispersal of artwork

# Access Support

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Access support is available to individuals who feel they face barriers in making an application.

A BCB team member is available to help with your application or to offer advice in advance of your application. Please email [apply@britishceramicsbiennial.com](mailto:apply@britishceramicsbiennial.com) to discuss how we can help you.

Please note that the advice we give on making an application is on the eligibility and suitability of your proposal, it will have no bearing on its assessment during the selection panel.

If you are printing the guidelines the application weblinks are found on [page 9](#).

# Audio application Guidelines

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If you would prefer, we have recorded the application form and guidelines, please click [here](#) to listen.

# Audio or video proposal submissions

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If you prefer to you can submit your application proposal as a six-minute audio or video file.

Details on how to make your audio or video submission is found on [page 11](#).



# How to apply

Artists are asked to submit short proposals (six-minute recording or 500 words), outlining the work they would like to exhibit if selected.

It is a condition that all work proposed will be current (no more than three years old and must not include graduate or student work).

Application Items	How do I submit this item?
Contact Information	[ <a href="#">Click here to complete the AWARD 2023 contact information form</a> ]
Equality, diversity and inclusion monitoring form	[ <a href="#">Click here to complete the AWARD 2023 equality, diversity and inclusion monitoring form</a> ]
The application form <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your proposal</li> <li>• Cost outline</li> <li>• Timeline</li> <li>• Environmental impact</li> </ul>	[ <a href="#">Click here to download the AWARD 2023 application form template</a> ]  Please complete and upload the Application form template provided to <a href="http://www.wetransfer.com">www.wetransfer.com</a> and send them to: <a href="mailto:apply@britishceramicsbiennial.com">apply@britishceramicsbiennial.com</a>
Up to 8 supporting files	

If you are printing the application guidelines please use the following weblinks:	
Contact form	<a href="https://forms.office.com/r/UZAHjHnVE8">https://forms.office.com/r/UZAHjHnVE8</a>
Equality, diversity and inclusion monitoring form	<a href="https://forms.office.com/r/CTtKuhk89K">https://forms.office.com/r/CTtKuhk89K</a>
The application form	<a href="https://www.britishceramicsbiennial.com/app/uploads/2022/06/AWARD_Application-Template-1.docx">https://www.britishceramicsbiennial.com/app/uploads/2022/06/AWARD_Application-Template-1.docx</a>

# Application guidance

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## The application form:

Please use the application form template as a guide. Submit the following items to [apply@britishceramicsbiennial.com](mailto:apply@britishceramicsbiennial.com) using [www.wetransfer.com](http://www.wetransfer.com):

1. **Your proposal:** In no more than six minutes or 500 words tell us about the work/s that you would like to exhibit in AWARD. Please use the following questions as a guide in telling us about your proposal:
  - i. What ideas would you like to explore?
  - ii. What form will it take?
  - iii. Why is it important for the work to be presented now?
  - iv. How will the work extend and develop your practice as an artist?

If you submit a sound or video recording please include the proposal questions in the recording. Please also share a weblink to this file when indicated in the application template. See [Submitting an audio or video proposal](#) for further guidance.

2. **Cost outline:** Please list the costs involved in your proposal, income identified and if necessary, please indicate unidentified income. We know that artists may wish to propose work that will require additional funding or resource, however, this is not an expectation of the exhibition.
3. **Timeline:** Please share with us how you see the proposal coming together starting from the end of January 2023, please list key points, self-set deadlines demonstrating how you will meet the delivery deadline of August 2023.
4. **Environmental impact:** Please summarise the sustainable practices you are committed to or will commit to in your proposal for AWARD. This may include, for example, committing to low firings, recycling and reusing materials, using a green website host or using renewable energy sources in your studio.

## Supporting material:

1. Please submit up to 8 supporting files to [apply@britishceramicsbiennial.com](mailto:apply@britishceramicsbiennial.com) using [www.wetransfer.com](http://www.wetransfer.com)
2. Supporting files can include photographs of existing work, illustrations of your proposal or recordings of planned or existing work
3. For example: one image = one file, one sound work = one file, one A4 illustration = one file.
4. Image quality should be min. 2,500 pixels wide, 300dpi and in JPEG form. Please share illustrations as JPEG or PDF. Please share weblinks to film and audio works via an online platform (YouTube or Vimeo for example). Please title your files with:
  - a. **yourname\_worktitle\_year\_dimensions\_primarymaterialused**
5. Work included in supporting files submitted must be made within the last three years.
6. Graduate or student work is not eligible.

## Submitting an audio or video proposal

Please use the questions listed in the Your Proposal section in the application form guidance as a guide in telling us about your proposal. Please include the proposal questions listed in the application form guidance in the recording, you can do this by yourself, someone else can ask you the questions in the recording or a BCB team member can ask you the questions and record your proposal on Zoom for your application.

In the proposal section of the application form template please share a link to your audio or video file (this can be shared as a link from: Dropbox, Google Drive, Vimeo or YouTube for example). Please ensure the recording of your proposal is clear and is not heavily produced. There will be no assessment of the production quality of audio or video recordings. Please ensure the audio or video length is no longer than six minutes.

Please provide a weblink to audio and video recordings in the application form. We need contact information, cost list and a timeline in written form, if BCB can transcribe this information for you, please email: [apply@britishceramicsbiennial.com](mailto:apply@britishceramicsbiennial.com)

# Diversity and inclusion

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We recognise that there is a lack of diversity in the ceramics sector and acknowledge that as an organisation we share responsibility in addressing systemic inequalities that persist. We need to increase representation of diverse artists and practice in our festival, exhibitions and events programmes.

