

## Fresh 2025 Call for Artists

Emerging artists are invited to apply for the 2025 British Ceramics Biennial Fresh exhibition, taking place in Stoke-on-Trent from 6 September to 19 October 2025.

“Exhibiting in Fresh gave me the confidence to expand my clay practice and see myself as part of a community of ceramicists in Britain. Looking back it was a real springboard for me, I met so many enthusiastic artists and was awarded a residency at Guldagergaard in Denmark which has been an amazing adventure and an opportunity to share ideas with international ceramicists.”

**Dorcas Casey**  
Fresh Talent Prize winner 2021

**Deadline for applications:** 12 noon, 4 June 2025

## Fresh 2025 Application Guidelines

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## **What is Fresh?**

The Fresh exhibition celebrates and promotes emerging talent in contemporary ceramics in the UK and Ireland. It explores the diverse ideas and trends in clay and ceramics practice. Shown as part of the 2025 British Ceramics Biennial in Stoke-on-Trent, Fresh provides a unique platform for early-career artists to inspire and challenge as part of the UK's largest contemporary ceramics event. It will bring opportunities for networking and benefits from exhibiting alongside established artists.

All eligible artists are invited to submit a proposal to present new, existing work for consideration by a professional selection panel. Applying to Fresh is free of charge. Twenty-five exhibitors will be selected by a panel of artists, curators and educators alongside a youth panel. Fresh will form an important part of the 2025 British Ceramics Biennial programme of exhibitions, projects and engagement and will be seen by thousands of visitors over the six weeks of the Biennial.

From the twenty-five selected artists, four Fresh Talent Prizes will be given to extraordinary emerging talent exhibiting in Fresh during the Biennial. The Fresh Talent Prizes include a range of unique residency opportunities that will take place through partnerships with the University of Staffordshire, Guldagergaard International Ceramics Research Center and Grymsdyke Farm.

**Deadline for applications:** 12 noon, 4 June 2025

## **What are the ambitions of Fresh?**

- To celebrate and provide profile to early-career artists from different types of clay or ceramics practice.
- To platform the variety of learning and development experiences informing contemporary practice.
- To be diverse and inclusive, reflecting the richness of ceramics practice.

## **Who is Fresh for?**

Fresh 2025 is looking for artists at a launch moment in their practice. This exhibition platforms emerging talent, representing artists from a variety of backgrounds. From self-taught artists to recent graduates and community workshop makers, Fresh celebrates artistic discovery and champions the courage of new beginnings.

## **Eligibility**

To be eligible, you must:

- Have been maintaining a sustained commitment to creative practice with clay for between 3 and 7 years.

This might include studio pottery, design, socially engaged practice, sculpting, performance, installation, object making, film or audio-based practice.

- Be living in the UK or Ireland from the point of application to November 2025.

If you meet these two criteria, you are eligible to apply for Fresh 2025.

Additional details can be found in the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) section. If you still have questions regarding eligibility, please get in touch: [apply@britishceramicsbiennial.com](mailto:apply@britishceramicsbiennial.com)

### **What do the selected artists receive?**

Each exhibitor in Fresh will receive a £300 exhibition payment and £50 towards the transportation of the work to and from the exhibition venue. Fresh exhibitors will benefit from a national PR and marketing campaign. Exhibitors in Fresh will also be considered for the Fresh Talent Prizes.

### **Fresh Talent Prizes 2025**

The Fresh Talent Prizes seek to recognise artists of significant emerging talent exhibiting in Fresh. Four early-career artists will be awarded a Fresh Talent Prize, comprising a cash award and a residency through partnerships with Guldagergaard International Ceramics Research Center in Denmark, Grymsdyke Farm in Buckinghamshire, University of Staffordshire and the BCB Studio, both of which are based in Stoke-on-Trent. Fresh Talent Prize winners are also invited to show their work at the next Biennial, taking place in autumn 2027.

### **Guldagergaard International Ceramics Research Center (ICRC)**

Guldagergaard ICRC is a ceramic research specialist centre with a focus on the artists-in-residence they host, and on helping to foster an international network among artists.

