

STOCKROOM

SUBTEXT - EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Inspired by the National Year of Reading, this exhibition invites artists to explore the unseen, unspoken and unexpected stories that lie beneath and between written words. Texts - whether novels, diaries, scripts, zines, translations or banned books - often reveal more about the era, culture and people who created them than the stories themselves. Subtext asks artists to delve into these layered narratives. We invite bold and interesting proposals for wall and screen-based artwork.

Theme Focus

Artists may wish to respond to (but are not limited to) the following ideas:

- Pen names and the lives they protect or obscure
- Banned stories and censorship as a mirror of society
- Challenging norms in literature, authorship and readership
- Hidden stories in archives, subcultures and private writings
- Dream / tarot meaning and symbolic interpretation
- Translation and what is lost, altered or invented
- How people read—rituals, habits, marginalia
- Reading people—who gets to be 'legible'
- Script writing and narrative construction
- Independently published work and grassroots storytelling
- Women's work and historically overlooked voices
- Climate narratives, eco-writing and environmental storytelling
- Inspirations such as Mary Shelley, Christopher Isherwood, and artists/writers who reveal cultural truths behind their narratives

Artists are encouraged to connect the brief to their recent or ongoing work.



Exhibition Space

Exhibition Wall:

The exhibition will predominantly take place on the 16m exhibition wall. The wall is divided into three main sections:

- Approximately 10 metres from the left edge to the TV.
- The TV – which covers a 2.37 metre section of the wall.
- And 3.8 metres from the tv to the right edge.

Digital Mosaic Wall:

The digital mosaic wall on the ground floor is in a high traffic area, facing the cafe. It is comprised of 3 landscape screens, 1 portrait screen, and 1 interactive screen. Each screen can be controlled individually, including interactivity between touch inputs on the interactive screen, to control content on the other four screens. These screens do not have audio output.



Commission Details

- Fee: £3,000 fixed fee.
- Install: Week commencing 1 October 2026
- Exhibition run: Until Spring 2027
- Location: Exhibition wall downstairs in Stockroom
- Format: Digital and lens-based work (film, photography, digital installation, projection, interactive media)
- Artwork should be co-produced with the people of Stockport

What Selected Artist(s) Will Provide

- Final artwork for installation
- Artist bio, portrait image and blog post for website and socials
- Three public facing co-production sessions at Stockroom
- Contribution to evaluation of the exhibition



What Stockroom Will Provide

- £3000 artist fee
- Exhibition and curation support from Stockroom team
- Up to £500 support for production cost
- Space and time in Stockroom to co-produce work with the people of Stockport
- Exhibition promotion and feature on Stockroom website/social media

Expressions of Interest

We welcome expressions of interest from artists at any stage, particularly those with lived experience or research relating to hidden histories, reading cultures, or digital storytelling.

To apply, please complete our form: [SUBTEXT - Expression of Interest – Fill in form](#)

- 150 words on why you are interested in the exhibition
- A link to your website or portfolio
- Brief note on how your proposal connects to the themes
- Deadline: 6th May, short turnaround — submissions encouraged ASAP.

Selection Process

- A shortlist of four artists will each receive a £200 development fee to refine their idea.
- One artist will then be commissioned to deliver the final exhibition.
- We will endeavour to contact all applicants with the outcome of the expression of interest by mid-May. Due to volume of applicants, we will not be able to provide individual feedback for expressions of interest.

Please complete the form to submit your expression of interest:

<https://forms.office.com/e/Pc2MUHGZZi>

DEADLINE FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST: 6TH MAY 2026, 23:59PM