We have a responsibility to artists working in clay and to the contemporary ceramics sector in addressing under-representation and the barriers in accessing opportunities to progress. We are taking actions to support an increase in applications from artists who feel their identity and background are under-represented. This includes better understanding who currently accesses information we distribute and how it is perceived, broadening the channels through which we communicate and offering access support options. We welcome conversations with those people with ideas and networks that might help us progress this work more quickly, please email [info@britishceramicsbiennial.com](mailto:info@britishceramicsbiennial.com)

# Frequently asked questions

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## How do you define quality?

We define quality as the balance of artistic intention, the ability to realise and deliver on those intentions in physical form and to effectively communicate them with an audience.

## What do you mean when you speak about creative risk taking?

We describe creative risk taking as a mixture of innovation and boldness to do something new.

## Can the works I apply with be made with materials other than clay?

Yes, providing the primary medium is clay and the work is based on the exploration of ceramic process.

## Do the images I submit need to be new work?

No — you can submit images of work up to three years old, excluding graduate and student work.

## Is there a size restriction?

No, not at this stage — but please provide dimensions of all work submitted in the application form.

## What media are eligible for entry?

All media are eligible providing the primary medium is clay and the work is based on the exploration of ceramic process.

## Can I apply if I have been selected for previous AWARD exhibitions?

Yes.

### **I work as an in-house designer for a ceramics company. Can I apply as an individual?**

Yes, with the permission of your employer and providing that you are the credited designer of the work submitted.

### **What should I include in my cost outline?**

The application form template includes an example list of costs that may apply for your proposal. If applicable, your cost outline may include the costs involved in making your proposed work and installation of it, special display requirements, transport of work to the exhibition site, your travel costs and any other costs you see as connected with the proposed exhibit. Please also include income/funds you have towards the cost of the work, income/funds you will apply for and income/funds that you don't have yet but will look for if shortlisted.

### **I'm having a problem accessing/sending my application! What do I do?**

Please contact, email: [rhannon@britishceramicsbiennial.com](mailto:rhannon@britishceramicsbiennial.com) We are happy to help. Due to high quantities of applications being made leading up to the deadline we strongly advise that you make and send in your application well in advance of the deadline.

### **Is there any access support available for artists wishing to apply who require additional support in order to do so?**

Yes. If you feel that you need access support, a BCB team member is available to help with your application. Please email: [apply@britishceramicsbiennial.com](mailto:apply@britishceramicsbiennial.com) to discuss how we can help you.

If you would prefer to, you can also submit your application as an audio or video recording in the application form. In the application form, where indicated, please share a link to your audio or video file (this can be shared as a link from: Dropbox, Google Drive, Vimeo or YouTube for example).

## Who has exhibited in AWARD?

**2021** – Alison Cooke, Christie Brown, Cleo Mussi, Connor Coulston, Tamsin van Essen, Helen Beard, Ho Lai, Jin Eui Kim, Mawuena Kattah and Stephen Dixon.

**2019** – Zoe Preece, Jessica Harrison, Sam Lucas, Irina Razumovskaya, Elliott Denny, Adam Buick, Hannah Tounsend, John Rainey, Barry Finan and Vicky Lindo & William Brookes.

**2017** – Eva Masterman, Katie Spragg, Malena Hartman Rasmussen, Matt Smith, Matt Raw, Nicholas Rena, Pauliina Pöllänen, Tana West, Zoe Lloyd and Alex Simpson.

**2015** – Sam Bakewell, Anne Gibs, Amy Hughes, Bethan Lloyd Worthington, Ingrid Murphy & Jon Pigott, Aneta Regel, James Rigler, Mella Shaw, Caroline Tatterstall and Andrea Walsh.

**2013** – Christie Brown, Matthew Chambers, Claudia Clare, Zachary Eastwood-Bloom, Edith Garcia, Malene Hartman Rasmussen, Ikuko Iwamoto, Johnathon Keep, Kim Jin Eui, Nicholas Lees, Andrew Livingstone, Nao Matsunaga, Ian McIntyre, James Rigler, Lara Scobie, Louise Taylor, Tamsin Van Essen, Andrea Walsh, James and Tilla Waters, Katy West and Conor Wilson.

**2011** – Carina Ciscato, Robert Cooper, Phoebe Cummings, Lowri Davies, Robert Dawson, Stephen Dixon, Ken Eastman, Philip Eglin, James Evans, Chris Keenan, Rob Kessler, Ikuko Iwamoto & Kazu Loudor, Sun Kim, Peter Lewis, Nao Matsunaga, Craig Mitchell, Katharine Morling, Rosa Nguyen, Merete Rasmussen, Angela Speight, Julian Stair, Caroline Tattersall, Andrea Walsh and Dawn Youll.

**2009** – Ikuko Iwamoto, Ingrid Ruegemer, Louisa Taylor, The New English – Designer: Marcus Steel, Lisa Turner, Monica Tsang, Florian Hutter, Terrie McGettigan, Tanja Livingstone, Lucy Whiting, Sam Bakewell, Neil Brownsword, Halima Cassell, Phoebe Cummings, Natasha Daintry, Stephen Dixon, Philip Eglin, Catrin Howell, Aimee Lax, David Roberts, Fran Priest, Paul Scott, Jacob van der Beugel, Conor Wilson and Dawn Youll.