

Supporting BDF – an invitation!



10th–12th June 2026

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Design should
strive to be
invisible

THE TRUTH IS,
WE'RE ALL
MOCKING IT UP
AS WE GO ALONG.

INFORMATION
POINT

DESIGNING
COMMUNITY
6-8
JUNE
CELEBRATING
STORYTELLING
BUILDING
BIGGER BRANDS
www.bdf.events

Intro to BDF.



THE MIDDLE CHILD

THE SECOND CITY SOMETIMES FORGOTTEN, THE MIDDLE CHILD OVERLOOKED SO VERY OFTEN. YET WE'LL NEVER BE FULLY GRASPED UNLESS WE EXAMINE THE COMMUNITY WE WANT TO BE SEEN.

A HISTORY FORGED FROM GOLD AND IRON, THE WALLS OF GIBBSHILL MADE TO INSPIRE.

AN INDUSTRIAL HISTORY OF NEW AND OLD, THE BUILDING TRADITION EITHER LOVED OR SOUGHT.

FORWARD IN OUR MENTAL, BODY AND SPIRIT, WE ARE THE CREATORS FROM A PLACE TO NEVER BE MOVED.

THE CREATIVE CITY

BIBLIO

T NOT IN SERVICE
ROCKLEY
NDSWORT
IETHWIC
QUINTON
VE WAYS
GBASTO



AM GUY · ADAM LLOYD · ALASTAIR TAYLOR · AN
EN · BARBARA GIBSON · BECKY BELL · BEN JAVI
CHARLOTTE HANKS · CHARLOTTE JENKINS ·
LAN · EMILY JEFFREY · ESME STILLAWAY · F
· HANNAH PARKES · HAPICO · HELEN WHEE
IM HOWELLS · JORY WOODHOUSE · JOHN W
· KEITH DOBBS · KIERAN GLENNON · KRIST
SKINNER · LUKE TONGE · LUKE WALLER
· ANGELIA LIU · MICHELLE TURTON · NATHAN C
· PICKLE ILLUSTRATION · POPPY SMALL · RAJ
· SARAH BAGSHAW · SARAH EASTER · SEVEN
YASIA GRAHAM · TED JONES · TINA JIWA · T

ROBERTS · ANJULI KCKENNA · ANNATONIX · ANTOHIO ROBERTS · ARTHUR
· BETH INGLETON · BEN WHITLING · BRONKHIAUS · BYNG · CAIRO HAMILTON
· CHRIS DAY · COMMON CURIOSITY · DAVID HEMPHAM · ELLIE
· FOLK LIKE THESE · GARETH DAVIS · GAZ DURMS
· IRISH MIDDLE T. ADEMOJA · JEN LEEM-BROUGEN ·
· JOSEPH FRASCINA · JOSH CUTTS · JUSTIN
· LISA BARRETT · LOR CHURLEY · LUCKY PABLO
· MARK MURPHY · MARTIN DONNELLY · MATTIE LYNCH ·
· MYRAN GILL · OLD BORT · OLLY WELLS · PET CLUB
· REBECCA HOWSON · ROBERT LUCKLEY · RODIC
· SHAY LI · SLEEP SPARROW · STUDIO BALDWIN
· TOMAS HOWELL · VANESSA MOUNTAIN · WINDOW ARTISTS

SEE THE WORK
ONLINE AT

A NEW

BDF is a celebration of the local, national and international design industry! Established in 2018 with ambition to create a credible, accessible and enjoyable event showcasing world class design in our city, encouraging visitors to rethink presumptions about Brum.

In our first year we welcomed thousands of visitors & dozens of speakers from across the globe (speaking on the theme *Forward*), showcasing 30 venues around the city and celebrating everything the design industry has to offer, from traditional graphic design to animation & special effects, product design to architecture – and everything in-between.

The festival in 2019 built on this success with speakers sharing their experience of the industry (with our theme of *Truth*).

In 2020 due to Covid we put things on hold, and in 2021 we adapted to a hybrid model, mixing virtual talks & workshops with an in-person exhibition called 'The Creative City' celebrating the theme of *Colour*. In 2022 we returned to the full 3-day festival celebrating the apt theme *Freedom*. This was then followed in the summer of 2023 with our first BDF conference – a more compact format – with a sold out single day of talks, at the 800 capacity Rep Theatre on the theme *Imagine*.

In 2024 we returned to the immersive & original full festival format exploring *Process*, selling over 11,000 tickets across 3 days.

