

collect

COLLECT OPEN 2027 APPLICATION GUIDANCE

Collect Open Partner

SPINOCCHIA FREUND

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INTRODUCTION

ABOUT COLLECT OPEN

COLLECT 2027

**26 FEBRUARY - 28 FEBRUARY
(PREVIEWS 24 & 25 FEBRUARY)**

SOMERSET HOUSE, LONDON, UK

Collect is the the art fair for contemporary craft and collectible design, bringing together specialist galleries from around the world.

A highlight of the fair is Collect Open – an annual showcase open to independent artists and collectives, selected by an expert advisory panel. We welcome proposals for bold, craft-led installations or artworks that push boundaries and spark conversation.

Whether your proposal explores materiality in new ways, makes a powerful social or political statement, or reflects something deeply personal, it should represent a fresh and ambitious direction in your practice.

Collect Open offers a rare opportunity to exhibit alongside leading galleries at Somerset House, presenting your work to a global audience of museum curators, arts patrons, luxury and corporates, interior designers, architects, art advisers, art buyers and enthusiasts.

For full details on criteria, application process and fees, plus information about the Collect Open bursaries, please read on.

We strongly encourage applications from individuals currently underrepresented in the UK's Creative and Cultural Sectors. This includes but is not limited to people of African or Caribbean heritage; Arabic heritage; Latin American heritage; East Asian, South Asian and South East Asian



collect

The Leading International
Art Fair for Contemporary
Craft and Design

27 Feb-01 Mar
Collectors' Preview 25 Feb
Preview 26 Feb



Tickets



Map

SOMERSET HOUSE

SOMERSET HOUSE MUSEUM OF EDIBLE EARTH

Warning Sheer drop!
Do not sit on ledge
Warning for the Disabled

Somerset House. Image by: Shin Miura

BENEFITS

SELECTED APPLICANTS RECEIVE

- A space at the fair to display their proposed work (this will likely be a shared room with other Collect Open artists)
- Professional development support including: 1:1 support for creative development, curatorial planning, pricing and marketing
- Operations and logistics support in the lead up to the fair
- PR and marketing exposure through the fair's extensive campaign
- A page in the fair Catalogue including contact details, full colour image and artist statement
- A dedicated page on the Crafts Council website in the run up to and during Collect 2027

POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Connecting with Collect global audiences
- Generating sales and/or earning commissions
- Generating collaboration opportunities
- Gaining critical feedback from knowledgeable and discerning visitors
- Securing gallery representation



Oriol Zinaburg, Collect Open 2026. Image by: Shin Miura

ELIGIBILITY

CRITERIA

- You must be an individual or collective (up to two people); galleries or dealers cannot be considered
- Your proposal should be for a new body of work made especially for Collect
- Your proposal must show how you are developing your work in new ways
- You should be committed to developing and progressing your professional practice as an artist
- It is expected that you are not already represented at Collect 2027 by an exhibiting gallery
- In the event that you are represented at Collect 2027 by a gallery exhibiting at the fair, you must inform the gallery immediately that you are applying to Collect Open, to ensure the business arrangement you have with them is not compromised. In addition, the work within the proposal you put forward for Collect Open must be critically different from the work you sell through your gallery representation
- You cannot participate in Collect Open more than twice
- Applications consisting solely of painting, drawing, graphic design, photography, fine art sculpture, animation or film will not be considered
- Full terms & conditions for participating at Collect Open are available on the application portal

Before you apply, please consider:

- Your application will require a submitted visualisation of your proposal (sketch/drawing)
- You will be required to submit good quality images of your past work
- How you will fund your participation (this can include the Collect Open bursary)
- Applications must be complete, considered and comprehensive
- As part of the terms & conditions, you are required to be present at your Collect Open stand for the duration of the fair

ELIGIBLE MEDIA

- Art jewellery
- Ceramic
- Fibre
- Furniture
- Glass
- Lacquer
- Leather
- Metalwork
- Non-traditional materials
- Paper
- Precious metalwork
- Resin
- Reused, repurposed and recycled materials
- Rubber
- Sculpture
- Stone
- Textile
- Traditional materials
- Woodwork

Artists using digital technologies within their work are expected to demonstrate that hand skill and craft knowledge is the lead component in both the concept and finished object.