“This residency has inspired me to push the boundaries of my practice, embracing new perspectives and innovative approaches in my future work...”

**Krzysztof Strzelecki**  
Fresh Talent Prize winner 2023

The Guldagergaard ICRC prize includes:

- 4-week residency
- Award of £2,500
- Residency accommodation, studio space and an allowance for materials and firing
- Critical assessment and development opportunity via artist talk / presentation during residency

- Exhibition at Claytopia Festival at Guldagergaard
- Presentation opportunity at BCB 2027

The artist awarded this prize will need to organise and pay for their travel and transport of work. They will also be required to leave one artwork behind to be added to the Guldagergaard Collection. Artists are likely to need to provide their own materials in addition to the allowance listed above.

[Learn more about Guldagergaard International Ceramic Research Center and its facilities.](#)

### **Grymsdyke Farm**

Grymsdyke Farm is a research facility, fabrication workshop and living-working space for architects, artists, designers and those interested in materials and processes of making. Based in the village of Lacey Green in Buckinghamshire, they run workshops, seminars and residencies with the aim of exploring the essential connections between processes of design, making and place.

“Grymsdyke Farm is truly a unique place for thinking and experimenting. The workshops are crammed to the gills with the results of previous artists/designers’ experiments, outcomes, successes and failures and a real freedom of thinking permeates the place.”

**Caroline Gray**

Fresh Talent Prize Winner 2023

The Grymsdyke Farm Prize includes:

- 4-week residency
- Award of £2,500
- Residency accommodation, studio/workshop access and basic recycled materials allowance
- Presentation opportunity at BCB 2027

The artist awarded this prize will be asked to contribute up to two artworks to Grymsdyke Farm’s small-scale editioning and sales operation. The proceeds of which support future artist residencies. Artists are likely to need to provide their own materials in addition to the allowance listed above.

[Learn more about Grymsdyke Farm and its facilities.](#)

### **University of Staffordshire**

The University of Staffordshire is based in Stoke-on-Trent, a city renowned for its ceramic industry. Its facilities include state-of-the-art ceramics equipment, along with

3D scanning and extensive 3D printing facilities across different materials. Research conducted in the ceramics department is world-leading with significant impact in the international field of ceramics.

“I was so inspired and finally felt a connection to the heritage of ceramics. I began to investigate how I could bring a nod to this rich history in my work...”

**Tim Fluck**

Fresh Talent Prize Winner, 2023

The University of Staffordshire prize includes:

- 5-week residency
- Award of £2,500
- Residency accommodation and studio/workshop access
- Development opportunities via delivering artist talks, demonstrations and practice-based discussions with students
- Presentation opportunity at BCB 2027

The artist awarded this prize will be responsible for providing their own materials.

[Learn more about the University of Staffordshire and its facilities.](#)

## **British Ceramics Biennial**

The British Ceramics Biennial (BCB) Studio is a space to work with clay, based in the heart of Stoke-on-Trent at Spode Works. It is a place for people working in clay to meet others, learn and share skills. The resident artist will have a studio space to work from, access to equipment including electric kilns, wheels, slab roller, basic glaze and plaster facilities and access to a network of artists, researchers and curators.

“On location, I felt a welcomed part of the BCB Studio. Talking to the staff, members and Associate Artists as they brought work in after completing projects in the community was a highlight for me. It was inspiring to see how ceramics was being used as a starting point for positive experiences with so many diverse groups.”

**Andrea Leigh**

Fresh Talent Prize Winner, 2023

The BCB Studio prize includes:

- 4-week residency
- Award of £2,500
- Residency accommodation, studio space and opportunity to use studio reclaim when available
- Presentation opportunity at BCB 2027

The artist awarded this prize will likely need to provide their own materials in addition to the allowance listed above.

