This project gives people a system to encourage confidence, creativity and play leading to an understanding of the design process. Bowles and Round have worked together to make this textile toolbox: a ‘pick and mix’ box of pattern, colour and quality. Inspired by researching the origins of kindergarten learning, the designers have developed a beautifully crafted game contained in a box. Smörgås Board is a hands-on game that encourages analogue play and participatory design. The pattern modules can be further translated digitally to create bespoke printed fabrics.

Empowering the consumer to be creative and to gain new skills may encourage them to create clothing for themselves that they cherish. By being involved, a level of pleasure and emotional attachment may be attained that leads to products being better looked after, and kept for longer. Perhaps they will buy less of the stuff that does not nourish them creatively; perhaps they can be taught – in an innovative and joyful way – how to buy well. To invest in the planet, themselves, and in quality ‘slow’ clothing at the same time.

The toolbox presents a physical ‘gift’ in the form of laser cut geometric shapes and offers a DIY design loop to print, make, wear. The skirt is digitally printed onto a luxury wool, and echoes the traditional felted wool clothing of the indigenous Sami people.