

# Mind × Body: Catalyst Phenomenon Archive

An exhibition by Reality Intelligence Association, presented as part of London Design Festival 2026

Open Call Handbook



|                   |                                                                                     |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Organisers</b> | Reality Intelligence Association (presented as part of London Design Festival 2026) |
| <b>Location</b>   | Central London (venue TBC)                                                          |
| <b>Dates</b>      | 18–20 September 2026                                                                |
| <b>Open to</b>    | All Practitioners: Art, Design, Document                                            |
| <b>Deadline</b>   | 10 August 2026, 23:59 GMT                                                           |

# 1. About the Organisers

## London Design Festival

London Design Festival (LDF) is one of the world's leading design events, held annually in London every September. Since its founding in 2003, LDF has grown into a globally recognised platform celebrating and promoting London as the design capital of the world. The Festival hosts hundreds of events, installations, and exhibitions across the city, attracting designers, architects, artists, and creative professionals from over 70 countries.

## Reality Intelligence Association

The Reality Intelligence Association (RIA) is a cross-disciplinary research and curatorial body dedicated to exploring the intersections of embodied experience, spatial intelligence, and emerging technologies. Operating across art, design, architecture, and the social sciences, RIA initiates and supports projects that examine how human beings perceive, inhabit, and construct reality — both physical and virtual.

## This Collaboration

As an official Partner of London Design Festival 2026, the Reality Intelligence Association presents *Mind × Body: Catalyst Phenomenon Archive* — a curated open-call exhibition positioned at the heart of London Design Festival 2026.

## 2. Curatorial Concept

*"The hand is not merely an instrument of execution, but an extension of thought itself — in the act of touching, shaping, and building, the hand is simultaneously thinking."*

— Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Thinking Hand: Existential and Embodied Wisdom in Architecture*

In *The Thinking Hand*, Finnish architect and philosopher Juhani Pallasmaa argues that the hand is not merely an instrument of execution, but an extension of thought itself — that in the act of touching, shaping, and building, the hand is simultaneously thinking. This notion of embodied wisdom dismantles the long-standing Cartesian split between mind and body: reason does not preside over the body from above, but flows through fingertips, skin, and muscle movement.

This exhibition takes that rupture as its founding premise. We position Mind and Body not as opposing poles, but as mutually catalytic forces — two fields of energy that, when brought into contact, generate something neither could produce alone. We invite practitioners across art, design, and documentary research to collectively assemble a temporary Catalyst Phenomenon Archive: a site that traces how thought becomes visible through the body, and how the body acquires meaning through thought.

### What Is a Catalyst Phenomenon?

When Mind meets Body, what occurs is not simple addition, but something closer to a chemical reaction — two states provoking each other into a third, previously unimagined form. The pressure of fingers on clay preserves the residue of thinking. An unbuilt architectural line holds within it an entire imagination of how a body might inhabit space. A wearable device dissolves the boundary between skin and interface. Games and extended realities redefine what it means to be embodied at all.

Together, submitted works constitute a living archive — a record of how the mind-body relationship is being negotiated, strained, and reinvented in our present moment.

### A Note from the Curators

Pallasmaa observed that contemporary architectural education has grown dangerously dependent on the visual and the representational, abandoning the knowledge that lives

in the hand. This forgetting is not unique to architecture — it runs through every creative practice where efficiency has erased process, and digitalisation has severed the haptic.

This archive is conceived as an act of reversal: not a showcase of finished conclusions, but an attempt to capture the threshold moment — that precise and often fleeting instant when Mind and Body collide, converge, and catalyse one another. Every submission, whether a pinched vessel bearing the ghost of a gesture, an unrealised spatial proposition, or an ethnographic account of how bodies are disciplined and liberated, stands as evidence of that reaction having taken place.

We are waiting for your archive.

## 3. The Exhibition

Mind × Body: Catalyst Phenomenon Archive is a curated, pop-up cross-disciplinary exhibition presented as part of London Design Festival 2026. Set in a central London venue (to be confirmed), the exhibition brings together works from practitioners across art, design, and documentary research.

