

Artists-in-Residence Toolkit



The following information has been prepared by artsACT to assist organisations in developing artists-in-residence programs.

Thinking of putting together an artist residency? Here are some things to consider:

Section 1: What is an artist residency?

An artist residency is an opportunity provided by a host organisation that enables a guest artist to work in a new environment, often away from the restrictions and pressures of their everyday lives. Artist residencies are about providing the time and space for a guest artist to develop work and creatively explore new ideas.

Artists are often selected through a competitive application process. The length of a residency can vary from weeks through months or even a year. Artist residencies can include a working space and accommodation, or may only offer a workspace. Some support a single artist or art form, others can support groups to collaborate across art forms.

Artist residencies are important because they provide opportunities for artists from around the world to spend time in a new atmosphere and environment. They support cultural and artistic exchange, nurture experimentation and new ideas, and support research and the development of new work.

Resource:

[Asialink Arts](#) works to initiate cultural and artistic exchange through artist residencies and other projects, and is Australia's largest international arts residency program. The aim of these residencies is to promote cultural understanding, exchange and artistic endeavour between Australia and Asian countries.

Asialink residencies enable Australians to develop their talents and experience by working in Asia. Artists establish personal contacts, develop on-going networks and further projects, and increase knowledge and understanding of Australian arts.

Section 2: Defining the purpose.

If you are thinking of setting up an artist residency, the first thing to consider is 'Why?' Knowing what you want to achieve by offering a residency will enable you to

establish clear expectations for artists and prepare assessment criteria. Your motivation for offering the residency will influence how the opportunity is promoted and who will apply.

Motivations for hosting artist residencies are many and varied. You may want to raise the profile of a place, organisation or activity. You may want to provide professional development and networking opportunities for both visiting artists and the host community, with opportunities for a community to be invigorated through an exchange of ideas and new ways of working. You may want to cultivate relationships with other artists and exchange opportunities with distant arts organisations. You may want to promote a particular art form or practice, encourage experimentation or facilitate exchange across art forms. You may want to support artists at a particular stage in their careers or from a particular background. Or you may want to increase access opportunities to a specialist facility or resource.

There are as many different purposes behind artist residencies as there are residencies themselves. Whatever the motivation for your artist residency, defining its purpose is the first step in realising your ambitions. Until you define why you want to offer an artist residency you won't be able to identify suitable applicants.

The ACT Government has an Artists-in-Residence policy that outlines a vision and goals for arts residencies hosted in the Australian Capital Territory. You can view the policy on the artsACT website at www.arts.act.gov.au

Residency example:

[La Paternal Espacio Proyecto](#) (LPEP) in Buenos Aires offers an artist residency with workspace for production and exhibition, and includes contacts and connections to Argentina's arts and cultural institutions.

The purpose of the residency is the promotion of dialogue between artists of different disciplines and nationalities, with a specific interest in projects focusing on Art and Politics.

Section 3: **What's on offer?**

Artist residencies cost money. Generally, an organisation offering a residency will subsidise some costs, but every artist residency is different. Your organisation must decide what it can offer and what costs resident artists will be responsible for.

Potential costs to consider include administration (and whether this can be defrayed somewhat through application fees), travel and accommodation costs, living

expenses, groceries and meals, art supplies, access to specialist equipment or technical assistance, insurance and more.

Many residency opportunities include some cost to the artist. However, it is important to be upfront and clear about any expenses before artists apply.

Studio facilities

All successful artist residencies offer conditions that are conducive to creativity and provide appropriate facilities for guest artists.

As the needs of a writer will be different from the needs of a sculptor or a dancer, it is important to be clear about the kind of workspace that is available. For example, you may wish to provide information about the size of the floor space, whether there is a wet area, electricity, or what furniture and equipment is present. This will help artists to decide whether your organisation's facilities will be appropriate for their needs.

Accommodation

Is your organisation able to provide accommodation as part of the residency? If so, describe the living quarters, capacity and amenities when promoting the opportunity. If not, can you assist artists to find appropriate accommodation? The following checklist may assist you in describing your facilities:

Accommodation:		Amenities:			
• Single	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Equipped kitchen	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Mobile reception	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Couples	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Bathroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Television	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Family	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Lounge area	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Radio	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Group	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Study area	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Heating	<input type="checkbox"/>
		• Desk	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Cooling	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local transport:		• Computer	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Laundry facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Car/bicycle facility	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Internet access	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Bedding	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Public transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Telephone	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Financial support

Consider whether the residency opportunity you offer will include an artist stipend. If so, how much will you offer and to what purpose? Will a stipend help attract higher profile artists? Is it intended to make the residency more affordable for a targeted group? Which costs is it meant to support? Will it be paid as a lump sum or regular payment?

