



## *product design assistant*

Reporting into Design Director / full time / permanent role / hybrid / based in our Putney design studio.

### **the company**

Based in South-West London, Caroline Gardner Publishing is a leading supplier of cards, stationery, and stylish home and gifting products, catering to design-focused retailers worldwide. From high street brands and department stores to independent galleries, our products find a home in a diverse range of retail spaces.

With a successful boutique on London's Marylebone High Street and a vibrant ecommerce platform, our unique blend of quirky and sophisticated designs is also available directly to consumers. The brand enjoys a strong, loyal following and is both instantly recognisable and highly sought after by a wide array of customers. We're excited to continue expanding into new product areas with ambitious growth plans on the horizon.

Celebrating 30 years in 2023, we are a British brand known for our commitment to high-quality products and exceptional customer service. We are deeply conscious of our environmental and community impact, focusing on creating timeless designs that resonate with modern life rather than fleeting trends.

As part of our dedication to social and environmental responsibility, we have embarked on a continuous improvement journey and have recently received an accredited B-Corp certification.

The business is at an exciting stage of growth and transformation. With ambitious plans to expand our presence across retail and ecommerce, we're looking for talented individuals to help drive this journey.

Caroline Gardner is committed to creating a diverse environment and is proud to be an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, colour, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, genetics, disability or age.

## the role

This is an exciting new opportunity for a Design Assistant/Product Development Assistant to join the product design team of this established boutique brand. Working as part of the design team, and closely with buying and merchandising, you will facilitate the timely development and delivery of ranges from sampling through to production, in line with the critical path across accessories, home ceramics, stationery, knitted accessories and loungewear. The role exists to support the product team in all stages of the product lifecycle, from market research and concept generation to sample development and launch, while gradually stepping up to take ownership of specific product segments. You will act as a design assistant but also contribute design ideas, support the collection planning, and work more autonomously as you develop.

## responsibilities

- Stay abreast of design industry trends by organising market research trips, competitive shopping, and trend research, to help support the delivery of mood/trend research and delivery of innovative product design each season.
- Assist with the creation of product visuals, colour palettes, technical drawings, print to product placements and prepare print-ready artwork.
- Work closely with the buying and merchandising teams to understand sales data to assist in range building a product offering that supports the company strategy and budgets.
- Ensure visual range plans are kept up to date throughout the season, through range selection to final visuals, for use by the team, and as a presentation and sales tool.
- Assist in taking creative design work from concept through to sampling, across all product categories from design and briefing to sample comments and gold seals.
- Ensure specification briefs are kept up to date through sampling amendments so that briefs are representative of production for use in future seasons.
- Assist with the production of product specification briefs to send to international suppliers, to include clear and accurate measurements, construction references, colour references, trim details and print placements.
- Manage the sample approval process, ensuring colour and quality comments are sent in-line with the critical path, and samples are available for key events such as customer meetings and trade shows, as well as bulk production schedules.
- Work closely with the Sales and Merchandising team to understand key customer requirements and sampling requests.
- Produce barcodes, swing tags and packaging for all final product SKUs.
- Be responsible for registering all designs on ACID each season, for intellectual copyright protection.
- Assist the Design Director with Licensing projects, providing specification briefs, artwork and amending designs, in line with project critical paths.
- Assist the Design Director with retail only ranges as needed.

- Support the wider design team with design projects and administration as required.

## skills & experience

- 1-3 years' experience as a Product Design Assistant or similar, with experience in manufacturing or fashion/lifestyle retail, with a relevant design degree.
- Solid skills in Adobe Illustrator for creating mood boards, range building, technical drawing and specification briefs.
- Good organisational skills, attention to detail and ability to follow project timelines/deadlines.
- Creative flair with an ability to generate original ideas, stay on-trend, but also understand commercial viability.
- Excellent communication skills with an ability to liaise cross functionally (design, buying, merchandising, sales and marketing).
- Ability to work in a small team with a flexible mindset and wear multiple "hats", from admin/support tasks to design development and specifications.
- Good presentation skills and the confidence to explain and sell ideas to stakeholders, colleagues and international suppliers and manufacturers.
- Excellent time management skills and the ability to cope under pressure with several projects at once.
- Accuracy and attention to detail, with a commitment to quality, particularly when creating and communicating product specifications, sample comments and approvals.
- Being open to feedback with a willingness to make changes to work as directed.

## personal attributes

- detail-oriented, proactive and solutions-driven.
- calm under pressure with a natural sense of ownership.
- collaborative, curious and passionate about beautiful, well-made products.
- motivated to develop the role and design abilities, always learning and improving.
- a team player with the ability to also work independently with some supervision.
- understands and represents the Caroline Gardner brand values.
- demonstrates respect and politeness and regularly exceeds expectations.
- always presents a professional image.
- prepared to go the extra mile to achieve targets.

## salary & benefits

Competitive salary dependent on experience.

Benefits include hybrid working (3 days per week in the office and 2 days from home), a generous annual leave allowance with long service additional holiday days, plus discretionary day off for your birthday, staff discount of up to 65%, discretionary annual bonus scheme, pension and group life assurance policy, an Employee Assistance Programme, and much more.

Candidates must have existing right to work in UK (we are unable to offer visa sponsorship).

This is a permanent, full-time role (five days per week, 9.00am–5.30pm, 37.5 hrs per week), based at our Head Office in Putney, London.

## how to apply

To apply, please submit your CV and relevant examples of your work to HR via [jobs@carolinegardner.com](mailto:jobs@carolinegardner.com).

Please note we can only accept complete applications which include a current CV and a portfolio of relevant work that illustrates why you're suitable for the role.

If your application is shortlisted, the interview process will consist of three stages, the first of which will be a remote interview via Teams/Zoom with the Design Director and HR. Successful candidates will then be asked to complete a design project for review by Caroline Gardner and the Design Director, as an opportunity for you to show your understanding of the design aesthetic and what you could bring to the brand, followed by a final stage interview and presentation at our Head Office in Putney with Caroline and the Design Director.

*A little note: We'd love to hear from you, so please don't wait too long to apply. If we receive a high number of applications, we may need to close the vacancy early to ensure we can give each application the attention it deserves. Once the role is closed, we won't be able to accept any further applications. Thank you for understanding.*