

Culture Coventry – Early Years Exhibition Installation Artist

Artist Call-Out Brief

The Opportunity

The Herbert's much-loved Early Years Exhibition returns this summer with *Beneath the Waves* — an immersive, sensory-rich experience inspired by the wonders and mysteries of ocean life.

We are seeking a creative installation artist to lead the physical installation of the exhibition play space, working with an extensive range of existing resources already available onsite. The appointed artist will have the opportunity to explore the materials in advance, visit the exhibition space, and view the underwater mural designs being created for the walls.

There is also a modest budget available for the purchase of additional materials or resources, where appropriate and agreed in discussion with the Head of Learning and Engagement.

About the Exhibition

Designed especially for children under five and their families, *Beneath the Waves* will transform the gallery into an interactive underwater environment filled with sensory discovery and imaginative play.

The exhibition will feature suspended ceiling installations, tactile play elements, interactive sensory pods, and immersive environments inspired by coral reefs, sandy shores, rolling waves, and marine life. Young visitors will be encouraged to explore freely through touch, movement, sound, and storytelling.

Illustrator and mural artist Jessica Hartshorn is creating a series of large-scale narrative wall murals featuring swirling currents, glowing jellyfish, colourful sea creatures, and other magical underwater scenes that will form the visual backdrop to the exhibition.

While tailored to early years audiences, the exhibition is intended to be welcoming and enjoyable for the whole family, including older siblings and carers.

Scope of the Commission

The selected artist will be responsible for the physical installation and dressing of the exhibition play space, including the arrangement and creative use of existing resources, furniture, props, and interpretive elements.

The exhibition space must also incorporate:

- A designated buggy park for pushchairs
- Comfortable family seating areas and a clearly identified snack area

As part of the commission, the artist will also be required to produce a full exhibition risk assessment, demonstrating strong consideration for health and safety within playful, early years-focused environments.

View last years exhibition here: [Playful Planet — Culture Space Coventry](#)

Fee

- **10 days of work**
- **£200 per day**
- **Total fee: £2,000**

The schedule for these 10 days is flexible, provided work is completed within the wider installation timeline.

Key Dates

- **Mural painting begins:** 15 May 2026
- **Exhibition technicians onsite:**
 - Week beginning 22 June 2026 and week beginning 29 June 2026
- **Lighting installation:** 3 July 2026
- **Exhibition opening:** 11 July 2026
- **Exhibition closes:** 30 August 2026

What to Submit

Please send an expression of interest of **no more than 600 words**, outlining:

- Your contact details
- Confirmation of public liability insurance (if held)
- Why you are suited to this opportunity
- Your understanding of the exhibition aims and audience needs
- Your experience of health and safety and risk management within playful or family-focused spaces

Supporting images or examples of previous immersive, playful, or installation-based work are strongly encouraged.

Deadline

Applications close: Sunday 31 May 2026

Please send proposals to:

Lisa Ford, Head of Learning and Engagement

Lisa.ford@cylife.co.uk