

# **schools programme strategic review**

Freelance Consultant Brief

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## **Background**

The Design Museum's vision is a world in which design enables people and the planet to thrive. Our Schools Programme plays a vital role in delivering this ambition by supporting teachers, inspiring young people, and building confidence, creativity and future-focused skills through design learning.

The museum is entering a period of significant change as part of its Transformation 2029 strategy. This includes a new website, a major capital redevelopment and rehang of the permanent collection, and a reshaping of organisational priorities. At the same time, the Schools team is responding to changes in the education landscape, including curriculum review, funding pressures, and increasing emphasis on digital and green skills.

In this context, we are commissioning a freelance consultant to carry out a strategic review of the Schools Programme, helping us define a clear, sustainable and relevant direction for the next phase of development.

## **Purpose of the commission**

The purpose of this commission is to provide clear, practical and prioritised recommendations that will support decision-making about the future of the Schools Programme.

The review will:

- Assess the current offer and how it is operating
- Identify where the museum's schools' provision can add the greatest value
- Recommend a focused strategic direction aligned with Transformation 2029
- Support the museum to articulate the value and impact of its schools work

This is a strategic advisory role, not a programme delivery or redesign commission.

## Key outcomes

The consultant will help the museum to achieve:

- A clear strategic framework for the Schools Programme, with agreed priorities for the short term (6 months) and medium term (up to 3 years).
- A more sustainable and focused programme model, aligned with current resources and capacity.
- An updated and relevant offer that supports teachers and equips students with creative, digital and environmental skills.
- Stronger alignment between the Schools Programme, the museum's collection, exhibitions and Transformation 2029 strategy.
- Clear articulation of impact and value, to support advocacy, partnerships and future funding.

## Scope of work

The consultant will be expected to focus primarily on the following areas:

### 1. Review and benchmarking

- Consultation with the Schools team and Head of Learning to agree priorities, scope and approach.
- Review of the current Schools Programme offer (workshops, handling collections, exhibition visits, teacher resources).
- High-level benchmarking against a small number of comparable museums to identify best practice and positioning.

### 2. Teachers, schools and curriculum alignment

- Review of existing teacher feedback and evaluation data to identify key strengths and challenges.
- Recommendations for how the programme can better support teachers and align with curriculum priorities.
- Advice on feasible approaches to engaging priority schools, including SEND provision and access considerations.

### 3. Programme direction and future planning

- Identification of key themes and focus areas for future content, with particular attention to environmental responsibility and green skills.
- Advice on how the Schools Programme can respond to developments in the permanent collection and exhibition programme.

- Consideration of future growth opportunities, including partnerships, digital engagement and pathways into creative careers.

### **Out of scope**

The consultant will not be expected to:

- Design or pilot new workshops or resources
- Deliver staff training
- Undertake extensive national research or large-scale consultation
- Develop detailed operational delivery plans

### **Outputs**

- A strategic report summarising findings and recommendations
- A presentation and discussion session with key museum stakeholders

### **Timeframe**

Start date: May 2026

End date: July 2026

Some on-site work will be required, including observation of workshops and meetings with the Schools team. The precise schedule will be agreed with the appointed consultant.

### **Fee**

The maximum budget for this commission is £8,000 (excluding VAT, inclusive of expenses). Fees should be proposed against deliverables rather than day rates, although an indicative breakdown is welcome.

### **Skills and experience**

We are looking for a consultant with:

- Experience of schools or learning programmes in museums or cultural organisations
- Strong strategic analysis and advisory skills
- Knowledge of the UK education sector and creative curriculum
- Experience of evaluation, benchmarking and stakeholder consultation
- A clear understanding of the value of design education

### **How to apply**

To apply, please submit:

- A CV and short cover letter
- Examples of up to two relevant projects or evidence of relevant experience
- Details of at least one referee
- A brief outline of your proposed approach, availability and fees

### **Application timeline**

Application deadline: **9:00 am on Friday 24 April 2026**

Interviews: week of 11 May 2026

Contract agreed by 22 May 2026

Work to be concluded by 2 July 2026

### **Museum visits**

We welcome you to come and visit the museum in advance of submitting a proposal, and we are also open to exploratory conversations. If you're interested in visiting or arranging a meeting, please contact the email address below.

### **Shortlisting & evaluation**

Shortlisted candidates will be contacted by email and invited to attend an interview. The selection process will include a review of responses and a panel interview. When the final decision has been taken, all applicants will be informed in writing whether or not they have been successful; this communication will provide feedback on the proposal submitted. No other information shall be given on the progress of the tendering.

To request more information or submit your application, please contact:  
[milagros.perezvarela@designmuseum.org](mailto:milagros.perezvarela@designmuseum.org)