

Modern Art Oxford

Open Call 2026 FAQs

Section 1: Application & Eligibility

Who can apply?

Groups of **two or more people** (including but not limited to established duos, new collectives, organisations/institutions, or informal creative partnerships).

Where do we need to be based?

At least **one member** of your collective must live within the Arts Council England (ACE) South East region. This covers Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire & Isle of Wight, Surrey, Kent, East Sussex, and West Sussex.

Is London included?

No. London is a separate ACE region and therefore falls outside the catchment area. However, if one member of your collective is based in London but another is based in the South East, your collective is eligible to apply.

How fully formed should the proposal be at the time of application?

Your proposal should focus on how you intend to engage with our central inquiry ("*How can collective practice/s help us to embrace uncertainty and complexity?*") and general ideas for the work. We aren't expecting you to have a finished piece at the application stage. The work will be actively developed alongside our curatorial and production teams between August and December.

Can I apply as part of two separate collectives?

Yes. You may submit separate proposals with different groups. It would be useful to have a list of participants for each collective, so that we are aware of possible cross-overs.

Does the proposal have to focus on global crises, or can it be personal?

We welcome both. Global socio-political landscapes directly and indirectly impact our personal lives; we view the personal and the global as deeply interconnected frameworks that inform one another.

Modern Art Oxford

We are a brand-new collective and have no joint work. What previous work should we submit?

You can submit examples of your individual practices. In your text response, highlight which elements, aesthetics, or methodologies from each artist you plan to draw upon for this collaboration. We want to see how you plan to work together, not just existing artwork documentation.

What exactly is the selection panel looking for?

- A clear, thoughtful engagement with the core research question.
- A distinct rationale for why working as a collective is central to this specific project.
- A realistic proposal that can be achieved within the provided budget, timeline, and gallery space.

Should the artwork itself address the question, or just our process?

The final artwork must directly address the question. This inquiry is the conceptual anchor that will hold the final group exhibition together cohesively across all three commissions.

Why is this termed a 'micro-commission'?

We use "micro-commission" to emphasise that the opportunity is specifically designed for small-scale and experimental interventions within a shared group environment. It also distinguishes the way of working in the Open Call from our other commissions in our upper galleries, often bound to a larger scale and longer timeline and set of expectations.

The micro-commissions still have time, space and resources dedicated to them but don't need to be full scale pieces or fill a gallery space.

Section 2: Gallery Space & Technical Requirements

What is the exhibition space like?

The exhibition takes place in our **Ground Floor Gallery**, located immediately inside the St. Ebbe's entrance. The space was re-converted from our shop into a gallery space during our 2024 building redevelopment. The three selected collectives will share this space.

Dimensions: Approximately 8 x 5.5m, with a height of 3m (2.62m to the underside of structural beams).