In 2025 we sold out our second conference, in another new venue – the iconic Town Hall – where 1000(!) people came together to celebrate *Play* (+500 for workshops).



Our theme is Change.



We're returning to our festival format for in 2026. This is our more expansive version of BDF, featuring over 60+ speakers! We believe **Change** is a timely theme that a diverse range of speakers will be excited to explore – and our audience will enjoy!

Due to the scale of BDF, to aid with navigation and facilitate different attendee interests, we separate the programme into core disciplines that we refer to as 'Design Districts'.

In 2026 these will be **Graphic, Digital & Analogue** – with each District focussed on its own main 'Hub' venue. These hubs will play host to five free talks per day, along with sponsors, stalls and info points giving opportunity to engage with attendees. .

From each of those hubs extend satellite venues that allow us to put on exhibitions, screenings and workshops in tailor made environments – providing further ability to showcase Birmingham's wonderful spaces.

These 'Hubs' are all within easy walking distance of each other, allowing attendees to select talks 'pic'n'mix' style across the Districts, ensuring there's always something which will take your fancy.

Bigger celebrations will take place at larger venues, namely the 'Giant Screen' former IMAX cinema at Millennium Point, allowing us to continue the festival into the evenings – allowing even more people to attend our most impactful events.

BDF vibes!

“From the moment I arrived, I felt incredibly welcome, and the whole experience was absolutely electric.

As someone who rarely steps into moments like these, I truly appreciated the trust and the platform to speak about something I care so deeply about.”

– Chris Clarke, 2025

What our speakers say...

“I’ve been to a lot of conferences... and sometimes, things are a bit wobbly in a new conference’s first couple years. But here’s the deal: The Birmingham Design Festival felt as good as any of the big dog outfits out there — these people did an incredible job.”
– **Aaron Draplin, 2018**

“Well done on curating a conference that really brought the best of Birmingham! Equally, well done on creating a design conference that was genuinely affordable. Don’t know how you did it, but it’s appreciated & I will definitely be using you as an example. Kudos!”
– **Florence Okoye, 2019**

“You created a sold-out, world-class event in a terrific part of the planet. The energy, the city, the food, the residents and the attendees conspired to make our three days there beyond wonderful.”
– **Brian Collins, 2023**

“Bravo! You ROCK. Heartfelt congrats on pulling off another amazing Festival. The warmth, passion, attention to detail (including details such as the personalised agendas), generosity and of course amazing line-up make BDF one of my very fave festivals (and I mean it). The creative industry are lucky to have you.”
– **Astrid Stavro, 2018 & 2023**

“BDF was an incredible experience. Everyone I met warmly welcomed me, and I had the chance to engage with a diverse group of creatives and listen to inspiring speakers from the creative industry.”
– **Aurélia Durand, 2024**

“Ever-inspirational, as far as I’m concerned, the best date in the design calendar. I met so many talented people, with not an ounce of ego amongst them”
– **Matthew Jones, 2024**

“Huge thanks for inviting me to talk at the festival. It has a great collaborative, community spirit. More so than any other festival I’ve been to.”
– **Pav Grochola, 2024**

“Birmingham’s creative energy? Unmatched!

I was not ready for the whirlwind of joy and inspiration that was Birmingham Design Festival. What Luke & Daniel have created is extraordinary.

The speaker selection was nothing short of incredible, and it was a pleasure to meet so many spectacular creative professionals; many of them women too. Louder for the people in the back: representation MATTERS! A special thank you to the team for putting together such a fantastic event – it was unforgettable.”
– **Marie Boulanger, 2024**

“If you haven’t been, the festival has a great ego-free, relaxed vibe, mainly down to Luke Tonge Daniel Alcorn and their fantastic teams.”
– **Michael Johnson, 2018 & 2024**

“Way back in Feb, the most wonderful Luke and Dan, reached out to me to speak at their incredible Birmingham Design Festival. Little did I know then that I was saying yes to being invited into the most wonderful, inspiring and supportive global creative community. The conference ended with ‘full hearts and tired feet’, as Luke put it. What a lovely mission to further design and support the community. Thank you for letting me be part of it.”
– **Sonal Jhuj, 2023**

“Hamish and I had a wonderful time at BDF; what an amazingly exciting, diverse event in such a fabulous city. (So much so we started to imagine moving there!). Great presentations, lovely people. Huge and heartfelt thanks for your utterly peerless organisation and hospitality throughout.”
– **Paul McNeil, 2024**

“What can I say, I enjoyed every minute of the festival. I think I mentioned already but it’s worth saying again – best festival I’ve been to!

