

THE VAA GUIDE TO

ARTIST RESIDENCIES

UNLOCKING CREATIVE OPPORTUNITIES
FOR ARTISTS OF ALL LEVELS

[VISUAL-ARTISTS.ORG](https://visual-artists.org)



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INTRODUCTION

Artist residencies offer artists a unique opportunity to immerse themselves in a creative environment, explore new ideas, and collaborate with fellow artists. Whether you're an emerging artist seeking exposure or an established artist looking for inspiration, participating in an artist residency can be a transformative experience. In this guide, we will explore the world of artist residencies, discussing their benefits, types, application process, how to find them, and valuable tips for artists of all levels.

Getting visible with Artist Residencies Artists in-residence programmes give visual artists opportunities to work away temporarily from their usual studio or workplace. This time can allow artists much-needed space to connect with new audiences, to feed their creativity.

The right artist-in-residence programme can be a key turn to gaining visibility in an artist's career. Artist-in-residence programmes come in all shapes and sizes and can typically last from a week to six months or longer.





The support arrangements vary, besides the physical space to work, and can include financial payment (salary or project fee) plus lodgings if required. Residencies are hosted by organisations in both commercial and public arts sectors including art institutions, museums, hospitals, universities, national parks, hotels, theatres, galleries, cultural foundations, and so on. They can be regional, national, and international. They increase opportunities to expand artists' networks and meet new art collectors.

Residencies are available to artists at all stages of their careers, contrary to popular belief that they are only for early to mid-career artists. We recommend that artists explore residencies that complement their niche or subject specialism.



A woman with blonde hair, wearing a blue patterned top, is seen from the side, reaching up to paint a large canvas. The canvas shows a seascape with blue and white tones. The background is a blurred view of a coastal area with buildings and trees.

CASE STUDY

MAGGIE COCHRAN

Seascape artist, Maggie Cochran was awarded a weeklong residency at Bedruthan Hotel and Spa in Newquay, renowned for its support of artists since the 1950s. She described the experience as magical.

She explained:

‘The view is just breathtaking, I shall be continuing to try and create it long after I leave. I’m really pleased with what I’ve achieved, four paintings over the residency, which are going on sale with a gallery. What a wonderful experience.’

Maggie recently secured a part-time residency at the Royal Duchy Hotel in Falmouth. She advised artists to not just consider Art Residencies that are advertised, but also be open to approaching suitable establishments. View it as a working partnership, whereby both parties can benefit from collaboration, community engagement and sharing audiences.

CASE STUDY

ALEX CORINA

We attended the launch of the Liverpool Everyman's Artist in Residence Programme with an exhibition by the artist in residence Alex Corina.

Alex explained:

'It is an opportunity to extend my practice by taking a break from my studio. I am creatively tackling the emotion of the theatre as a visual subject, which is a new and inspiring experience.'



ALEX
CORINA



MAGGIE
COCHRAN



RESIDENCY & PLACEMENT PARTNERS

Artist residencies are programs that offer artists dedicated time and space to create, experiment, and connect with other artists. Residencies can vary in duration, ranging from a few weeks to several months, and can take place in a variety of settings, including studios, retreats, galleries, or cultural institutions. Each residency program is unique, offering different resources, facilities, and support, so it's important for artists to understand their specific goals, structure, and requirements before applying.

Some of the most unconventional artist residencies span across the world, including Hawaii National Parks, Side Street Studios in South Africa, Antarctica Residency at the National Science Foundation, Brisbane Airport Artist Residency, and an Amazon Rainforest Artist Residency with LabVerde. If you are open to the idea of undertaking an artist-in-residence project, the possibilities are endless. Equally, you can also create your own artist placement, in partnership with organisations that may have not considered this before.

BENEFITS OF ARTIST RESIDENCIES

Participating in an artist residency offers numerous benefits. Firstly, it provides uninterrupted time and space for artists to focus solely on their creative practice, away from daily distractions and responsibilities. Residencies also offer exposure to new experiences, cultures, and perspectives, which can greatly influence an artist's work and broaden their artistic vision. Additionally, residencies often foster a sense of community, allowing artists to connect and collaborate with peers, exchange ideas and techniques, and build a network of support within the art world.