COLLECT OPEN BURSARY

INFORMATION

For the 2027 edition of Collect, Crafts Council is pleased to continue its Collect Open bursary programme for a second year, building on its commitment to addressing the financial barriers that can hinder participation in Collect and wider career progression in craft. Three Collect Open bursaries will again be awarded, each offering a package of support worth £5,000 to the successful applicants.

The bursaries will support UK-based artists from global majority backgrounds who are in need of financial support, and are designed to cover the costs of exhibiting as well as provide a one-off financial allowance for additional costs the artist will incur.

The bursaries reflect Crafts Council's commitment to equality and diversity, supporting our goal to increase representation and build a more equitable platform for exceptional emerging craft voices within this highly regarded programme.

BURSARY ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for a Collect Open bursary, you must:

- Identify as being from a global majority background, which includes, but is not limited to people of African or Caribbean heritage; Arabic heritage; Latin American heritage; East Asian, South Asian and South East Asian heritage.
- Be in financial need or come from a low-income background (see FAQs on page 25 for full criteria).
- Be age 18 or over
- Be based in the UK
- You will also need to meet the general Collect Open eligibility criteria as outlined on page 7

MAKING AN APPLICATION

PROCESS

APPLYING

Artists who wish to be part of Collect Open must submit an application and pay the application fee (£60 inc. VAT) via the online portal by the deadline. Before you apply, please ensure you read all the information in this document carefully.

If you wish to apply for a Collect Open bursary as part of your application, please complete the relevant parts of the application form.

ADVISORY PANEL

The applications submitted are reviewed by an advisory panel.

10 - 14 projects are selected each year.

This year our advisory panellists are:

- TF Chan, Collect Fair Director
- Caroline Jackman, Creative Industries Business Consultant
- Brigitta Spinocchia Freund, Founder & Creative Director of Spinocchia Freund

Q&A SESSION

Join us for an informal Q&A session where we will talk through the application process; you will hear from a former Collect Open participant about their experience, and you can ask any questions you may have about Collect Open - big or small. The session will be recorded, so if you are unable to take part or wish to listen back, a link to the recording will be available.

RSVP here:

<https://collectfair.artsvp.com/5edb93>

KEY DATES

Q&A session: Tuesday 26 May, 11.00 - 13.00 BST

Application deadline: Sunday 21 June, 23.59 BST

In some cases we can grant deadline extensions upon prior agreement to those who have commenced their application before 21 June, please get in touch to arrange this: collect@craftscouncil.org.uk

We will notify with the outcome of your application by the end of July 2026. Please note that our emails often end up in spam folders, please check there after the application deadline to ensure you don't miss any communications from us.



Collect Open 2026 judges and award winner, Chloe Lennon. Image by: Shin Miura

FEES & EXPENSES

APPLICATION FEE

To apply for Collect Open there is a fee of £60 (inc. VAT).

CONTRACT FEES

Should you be successful, you will be required to sign a contract to confirm your participation in Collect Open.

Total contract fee:
£3,500 (+VAT*) / £4,200 (inc. VAT)

What's included:

- Stand space
- Inclusion in marketing & PR campaign
- Full listing on Crafts Council website
- Professional development support
- Logistics and operational support
- 2 hours technician time during installation
- 2 cbm offsite storage during fair
- Stand signage
- 4 lights at stand
- Dedicated exhibitor WiFi
- Allocation of invitations to the fair
- Full colour single page in catalogue
- Dedicated page on Collect website

*Current UK VAT is charged at 20%. Exhibitors based outside the UK are charged VAT at 0%

There is a payment schedule for contract fees, please see below.

Payment dates can be adjusted upon prior agreement, please notify us upon the point of returning your signed contract if alternative dates are required.