So much fun, really inspiring, I met some of my design heroes and caught up with friends I haven’t seen for ages. Everyone has been really friendly, helpful and generally everything has been super-well organised. All the while you guys seemed cool as cucumbers. You and the whole team should be really proud. Huge thank you from me!”
– **Dan Forster, 2024**

“Real joy to be at BDF, a great celebration of craft and creativity. All admirably organised by Luke and Dan, with zero sense of self-importance or pretentiousness, and extremely accessible pricing (or totally free in many cases). It’s become a big deal in a great city – the design world should be happy it exists.”
– **Nick Asbury, 2019**

“Just wanted to drop a note to say how much I loved being at Birmingham Design Festival! The whole experience was brilliant. Everyone was so friendly and helpful. I met some lovely people too. The set up was perfect. The talks were so inspiring. My friends and I are already talking about going next year.”
– **Miho Mishima, 2024**

“The festival is brilliant – positive, inspiring, envy-inducing. Every interaction I had with anyone from BDF was brilliant. Amidst a general doom and gloom in the world – it’s a rare bright spark. Thank you for letting me be part of it”
– **Jim Sutherland, 2018**

“BDF holds significant importance as it helps decentralise the UK’s creative industry from London, builds community among designers, and showcases Birmingham’s creative culture.”
– **Poppy Thaxter, 2024**

“I had the immense pleasure of speaking at BDF. I can only imagine the time and energy it must take to organise as well as all the complications when it’s on. Such a great thing for Birmingham and the wider design community – really great to see how far people were coming to see speakers. I really don’t think there is anything else as open or as inspiring with the range and quality”
– **Johanna Drewe, 2018 & 2024**

Top night all round. Amazing lineup, amazing turnout, amazing food, perfectly organised all round. Lovely goodie bag too! Was a treat opening that last night. Best design events around. You lot never fail! Rock on!
– **Jamie Ellul, 2024**



Our approach...



Info point.
Pick up a speaker pack
(one per person please!)
get directions & advice.

Info point.
Pick up a speaker pack
(one per person please!)
get directions & advice.

Birmingham School of Architecture and Design
School of Fashion and Textiles
School of Media
Visual Communication

BIRMINGHAM DESIGN FESTIVAL 2019

Graphic	Design	Product
John Green Creative Director	Steve Lee Creative Director	Simon Lee Creative Director
John Green Creative Director	Steve Lee Creative Director	Simon Lee Creative Director
John Green Creative Director	Steve Lee Creative Director	Simon Lee Creative Director

McCANN
AW SOME
bbc
BDF 2019



BDF was founded on the belief that design conferences should be affordable for all who want to attend, no matter their circumstances.

As a result of this, the vast majority of our events are **free** to attend, and the ones you do pay for are very low cost. With this model we've been able to bring almost 400 of the worlds best practitioners to Birmingham.

This means visitors can enjoy over 80 hours of free talks and workshops combined with low-cost headline events – allowing people of all incomes to learn from the best in the industry.

Visitors to the festival are be able to take in a full three days worth of content for under £80, with a day of talks costing a max of £25.

Those who cannot afford this can enjoy all of the daytime content totally free of charge!

We've had fantastic support from those in the industry in Birmingham to help us to do this, but we still need generous partners who will offer money and support-in-kind in exchange for exposure throughout the festival.

In 2026 we are committed to replicating our ground-breaking pricing structure, providing almost 50 hours of free talks and workshops – combined with low-cost headline events – allowing people of all incomes to learn from the best in the industry.

BDF is powered by volunteers, and remains the most accessible event of its scale.

**BDF reaches people
other events do not.**



BDF Audience.

The Birmingham Design Festival attracts considerable national and international attention, and is now a respected mainstay of the cultural calendar.

We welcome a diverse audience of professionals (largely from the creative industries) alongside design conscious consumers, higher education students and general cultural enthusiasts. In 2023 we sold out the Rep at 800 capacity, and in 2024 we sold over 11,000 tickets across our 3 days.

Surprisingly 50%+ of our audience travel from beyond Birmingham – many visiting from beyond the EU, including USA & Australia.

BDF reach.

Across our various accounts our digital audience is growing & engaged.

