

Open Call Find Fitzrovia



Whitfield Gardens, The Fitzrovia Partnership

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The Commission

London Festival of Architecture (LFA), powered by NLA – London’s built environment community, is partnering with The Fitzrovia Partnership for the third year of a four-year initiative. We are inviting emerging architects, designers and artists to create a playful trail of visual markers that make it easier and more enjoyable to navigate to Charlotte Street and other more hidden destinations within in the area.

This year’s commission forms part of the four-year initiative, testing temporary interventions across The Fitzrovia Partnership’s footprint. The aim is to explore how the neighbourhood can be shaped for the future to better serve both people and the planet.

This competition has two rounds. Up to six teams will be shortlisted for round 2 of the competition, each receiving an honorarium of £1,000 + VAT to develop their design proposals. The winning team confirmed in March 2026, will be awarded

£36,000 + VAT to develop and deliver a fully costed, feasible design, to be installed for the Festival in June 2026 and remain in place for up to three months.

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Context



Neighbourhood of Fitzrovia, The Fitzrovia Partnership

Fitzrovia is a neighbourhood situated between Marylebone, Bloomsbury and Soho, extending from Euston Road in the north, to Oxford Street in the south, and Tottenham Court Road in the east to Great Portland Street in the west. It is in both the London Borough of Camden and Westminster City Council.

The Fitzrovia Partnership aims to enhance the district's key gateways to increase footfall and deepen public appreciation of Fitzrovia's distinctive heritage. To support this ambition, we are seeking the creation of a series of markers that act both as wayfinding landmarks and as engaging information points. These installations will guide visitors through the area while sharing concise historical insights that showcase the character and evolution of Fitzrovia.

The markers are intended to serve as welcoming landmarks that encourage movement into and around the neighbourhood, inviting people to explore its streets, cultural assets and independent businesses. They should be designed with a strong sense of place and reflect the creativity and architectural diversity for which Fitzrovia is recognised. While the functional purpose of wayfinding is essential, we encourage designers to bring imagination and innovation to the project, producing structures that are visually distinctive, informative and robust.

In addition to their immediate purpose, we hope to utilise these temporary installations as part of a wider programme of public realm improvements that The Fitzrovia Partnership is currently developing. By demonstrating how thoughtful design interventions can enrich the visitor experience and strengthen the identity of the area, we aim to illustrate to Camden Council, Westminster City Council and the Greater London Authority the untapped potential that exists within Fitzrovia.

Through this project, we seek to build momentum for longer term investment that benefits those who live, work and visit the district.

LFA2026

Building on the success of the 2024 temporary installation, which improved the pedestrian area outside Warren Street Station, and 2025's public seating project, *Fitz&Sits* (read more in section 17) we are now seeking proposals that will enhance navigation from Oxford Street into Fitzrovia.

The London Festival of Architecture returns in June 2026, with a month-long series of events, installations and other activities. Through the LFA2025 theme of ***Belonging***, we encourage applicants to respond to the brief by exploring how their proposals can act as a platform for hope and connection.

We live in a time of stark contrasts – of people, places and ways of thinking. And within this it is all too easy to fall into traps of anger, pessimism or passiveness. None of which lead to healthy, thriving, and safe cities. LFA2026 aims to be a platform for hope and belonging, a space to reimagine connection, and a vehicle for change in our city.

We want LFA2026 to be more than a moment. We hope it will plant seeds that grow long after June has come to a close – whether that be skills, ideas, and connections. We hope organisers can begin to rewild grey parts of the city, reclaim neglected streets, and show what happens when lived experience and professional expertise work together to create spaces in which people can belong. We hope organisers and attendees will ask hard questions, collectively take responsibility and, and celebrate the small, everyday acts of care and creativity through which a city becomes a place of belonging for all.

How can your design become a vehicle for change, promoting a healthy, thriving, and safe Fitzrovia? We are particularly interested in seeing proposals that celebrate small, everyday moments, contributing to making the city a place of belonging for all.

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The Sites



The Fitzrovia Partnership BID Area with identified sites

A variety of potential locations across the Fitzrovia footprint have been identified for this project. These are predominantly key approach routes that would benefit from activation, with significant potential to enhance wayfinding.

These include the entrances from Warren Street, the Tottenham Court Road corridor, including Whitfield Gardens or Percy Street, and the junction of Oxford Street and Newman Street. Subject to resources, an additional installation may be located near Great Portland Street station.

The ambition is to create a cohesive trail of wayfinding markers across the neighbourhood, with a particular focus on improving navigation towards Charlotte Street.