TYPES OF ARTIST RESIDENCIES

There is a wide variety of artist residency programs available, catering to different artistic disciplines, levels of experience, and personal preferences. Some residencies focus on specific mediums, such as painting, sculpture, or photography, while others are interdisciplinary, welcoming artists from various disciplines. Residencies can be located in urban or rural settings, offering artists the choice of a bustling metropolis or serene natural surroundings. It's crucial for artists to research and identify the types of residencies that align with their artistic goals and preferences.

A man with glasses and a beard is looking down at a book in an art studio. In the background, there are shelves with books and a large abstract painting with vibrant colors like red, blue, and yellow.

FINDING ARTIST RESIDENCIES

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Engaging with professional networks and organizations relevant to your artistic discipline can lead to valuable residency opportunities. Attend conferences, exhibitions, and workshops within your field to connect with other artists and organizations that offer residencies.

Numerous websites and online platforms exist to help artists find residency programs. Some popular ones include:

ResArtis - An extensive database of artist residencies worldwide.

TransArtists - Provides information and resources for international artist residencies.

Alliance of Artists Communities - A network connecting artists with residency opportunities globally.

Artquest - An online platform providing artist residency listings and resources for UK-based artists.

Open Calls - Curated list of open calls and artist opportunities, including residencies.

Visual Artists Association - Opportunities and open calls, including residencies.

WEBSITES AND ONLINE PLATFORMS

ARTIST RESIDENCY DIRECTORIES

Directories specifically dedicated to artist residencies can be valuable resources. Examples include:

The Complete Artist Residency Guide by GYST (Get Your Sh*t Together): A comprehensive guidebook listing residencies worldwide.

AIR Artist-in-Residence Programs by Art Hub: A directory of residency programs searchable by discipline and location.

Artist Residency Programs: A Guide for Artists, published by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA): Provides a detailed overview of residency options and resources.

Subscribe to newsletters and publications focused on your artistic practice for updates on residency opportunities.

HOW TO FIND YOUR OWN RESIDENCY PLACEMENT

While many residencies are open to applications, artists also have the option to create their own residency experience. Here are some steps to help you find your own residency placement:

Define Your Goals: Determine the purpose and objectives of your residency. What do you hope to achieve during this dedicated time? Consider the location, resources, and community you desire.

Research Locations: Identify potential locations that align with your artistic vision. Explore different cities or regions that pique your interest, either close to home or abroad.

Network and Connect: Reach out to local artists, galleries, and cultural institutions in your desired location. Inquire about temporary studio spaces or partnerships that could facilitate your self-directed residency.





Collaborative Residencies: Consider organizing a group residency with other artists. Collaborate on finding a shared space or utilize existing residencies that provide group possibilities.

Create a Proposal: Develop a formal proposal that outlines your intentions, goals, and how the residency will enhance your practice. This proposal can be used when reaching out to potential collaborators or organizations.

Secure Funding: Explore grants, scholarships, or sponsorships available to support your self-directed residency. Research local arts councils, private foundations, or crowdfunding platforms that may offer financial assistance.