Twitter/X = 18,000+

Instagram = 25,000+

Linkedin = 15,000+

Facebook = 4000+

Newsletter = 3,850+

Website = 350k page views (25k users) during BDF, annually 450k page views (40k users)

We also have longstanding and successful relationships with the design press (*Creative Review, It's Nice that, Creative Boom, Dezeen* etc) and local partners such as *ICHOOSE Birmingham* who reach 20k+ locals via email.

Partnerships make BDF possible!



Thanks to our **Generous Sponsors**

GOLD

- UNIQUE VENUES BIRMINGHAM
- the Rep
- clarkeprint
- bloc HOTELS
- METHOD
- BIRMINGHAM CITY University
- Monotype
- McCANN BIRMINGHAM
- THE JOINT HUBS
- merchmill

SILVER

- substrakt
- RBH
- G. F SMITH
- MY EVENT LAB



BIRMINGHAM DESIGN FESTIVAL

Our partners

The festival wouldn't be possible without the generous support from our partners:

Main partners: McCANN BIRMINGHAM, bloc HOTELS, AWESOME MERCH, ORB ELONEX

District partners: Commercial: G. F SMITH, FOLGO, BIRMINGHAM CITY University; DIGBETH, SUPERH!, substrakt, AULA; FREYAC, MOO, STEAM ROOMS, SONY, HUBS Birmingham

Media partners: 99 Percent Lifestyle, CREATIVE REVIEW, de zeen, eye, native, CREATIVE BOOM, The Design Kids, typography.her

Supporters: SPARK44, freestyle, Newspapers Club, Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce, SIXTH STORY, GRIN, ARUP, AOI, BIRMINGHAM DESIGN FESTIVAL



Partnership options...

We have big ambitions for Birmingham Design Festival, but they're only going to be possible with the support of partners and donors. Sponsorship money will help with festival running costs including travel and board for our guests, venue hire and equipment. Options include:

- Main Partner/Sponsor – £12,000+VAT
- District Sponsor – £6,000+VAT
- Event Sponsor – £1,000–£3,000+VAT
- (Agency) Supporter – £1,000+VAT

+ Sponsorship in kind. (*ie. Travel, catering, media etc*).

Sponsors giving the festival value in kind, in the form of equipment, supplies and services will receive billing as a BDF partner and prominence at the event in accordance to the monetary value of the sponsorship in kind, and if needed can be 'topped up' with cash.

Partnership options explained.



Main Partner – £12,000+VAT (to discuss partial/full SIK contact us)

*A leading presence on all festival promotion on & offline, before and throughout the festival.
Tailored activation to all attendees providing multiple touch points & unique engagement.*

- Your logo featured prominently across festival comms alongside the main BDF identity.
- A stall throughout the festival at one or all of the festival hubs.
- Full page ad space in the printed festival programme.
- Opportunity to promote via leafleting at festival venues.
- Logo featured on banners and screens around festival venues.
- Listed as 'Main partner' on partner pages on the website & printed festival communication.
- Logo featured in website, email & social media mastheads and footer (where applicable).
- Activation in the form of competitions, workshops and events at the festival.
- 10 festival passes allowing for free roam of festival events (tickets must still be booked).
- Our undying never-ending appreciation and loyalty.

District Partner – £6,000+VAT (to discuss partial/full SIK contact us)

*A strong presence on all events in a specific district in the build-up to and during the festival.
Tailored activation to all attendees visiting events in the district (1 of 4).*

- Your logo on district-specific communication ahead of the festival.
- A stall throughout the festival within the district hub.
- Opportunity to promote via leafleting at festival venues.
- Listed as 'District partner' on partner pages on the website & printed festival comms.
- Logo featured on banners and screens around district venues.
- Logo featured in website, email & social media footers (where applicable).
- Activation in the form of competitions, workshops and events at the festival.
- Half page ad space in the printed festival programme.
- 5 festival passes allowing for free roam of festival events (tickets must still be booked).
- Our year-round appreciation and casual promotion.

Event Sponsor – £1,500–£3,000+VAT

Sponsor a specific event helping pay for speakers travel, venue and equipment and receive prominence on all promotion in regards to that event, on and offline.