You may also like to consider whether the residency will support artists' travel. If so, for how much? Will the amount vary between Australian artists and international artists?

If a residency involves more than one artist, will financial assistance be increased to support each individual or will it remain the same?

Non-financial support

Host organisations can add value to an artist residency in a number of ways. Consider the networks that you can draw upon to increase the attractiveness and value of a residency opportunity for artists. Will you assist resident artists to make connections with local peers, and provide introductions to arts events and organisations? Is there an opportunity to assist resident artists to access tutoring work within local teaching institutions or artist communities?

Practicalities

Think about the feasibility of hosting a resident artist:

- Is the environment urban or rural?
- Does the environment present any potential risks to the resident artist? If so, how can they be mitigated?
- Do you have the appropriate insurance?
- Are guest artists welcome to bring partners, children, or pets?
- Is public transport available within an easy walk? Is a vehicle required?
- Is there disabled access?
- Will artists need to purchase and prepare their own food?
- Are English language skills essential?
- Is on-site staff support available?
- Is there a cleaner? Is there garbage collection?

Remember:

Offering an artist residency costs money, as does participating in one. Some residencies cover all costs, and some don't cover any costs at all. Can your organisation afford to offer the residency and will artists be able to afford to participate?

Section 4: **Establishing a timeline.**

When looking to put together a timeline for your artist residency there are a number of things to consider.

When will residencies be available?

When deciding how many residencies you can offer over the course of a year, and the dates they will be available, consider other demands upon your facilities and resources. Is it best to schedule a residency during what is typically a quieter time of the year, or is there a regular activity or event that would benefit from having a resident artist?

Look closely at your organisational calendar to determine what dates are available and whether you will have the capacity to schedule a residency during that time.

What will be the minimum and maximum length of residencies offered? Consider the minimum time an artist will need to meet the purpose of your residency (see section 2), and the maximum period that your organisation could support a residency.

Consider the cost of each artist residency and the available funding before deciding how many supported residencies you will offer.

Planning takes time

When looking to set a closing date for applications, consider how long you will need to promote the residency opportunity. Following the closing, you will need to schedule time to assess applications and contact successful and unsuccessful artists. Is the time between when you can advise artists and the commencement of the residency period a reasonable time in which to prepare to take up the opportunity?

Taking time out to participate in a residency can require considerable planning by the artist. From the time they are advised, successful applicants will need time to prepare to take up their residency opportunity. Participation is usually planned in advance (expect three months, or more for longer residencies).

Residency example:

The [Hill End Artist Residency](#) is offered by the Bathurst Regional Art Gallery and aims to support creative development in all areas of the visual arts and contribute to the cultural development and sustainability of the village.

Hill End residencies are located in a heritage environment, and artists respond to the history and landscape of the region. The residency also aims to provide the opportunity for public access to an artist at work, and promotes open studios, talks or workshops as part of an artist's stay.

Section 5: Financial considerations.

Hosting an artist residency comes with both organisational and financial challenges. What resources will your organisation commit to hosting a resident artist? Beyond confirming that you have the necessary time, physical and staffing resources, there are a number of financial considerations that must be taken into account.

Will it be sustainable?

You may be planning a one-off residency which will meet your purposes, and this is perfectly valid. However, if you are thinking about hosting an ongoing artists-in-residence program you must consider whether doing so will be sustainable for your organisation. Identify what resources are required and who will be paying for each aspect of the program.

Costs to consider

Identifying and setting up suitable accommodation can be a costly exercise. You may already have accommodation and/or studio space, but does it require a fit out? Is there heating? Does the kitchen need equipping? Is there bedding? Does the workspace for the artist need any equipment or furnishings? Are there costs associated with guest artists accessing specialist studio equipment or technical assistance?

Think about expenses which may not be immediately apparent, like administration (from initial planning through to promoting the opportunity, receiving and assessing applications, liaising with artists and reporting). Other expenses will include insurance, power and water consumption and housekeeping.

Additional funding

While there are many benefits in hosting artist residencies, your organisation will also bear some of the costs involved. Other associated costs may be the responsibility of the artist. Applicant artists may be able to apply to their local council or arts funding body to support them to take up residency opportunities.

Additional funds to support an artist residency may be available through business or philanthropic sources, but keep in mind that there is significant work involved in identifying, winning and managing sponsorships.