Payment	Amount	Due by
Upon return of contract	20% of contract fees £700 (+VAT) / £840 (inc. VAT)	11 September 2026
Second installment	30% of contract fees £1,050 (+VAT) / £1,260 (inc. VAT)	30 October 2026
Final installment	50% of contract fees £1,750 (+VAT) / £2,100 (inc. VAT)	18 December 2026

ADDITIONAL EXPENSES

Please consider carefully the additional costs you will incur beyond the contract fees.

These may include:

- Making the work (e.g. materials, equipment)
- Shipping work to the fair
- Assistance at the fair (e.g. technician or other support)
- Display equipment (e.g. plinths, frames)
- Additional lighting
- Marketing costs (e.g. promotional materials, photography)
- Travel expenses
- Accommodation in London

Selected applicants will be provided with an Exhibitor Manual in November 2026, which will detail how to book shipping and order display items through the fair's recommended suppliers.

FUNDING

We recognise that taking part in Collect Open is a significant investment.

Many participants apply for funding to support their participation.

Please note that applying for a Collect Open bursary does not prevent you from seeking additional sources of funding.

If you decide to apply for grant funding or similar, we suggest you do this early.

On this page we have listed a selection of funding options, this list is mostly intended for artists based in the UK, and is not exhaustive.

You can also find useful resources about funding in the “Sector Support” section of the Crafts Council website:
www.craftscouncil.org.uk/sector-support/craft-business-resources

If you would like to speak to one of the team about funding options before you apply for Collect Open, please do get in touch: collect@craftscouncil.org.uk

Arts Council England (ACE)

- Developing your Creative Practice (DYCP) grant:
www.artscouncil.org.uk/dycp
- National Lottery Project Grants:
www.artscouncil.org.uk/projectgrants

Material-specific grants

- Goldsmiths Company Career:
www.goldsmiths-centre.org/apply-for-grants/business-catalyst-small-grants
- Theo Moorman Trust grant for weavers:
www.theomoormantrust.org.uk
- Fashion & textiles children trust:
www.ftct.org.uk/Pages/FAQs/Category/do-you-work-in-ft
- Regional Furniture fund:
www.regionalfurnituresociety.org/bursaries
- Craft Potters Association:
www.craftpotters.com/craft-potters-charitable-trust

Creative Debuts

- Black Artists Grant: www.creativedebuts.co.uk/pages/black-artists-grant
- Working Class Creatives Grant: www.creativedebuts.co.uk/pages/working-class-writers-grant

Crowdfunding options

- Crowdfunder: www.crowdfunder.co.uk
- Kickstarter: www.kickstarter.com
- Go Fund Me: www.gofundme.com
- Indiegogo: www.indiegogo.com



Ella Merriman, Collect Open 2026. Image by: Shin Miura

YOUR APPLICATION

Collect Open is a unique opportunity to push your creative boundaries and take your practice in a new direction. As part of your application, we encourage you to share how you plan to develop your work and demonstrate your commitment to being part of Collect Open.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

- Describe your proposed project for Collect Open
- Explain how your proposal is ambitious, and an advancement of your previous work (e.g. conceptually, in terms of making skills/techniques, scale)
- Give us an overview of your previous work, e.g. exhibitions where you have shown your work, or occasions when your work has been commissioned by someone
- Tell us about what you have done previously that shows your ability to practically deliver your proposal
- Good quality images of your work
- Describe how you plan to present your work, and provide a supporting sketch to show this to us visually (can be a simple drawing), include approximate weights and fixing methods where possible
- Describe how visitors of the fair will engage with your work
- Let us know how you plan to fund your participation
- Let us know what you hope Collect Open will do for you and your creative practice
- Your professional social media profile or website should be up to date to support your application
- Your application should convey clearly what your project will look like, either through the stand plan, images of your previous work, or a combination