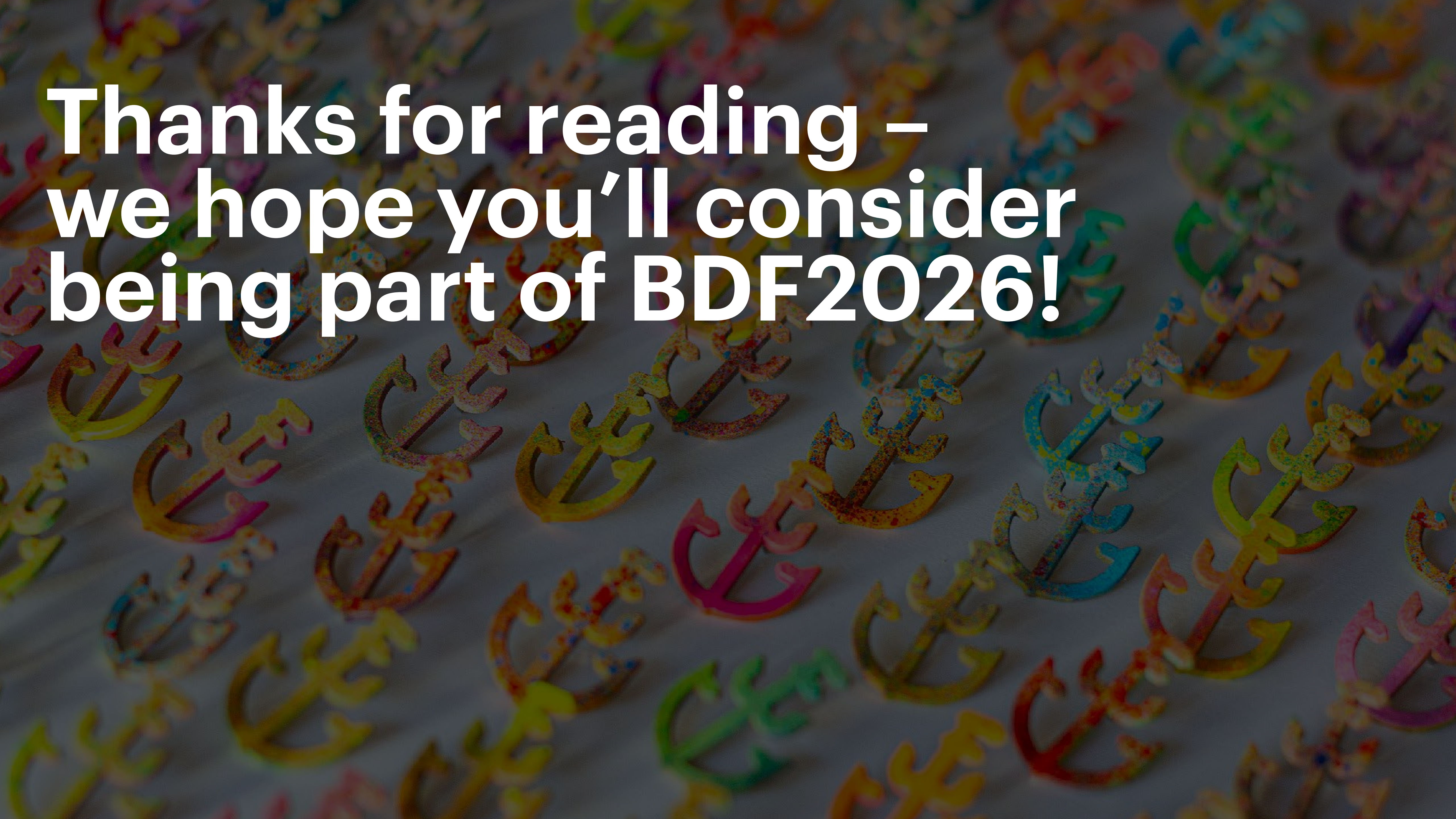
- Logo featured on screens and banners (depending on the event) around the venue.
- Listed as 'Event partner' in festival programme and on event page when booking tickets.
- Opportunity to promote at the event via flyers and/or a stall (depending on the event).

Supporter – £1,000+VAT (perfect tier for local design agencies looking to support).

Supporters will receive activation during the festival and appear inside the printed programme and on the website, receive festival passes and exclusive event access.

- 5 festival passes allowing for free roam of festival events (tickets must be booked).
- Listed as 'Supporter' on partner pages on the website and printed festival communication.
- An article profiling the business on our blog & promoted on our social channels.
- Our enduring respect & love.

**Thanks for reading –
we hope you'll consider
being part of BDF2026!**



Any questions? Contact us:
hello@birminghamdesign.co.uk

birminghamdesignfestival.org.uk
[instagram.com/designfestbrum](https://www.instagram.com/designfestbrum)
twitter.com/designfestbrum