Government funding may also be an option for support. If you are considering approaching government or business/philanthropic sources for support, start by looking at the purpose behind your proposed residency and how it might fit with the stated objectives of potential funding bodies.

Note: Arts Residencies ACT is a co-ordinated webpage promoting artist residency opportunities across the ACT, as well as a potential source of funding to support ACT-based arts residencies. It is linked to the ACT Artists-in-Residency Policy and administered by artsACT. For more information visit www.arts.act.gov.au or phone (02) 6207 2384.

Will you offer user-pay residencies?

Some organisations offer both supported and user-pay artist residencies. Consider whether it would be worthwhile to include provision for guests to purchase a residency period at your facility. How much would you need to charge to make it cost neutral? What profit level would make offering user-pay residencies worthwhile? There may be other benefits beyond income in allowing for user-pay residencies (such as profile building, or making use of otherwise empty accommodation or studio space).

If you are thinking about user-pay residencies consider what your organisation can offer to make the opportunity attractive, and how much it might be worth to those willing to pay.

Section 6: Expectations of the artist.

Artists will have a variety of motivations for, and expectations about, participating in a residency. Artist motivations for participating in a residency may include:

Education

- learning specific techniques or skills
- working with particular artists, curators or scholars
- conducting research in a particular place or institution

Production

- working on an individual creative project
- working with specific technical tools or facilities
- making work for exhibition or performance

Sabbatical

- taking time away from the everyday
- immersion in a new environment and culture
- finding new inspiration
- creatively exploring an idea

Collaboration

- building networks
- meeting local artists and/or other residency artists
- working as a group to develop a project

Be clear and upfront about the purpose of the artist residency opportunity and what your organisation can offer. This will assist artists to select a residency that is right for them, and will help to avoid misunderstandings, making the opportunity a success for both guest and host.

Section 7: Expectations on the artist.

The purpose of an artist residency (see Section 2) will guide an organisation's expectations for participating artists. Start with why you are offering the artist residency and what you want to achieve. While many artist residencies will have specific benefits to the host organisation and wider community, all residency opportunities should be artist-centred, with a clear focus on the benefits for artists.

Consider:

- What are the expectations for artists to work on the premises? For instance, if a facility is open to the public should the artist be at work in a studio on particular days/times?
- Will artists need to create new work for exhibition or performance at the conclusion of the residency?
- Is a period of sabbatical enough?
- Is a written report required at the conclusion of the residency? This might include the applicant's assessment of the residency and any outcomes. Such an evaluation may be useful for annual reports or when acquitting funding.
- What outcomes can you record and measure? This may be useful when looking to leverage future sponsorship or funding.

Depending on the expected outcomes, some artist residencies ask that guest artists donate a work sample from the residency period to the host organisation.

Remember:

Some artist residencies include specific conditions that artists must comply with, such as a community engagement element or exhibiting at the end of the period. Other artist residencies offer unconditional hospitality, where the artist is free to use the residency for his or her own purposes, with minimal obligations.

Are community engagement outcomes envisaged?

Will your residency connect artists with the local community? Artist residencies can present exciting engagement opportunities for artists and local communities. Resident artists may benefit from introductions to local arts and cultural organisations.

If your organisation expects an element of community engagement from a residency, it will be essential to assist your guest artists to deliver this. Community engagement that is planned for by the resident artist, in conjunction with the host organisation, will be most successful. After all, you know the local community.

If appropriate, assist resident artists to make local connections and plan engagement activities that will resonate with a target group. Community engagement can happen in many different ways and might take place during or at the conclusion of a residency. Activities may include workshops, exhibitions, presentation of research, a performance excerpt or concerts, focused discussions, school visits (organised with the assistance of the host organisation), guest lectures or tutoring.

Note: All artist residencies that receive Arts Residencies ACT funding will outline community engagement responsibilities for artists.

Section 8: Criteria and artist selection.

Many artist residencies have an application procedure open to artists from around the world. Applications usually include a curriculum vitae, a statement outlining the artist's motivation or a project, and support material demonstrating the artist's practice.

How do you know if an artist is the right one?

A suitable artist should be able to:

- communicate their ideas clearly;
- provide strong examples of their work;
- present a curriculum vitae outlining their education and experience; and
- provide references or referees.

Application criteria

When preparing criteria, keep referring back to the purpose of your residency (see section 2). Consider whether the residency has a particular focus or is targeted to a particular group. If you want to attract emerging artists, your criteria will need to reflect this. The same criteria would not be suitable for a residency program aiming to attract artists with an international profile. Application criteria should reflect how important an applicant's level of experience and/or the quality of their work will be to their selection.