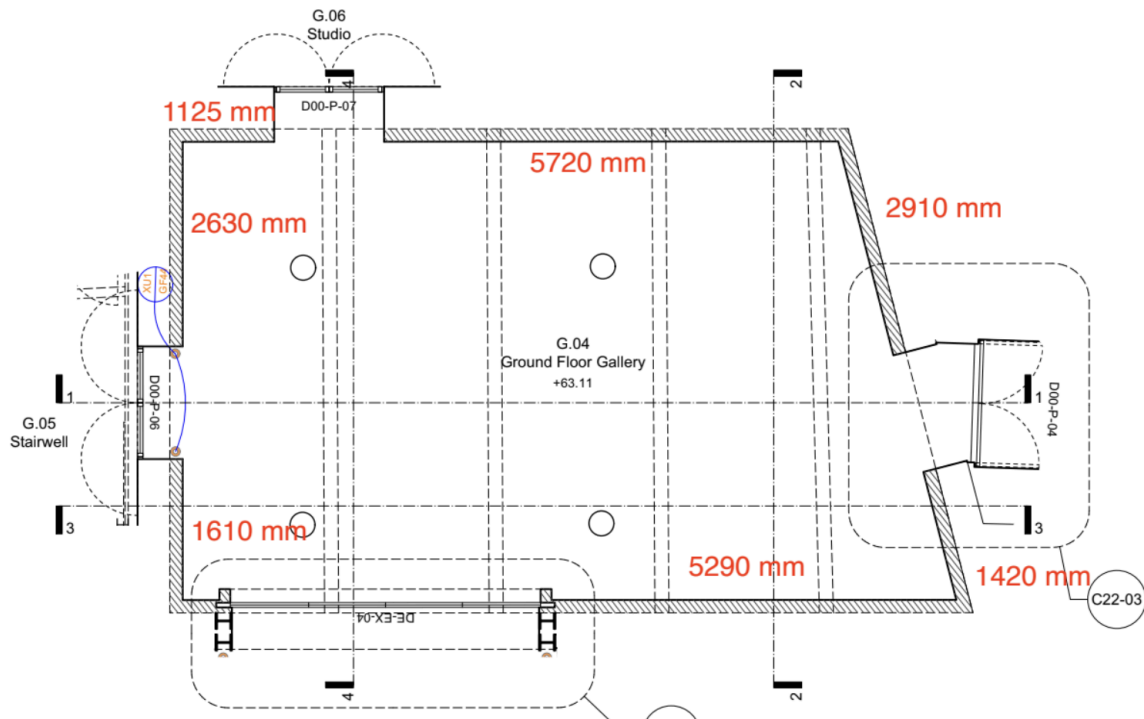
Modern Art Oxford



Image credits: *Installation view of Tender Grounds, 2024.* © Modern Art Oxford. Photo by Ben Westoby.



Modern Art Oxford



Modern Art Oxford

Will this run alongside the Mike Nelson exhibition?

Yes. The Open Call group show will occupy the Ground Floor Gallery while Mike Nelson's major solo exhibition occupies our Upper Galleries.

Can we propose interactive or participatory work?

Absolutely. We have a strong history of hosting participatory projects in this space. Our dedicated Studio space is also available for public workshops and events during the show.

Can the space be blacked out for film and moving image?

Not entirely. The Ground Floor Gallery features glass doors and significant natural light. While we cannot achieve a total blackout, we frequently present video work on high-contrast screens or project onto walls where we can dim the lights.

Please see below some photos of video work exhibited in the space.



(Image credits: Installation view of *We're Going To Need A Bigger Brush!*, 2026. © Modern Art Oxford. Photo by Phil Brooks.)

Modern Art Oxford



How might sound-based works interact with each other?

We will select three projects that can coexist in the space. If multiple selected works feature sound we will work collaboratively with you during the production phase to find solutions, for example, if two pieces are sound-based we might need to use headphones or other interventions to ensure all exhibited work can be experienced fully by our audiences.

Section 3: Format Eligibility

Are any artistic mediums or formats restricted?

We welcome all creative practices - including but not limited to visual art, text, live performance, film, poetry, sound. Live elements can also be integrated into our public programming and preview events.

Modern Art Oxford

If our project involves live performance, when does it take place?

This will be mapped out during the production phase. Live components can activate the space during the opening preview party, as pop-up interventions throughout the exhibition run, or as programmed evening events.

Should we create a series of works or a single piece, and what constitutes a "collective" output?

We view each micro-commission as a singular project, which may or may not comprise multiple components (e.g., a multi-channel video installation or a cohesive series of physical works).

We want to see true collective creation. While not every individual's hand needs to touch every element of the work, the output must demonstrate a unified, collective approach.

Section 4: Ownership, Contracts & Sales

Who owns the artwork once the exhibition concludes?

You do. The intellectual property and physical ownership of the artwork remain entirely yours. You are free to tour, exhibit, or sell the work afterward, but it must remain on loan to the gallery for the full duration of the exhibition run at Modern Art Oxford.

Can the work be offered for sale?

Modern Art Oxford is a non-commercial, public institution, so we won't sell work directly or take commissions.

Below are some useful links:

[Open Call call out](#)

[Information pack](#)

[Application form](#)