HOW TO APPLY

- Applications must be submitted via the online portal (see link below)
- We strongly advise having a read through all sections on the portal before starting your application
- Most of the information required should be included in the “proposal” section, but there are other sections where you will be asked to upload your images and supporting documents
- You can submit either a written (max. 500 words) or video proposal (max. 3 mins).
- For written proposals, we advise drafting this offline (e.g. in a word document), having someone else proof read it, and copying it to the form once it is finalised
- If you wish to apply for a Collect Open bursary as part of your application, please complete the relevant parts of the application form to confirm

APPLICATION PORTAL

https://craftscouncil.smapply.io/prog/collect_open_2027_exhibitor_portal

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

SPACE ALLOCATION

THE VENUE

Somerset House is a beautiful historic building situated in the heart of London. Due to its Grade 1 listed status, there are limitations on what is possible for fixing installations. Successful applicants will liaise with the Collect operations team to confirm and resolve display requirements.

This is a unique space, providing a stunning backdrop. Collect Open displays are gathered within the East Wing of the Somerset House, on the ground floor.

PROCESS

For successful applicants, the Collect team will review your proposal and evaluate the needs of the work, and decide on its positioning within the fair.

The floor planning and curation of Collect Open is at the discretion of the Collect team.

We will confirm details of your allocated stand with you in autumn 2026.

Please note if selected, you will be required to sign your contract to confirm your participation before the details of your allocated stand have been shared with you.

SIZE

The size of your stand will vary depending on the needs of the work and rooms will most likely be shared with other Collect Open artists. As such, there is not a standard space size that is assigned to everyone. This takes into account each project being of varying scale and material. For example, art jewellery would not require as much space as an installation piece. As a guide, for floor based projects, no more than 4sqm will be allocated. Stand allocation is at the discretion and decision of the Collect team.



Fire exit

Exit →

collect
OLLY FATHERS
WOOD

Olly Fathers, Collect Open 2026. Image by: Shin Miura

TIMELINE

ACTIVITY	DETAILS	DATE
Contract	Successful applicants will be notified by the end of July 2026. If you have been successful, we will issue your contract shortly after notifying you. The signed contract and first installment of fees (if applicable) is due by 11 September 2026.	July - September 2026
1:1 Meeting	Collect Open Curator and Business Consultant, Caroline Jackman, will be in touch with each successful applicant to arrange a 1:1 meeting. This meeting aims to provide any support you may need in terms of your professional practice or realising your proposal.	July - August 2026
Induction	This is a chance to meet some of the Collect team, the other Collect Open artists, and for further information to be shared with you. This will be an in-person meeting in London, with the option to join online if needed.	September 2026
Site visit	Together we will visit Somerset House where you will be able to see your allocated stand. Please note this will most likely be shared with other Collect Open artists.	November 2026
Exhibitor Manual & forms available	The Exhibitor Manual will include logistical and operational information to help you prepare for the fair. You will also be asked to submit some practical information to us, most form deadlines are in January 2027.	November 2026
Catalogue submission	The first form deadline is for the catalogue content submission. This includes copy (artist statement) and an image for your catalogue page. The content used for your catalogue will also be used for your page of the Collect website.	December 2026
Operations & Logistics Q&A session	This is a chance to meet with the operations team to go through any questions that you have regarding the exhibitor forms, manual, and on-site processes.	December 2026
Pricing your work	An online workshop led by Collect Open Business Consultant Caroline Jackman, offering advice on pricing your work.	January 2027
The fair	A full schedule of preview events and exhibitor access times will be available in the Exhibitor Manual. The main installation day will be 23 February 2027.	24 - 28 February 2027

JIHYUN KIM



FAQS

HOW DO I ATTEND THE ONLINE Q&A?

We welcome you to join our online Q&A to ask any questions you may have, please RSVP here:

<https://collectfair.artsvip.com/5edb93>

I MISSED THE Q&A, CAN I WATCH IT BACK?

Yes the Q&A session is recorded, please email: collect@craftscouncil.org.uk and we will send you a link to the recording.

HOW MUCH SPACE WOULD I GET?

There is not a standard space size that is assigned to everyone. This takes into account each project being of varying scale and material. As a guide, for floor-based projects, no more than 4sqm will be allocated. For more information about space allocation please see page 17.