The exhibition is conceived as a living archive rather than a static display. Works are selected and arranged to create dialogue across disciplines, media, and methodologies — placing a ceramic vessel in conversation with an architectural drawing, a wearable device alongside an ethnographic document.

### Format

The exhibition runs over three days, open to the general public and professional audiences throughout London Design Festival. Works will be displayed across a single cohesive gallery environment organised into thematic clusters aligned with the curatorial concept.

### Expected Scale

The exhibition anticipates between 20 and 40 selected works across all disciplines. Physical works, printed documentation, screen-based media, and interactive or immersive installations are all welcome, subject to spatial and technical constraints outlined in Section 7.

### Audience

The exhibition is open to the general public and free to attend. Its primary audience includes design and architecture professionals, students and educators, cultural practitioners, and international visitors attending London Design Festival 2026.

## 4. Open Call

This exhibition is open to practitioners at all career stages and across all disciplines and media. We welcome submissions from individuals, collectives, and institutional research groups.

We particularly encourage cross-disciplinary proposals that resist easy categorisation, and works that occupy the threshold between thought and physical form — whether realised, in-progress, or speculative.

### Eligible Disciplines and Media

**Art:** Ceramics, Painting, Sculpture, Installation, Computational Art, Fine Arts

**Design:** Graphic, Interior Design, Architecture (built and unbuilt projects), Product Design, Service, Interaction Design, Wearable Devices, Photography, Game Design, AR / VR / MR / XR, Fashion, Experience design, (E)-Textiles

**Document:** History & Theory, Article, Critic, Letter, Book, Zine, Portfolio, Anthropology, Sociology, Sustainability, Humanities

This list is indicative rather than exhaustive. Practitioners working across or outside these categories are warmly encouraged to apply. If you are uncertain whether your work is eligible, please contact us at the address in Section 11 before the submission deadline.

### Who Can Apply

- Individual practitioners at any career stage (student, emerging, mid-career, established)
- Collaborative teams and collectives
- Academic and institutional research groups
- Practitioners based anywhere in the world

## 5. How to Apply

To apply, please compile and submit a single PDF document containing all of the following components:

### Required Submission Components

| Component                   | Content                                                                                                                                                                         | Word Limit    |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Practitioner Bio</b>     | A short biography covering your background, training, and practice.                                                                                                             | Max 100 words |
| <b>Practice Statement</b>   | An overview of your broader creative or research practice.                                                                                                                      | Max 100 words |
| <b>Work Statement</b>       | Description of the submitted work, including medium, dimensions, and any technical or spatial requirements.                                                                     | Max 100 words |
| <b>Visual Documentation</b> | 5–10 images or documentation of the submitted work. For time-based, interactive, or XR works, a short video link or process documentation is also welcome.                      | No word limit |
| <b>Thematic Response</b>    | A brief response to the theme of Mind × Body: Catalyst Phenomenon Archive — how does your work engage with the relationship between embodied practice and intellectual inquiry? | Max 100 words |

Please note: the five components below should all be contained within your single uploaded PDF. Your name, email address, and submission category are collected separately in the online application form, not in the PDF.

Applicants submitting Document works should place their abstract, references, and key figures at the front of the PDF.



## Submission Instructions

An application is only complete once both of the following steps are done:

1. Complete the online application form and upload your single PDF:  
<https://riauk.org/exhibition>
2. Pay the £8 application fee (non-refundable) within the same form.
  - Your submission must be a single PDF, named  
SURNAME\_Firstname\_MindBody2026.pdf
  - Maximum file size: 20 MB
  - Video links (for time-based or XR works) may be embedded as URLs within the PDF
  - The £8 application fee is paid securely by card within the form; applications without payment cannot be processed.

**Submission Deadline:** 10 August 2026, 23:59 GMT

**Notification:** Applicants will be notified within 7 working days of the submission deadline.

## 6. Selection Criteria

The curatorial team reviews all submissions. This is a curated exhibition — selection is based on curatorial fit and thematic alignment, not on participation fees or seniority.

