Yorkshire Contemporary

JOBS

Assistant Curator

Application pack
Thank you for your interest in the position of Assistant Curator at Yorkshire Contemporary. In this application pack, you will find details of how to apply, the job description, person specification and background information on Yorkshire Contemporary.



Job description

Job title: Assistant Curator
Employer: Yorkshire Contemporary (trading name of Project Space Leeds)
Hours: Full-time (5 days, 35 hours per week)

Conditions of work: Saturday working required, flexible Monday–Friday for remainder of hours. Occasional evening commitments required for events. Additional hours are recognised through Time Off In Lieu, in accordance with Yorkshire Contemporary's policy.

Contract: 1 year, with a view to extend
Salary: £30,000
Place of work: Leeds city centre and Beeston, South Leeds.
Flexible home working as part of Yorkshire Contemporary's policies.

Reports to: Deputy Director
Responsible for: Volunteers/Participation Assistants on project basis (no line management)
Probation period: 3 months
Notice period: 2 months (probation notice period is 1 month)

Benefits:
- 33 days' annual leave per year, including bank holidays
- Employee Assistance Programme
- Cycle to Work Scheme
- Training opportunities
- Dedicated research budget
- Enhanced sickness and parental leave

Yorkshire Contemporary will not discriminate against eligible applications on the grounds of age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, gender identity, gender expression, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy and maternity. We encourage applications from individuals with diverse experiences and backgrounds, particularly those who identify as D/deaf, disabled or neurodivergent, come from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, or are part of the Global Majority.

Introduction

Yorkshire Contemporary is looking for an Assistant Curator to help develop and deliver our artistic programme across Leeds and West Yorkshire. You will work with artists, communities and partners on major contemporary art commissions, artist development and participatory projects. You will support artists to develop new work, help coordinate mentoring and professional development opportunities, and contribute to projects that bring artists and audiences together.

Reporting to the Deputy Director, you will work with the whole team to develop ideas and see projects through to delivery. You will take responsibility for agreed areas of work, from research and artist liaison to practical planning and public activity. This includes working with Rowland Road Working Men's Club in Beeston, where you will lead play sessions and support volunteers and club members to shape the future of the Rowland Road Play Patch.

We are looking for someone who is curious about contemporary art, enjoys working directly with artists and communities, and can bring care and organisation to projects with many moving parts. You will be comfortable taking initiative, building relationships and working with colleagues to make our programme welcoming and accessible.







Current projects

Rowland Road Play Patch is a free community play space in Beeston, South Leeds, created by local families, volunteers and artists working with Rowland Road Working Men's Club and Yorkshire Contemporary. The Play Patch has transformed a disused plot beside the club into a place where children can play outdoors, explore materials and take part in crafts. Saturday sessions give families a place to meet and children the freedom to follow their own ideas.

As Assistant Curator, you will lead play sessions and deliver creative activities for children, working alongside volunteers and club members to plan and run them. You will prepare materials, welcome families and facilitate open-ended play, adapting activities to children's interests and access needs. You will help keep sessions safe and welcoming, and use feedback from children, families and volunteers to shape what happens next.

A central part of the role is to support volunteers and club members to take ownership of the project. You will build relationships with people and invite others to join in, offering manageable ways to get started. You will help people find tasks that suit their interests and availability, and offer practical guidance and support. Those who want to take on more responsibility will have opportunities to lead parts of a session with your support.

Working with the club and the Yorkshire Contemporary team, you will help volunteers and club members share skills and make decisions about what happens at the Play Patch. As more people gain the confidence to help plan and deliver sessions, you will support the club to build a team that can keep the Play Patch open and welcoming to local families.

Alongside your work at the Play Patch, you will support major artist commissions, artist development and participatory projects across Yorkshire Contemporary's programme. This will include working directly with artists and partners and taking responsibility for agreed areas of development and delivery.

How to apply

Please apply using the online application form.

Assistant Curator application form

Please also complete the separate, anonymous equal opportunities monitoring form.