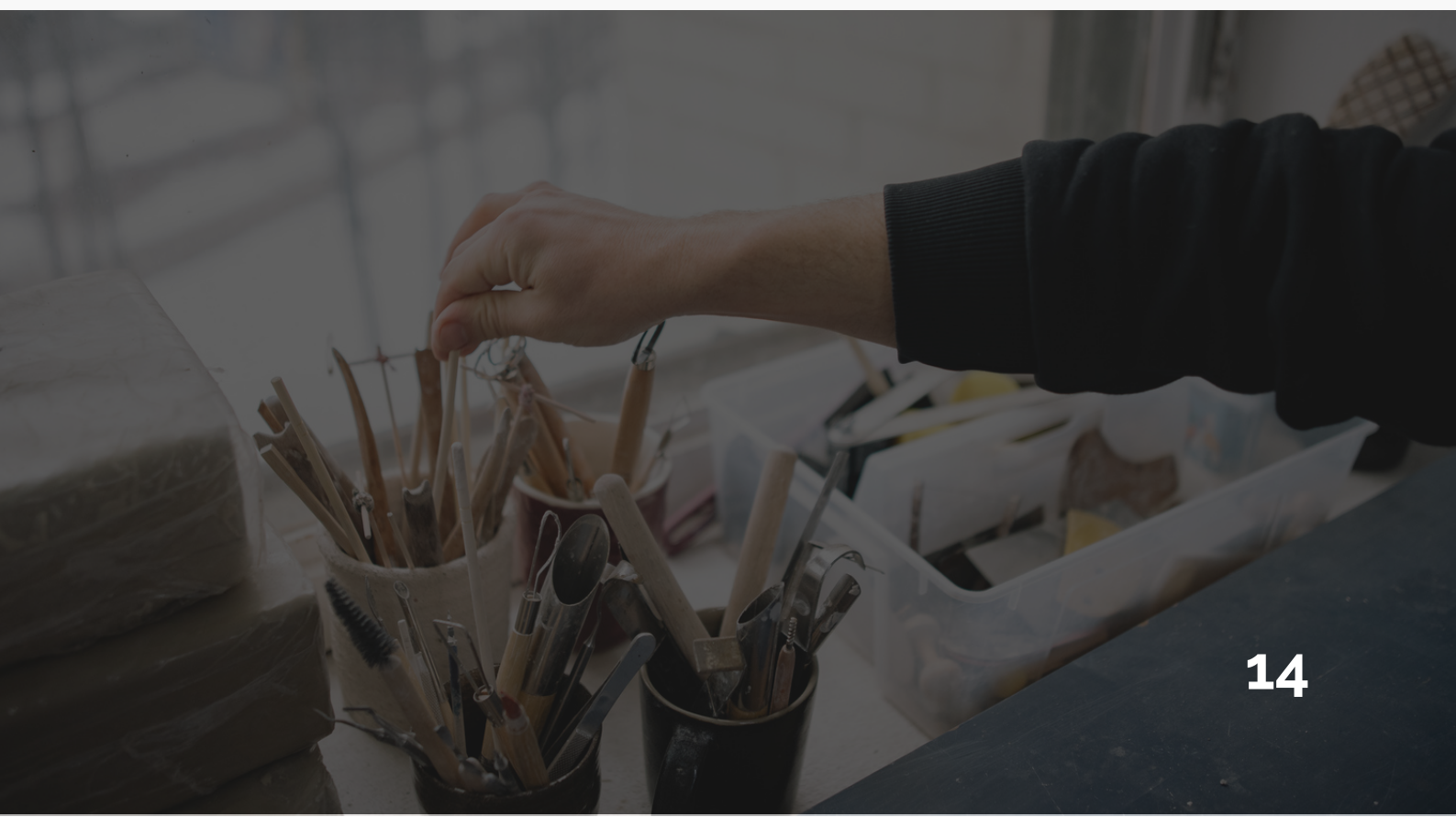
Arrange Logistics: Once you have secured a location or partner organization, discuss and establish the logistics of the residency, including accommodation, studio space, and any additional requirements or agreements.

An artist with long dark hair tied back is seen from the side, focused on painting a portrait on a canvas. The studio is filled with various art supplies, including brushes, paints, and other canvases in the background.

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL ARTIST RESIDENCY EXPERIENCE

1. **Research extensively** to find residencies that align with your artistic goals and interests.
2. Prepare a **professional portfolio** showcasing your best and most recent work.
3. Craft a captivating **artist statement** that reflects your unique artistic voice.
4. Tailor your **project proposal** to each residency program, demonstrating your passion and commitment.
5. Be organized and submit applications **ahead of deadlines**.