These sites are intended as guidance rather than fixed locations, and we welcome proposals that suggest alternative placements supported by a clear design rationale.

Site One – Warren Street



Site Two – Whitfield Gardens / Tottenham Court Road



Site Three – Oxford Street / Newman Street



Site Four – Great Portland Street station



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Design Requirements

The applicant should take a holistic design approach, creating a trail of creative, physical, on-street interventions that enhance the visibility of Fitzrovia from both Oxford Street and Tottenham Court Road. We will allow for creative discretion on final locations if they activate from these major gateways. The main focus is on sites one, two and three, and if budget allows then extend to site four.

All design elements should be highly visible and read as a cohesive family of objects, forming a recognisable trail. We are seeking pieces that function as wayfinding tools (not purely sculptural works) and that are realistic in scale and purpose, avoiding pavilion or folly-like designs. Each element must be safe, robust, durable, and provide a low-maintenance design solution.

Designs should embrace circular economy principles, with careful consideration of materials, whole-life sustainability, and end-of-life reuse or recycling. Incorporating greening elements is encouraged, provided that maintenance requirements are kept to a minimum.

Overall, the key objectives of the project are to deliver a series of wayfinding interventions that:

- Improve accessibility and connection to Fitzrovia,
- Are unique, bold and visually striking,
- Celebrate and respect the character and history of Fitzrovia, ensuring designs complement and enhance the existing environment,
- Create a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere that brings visitors and the local community together, showcasing Fitzrovia's distinctive identity,
- Interpret the LFA 2026 theme of *Belonging* in a creative and innovative way

Further guidance:

- Designs should consider material and design quality
- Any winning design will be robust enough to withstand all weather conditions
- Interventions must be safe for public use (deter anti-social behaviour and not encourage sleeping, skateboarding or acting as a bike stand)
- Designs should not obstruct pedestrian flow or act as barriers to views across the road
- Interventions should not block fire hydrants, fire exits, utility covers, street signage, or any other emergency access
- Designs should require minimal maintenance, be easily kept clean, litter-free and in good condition.
- Non-movable elements rather than movable elements are encouraged
- Built elements must be secure and unable to be moved by the public. They should be self-standing with no fixtures to the ground and weighted sufficiently
- Winning teams will need to prepare the necessary documentation for permission from local authorities
- Risk Assessment and Method Statement (RAMS) will be required for installation
- Although the intervention is designed to be temporary, designers are encouraged to plan for its afterlife — through re-homing, reuse, CSR initiatives, or recycling.
- At the point of the project install, the intervention will become the property of The Fitzrovia Partnership

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Budget

The total budget available for this project is £36,000 + VAT. This needs to include all fees, fabrication, installation, deinstallation, other capital costs and contingency. Minimum contingency within the budget should be 10%, although we recommend allocating 15% contingency in your stage 2 submission, if shortlisted. The budget outlined includes a 12.5% design fee for the appointed team to cover on-going design fees and other costs required to deliver the concept. If your practice is not VAT registered, you will need to consider this when preparing your budget.

The winning team will be expected to undertake the following tasks:

- Provide a feasible and in-budget design intervention that is robust enough to be in the public realm for its duration
- Consult with key stakeholders, including The Fitzrovia Partnership, the London Boroughs of Camden and Westminster, local residents and businesses, and community and cultural organisations
- Project management and delivery of the winning design

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Submissions requirements

This competition has two stages.

This first stage submission should be single PDF submission of no more than 10-pages and maximum 5MB and include the information below. Alternatively, you can submit your application in another format (e.g. video) but the content should not exceed the equivalent of a '10-page limit'.

Your submission should include the following:

Your experience:

- Brief biographies of all the project team.
- A 200-word description about your practice along with any relevant technical and consultation experience acquired through previous projects.
- A selection of relevant previous work, including images.

Your response to the brief. Please provide reflections on the following prompts:

- The overall design brief - why you are interested in being involved in the project and what are your initial reactions to the brief?
- Your initial vision for the project
- Your approach to the LFA2026 theme of *Belonging*

You can submit your response to these prompts in any format. For guidance, this should be (equivalent to) a short paragraph of max. 300 words per prompt or 90 second video per prompt.

No design work is required for the first stage.

Shortlisting

Submissions will be shortlisted by the judging panel. Up to six shortlisted practices will then be invited to develop a design concept based on the information laid out in this open call and will be awarded an honorarium of £1,000 + VAT each. The work required for the second phase of the project will be reflective of the honorarium sum.