Equal opportunities monitoring form

We welcome applications in alternative formats, including audio and video. If you would like to apply for this role in another format, or if you have any access requirements and would like to discuss how we can best support you through your application process, please email recruitment@yorkshirecontemporary.org

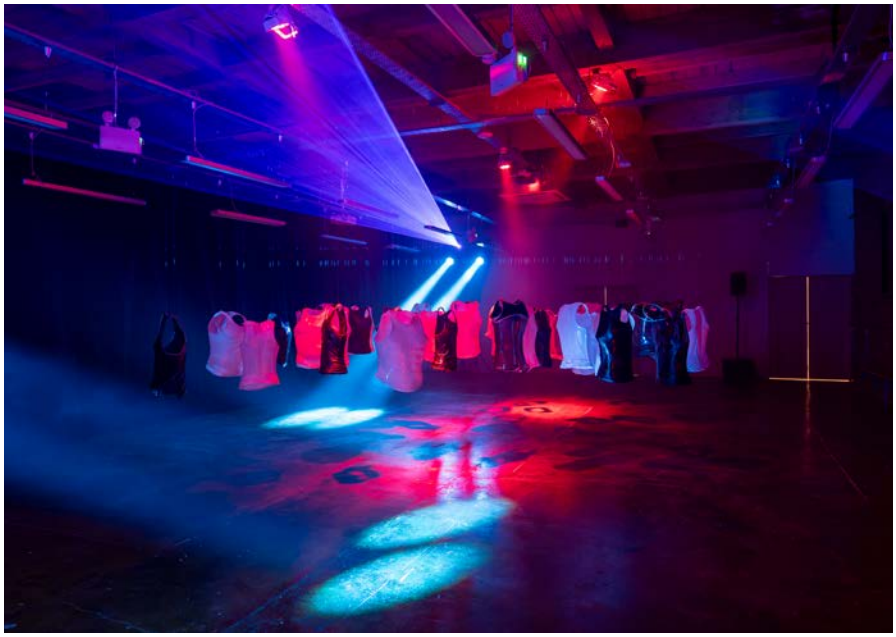
Application deadline: Tuesday 15 December 2026, 12pm (midday)

Interviews will take place in person on Tuesday 22 December 2026 in Leeds city centre.

Briefing session
Join us on Tuesday 1 December at 6.30pm to find out more about the Assistant Curator role and how to apply. You can ask questions about the role or the application process during the session or submit them in advance.

No recording will be available after the session. We will publish the questions and answers in a document that everyone can access following the event.

Sign up to attend or submit a question



Purpose

To support the development, delivery and engagement of Yorkshire Contemporary's artistic programmes, including ambitious contemporary art commissions, artist development activities and play-based approaches to contemporary art, as part of a curatorial team.

Programme

Development

- Contribute ideas to Yorkshire Contemporary's artistic programme, including curatorial proposals, artist briefs and programme plans.
- Undertake agreed research, including studio visits, community and exhibition visits across West Yorkshire.

Delivery

- Support project delivery across our programme, reporting to the project lead and taking responsibility for agreed aspects of the work.
- Provide administrative and logistical support for meetings, visits and mentoring, and coordinate project planning in shared systems.
- Assist with contracts, loans, transport, insurance, risk assessments and production arrangements in line with organisational procedures.
- Provide practical support for production, installation, events and deinstallation, working with artists, technicians and other colleagues.
- Administer and facilitate agreed activities that connect contemporary art with high-quality opportunities for play, curiosity and creative expression, in indoor and outdoor environments.
- Support artists to develop work that responds thoughtfully to community and place, while retaining space for artistic ambition and experimentation.
- Take a curatorial leadership role in programme elements where appropriate and agreed, reporting to the Deputy Director for oversight and sign-off.

Engagement

- Maintain supportive relationships with programme artists.
- Support inclusive participation by identifying barriers and collaborating with colleagues to ensure accessible programmes.
- Work alongside children, families, local residents and community groups to understand their interests, needs and aspirations, enabling them to influence project ideas, decisions and delivery.
- Facilitate welcoming activities and environments that encourage learning, open-ended play, exploration and participation at people's own pace, including workshops, talks and tours.

Partnerships

- Work closely with programme partners to deliver co-designed and co-delivered projects, including relevant host venues and community groups.
- Contribute to building connections with relevant local organisations to strengthen community involvement, and involve communities in decision-making processes relevant to our projects.

Fundraising

- Contribute to applications and reports for funders, providing research, data, budgets and supporting information.

Finances

- Prepare and manage agreed project budgets and delivery plans, maintaining accurate financial and project records.

People

- Oversee Participation Assistants, volunteers and student placement involvement in delegated projects.

Storytelling & communications

- Represent Yorkshire Contemporary at relevant meetings and events.
- Support in preparing exhibition texts, interpretation and other programme content.
- Provide timely information, copy, images and documentation to support programme communications, ensuring the appropriate acknowledgement and credits.
- Help to communicate the relevance and value of projects to participants and audiences.