6. **Maintain an open mindset**, embrace new experiences, and be willing to collaborate with other artists.
7. **Make the most of the resources and facilities** provided, experiment with new techniques, and push your creative boundaries.
8. Engage with the **local community**, **immerse yourself** in the cultural environment, and **seek inspiration** from your surroundings.
9. **Foster connections with fellow artists** by attending studio visits, workshops, and events to expand your network and gain insight into the art world.



This is a simple example of an artist placement agreement from VAA Mentor Amy Jobes, which is useful if creating your own residency placement as part of your professional development. You can amend the terms according to your individual placement.

Artist-in-Residence: Confirmation Agreement

Artist:	Amy Jobes
Placement:	Saunton Sands Hotel
Key Contact:	XXX Brend Hotels
	t: XX e: XXXk

1. Commencement & Dates:

Monday 9 January to Sunday 12 March 2023.

Private View Friday 9 March, with the exhibition running over the weekend until Sunday 12 March.

2. Artistic Work / Scope

- Prestigious artwork created of the venue's views by Amy Jobes, a professional artist. Amy will produce a collection of new works 8 to 12 pieces to showcase the venue.
- Opportunity for visitors to come to see live art.

- VIP event opportunity (usually evening) for the hotel to invite key clients to view an exhibition of the artist's works
- Shared revenue opportunity on artwork sales.
- PR with consumer and trade media (VAA can issue press releases).

3. Remuneration

As per schedule. In addition, it is discretionary and usual for the venue to consider offering light refreshments to the artist whilst working, as well as funding space & refreshments for the solo exhibition (50-60 guests from the artist and hotel). The hotel is to receive a 20% commission on paintings sold).

4. Materials

The material costs will be fully funded by the artist, which is approx. £1500.

5. Storage

The hotel to provide a clean dry space to store the canvas. The artist to liaise with the hotel to confirm the delivery date.

6. Health & Safety

The artist has Products and Public Liability Insurance of £5m covered by the Visual Artists Association, with Hencilla Canworth Ltd.

And here we have a simple example of a prospecting email, eg. an email that you might use to enquire about a residency or placement.

Subject: Enquiry for Artist in Residence Placement - Collaboration Opportunity

Dear [Venue Contact's Name],

I am an artist and a proud member of the Visual Artists Association (VAA), reaching out to explore potential opportunities for an artist in residence placement at [Venue Name]. I believe such a collaboration could bring numerous benefits to both parties involved.

As an artist in residence, I can offer the following advantages to [Venue Name]:

1. Enhanced vibrancy and creativity: Having a resident artist actively engaged in the venue cultivates a dynamic and inspiring atmosphere, captivating visitors and fellow artists alike.
2. Engaging with the audience: I would be delighted to interact with visitors, discussing my artistic process and creating a deeper connection between the art, the artist, and the audience.
3. Collaboration potential: The artist in residence program allows for collaboration between resident artists and the existing artistic community, enabling the exchange of ideas, techniques, and perspectives.

4. Exhibition and event participation: As part of the residency, I would gladly contribute to the exhibition program, leading artist talks, workshops, or participating in group exhibitions.

5. Cross-promotion and exposure: I will actively promote my residency through social media, personal networks, and the VAA network, which boasts a membership of over 25,000 artists, providing additional exposure for [Venue Name].

I have attached my portfolio for your perusal, allowing you to get a sense of my work and artistic journey.

I am excited about the prospect of collaborating as an artist in residence at [Venue Name]. I would love to discuss this opportunity further and explore how our partnership could contribute to the artistic vibrancy of your venue.

Thank you for considering my inquiry. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Best regards,

[Your Name]

[Your Contact Information]

Visual Artists Association (VAA) Member



CONCLUSION

Artist residencies open doors to incredible creative opportunities for artists of all levels. By understanding the different types of residencies, utilizing various resources to find them, and following the tips outlined in this guide, artists can successfully navigate the residency application process and unlock vast creative potential.

Whether participating in an established residency or creating your own, artist residencies offer unparalleled experiences that can shape and enrich an artist's practice in profound ways.

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