At shortlisting, the second stage submission should include:

- Maximum 10-page PDF explaining your proposal to be shared with the jury for review, prior to interview. Your submission should (but is not limited to) include:
 - Detailed design drawings (we accept a variety of formats including hand or computer drawn 3D design visualisation)
 - Key construction details drawn to scale, with key dimensions noted
 - An outline of all materials, budget*, delivery and fabrication process
- PowerPoint presentation for the purposes of judging.

*If your practice is not VAT registered, you will need to consider this when preparing your budget.

Submission information

For any questions about the competition or submission process, please email: info@londonfestivalofarchitecture.org

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Eligibility

The competition is open to emerging architects, landscape architects, designers and artists. We welcome collaborations; however, the project must be actively led by a named emerging architect, designer or creative.

Applicants need to fulfil at least two of the following criteria to be eligible for this competition:

- being no more than ten years post-graduation from your most recent degree or professional qualification
- be under 40 years of age
- have set up your practice or collaboration within the past three years
- be part of a practice in which the majority of members of your team for this competition meet the first two criteria

The judges strongly encourage submissions from, or collaborations with groups who are underrepresented in architecture.

The judges are particularly interested in seeing applications from local organisations or those working in partnership with groups based within the Fitzrovia area.

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Deadline and submission details

- Deadline for first submission is Midday, Tuesday 13th January. Submissions received after time this will not be considered.
- To send your expression of interest in a PDF format go [here](#).
- The PDF should be no more than 5MB and 10 pages (both portrait or landscape are acceptable)
- You will receive an email confirming the receipt of your submission.

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Schedule outline

Submissions open: Tuesday 9th December

Submissions closed: 12:00, Tuesday 13th January

Successful shortlisted teams notified: w/c 19th January

Site visit with shortlisted teams: 10:00-12:00, Tuesday 27th January

LFA2026 in Fitzrovia Briefing: Afternoon, Tuesday 27th January

Round 2 submission deadline: 12:00, Tuesday 24th February

Final judging / interviews: w/c 2nd March

Winner notified: w/c 9th March

Design & Build: March – May

Project Install: 30th – 31st May

London Festival of Architecture: 1st – 30th June

Project Deinstall: 28th August

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Judging panel

Andrew Munk, CEO, The Fitzrovia Partnership

Antonia Alexandru, Senior Urban Designer, Camden Council

Farouk Agoro, co-founder, bafalw

Jennifer Mills-Knutsen, Reverend, American International Church

Rosa Rogina, Associate Director of Partnerships, NLA and Director, London Festival of Architecture (Chair)

With a number of other experts and local representatives still to be announced.

Judging criteria

Round 1

At round one expressions of interests will be given two scores:

- **Practice/team profile (60%)**

Does the team have skilled professionals for delivering the proposal in line with eligibility outlined in the Open Call? Does the team have a diverse set of skills and experience? Are the previous work experiences and/or their work methodologies and wider design aspirations relevant to the competition? Does the team proposed align with the eligibility criteria stated in the brief?

- **Initial vision/response to the brief (40%)**

Does the proposal's initial written reflection to the brief suggest innovation, surprise and creativity? Does it explore a new and original way to use and engage with the area? Is the team thinking beyond possible barriers or restrictions, and pondering how they might be broken down? Is the vision something which could be developed into an appropriate and achievable scheme for the area, in line with the brief?

Round 2

At round two design proposals, budgets and supporting documentation will be assessed on five criteria.

- Overall Design (30%)
- Costs and Feasibility (25%)
- Safety and Equity (15%)
- Sustainability and Longevity (15%)
- Contextual Design and Public Engagement (15%)

Our evaluation criteria are alignment with [New London Agenda](#) – NLA's framework for best practice in city-making. The jury will be assessing submissions on the criteria above as well as the six pillars of placemaking set out in the agenda.

Access

Accessibility, diversity and inclusion are core values of the NLA at all levels of our organisation, and we are committed to delivering projects that are representative of the whole city and can be enjoyed by everyone. At the same time, we recognise that there are still significant barriers for groups in our society to be able to enjoy and participate in festival activity.