[Learn more about the BCB Studio.](#)

### **Expectations of the selected artists**

Artists are invited to apply for Fresh by filling out the application form via our website and uploading up to five supporting files of the artwork they would like to exhibit in Fresh. The work submitted must already exist and be made within the last three years. Artists are responsible for delivering and collecting their own artworks to/from the Biennial site in Stoke-on-Trent. Selected exhibitors who are based in the Republic of Ireland are expected to manage customs paperwork and charges incurred in sending or delivering the work to and from the exhibition site.

### **Fresh 2025 selection panel**

The Fresh selection panel comprises leading professionals who are advocates for emerging contemporary art and making alongside a youth panel. The selection panel reviews all applications, bringing a variety of perspectives to the decision-making process.

The Fresh 2025 selection panel will be announced soon, please stay in touch on social media for the latest updates.

The selection panel considers the following criteria:

- High quality and ambition of the submitted work
- The potential impact of selection on the development of the artists' practice and career
- Sustained commitment to practice

### **Diversity and inclusion**

We recognise that there is a lack of diversity in the ceramics sector. As an organisation we share responsibility in addressing systemic inequalities by increasing representation of diverse artists and practice in our Biennial, exhibitions and events programmes. We are undertaking our responsibility to address under-representation and remove barriers in accessing opportunities by adapting our systems, improving our communications and expanding our networks. We aim for our actions to lead to an increase in applications from artists who feel their identity and background are currently under-represented. We welcome conversations with anyone with ideas and networks that can help progress this work more quickly.

## Key dates for Fresh 2025

27 March	Application window opens
12 noon, 4 June	Deadline for submissions
July	Selection panel meet and candidates informed
4 to 8 August (by appointment)	Delivery of selected work to Biennial venue in Stoke-on-Trent
5 September	Biennial launch night
6 September	Biennial opens to the public
19 September	Awards evening when Fresh Talent Prize 2025 winners announced
19 October	Biennial closes to the public
20 to 24 October	Collection of all artwork

## Access support

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.

Any advice we give on applying is for the artists and artwork eligibility. It will have no bearing on its assessment during the selection panel.

If you have any questions about eligibility or access support, please contact [apply@britishceramicsbiennial.com](mailto:apply@britishceramicsbiennial.com).

## Recorded application guidelines

We have recorded the Fresh 2025 application guidelines, [please click here to listen](#).

## How to apply

- [Complete the Fresh 2025 application form on the BCB website](#)
- [Complete the Fresh 2025 diversity and equality monitoring form online](#)

## Deadline for submission: 12 noon, 4 June 2025

Audio or video submissions are also accepted.

## Complete the Fresh application form online

**Step 1: Provide artist interpretation text**

Artist Interpretation Text (up to 300 words) summarising your practice, pathway to pursuing an artistic career and environmental considerations that you incorporate into your practice.

This text will be used for devising Biennial interpretation materials if you are selected. You will need to submit a written artist interpretation text even if you are submitting the Fresh artist application questions in a recorded way.

**Step 2: Answer the application questions**

We have four questions in the Fresh application form that will help us learn more about you and your practice.

Application questions:

1. Tell us about your practice. (100 words max)
2. When and where did you begin your sustained creative practice with clay? (100 words max)
3. Where do you see your practice progressing in the next three years? (100 words max)
4. Why do you work with clay and what does it mean to you? (100 words max)

**Step 3: Upload up to 5 supporting files**

Please select high-quality images, video or audio of the artwork(s) you would like to exhibit in Fresh. You can submit multiple images of the same artwork or collection of artworks. The work submitted must already exist and have been made within the last 3 years. The work must be available and remain available for the entire Fresh exhibition (6 September to 19 October 2025).

Please title your files in the following format: yourname\_artworktitle\_yearmade

Accepted file types: jpg, jpeg, png, wav, mp4, Max. file size: 5 MB.

You will also need to add the material(s) used and the dimensions of the work in centimetres.

**Step 4: Complete the diversity and equality monitoring form**

The information collected through this form will be used to provide a demographic profile of artists working with BCB, allowing us to understand and address under-representation and remove barriers in accessing opportunities. We aim to increase applications from artists who feel their identity and background are currently under-represented.



