

Information Sheet

Creative Professionals: Exhibiting and Selling

How do I identify suitable spaces?

It is important at this stage to be clear about your aim. Are you looking:

- for an exhibition opportunity?
- to sell your work on a retail basis?
- to gain general publicity?
- to interest people in commissioning work from you?

The type of exhibition venue you will be looking for will be influenced by all the reasons listed above.

It is also important to do your research and choose spaces that are sympathetic to your type of work. Hiring a gallery is an option and this is best done as part of a group as it can be costly.

It is worth noting that the best exhibition space is not necessarily a gallery. Opportunities could exist within public buildings, outdoor spaces, studio complexes etc.

How do I approach a gallery?

Some galleries will prefer to find and approach you; but generally speaking approaches by artists are welcomed.

Provide information that is clear, concise and of good quality.

Digital Images and artists packs are the best means of doing this. Make sure you send your information to the right person in the correct role; check the website or telephone number.

For craft makers in particular it is important to include a price list with wholesale prices for a retail situation or selling prices for exhibitions.

How do I write a proposal?

When writing a proposal, keep the language clear and concise; avoid 'Art-Speak'.

Remember something you may have been thinking about in your own way, may not be as easy to understand by someone viewing your ideas for the first time. Ask someone to read

through the application before you send it so they can flag up anything that is not clear to them.

Remember to include documentation of your previous work and if possible some pictorial indication of your proposal.

Unless the application states a preferred format, set out the proposal in logical order:

- A covering letter
- your proposal
- supporting information
- budget*
- images
- CV

[* If you are writing a budget for your proposal do not forget to include any partner funding, copies of quotes for materials, support in kind and include a fair rate of pay for your time. Visit www.payingartists.org.uk for information on rates of pay for artists.]

Place the information in a binder. Post in good time to avoid leaving submission to the last minute. This will avoid problems such as printer ink running out, postal delays etc.

Initial approaches from galleries may occur by various means: degree shows, miscellaneous exhibitions, word of mouth, craft fairs, online profiles, websites and so forth. Most galleries plan exhibitions on average two years in advance, therefore this approach may only be for an outline exhibition concept, for later discussion with the gallery.

[Artquest: Artists Resource](#)

What is the procedure once an exhibition is confirmed?

If the gallery is interested in developing your idea, or in featuring your work in the overall programme, you should receive a contract outlining the conditions of exhibition (i.e. delivery and collection, insurance, commission, sales and payment, and publicity).

Once you have accepted these conditions in writing, this contract is legally binding between you and the gallery. You should raise any queries before signing a contract to avoid confusion later.

Nearer the time of the exhibition (approximately two months before the opening date) details such as transport and delivery arrangements and requirements for publicity and press information will be confirmed. This is your last opportunity to clear up any final exhibition queries.

Copies of the publicity material should be sent to you allowing enough time for distribution to your own list - alternatively the gallery may request your invitation list of individuals and organisations and then undertake a mailshot on your behalf.

After the exhibition has closed, all unsold work will be returned. Be sure to clarify in your contract who pays for the return of work. You must check immediately all pieces of work for damages and omissions and notify the gallery as soon as possible.

You should shortly afterward receive confirmation of any payment due to you and when you are likely to receive it.

See our [Contracts, Fees and Legal Matters Information Sheet](#) for more information and links.

What do I need to know about exhibiting at Craft Fairs?

The advantages of exhibiting at craft fairs include selling work directly to the public and being able to achieve a higher profit than selling through an exhibition or a shop. This is also an important opportunity to network and meet other makers.

You can only really assess the quality of a fair by visiting it for yourself. It must be right for your work and capable of generating worthwhile sales, future orders, contacts and opportunities.

Before you apply or commit, find out about advance publicity, previous years' sales and visitor numbers. If possible contact past exhibitors to get their opinions.

Before the event make sure you inform your existing customers, client list and also the press in order to make the event as successful as possible.

[Crafts Scotland](#)

[Craft and Design Magazine](#)

Some Craft Fairs:

[Contemporary Craft Fair Bovey Tracey](#)

[Lustre](#)

[Ceramic Art London](#)

[Great Northern Contemporary Craft Fair](#)

[Hereford Contemporary Craft Fair](#)

[Made by Hand](#)

[British Craft Trade Fair, Harrogate](#)

Some Art Fairs

[Affordable Art Fair](#)

[Frieze Art Fair](#)

[London Art Fair](#)

Some Competitions and Opens Prizes

[Eisteddfod – Y Lle Celf](#)

[Oriel Davis Gallery](#)

[Oriel Mostyn Open](#)

[New Contemporaries](#)

[Jerwood Visual Arts](#)