HOW MUCH TIME IS THERE TO INSTALL WORK AT THE FAIR?

Collect Open participants will have approximately 16 hours available across two days in which to install their work at the fair. There will be a dedicated floor manager, along with the wider team, available to assist with any queries during the install period.

I DO NOT LIVE IN THE UK, CAN I STILL APPLY?

Yes. We welcome applicants from anywhere in the world. However, please note that the Collect Open bursary is only available to UK-based applicants.

MY WORK IS COMPLEX TO INSTALL, WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

As part of your proposal, please tell us how you intend to display your work. Include your suggested fixing methods and approximate weights. The Collect operations team will speak with successful applicants to confirm their display requirements ahead of the fair.

CAN SOMEONE ASSIST ME DURING THE FAIR?

Yes. The fair is open for five days, with one day dedicated to installation ahead of opening. We recommend making sure you have support during these days.

I HAVEN'T EXHIBITED AT A FAIR BEFORE, DOES THIS MATTER?

Collect Open often includes artists who are exhibiting at a fair for the first time. Our team is here to support and advise you, to help ensure you have a successful experience.

WILL I RECEIVE FEEDBACK ON MY APPLICATION?

If you would like feedback on your application, please indicate this upon submission via the application form. Please note due to the nature of us being a small team, it can take up to 3 weeks to respond with feedback.

IN WHAT FORMAT CAN I SUBMIT MY PROPOSAL?

You are welcome to provide your proposal in either written or video format, please submit this via the application portal.

WHAT KIND OF WORK IS ELIGIBLE FOR COLLECT OPEN?

Collect Open is open to contemporary craft-based installations. Applications that consist solely of painting, drawing, graphic design, photography, fine art sculpture, animation, or film will not be considered. See page 7 for full information on eligible media.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY “PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE”

By professional practice, we mean that you are actively engaged in your craft as a career, whether you are currently earning a living from your work or are working towards doing so.

DO I NEED ANY FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS TO APPLY?

No, you do not need formal qualifications to apply. We welcome applications from makers with a range of experiences and pathways into craft.

DO I NEED TO BE REPRESENTED BY A GALLERY?

No, Collect Open is specifically designed for independent artists and collectives and it is expected that you are not also exhibiting with a gallery at the fair.

I AM NOT SURE IF MY IDEA IS DEVELOPED ENOUGH, CAN I STILL APPLY?

We encourage ambitious ideas from artists, and many previous Collect Open participants have refined their concepts throughout the process. However, as this is a highly competitive opportunity, it is important that your proposal is clearly articulated to help the panel fully envision your work and make their selection. Your initial idea does not have to be perfect, but it must outline a new body of work created especially for Collect, demonstrating how you are exploring new directions and pushing your practice forward. Successful applicants will receive guidance from our Collect Open Business Consultant to help develop their proposal further in the six months leading up to and during the fair.

HOW WILL MY APPLICATION BE ASSESSED?

All complete and eligible Collect Open proposals will be reviewed together by an expert advisory panel. All applications will be anonymised, with numbers used for applicants instead of names. The panel will be presented with slides featuring submitted proposal content, including images of previous work, your written or video statement, and your stand plan.

WHEN WILL I KNOW IF I HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL?

Applicants will be notified whether they have been successful or not by the end of July 2026 at the latest. Please note: our emails can be blocked by spam filters and be delivered to the “junk” folder of your inbox.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I AM UNSUCCESSFUL?

An unsuccessful application does not mean your work is not strong, it may simply be that other proposals were a better fit for this years selection or met the programme’s criteria better. You are welcome to apply again if you are unsuccessful, please sign up to our mailing list to receive updates about future opportunities.

HOW MUCH IS PARTICIPATING IN COLLECT OPEN LIKELY TO COST?

Collect Open could cost a participant upwards of £10,000, depending on their practice. This takes into account the time to make the new work, the materials, the display, the cost of participating (contract fee) and your expenses (travel, accommodation and subsistence).