### **Audio or video submissions**

You can submit your application as a five-minute audio or video file. If you are submitting an audio or video recording of your Fresh application, you will need to clearly separate each of the four questions:

1. Tell us about your practice. (100 words max)
2. When and where did you begin your sustained creative practice with clay? (100 words max)
3. Where do you see your practice progressing in the next three years? (100 words max)
4. Why do you work with clay and what does it mean to you? (100 words max)

You can do this by speaking aloud or through post-video editing. Please include the application questions in the recording as a guide. Ensure the recording of your video is clear and is not heavily produced. There will be no assessment of the production quality of audio or video recordings.

In the application section of the application form 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)

If you require further assistance, a BCB team member can assist you with the Fresh application. We will prompt you with each of the application questions and record your responses on Teams or Zoom.

Please email [apply@britishceramicsbiennial.com](mailto:apply@britishceramicsbiennial.com) if this method is of interest. The BCB team will only ask questions as they are written in the application form, we will not be offering further advice or asking for clarification from you. Using this method for your application will have no bearing on its assessment during the selection process. We can only schedule meetings of this nature up to 28 May 2025.

You still need to fill out the application form via our website so that we have the applicant details, artist interpretation text and the diversity and equality monitoring form. The artist interpretation text will be used for devising Biennial interpretation materials if you are selected. You will need to submit a written artist interpretation text even if you are submitting the Fresh artist application questions in a recorded way.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. Who is eligible?

To be eligible for Fresh, you must have had a sustained commitment to creative practice with clay for between 3 and 7 years. You must also be living in the UK or Ireland from the point of application to November 2025.

Eligible applicants include:

- Applicants who are self-taught, have studied through community workshops or a different learning route
- Applicants who have undertaken an apprenticeship
- Applicants who are undertaking courses from UK or Ireland-based Higher Education or Further Education Institutes

### 2. What is a sustained commitment to creative practice? And how do I demonstrate this?

Having a sustained commitment to creative practice is to have an ongoing dedication to developing your work over a period of time. For example, you might have been studying or training and are now continuing independently. Or, you might have worked with a collective or studio and wish to profile your activities through the exhibition.

### 3. How do you define an early-career artist?

We define an early career artist as someone who has been practising between 3 and 7 years, including time in education or learning.

### 4. What if I took a break in my practice? Am I still eligible?

If you had to put your practice on hold due to a health event or personal commitments like starting a family or caring responsibilities, you will still be eligible if the total time you have had a committed creative practice adds up to between 3 and 7 years.

### 5. How do you define quality and ambition?

We define quality as the realisation and delivery of artistic intention in physical form and/or emotional and intellectual impact. We define ambition as the effort or ability by which artistic intentions are developed, planned and communicated. This information on ambition and quality from Arts Council England might also be useful ([Essential read: Ambition & quality | Arts Council England](#))

### 6. Can the artworks be made with materials other than clay?

Yes, providing the primary medium is clay.

**7. Can I propose new work?**

No — only existing work up to 3 years old is eligible for Fresh.

**8. How many artworks can I submit?**

You can only submit five images in your application, and these images should reflect the work, or collection of work you would like to exhibit. This can look like:

- five separate images of five separate pieces
- five images of one artwork
- five images of a collection of artwork
- two or three pieces of work with detail images

The work you submit should be what you consider to be your best work. Submitting one high-quality artwork is sometimes better than submitting five good quality artworks.

**9. Is there a size restriction?**

Restrictions can vary depending on the venue and other installations, so please provide dimensions of all work submitted in the application form.

**10. What media are eligible for entry?**

All media are eligible providing the primary medium is clay.

**11. Can I apply if I have been selected for previous Fresh exhibitions?**

Yes, provided you are still within the eligibility criteria.

**12. I am having a problem accessing/sending my application. What do I do?**

Please contact us via email: [apply@britishceramicsbiennial.com](mailto:apply@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.