### Assessment Dimensions

- Curatorial Fit: How compellingly does the work engage with the Mind × Body: Catalyst Phenomenon Archive theme?
- Cross-Disciplinary Ambition: Does the work create meaningful dialogue across disciplines or challenge conventional categorisation?
- Quality and Rigour: Is the work realised, documented, or conceptualised with craft and intellectual depth?
- Spatial and Technical Viability: Can the work be practically accommodated within the exhibition environment?
- Diversity of Practice: The curatorial team seeks a final selection that represents a broad range of media, disciplines, career stages, and geographic contexts.

### Curatorial Team

Boyuan Yu, University College London

Jianing Luo, Oxford School of Architecture

Prof. Lei Zhang, Industrial Design Association

Decisions of the curatorial team are final. Feedback on individual submissions cannot be provided. Only works submitted and approved through this process will be eligible for display. Substitutions or unapproved works cannot be accommodated once the selection process is complete.

## 7. Practical Information for Selected Practitioners

### Participation Fees

The exhibition is offered as a platform for professional and public exposure. Selected participants are responsible for the costs associated with the production, transport, and installation of their own works unless otherwise agreed in writing with the organisers. Application Fee: **£8**. Please note that the application fee is non-refundable. The Reality Intelligence Association is not VAT-registered, so no VAT is applicable to any of these fees.

Select Category:

Document Archive: **£220**;

Poster x 2D Art: **£290**;

3D Art & Installation Art: **£390**.

### Work Specifications

Selected practitioners will receive a detailed technical brief upon notification of acceptance. As a general guide:

- Two-dimensional works: maximum size 100 × 120 cm per piece
- Three-dimensional works: maximum footprint 1.5 × 1.5 m, maximum height 2.5 m
- Screen-based or projection works: please specify screen/projection size and technical requirements in your Work Statement
- Interactive or XR works: please specify spatial footprint, power requirements, and any visitor interface considerations
- Multiple works or large-scale installations: please contact us to discuss feasibility before applying

### Transport and Installation

- Practitioners are responsible for transporting works to and from the exhibition venue in London.
- Installation assistance will be provided by the exhibition team during the designated installation period (dates to be confirmed upon selection).
- Works must be supplied installation-ready, with clear written installation instructions.
- The exhibition team reserves the right to decline installation of works that do not meet agreed specifications.

## Technical Support

- The venue provides standard 13-amp UK power sockets throughout the exhibition space.
- Wi-Fi access is available for interactive or networked works. Bandwidth-intensive applications should be confirmed in advance.
- Specialist AV equipment (projectors, screens, speakers) is not provided as standard. Practitioners requiring specific equipment should note this in their Work Statement; the curatorial team will confirm availability upon selection.
- Selected practitioners requiring significant technical infrastructure are encouraged to contact the team as early as possible.

## Insurance

Practitioners are strongly advised to arrange their own fine art or transit insurance for works in transit and on display. The organisers accept no liability for loss or damage to submitted works.

## Work Handling and Return

- Works must be collected by the practitioner (or a nominated representative) within 1 working day of the exhibition close (20 September 2026).
- Works not collected within this period may be subject to storage charges.
- The organisers are not responsible for the return shipment of works unless expressly agreed in writing.

## 8. Benefits for Selected Practitioners

Selected practitioners will receive the following as part of their participation in the exhibition:

- Exhibition of work at a central London venue during London Design Festival 2026
- Practitioner profile (bio and work documentation) published on the Reality Intelligence Association website
- Selected Artist/Architect/Scholar/Designer interview posted on the RIA website and social media channels
- Editorial coverage in Reality Intelligence Association × Industrial Design Magazine (工业设计杂志), published in both English and Chinese
- Architecture-specific works considered for coverage by World Architecture Community
- Outstanding works are recommended for publication in journals such as Landscape Architecture Frontiers and Industrial Design.

### Workshop Opportunities

Selected participants are warmly invited to propose and co-host a workshop in conjunction with the exhibition — an opportunity to extend your practice into dialogue with other disciplines and with the public. Workshop proposals should be submitted alongside or shortly after selection notification. The curatorial team will confirm feasibility and scheduling.