If there is a community engagement element to the artist residency, the criteria may require artists to outline what kind of engagement activities they could offer. It is important to remember that community engagement works best when activities are negotiated between the artist and host organisation. As long it is clear up front that a level of community engagement is required, how this might occur can be decided during the residency.

Decide what support material you will need in order to assess applications, but keep in mind that it should not be too onerous for the artist and should be in a format that is easy to send and access.

Who should apply?

- Is the residency open to local artists? Australian artists? International artists?
- What art form(s) is the residency opportunity suited to or targeted at?
- Is the residency suitable for or targeted at emerging artists? Developing artists? Artists with an established career and profile?
- Will preference be given to particular applicants?
- Can two or more artists who want to collaborate apply together? If so, how many artists can be accommodated?
- Is there provision for family members or a partner of the Resident Artist during the residency term?

Assessment and selection

Your organisation will need to decide how best to select the artists that will participate in your artist residency. You may decide to assign responsibility for this decision to your organisation's artistic Director or CEO, or to a panel of working artists from your community, or a Board sub-committee.

However the selection is made, assessing applications takes time so remember to build this into the assessors' workload (if managed in-house). And after a selection has been made, consider how you will notify successful and unsuccessful applicants, and whether you can offer feedback on unsuccessful applications.

Section 9: **Marketing and promotion.**

Marketing and promotion is yet another body of work and cost associated with hosting an artist residency. Will there be interest in the artist residency opportunity your organisation is offering, and how will you let people know about it? Consider how and where you will promote the residency. If it is open publically, how will it be advertised? Consider what local and national networks you can access to promote the residency.

If your residency is open to applications from Australian and international artists, there are a number of websites you may wish to consider advertising with.

[Arts Hub Australia](#) is a national arts portal presenting news and information about the arts, and may be an option to consider for paid advertising.

[Res Artis](#) is a European-based worldwide network of artist residencies and presents a detailed list of residency opportunities across more than 50 countries.

The [Alliance of Artists Communities](#), based in the United States, is a source of information about artist residencies in the U.S. and internationally.

[TransArtists](#) is another international network for arts residencies and a resource for research and promotion.

Remember:

artsACT hosts the Arts Residencies ACT web pages, a co-ordinated portal with information about artist residencies available in the ACT. The portal is a free promotional tool. If you would like to include your residency on the portal, contact artsACT at arts@act.gov.au or phone (02) 6205 9431.

Establishing a point of difference

Identifying a point of difference will help you when promoting your artist residency. Think about what your organisation can offer that is out of the ordinary. What makes your residency facility / location / opportunity special or unique? If you can offer specialist facilities, a distinctive environment, or easy access and introductions to institutions, then make that a selling point.

Acknowledgement

Organisations that host an artist residency should reserve the right to promote the participation of specific artists and their work prior to, during and following the residency period.

Acknowledgement of support should be required on any documentation, printed or electronic, relating to or emerging from the residency by the artist.

Section 10: **Evaluating the Program.**

What makes a successful artist residency?

There is no one way to manage an artist residency. However, most successful residencies will have some or all of the following elements:

✓ **Communication**

- Clearly define the relationship between host organisation and visiting artist. Prepare a handbook about your organisation with contact details and relevant guidelines or studio policies.

- Have an initial meeting to induct artists, and ensure a shared understanding of the artist's goals and your expectations.
 - Help resident artists to get to know your community, if appropriate. Provide information about the local environment and introduce them to peers and relevant institutions.
 - Have one point of contact within your staff for resident artists.
- ✓ **Collaboration**
- Work together to negotiate community engagement outcomes, and provide the assistance necessary to make activities a success.
 - Work together to create a timeline for expected project outcomes.
- ✓ **Flexibility**
- Help the artist become accustomed to their new environment, which may be very different from where they normally create.
 - Embrace spontaneity, and recognise that important work can happen when you welcome the unknown.
- ✓ **Artist focused**
- During the artist residency, emphasise the creative process and experience rather than the final product.
- ✓ **Evaluation**
- Consider how the success of a residency can be evaluated and reviewed.
 - Give resident artists the opportunity to provide feedback on the residency.

Arts Residencies ACT



 **Get inspired**

 **Create connections**

 **Exchange ideas**

What is Arts Residencies ACT?

- Arts Residencies ACT is a web portal promoting arts residency opportunities across the ACT.
- Arts Residencies ACT is a potential source of funding to support arts residencies, administered through artsACT.

For more information visit www.arts.act.gov.au or phone 62072384.