



Guidelines for 4-Year Studio Application Form

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

A sub-committee of Board members and the Studio Director will assess the applications submitted. The first stage of the application process requires the submission of an application form and supporting material. Applicants will then be interviewed before a final selection is made by the panel.

The criteria used to assess applications for membership are as follows:

- Practicing professional artist (see professional criteria below)
- Quality of work as indicated by portfolio
- The artist must have a proven need for a studio space
- The artist must be willing to contribute to the studio group
- Overall quality of application

The criteria used to assess active professional status are as follows:

- Has received art education to third level or can satisfactorily demonstrate equivalent experience and achievements
- Shows a consistent record of exhibiting and/or developing their practice
- Has a clear and well documented career trajectory
- Communicates their art practice clearly and presents themselves in a professional manner

In addition to the above assessment criteria applicants will be grouped as follows and the highest scoring applicants from each group awarded studios. A balance of Early Career Artists, Mid-Career Artists and Established Artists will be selected for interview and for the final selection.

- Emerging artist (graduate–5 years)
- Mid-career artist (6 -10 years)
- Established artist (11 years+)

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

We are committed to adopting the best possible practice in relation to Equality, Human Rights & Diversity within our organisation. To this end, we aim to select a diverse community of Visual Artists through this process.

1. PERSONAL DETAILS

Name, Address, Email address, Phone number: This information will be used to contact you during the application process and afterwards should you be awarded a studio space.

2. ART PRACTICE

Artist Biography (max 200 words): This should be a summary of your CV that gives details of your career trajectory to date. This could include career highlights, significant exhibitions you have been in, awards you have been shortlisted for or have received. If you are an emerging artist who has recently left college, please include this information here. If you have a non-arts background that informs your practice it would be appropriate to mention it in your biography.

Artist Statement (max 300 words): This should be a clear, well-written communication of what your art practice is about.

Website (if any): Make sure your website is functioning, up to date and that its primary content matches that in your submission e.g. artist statement, artist biography, portfolio and CV (if included on website).

Relevant social media/blog links (if any): Only include social media and blog links relevant to your art practice. The panel will look at the links provided. The advantage of including social media is that it provides the panel with a representative glimpse of your activity over a period of time. If you do not use it regularly and the content is low it is arguably not an important part of your professional practice and should therefore be omitted. You will not lose marks for not having social media links.

What are you currently working on? (max 150 words). What artistic output are you currently working on? Include any relevant information about up and coming exhibitions, projects and/or collaborations or any commission you have undertaken.

3. ACHIEVEMENTS

What do you want to achieve as a professional artist in the next 4 years? (max 150 words). The primary purpose of this question is to establish whether you have ambitions for your art practice in the next 4 years that are in line with Backwater's criteria for professional art practice (see above).

4. STUDIO USE

Outline briefly how you foresee yourself utilising the space over the next 4yrs (max 200 words). What aspects of your practice require the use of a studio, how many hours can you realistically spend in the studio per week and how do you think you would organise your time? e.g. mornings, evenings, 2 full days per week etc

5. CONTRIBUTIONS

Backwater Artists Group is an artist-led organisation that provides subsidised studio spaces with assistance from national and local authority funding. There are two members of staff (Director – full-time, Studio Coordinator – part-time). For the smooth and effective running of the organisation it is expected that members contribute where possible and appropriate. It is in the collective interest that members advocate for Backwater, increasing visibility in the community and the arts sector and ensuring that the organisation is well placed to secure much needed sponsorship and funding. Backwater is a progressive organisation and continues to develop new initiatives such as the Backwater Artists Network and a Continued Professional Programme for artists in the Cork area. We also welcome member-led initiatives.

In return for the opportunity to remain a member of Backwater, we ask that members do what they can to work with Backwater to raise the profile of the organisation and to generate new resources and opportunities for its members. Backwater Artists Group originated from an ethos of shared skills and ideas for the promotion of visual arts. In order to fulfil this, members were required to give some of their time and participate in the activities of the group. This ethos has now been adapted to ensure that any such exchange is done in the context of a reciprocal professional exchange between the organisation and its members.

It is important that you do not tick boxes for contributions that you are unlikely to deliver on, as the completed list will form part of your studio license agreement. Be realistic and focus on what you can genuinely and willingly contribute.

Please let us know the ways in which you would be willing to contribute by ticking the boxes below. The scoring of each of these items is weighted according to the level of contribution implied. It is important that an applicant only ticks boxes for contributions that they are genuinely prepared and equipped to deliver on. It is essential that an applicant ticks at least three boxes. It

is understood that some applicants may not have time to contribute in some of the ways listed. An optional text box is provided for a general declaration of intent.

Name Backwater Artists Group in your artist biography and/or CV: It is important that Backwater maintains visibility as a studio provider. We simply ask that a studio member communicates their membership in some way e.g. currently holds a studio at Backwater Artists Group, Cork.

Name and advocate for Backwater Artists Group when given an opportunity to do so: When asked about where you have a studio we ask that you mention Backwater by name and describe the benefits where appropriate.