### Letters of Recommendation

Where a genuine working relationship has been established — for example, through co-hosting a workshop or a sustained curatorial collaboration — the curatorial team may, entirely at its own discretion, provide a letter acknowledging a practitioner's contribution to the exhibition. Such letters are considered on a case-by-case basis, are not guaranteed, and are in no way linked to any application or participation fee.

## 9. Rights & Permissions

### Copyright

All intellectual property rights in submitted works remain with the originating practitioner(s). Submission of work to this open call does not transfer copyright to the organisers.

### Image Use Authorisation

By submitting to this open call, practitioners grant the Reality Intelligence Association a non-exclusive, royalty-free licence to reproduce documentation of submitted works (including images, video stills, and process documentation) for:

- Exhibition promotion and marketing (print, digital, and social media)
- Editorial and press coverage related to the exhibition
- Post-exhibition archival documentation and publication

This licence does not extend to commercial exploitation of works beyond the above purposes. Practitioners who wish to restrict specific uses of their documentation should notify the curatorial team in writing at the point of application.

### Media and Publication

Selected practitioners consent to their name, biography, and work documentation being published in the exhibition's editorial coverage, including the RIA × Industrial Design Magazine (工业设计杂志) bilingual publication and any associated press releases. Practitioners will be credited accurately in all publications. Practitioners may request a copy of any editorial coverage featuring their work.

### Data Protection

Personal data submitted as part of this open call will be held securely by the Reality Intelligence Association, which is registered with the UK Information Commissioner's Office (ICO registration no. ZC158818). Data will be used solely for the purposes of

administering this application process and, where applicable, the exhibition, and will be processed in accordance with UK data protection law (UK GDPR). Data will not be shared with third parties without consent. Practitioners may request deletion of their data at any time by contacting [info@riauk.org](mailto:info@riauk.org).

## 10. Frequently Asked Questions

### **Can I submit as part of a collaborative team or collective?**

Yes. Collaborative submissions are welcome. Please designate one lead contact and include bios for all contributing members within the 100-word practitioner bio limit (or slightly expanded if necessary — please indicate this in your submission).

### **Can students apply?**

Yes. This exhibition is open to practitioners at all career stages, including undergraduate and postgraduate students. Student applications are assessed on the same curatorial criteria as all other submissions.

### **Can I submit a speculative, unbuilt, or in-progress work?**

Yes. Unrealised architectural projects, speculative designs, and works-in-progress are explicitly welcomed, provided they are documented clearly and engage meaningfully with the exhibition theme.

### **Can I submit more than one work?**

You may include documentation of more than one work within your submission PDF, but please clearly identify your primary submission. The curatorial team will select works on an individual basis.

### **I am based outside the UK. Can I apply?**

Yes. The open call is international. If selected, you will be responsible for arranging the transport of your work to London at your own cost, unless alternative arrangements are agreed in advance with the organisers.

### **Will I receive feedback if my submission is not selected?**

Due to the volume of submissions anticipated, the curatorial team is unable to provide individual feedback on unsuccessful applications. All applicants will be notified of the outcome within 7 working days of the submission deadline.

### **What happens to my submission materials if I am not selected?**



Submission PDFs and associated materials are held securely for the duration of the selection process and may be retained for archival purposes in line with our data protection policy (see Section 9). You may request deletion of your submission data by contacting [info@riauk.org](mailto:info@riauk.org).

**My work does not fit neatly into the listed disciplines. Should I still apply?**

Yes. The listed disciplines are indicative rather than exhaustive. Cross-disciplinary, hybrid, and hard-to-categorise practices are strongly encouraged. If you are uncertain, please contact us before the deadline.

## 11. Contact

For all open call enquiries, please contact the curatorial team at:

|                          |                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>General Enquiries</b> | <a href="mailto:info@riauk.org">info@riauk.org</a>                                                                                 |
| <b>Website</b>           | <a href="https://riauk.org/exhibition">https://riauk.org/exhibition</a>                                                            |
| <b>Enquiry Deadline</b>  | Please submit all pre-application queries no later than 3 August 2026 to allow time for a response before the submission deadline. |

**Reality Intelligence Association, presented as part of London Design Festival 2026**

*Mind × Body: Catalyst Phenomenon Archive*