Angel Zinovieff's Material Archive: UKG Cosmology, 2024
Image: Jemima Yong

SIOBHAN DAVIES STUDIOS

COURTYARD FURNITURE COMMISSION FOR OUR DANCE AND ART STUDIOS

APPLICATION PACK FOR DESIGNERS AND MAKERS

SIOBHAN DAVIES STUDIOS

WELCOME TO SIOBHAN DAVIES STUDIOS

We believe in the power of dance for artistic and social change.

We connect artists, neighbours and audiences through investigative, collaborative and inclusive activities at our studios in South London and beyond.

If you would like this Application Pack in another format please email luciaf@siobhandavies.com

ABOUT SDS

Siobhan Davies Studios has been part of the contemporary dance landscape since the 1980s. We are proud to be artist and female led.

Our RIBA award-winning public arts building is located in the diverse and densely populated area of Elephant and Castle. We share our space with Independent Dance, who are our consortium partners in Arts Council England's National Portfolio.

At our studios, we run activities that welcome people to be together in ways that prioritise sharing and collaboration. We host social gatherings, spaces to co-work and create classes for all abilities, performances, talks and free exhibitions.

Since leadership changes in 2021, our programme has been shaped by, and centres, people who have experienced marginalisation, displacement, exclusion and violence. We continue to address omnipresent oppressive structures and narratives, actioning anti-white supremacist ideologies to change internal working structures and question the relevance of our public activities.

We believe that taking time and space to dance and move is inherently political and offers tools to exist in the world. It encourages human contact, connection, self-expression and the negotiation and sharing of space.

We are committed to our social responsibility as a public charity and arts organisation. We know we are imperfect. We value being adaptable and we question how we work on a daily basis.

SIOBHAN DAVIES STUDIOS

THE COMMISSION

We're seeking a designer/maker to create bespoke garden furniture for our Courtyard Garden. Installed in Spring 2026, the commission will mark the 20th anniversary of our studios and launch the Courtyard Garden as a playful and welcoming space for all our building users.

We want to create furniture that supports the multiple functions of our courtyard and embraces curiosity, connection and welcome in its design. We imagine modular, moveable pieces that can be easily assembled in different and inviting ways. This adaptable furniture may also offer pockets of privacy to those seeking a moment of calm or for intimate events.

Proposals should take into account SDS's three principles: people, place and legacy, as well as our belief in the power of dance for social chance. We suggest that you take a look at our programme to get a sense of what we do. Inspiration can also be taken from our RIBA award-winning building. You can view a tour of here, you are also welcome to drop by and take a look around.

Responsibility for our long-term impact is key and we strongly encourage the use of recycled and/or local materials.

The total budget - inclusive of all fees, labour and materials - is £9,000. The budget will be managed in conversation with Siobhan Davies Studios.

Primary funding for this commission has been awarded by Southwark Council as part of the Cleaner Greener Safer programme, designed to support groups and organisations to permanently improve the local area.

Autumn Moon Festival, 2024
Image: Sophie Brassard

The Courtyard

Greeting you as you step off St George's Road, the Courtyard is the first space that visitors see on arrival at SDS. It's a small but well-loved space that is used in multiple ways; it is a hangout during lunch breaks throughout the week; a play space for children attending our weekend classes; a gathering space for hirers, such as for wedding; and a performance space used by dance artists.

From Spring/Summer 2026 the Courtyard will host a regular community gardening group and outdoor events that focus on understanding the natural world and our movement in it.

The Courtyard measures 14.20m x 8m.

Images: Wedding, Anneli-Marinovich / NEXT 2025, Jemima Yong / Angela Andrew's Live Archive: mearchivingme, 2024, Zbigniew Tomasz Kotkiewicz

Design Requirements

The furniture design must:

- reflect the values of SDS.
- be usable by people of different ages and physical abilities.
- be easy to clean and maintain, and be durable.
- be safe and secure.
- consider the courtyard conditions, such as slopes and weather.
- adhere to Southwark Council's policies.
- adhere to SDS's policies and procedures.

We encourage designs that:

- use recycled and/or locally sourced materials
- are modular and suitable for different uses and users.

HOW TO APPLY

Making an application

To make a proposal, we ask that applicants prepare a PDF, of up to 4 pages, that includes:

- 200-word biographies of the project team.
- 300 words about your practice and relevant experience.
- 300 words on your design proposal and how it meets the brief.
- Visualisations/designs, to scale with key dimensions.
- A proposed timeline of design, construction and installation.
- A proposed budget, including designer/maker fees, materials, and production.
- Suggestions for maintenance.

Proposals can be submitted at **siobhandavies.com/courtyard-commission**

You will receive an automatic email confirming your submission. If you don't receive this please check your spam.

If you have any questions please email contact@siobhandavies.com.

Who can apply?

This commission is open to students, emerging architects, established architects, and designers.

Makers from other disciplines (theatre, set designers, installation artists, and sculpturers) are also encouraged to apply, with the understanding that the furniture must meet the demands of the brief.

We welcome applications from local organisations, collaborators and collectives.

Review process

The applications will be reviewed and shortlisted by SDS staff. They will then deliver a shortlist to the newly formed Community Board for their feedback.

Further feedback may be requested from the Board of Trustees, SDS Operations team and the building's architect Sarah Wigglesworth.

Application timeline

2 Oct	Submissions open
24 Nov	Submissions close at noon
w/c 8 Dec	Possible follow up conversations
w/c 15 Dec	All applicants notified
21 June	Summer Celebrations in the courtyard (provisional)

SIOBHAN
DAVIES
STUDIOS

DISCLAIMER

Decisions of the Community Board, Board of Trustees and SDS staff represent their professional judgments and all decisions are final.

SDS reserves 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 a proposal, it is understood that you are the owner of such material and/ or have all necessary rights, licenses, and authorisation to distribute it.

DATA PROTECTION

Any data about you will be held securely with access restricted to those involved in dealing with your application in the recruitment process.

Should any opportunities arise in the future for which we think you may be suitable, we may send you application details. In addition, we may contact you in the future for feedback on our recruitment procedures.

LANGUAGE Performance, 2022
Image: Sika Tro