We will support with any resources and adjustments for anyone who needs it, to make applying for this role easier e.g. alternative document formats, interpreters, hybrid

meetings. In the application form you will be asked how we can support you throughout the process; this will not influence your application.

www.londonfestivalofarchitecture.org/access/

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Further information

- Submissions will be judged on originality, demonstration of creativity, relevance to the brief as well as feasibility and how the proposal works in the context of the site.
- To process entries to this competition we will share your application, and any associated personal data provided on the application with our jury and competition partners.
- All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application, but due to the volume of submissions we may not be able to provide feedback to entrants individually.
- Applicants may not be assisted in any way in their submission by members of the judging panel, the client body, organisers, members of their family, close business associates or employees.
- The ownership of Copyright of the design will be in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, that is Copyright rests with the author of the submitted design.
- All designs remain the intellectual property of the designer however the winning design will itself when built will be the property The Fitzrovia Partnership.
- Please bear in mind the project requires a fast turn around and may have peak moments when your practice will need to dedicate sufficient staff to deliver the project on time, to budget and to the high standard expected by all stakeholders.
- If your practice/collaboration is appointed to deliver the project it will need to have the following insurance: Employers Liability, Professional Indemnity, Public Liability.
- Significant efforts are made by all stakeholders of the project to ensure wide media coverage.
- NLA reserve the right to use images from the submissions for promotional purposes in press, social media and publications. All endeavours will be made to ensure accurate accreditation.

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Useful links

[London Festival of Architecture](#)

[The Fitzrovia Partnership](#)

[We Make Camden](#) (Camden Council's overall Vision)

[Our Strategy for a Fairer Westminster](#) (Westminster City Council)

[Camden's Strategy for Diversity in the Public Realm 2023 to 2028](#)

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Contact

Follow this [link](#) to submit your entry. The link will take you to an external platform [zealous.co](#)

For general enquires please contact: info@londonfestivalofarchitecture.org

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Disclaimer

The competition organisers are not liable for lost, misdirected, or late entries. Decisions of the jury represent their professional judgments and all decisions are final. While it is the intent to construct the winning scheme, the organisers reserve the right to not proceed with construction for any reason. Material submitted by you shall be your sole responsibility, shall not infringe or violate the rights of any other party or violate any laws, contribute to or encourage infringing or otherwise unlawful conduct, or otherwise be obscene, objectionable, or in poor taste. By submitting such material, you are representing that you are the owner of such material and/or have all necessary rights, licenses, and authorization to distribute it.

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References

This year will be the third of four years in which The Fitzrovia Partnership and LFA collaborate to make the Fitzrovia area a key neighbourhood for the London Festival of Architecture.

Fitz&Sits 2025

Fitz&Sits was introduced to the area as part of 2025's London Festival of Architecture in response to the theme of Voices, creating new and inclusive places to meet to encourage conversation and story-telling.

This series of nine creative seats across the area, formed part of a trail around Fitzrovia and encouraged the local community to pause, connect and enjoy their surroundings. A local business sponsored each seat, in place throughout the festival and throughout the summer months.



Fitz&Sits Winners with their benches © Luke O'Donovan

Rabbit Warren Street 2024

Rabbit Warren Street was the first in a series of wayfinding projects in Fitzrovia, brought about in collaboration between the LFA and The Fitzrovia Partnership. The installation acted as a focal point for around 30 diverse events which took place in Fitzrovia across the month of June 2024, including walking tours, workshops, family events and panel discussions.



Rabbit Warren Street from above © Luke O'Donovan

Commissioning organisations



The London Festival of Architecture (LFA) is a month-long celebration of architecture and city-making, taking place every June across London. Our mission is to act as a vehicle for change by making discussions around architecture more accessible, testing new ideas, and promoting emerging talent, all with the aim of creating a greener, healthier, and more equitable city. For everyone interested in shaping the future of London, the Festival unites industry professionals, students, and Londoners to collaboratively engage with and create positive change in our city's unique neighbourhoods. LFA is run by NLA, London's built environment community – a cross-sector membership organisation for everyone committed to shaping a better city.

www.londonfestivalofarchitecture.org

Twitter: @LFArchitecture

Instagram: @LondonFestivalofArchitectureOfficial



About The Fitzrovia Partnership

The Fitzrovia Partnership represents two Business Improvement Districts with more than 250 businesses in Fitzrovia Camden and over 170 businesses in Fitzrovia Westminster. Its role is to bring together local businesses to provide added-value solutions and make a tangible difference to the area that benefits all stakeholders. Sustainability is at the heart of the organisation. This means leading campaigns on behalf of member businesses to reduce the environmental impacts of conducting business whilst improving economic and social sustainability.

For 2026, Fitzrovia will be a key neighbourhood for the third time during the LFA month-long festival and The Fitzrovia Partnership will host its third design competition to look at sustainable ways of providing solutions to public realm challenges.

www.fitzroviapartnership.com