Provide Backwater staff with details of any upcoming events or exhibitions in which you are involved: It is part of Backwater's ethos to support its member artists through the promotion of their work through our website and social media channels. To this effectively it is important that members communicate their news to office staff in good time.

Give workshops at outreach events e.g. Culture Night: This is a standard form of contribution at Backwater and other artist-led organisations in Cork City. Members who are practiced in giving children and adult art workshops are encouraged to do so for this event as a contribution to Backwater.

Give studio tours at open days and outreach events e.g. Culture Night, Open Studios: This is a standard form of contribution at Backwater and other artist-led organisations in Cork City. Each tour is given by one member with support from another for the purposes of security and safety. The member giving the tour is provided with a document with details of the organisation's background and the building's history. The tour will include stops at the studios of specific artists who have volunteered to give a short artist talk and Q&A as part of the event.

Give artist talks at open days and outreach events e.g. Culture Night, Open Studios: This is now a standard form of contribution at Backwater. Tours of the building are structured around stops at specific studios where the artist provides a ten minute overview of their art practice and take questions from the tour group.

Act as an ambassador for the organisation at events (home and away): When attending professional arts events we ask that you identify yourself as a Backwater studio member if appropriate and if serving on our board or a sub-committee that you keep our collective agenda in mind when networking.

Act as an ambassador for the organisation when hosting visiting artists and organisations:

Backwater staff are not always available to greet or host visiting artists and organisations with whom we are building a working relationship. In these instances we sometimes identify and approach specific studio members who we feel might be an appropriate point of contact on site. This can sometimes extend to hosting in some form such as making introductions to other arts professionals in Cork or showing them around our building and/or other venues in the city centre.

Act as a mentor to an emerging artist /bursary recipient (min 3 studio visits): When awarding our annual Ciarán Langford Memorial Bursary to a CCAD graduate we first look amongst our own members for a suitable mentor from whose experience the recipient of the award could benefit. If a suitable mentor is not found within our members we invite a non-member artist, an appropriate arts professional or a relevant non-arts professional. It is expected that the mentor would conduct a minimum of three studio visits throughout the bursary period and also give the opening remarks at the bursary recipient's exhibition, which forms part of their award.

Fundraising Committee: The primary role of this committee is to plan and deliver the annual Winter Salon and Backwater's Sponsorship scheme. Tick the box if you are interested in contributing to this committee.

Programme Committee: The primary role of this committee is to support the Studio Director and Studio Coordinator by meeting once every quarter to discuss programming strategies and logistics. Apart from functioning as think tank it is also appreciated if committee members have relevant skills, experience or professional networks from which the committee and Backwater can benefit. Tick the box if you are interested in contributing to this committee.

Health & Safety Committee: Tick the box if you are interested in contributing to this committee.

Chair group crits for members of the Backwater Artist Network members: See website for an overview of the network (Joins Us/ Backwater Artists Network). Beginning in late 2020 individual groups will be formed from the current BAN membership to facilitate group crits amongst artist with similar interests. It is intended that the bi-monthly crits for each group will be chaired by a Backwater studio member with relevant experience and interests. Tick the box if you are interested in participating in these crits in the role of facilitator.

If you have any particular skills or experience that are especially relevant to any of the items you have ticked above please provide details here (max 100 words): We are particularly

interested in members having previous work experience or training in areas relevant to the committees listed and other supporting roles.

Declaration of intent (optional, max 100 words): If you do not think you will be in a position to contribute in many of the ways listed you can say so here and provide reasons if you wish (e.g. employment, parenting). This will be taken into account and expectations and scoring managed accordingly. Alternatively you can propose additional or alternative means of contribution to those listed above.

6. CHECKLIST

Application Form (.doc /.pdf format/ Google Submission Form) *

The support documents below should be sent/ submitted as a single PDF. Include your name and application type in the PDF title.

CV (.doc /.pdf format) * Please submit an up to date artist CV with your application. See guidelines. Your artist CV should be up to date and only contain relevant information. Only include details of employment history if those roles are relevant to the arts and/or your practice and/or skills that may feature in Section 6: Contributions. If previous experience in a non-arts field informs your practice mention this in your biography rather than going into too much detail in your CV.

Portfolio (.jpg/.doc /.pdf format) * Please submit an up to date portfolio that reflects your work over the last 4 years: Prioritise most recent work ensuring that work produced in the last four years is represented. Ideally each of the four years should be represented.

Videos where applicable can be included as video links (e.g. Vimeo/Youtube)

or sent via online file transfer (Wetransfer/Dropbox) – provide details/titles below

Catalogues, Books, Press (re last 4 years): Scans of pages you are featured in or post/deliver a hardcopy to the office (address below)

Reviews (re last 4 years): Scanned copies of reviews or links to reviews online

Additional material/information (Please specify below): If there is any additional material being submitted other than the list above tick this box.

List of additional material/information submitted (videos, catalogues, press, reviews etc) If submitting individual numbered portfolio images as .jpgs please include image list here:

This should be a list of all the material you are submitting in addition to your form. All material submitted in addition to the form should be added to the end of the application form document or included as additional documents and clearly labelled. If submitting individual images for your portfolio please ensure that an image list is included here (Title, year, medium, dimensions).