I HAVE PREVIOUSLY PARTICIPATED IN COLLECT OPEN, CAN I STILL APPLY?

Yes, as long as you meet the eligibility criteria and have not participated in Collect Open twice, or in the last year.

BURSARY FAQS

WHAT ARE THE COLLECT OPEN BURSARIES?

The Collect Open bursaries were introduced for the 2026 edition of Collect, with 2027 marking their second year. Each bursary offers financial support worth £5,000 for three UK-based makers from global majority backgrounds, helping them to participate in Collect Open.

HOW MANY BURSARIES ARE AVAILABLE?

There are three bursaries available. Each bursary is offered to an individual artist or collective who are successful in their application to take part in Collect Open 2027.

WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM APPLICANTS WHO RECEIVE THE BURSARY?

Successful applicants are expected to use the bursary to participate in the 2027 edition of Collect and will be required to adhere to all T&Cs of their contract.

I AM BASED IN THE UK ON A VISA, CAN I STILL APPLY?

Yes, you can apply as long as you are currently living in the UK and have the legal right to remain here. You will also need a UK bank account and must be entitled to remain in the UK throughout the duration of the fair in 2027.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR THE COLLECT OPEN BURSARY?

The Collect Open bursaries are open to individuals who:

- Identify as being from a global majority background, which includes, but is not limited to: people of African or Caribbean heritage; Arabic heritage; Latin American heritage; East Asian, South Asian and Southeast Asian heritage
- Self-identify as being in financial need or come from low-income backgrounds
- Are over the age of 18
- Are based in the UK

Please note: Collect Open bursary applicants must also meet the general Collect Open programme eligibility criteria to receive the bursary (see page 7).

WHO IS INCLUDED IN THE TERM “GLOBAL MAJORITY”

Global majority is a collective term coined by Rosemary Campbell-Stephens MBE, referring to those who make up 80% of the world’s population.

By global majority, we refer to; people of African or Caribbean heritage; Arabic heritage; Latin American heritage; East Asian, South Asian and Southeast Asian heritage.

HOW DO YOU DEFINE FINANCIAL NEED OR LOW-INCOME BACKGROUND?

Our definition of financial need and low-income backgrounds is based on recommended UK government approved indicators. You must self-identify as meeting at least one of the below criteria to be eligible for the bursary:

- Your parents or carers did not attend university in the UK or abroad
- The main household earner when you were 14 worked in a technical, craft, routine, manual, or service occupation, or was long-term unemployed
- You attended a state-run or state-funded school
- You were eligible for free school meals at any point during your school years.
- You received means-tested financial support while in further or higher education
- You consider yourself to be disabled
- You consider yourself to have a learning disability or special education need
- You currently have or have ever had refugee or asylum status

CAN I APPLY FOR THE COLLECT OPEN BURSARY MORE THAN ONCE?

Yes.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR THE COLLECT OPEN BURSARY?

You will need to submit an application form to take part in Collect Open via the online portal. If you wish to apply for a Collect Open bursary as part of your application, please complete the relevant fields on the application form to confirm you would like to be considered for the bursary. You cannot apply for the bursary without applying to participate in Collect Open.

IS THERE A FEE TO APPLY?

The £60 application fee will be waived for Collect Open bursary applicants.

HOW MUCH WILL I RECEIVE FROM THE BURSARY?

Each bursary provides a package of support worth £5,000, which includes mentoring, business development support, operations, PR, and marketing assistance. A portion of the £5,000 will cover the contract fee for participating in Collect. The rest will be provided as a one-off financial allowance to help contribute to additional costs you will incur.

CAN I APPLY FOR OTHER FUNDING IN ADDITION TO THE BURSARY?

Yes, you can seek additional funding from other sources. We recognise that taking part in Collect Open is a significant investment. Many participants apply for funding to support their participation in Collect Open, see page 13 for additional funding sources.

To get in touch with a member of the
Collect team, please email:
collect@craftscouncil.org.uk