

The Imagination Garden Experience for Babies

Artist call-out



The Egg has recently received ACE National Lottery funding to deliver a year-long arts programme based on the novel, *The Secret Garden*. *The Secret Garden* is a story of transformation — of spaces, of people, and of how we care for one another and nature.

The **Secret Gardens** programme is made up of the following strands of work:

- A bold new disability-led theatre production, reimagining *The Secret Garden* for today's family audiences
- ***I Take My Imagination Everywhere***: a project with hospital in-patients aged 6+
- ***The Imagination Garden Experience for Babies***: a touring pop-up sensory pod for little ones and their adults
- School residencies for primary and secondary students
- ***The Feelgood Factor***: an interactive, creative technology tool for engaging children and young people in critical reflection
- ***Young Associate Artists***: Young artists aged between 9 and 12 years old will work alongside each of our lead artists across the programme.

What we're looking for

We're looking for freelance artists or artist collectives to join our highly creative, ambitious and deep-thinking Secret Gardens team to design and deliver exciting engagement projects across the south west. Given the focus of the Secret Gardens programme, it's important to us that the artists we work with have professional or personal lived experience of disability and an excellent working knowledge of inclusive and adaptive practice.

At The Egg, we are committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive workforce and we strive for equity in our recruitment and employment practices. To inspire and engage more people from diverse backgrounds, we need to actively work to address the barriers they face.

To do this, we aim to diversify our workforce by 20% by 2026. We therefore actively encourage applicants from the global majority, low socioeconomic backgrounds and those living with a disability to apply. Specifically, the successful candidate for this role will have experience of disability-led work or work with disabled participants or audiences. We are happy to make reasonable adjustments to help applicants feel more confident throughout the recruitment process. Please don't hesitate to let us know how we can help.

The Imagination Garden Experience for Babies

“When we provide an environment with both familiarity and novelty, where a child’s curiosity can be facilitated, we enter a golden zone of cognitive development.”

Dr Kitty Morley

We’re looking for an artist or artist collective to create an awe-inspiring, sensory, immersive installation for pre-walking babies and their adults, as part of the **Secret Gardens** programme.

The **Imagination Garden Experience for Babies** will be installed in the foyer of The Egg theatre, as well as touring in community venues across the South West and beyond.

We anticipate that the designed environment will be built into a tent, which can pop up in a variety of settings and engage babies as much or as little as they choose.

To create the experience, you might use sound, music, verbal provocations, sensory materials, crafts, as well as your own good ideas. There will be no performative element to this installation - babies and their adults are the protagonists - but the experience will be curated sensitively by a member of The Egg’s front of house staff.

Through this element of the programme, we aim to explore whether an immersive event can convey a narrative experience for a baby, whether indoor art can play a part in igniting young children’s relationship to the outdoors, and how we can bring creativity and nature together to enhance wellbeing - among other questions.

You will be supported by the Secret Gardens Project Producer, who will oversee all elements of this ambitious programme of work, the Head of Engagement, who will support with working with Young Associate Artists and the Production Manager, who will support with sourcing materials, volunteers where appropriate and working in accordance with The Theatre Green Book. An access consultant will also support us with all aspects of the programme.

To launch the programme, we will be bringing together the Secret Gardens team at The Egg Theatre, Bath, for a 2-day (non-residential) Artists Retreat, which will be an opportunity for you to connect, develop ideas and undertake essential training together.

Attendance at the Artists Retreat is key to the success of the programme, and is non-negotiable.

We can help you with travel and accommodation costs if you need us to, and this will be discussed at interview stage.

Key Dates

Application deadline: Monday 20th October at 9am

Interviews: Wednesday 22nd or Thursday 23rd October (online or in person)

Artists Retreat: Saturday 8th and Sunday 9th November (all day), The Egg

Design, development and testing: November - December TBD

Pilot tour: February - March 2026 TBD

Residency at The Egg Theatre: June 2026 TBD

Budget

We currently have a maximum budget of **£11,500** (including VAT) available for this project, which includes a commission fee, artist fees, materials and hires. There is a separate budget for delivery costs associated with the tour, and for any access costs.

Application process

Please respond to the brief above, including the following information:

- An introduction to you as an artist, your practice and examples of some relevant projects you've taken the lead on.
- Your proposed approach to the project, including an outline budget. We are not looking for a fully formed idea at this stage, as it's likely that your initial concept will be influenced by your participation in the Artists Retreat.
- Your experience of inclusive practice and, specifically, how you propose to engage with babies and their adults, who may have a range of different needs.
- Your proposed approach to working alongside one of our Young Associate Artists.
- Confirmation that you are available to attend both days of the Artists Retreat on Saturday 8th and Sunday 9th November at The Egg Theatre, 36 Monmouth St, Bath BA1 2AN.

Feel free to use any **one** of any of the following application formats and email or WeTransfer to secretgardens@theatroyal.org.uk with the subject line

- a maximum of 3 typed pages of A4
- A 5-minute video
- 8 PowerPoint slides

Application deadline: **Monday 20th October at 9am.**