Evaluation

- Implement feedback mechanisms to adapt project activities to community needs.
- Gather and maintain quantitative and qualitative records of project activity, artist experiences and community access.
- Conduct surveys to understand programme reach, identifying barriers to engagement to inform future planning.
- Prepare and share reports for staff, trustees and other stakeholders.

Organisational responsibilities

- Promote Yorkshire Contemporary's mission, vision and goals and contribute positively to an equitable and supportive working culture by embodying our values.
- Follow organisational policies and procedures, including safeguarding, health and safety, equality, data protection and environmental.
- Participate in staff meetings, training and professional development.
- Undertake other duties commensurate with the role.

Person specification

Essential

- Strong ability to engage with and work alongside local communities, artists, and partners to develop and deliver inclusive and accessible projects.
- Experience of working in creative contexts with children and/or families.
- Enthusiasm and knowledge of contemporary visual art practice.
- Proven organisational and administrative skills with experience in coordinating multiple tasks and managing deadlines.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills to a range of audiences.
- Strong attention to detail, with an ability to manage project timelines and deliver work under pressure.
- Self-motivated with ability to work independently and collaboratively in a small team.
- Commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Willingness to work flexibly, including occasional evening work.

Desirable

- Experience of working with public art projects or artist-led community engagement programmes.
- Understanding of communities in South Leeds.
- Knowledge of the arts landscape and audiences in West Yorkshire.
- Experience of supporting the professional development of emerging artists.
- Experience working with or within an arts organisation, charity or other not-for-profit.
- Experience in documenting project activities and supporting the funding and evaluation.

About Yorkshire Contemporary

Yorkshire Contemporary produces and presents ambitious contemporary art that connects people, artists and ideas. Based in Leeds and working across West Yorkshire, we champion emerging artists and the role of contemporary art in the region. We give artists time to test ideas, build networks and bring new work to audiences. With our partners, we create free opportunities for people to experience and make art.

In 2025, we co-curated the Turner Prize exhibition with Cartwright Hall Art Gallery as part of Bradford 2025, Tate and Bradford District Museums & Galleries. Earlier this year, Hannah Catherine Jones presented UNEARTHING(S) at Leeds Art Gallery, her first commission in her home county, with parts of the work entering the city collection.

Our current artist development programme, Practice, offers emerging artists paid time to develop their work, tailored mentoring, opportunities to learn from peers and ongoing curatorial support.

Play is fundamental to our approach. It shapes how we work with artists and how we invite people of all ages to engage with art. We make room for curiosity, experimentation and the freedom to follow an idea.

We have worked in Beeston Hill since 2022 to support children's play. We have run an artist-led playgroup for under-fives in partnership with Hamara Healthy Living Centre and have delivered summer art and play sessions in Cross Flatts Park. In partnership with Rowland Road Working Men's Club, we helped turn a disused plot into Rowland Road Play Patch, a free play space that children, families, volunteers and club members continue to shape. The project won a Child Friendly Leeds Award in 2026.

Our partnership with Leeds Libraries has brought artist-designed play into the city centre. In 2024, Stephanie Jefferies' play space for under-fives moved to Leeds Central Library as the Tiny Totley Studio. We are building on that partnership with a new commission by Joanne Tatham & Tom O'Sullivan for the Children's Library.

Yorkshire Contemporary began as Project Space Leeds, an artist-led organisation founded in 2006 by artist-curators Pippa Hale, Kerry Harker and Diane Howse. Its first gallery at Whitehall Waterfront gave artists a place to test ideas and show new work in Leeds. From 2013 to 2023, Project Space Leeds ran The Tetley, a contemporary art gallery on Leeds' South Bank that welcomed more than one million visitors and supported more than 500 artists through commissions and exhibitions.

Yorkshire Contemporary is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation and receives investment from Leeds City Council. We also work with trusts, foundations and project partners to support our artistic programme and our work with artists and communities.

Yorkshire Contemporary is the public name of Project Space Leeds, registered charity number 1148716. **The Board of Trustees** oversees the charity's strategy and governance and supports the staff team in delivering its mission.







