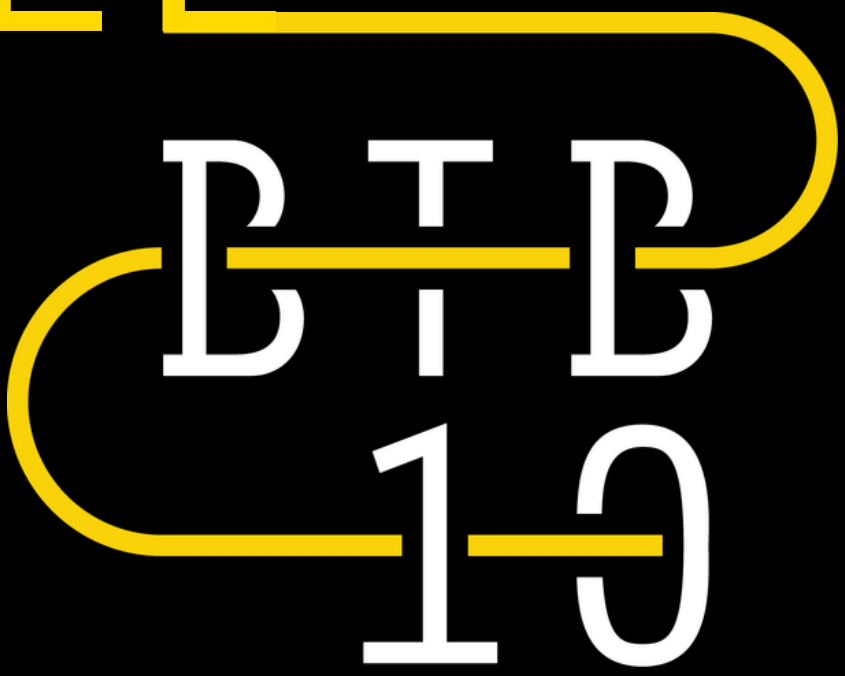
OPEN CALL



BTB 10 Year Survey Show:
The Harris Interactive Commission

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The HARRIS

OPEN CALL: BTB 10 YEAR SURVEY SHOW – THE HARRIS INTERACTIVE COMMISSION

Background:

British Textile Biennial (BTB) is a free festival of contemporary art that commissions artists and designers from across the UK and internationally to make work inspired by the context, histories and continuing legacies of textiles in Lancashire and its global connections.

In 2027, BTB will mark ten years of commissioning with a major survey exhibition at The Harris, Preston. Bringing together works and stories from across BTB's programme, the exhibition will reflect on a decade of artistic responses to textiles, labour, place, materials and making, while looking towards the future and bringing contemporary art to new audiences.

As part of the exhibition, British Textile Biennial and The Harris are seeking to co-commission a new interactive artwork incorporating textiles for audiences of all ages, creating a playful and participatory way into the ideas explored throughout the exhibition.

The opportunity:

We are looking for an artist, designer or collective to develop an ambitious interactive work of scale that responds to the themes and ideas running through ten years of British Textile Biennial.

Across its programme, BTB has used textiles as a way of exploring wider questions about people, place and the world around us – from global connections, labour and making to fashion and consumption, migration, sustainability, traditional knowledge, technological innovation and our changing relationships with materials.

We are interested in how these ideas might be encountered differently through participation. The commission must incorporate textiles, but its form and approach are open. The work might be sculptural, spatial, sensory, digital and/or immersive, or bring together several of these approaches. It could invite visitors to play, explore, assemble, manipulate or contribute; evolve through participation over the course of the exhibition; or propose an entirely different form of interaction.

The commission will occupy a dedicated space in the central room of the exhibition, measuring 3 m × 6.6 m, with two walls available for hanging work to a height of 4.1 m. Proposals should be developed with this space in mind, considering how visitors will enter, move through and interact with the work.

We are particularly interested in proposals that:

- encourage open-ended play, experimentation and participation;
- create an engaging experience for audiences across generations;
- consider accessibility as an integral part of the work.

These prompts leave space for artists to interpret the opportunity through their own practice. We are interested in ideas that we haven't anticipated.

Applicants do not need to identify as textile artists. We welcome artists and creatives working across disciplines who can incorporate textiles imaginatively into their response.

The commission

The successful artist or collective will receive:

- A commissioning budget of £10,000, to cover artist fees, materials, fabrication, travel and other project expenses.
- Curatorial and production support from British Textile Biennial and The Harris.
- Support around access, participation and the practical requirements of creating the work.
- Professional documentation of the completed work.
- Inclusion within the wider BTB 10 Year Survey exhibition and associated communications and events programme.

The work will be presented at The Harris, Preston, from 29th May – 31st August 2027.
As the commission is intended for regular interaction, proposals should consider how the work will remain safe, accessible and engaging throughout the exhibition. Depending on its form, this may include durability, technical support, maintenance or the replacement and replenishment of materials.

We also welcome ideas for how the commission might have a meaningful life beyond the exhibition, whether through future presentations, adaptation, shared resources or continued audience engagement. Any opportunities for its future use or presentation would be explored with the selected artist as the work develops.

Who can apply?

We welcome applications from individual artists, designers and makers, as well as collaborative practices and collectives. We are particularly interested in practitioners with experience of creating participatory, interactive or public-facing work and engaging a broad range of audiences.

Previous experience of delivering a commission at this scale is useful but not essential. We are equally interested in strong ideas from practitioners whose previous work demonstrates the potential to develop the commission successfully with support from the BTB and Harris teams.

How to apply

Please send us:

- A short outline of why this commission interests you and how it connects with your practice.
- An initial proposal for how you might approach the commission, including how you would incorporate textiles and respond to the allocated space. We are interested in your ideas and approach rather than a fully resolved design at this stage.
- Examples of no more than four previous projects that demonstrate why your practice is relevant to the opportunity, including images and/or links to film, sound or other documentation where appropriate.
- A simple outline budget, including artist fees/daily rates and indicative costs for materials, fabrication, travel and other expenses. If selected, we will work with you to develop a detailed project budget.
- Details of any access requirements for the application or interview process.

Please combine the above into one compressed PDF document.

Application deadline: 12 noon, Friday 20th November
Interviews: Early December
Development and delivery: December 2026 – April 2027
Installation: May 2027
Public presentation: 29th May - 31st Aug 2027

Applications should be sent to: emily@britishtextilebiennial.co.uk

BTB 10

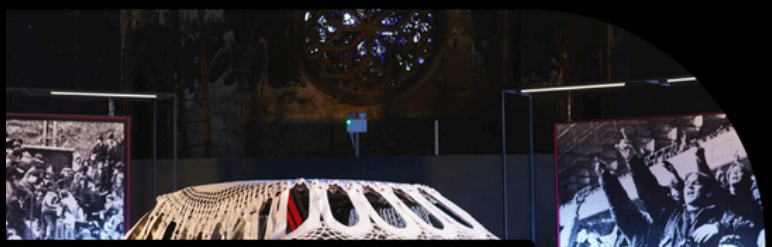
British Textile Biennial marks ten years with major retrospective at The Harris, Preston

















29 MAY
31 AUG 2027

The Harris,
Preston, Lancashire

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