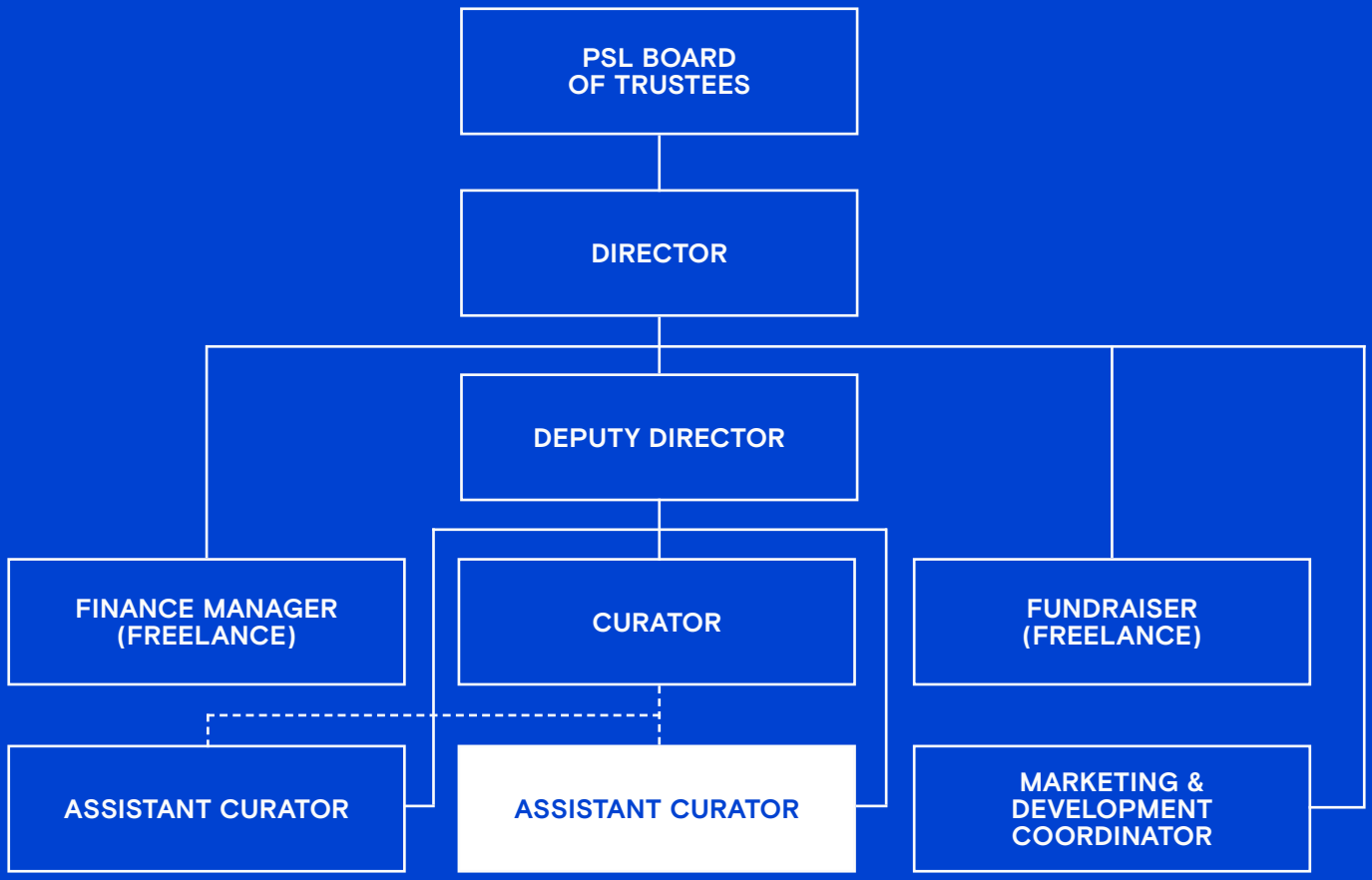

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Image credits

P1 – Installation view of Nnena Kalu's presentation at the Turner Prize 2025, Cartwright Hall Art Gallery. Photo by David Levene.

P2 – Top left: Zoe Spowage, Paint Maze, 2025, Yorkshire Contemporary. Photo by Jules Lister. Bottom left: Rowland Road Play Patch, 2026, Yorkshire Contemporary. Photo by Jules Lister. Right: Rowland Road Play Patch, 2025, Yorkshire Contemporary. Photo by Jules Lister.

P5 – I want ur hands on me (unrequited), K Walker, Yorkshire Contemporary, Light Night Leeds 2026. Photo by Ronnie Danaher.

P10 – Left: Stephanie Jefferies, Tiny Totley, 2024. Photo by Jo Ritchie. Top right: Rowland Road Play Patch, 2026, Yorkshire Contemporary. Photo by Jules Lister. Bottom right image: Cabaret Mystic, 2026, Yorkshire Contemporary. Photo by Emma Bentley Fox.

P11 – UNEARTHING(S) Hannah Catherine Jones, 2026, Yorkshire Contemporary, Leeds Art Gallery. Photo by Rob Battersby.