



How to Work Respectfully with Visual/Media Artists

So you wish to engage or partner with an artist in a project - that's wonderful!

This guide provides helpful tips and resources for respectfully working with artists with the aim of increasing awareness and protection of artists' rights in our community and beyond.

Did you know?

The median personal income of County artists is **\$33,200 - 30% lower** than that of all workers in the County (\$47,600)

86% of County artists are self-employed, and many juggle multiple jobs to make ends meet

Artists have rights that need to be respected

- The right to a **fair wage** and fair compensation for use of artwork, images, etc.
 - Artists have real costs and should not be compensated solely through in-kind goods or services, or offers of exposure
 - Defer to industry standards set by experts when determining an artist fee - do not assume you know the value of an artist's time and skills
- The right to **safe and acceptable working conditions**
- The right to **artistic freedom, and to maintain control over artistic output**
- The right to be **treated respectfully**, including by providing adequate time to complete a project

Question 1 - Do you have a budget?

NO



Paid opportunities are crucial for artists, especially at industry-standard rates.

Artists may choose to accept unpaid opportunities, but you should consider if the exchange disproportionately benefits you. For example, in the case of a business offering to display art in a public space (e.g. restaurant or store), even if the work is for sale, the artist is still due an industry-standard fee if none of their work sells.

We strongly recommend securing an appropriate budget for your project. County Arts will not promote commission opportunities with our membership that do not include an artist fee.

YES



EXCELLENT! Artists have a right to a fair wage. We recommend paying artists industry-standard rates, as set by [CARFAC](#) (Canadian Artists' Representation/Le Front des artistes canadiens), the certified national representative of professional visual and media artists in Canada. CARFAC rates cover a variety of scenarios including exhibitions and presentations. Make sure you are using the current year's rates. While some organizers, for example nonprofits, may find it challenging to pay artists industry-standard fee rates, all organizations should be striving to meet them.

Question 2 - What type of labour are you looking for?

Click on a title to explore a section:

1 - Commissions i.e. paying an artist to create work for you

2 - Exhibitions

3 - Presentations / Workshops

4 - Other professional services i.e. installing, consulting, assessment panel work



COMMISSIONS

Key considerations for commission projects:

- Commission rates can vary greatly depending on several factors including the artist's experience, medium of choice, and the size, scale, and location of the commission. CARFAC does not provide guidelines for producing commissioned works, as rates should be negotiated between the artist and the commissioner.
- CARFAC's [Public Art Fee Schedule](#) proposes fees for both application proposals (for example, if you are asking artists to submit a design as part of their application) and commission/artist fees for producing public artworks.
- Proposals, sketches, and design ideation constitutes artistic labour and should be compensated.
- Consider material costs when determining the commission budget.
- Commissioners should engage the artist with an agreement that includes details, including payment and important dates (see Resources below).

How do I find and select an artist to work with?

- **Direct Invitation** - When reaching out to an artist whose work you like for your purposes, be clear and concise in your ask. Give all the details, including dates, payment, conditions or special considerations. That way they can make an informed decision on whether to take on the project.
- **Open Artist Call** - [Click here](#) to explore our Best Practices for Artist Calls on page 5.

EXHIBITIONS

Key considerations for exhibitions

- Artists have the right to be paid for exhibitions where work is not for sale, and in certain cases where work is for sale – for example, there are specific rates that apply to art exhibited in public places other than galleries, such as restaurants ([see Rates](#)).
- Click to see [Exhibition Fee Rates](#), [Preparation Fee Rates](#), and [Writing/Editing Fee Rates](#).

PRESENTATIONS

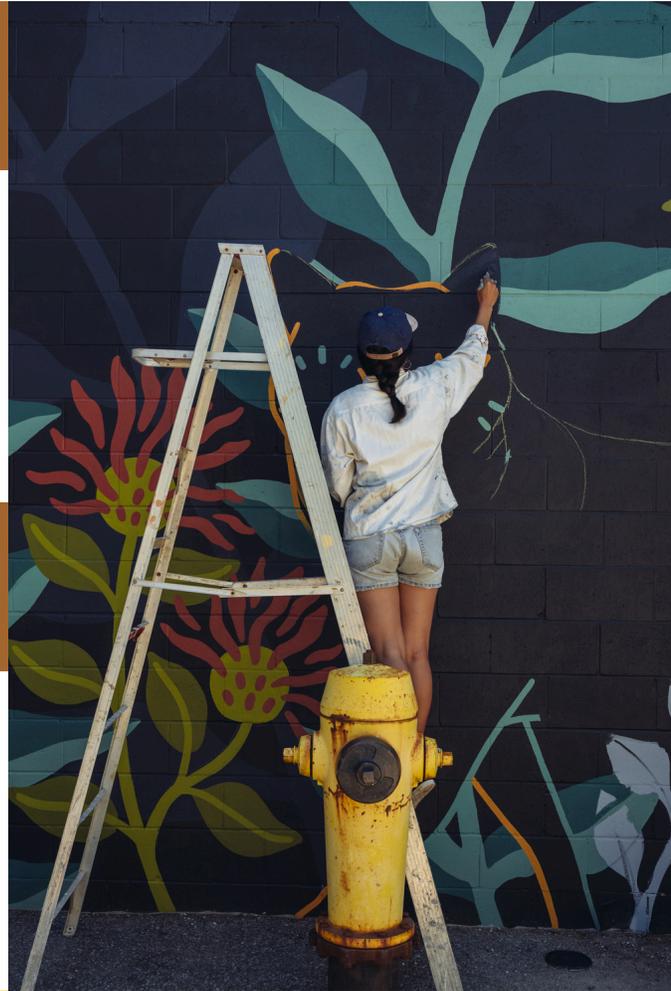
Key considerations for presentations:

- Artists have the right to be paid for presentations – for example, for facilitating a course/workshop/activity, speaking to school groups, participating in a panel discussion, giving a solo artist talk, etc.
- Click to see detailed CARFAC [Presentation Fees](#)

OTHER SERVICES

Click on the links to see the corresponding fees for other professional services commonly performed by artists:

- [Consultation Fees](#)
- [Selection Panel Fees](#)
- [Installation Fees](#)



COPYRIGHT CONSIDERATIONS

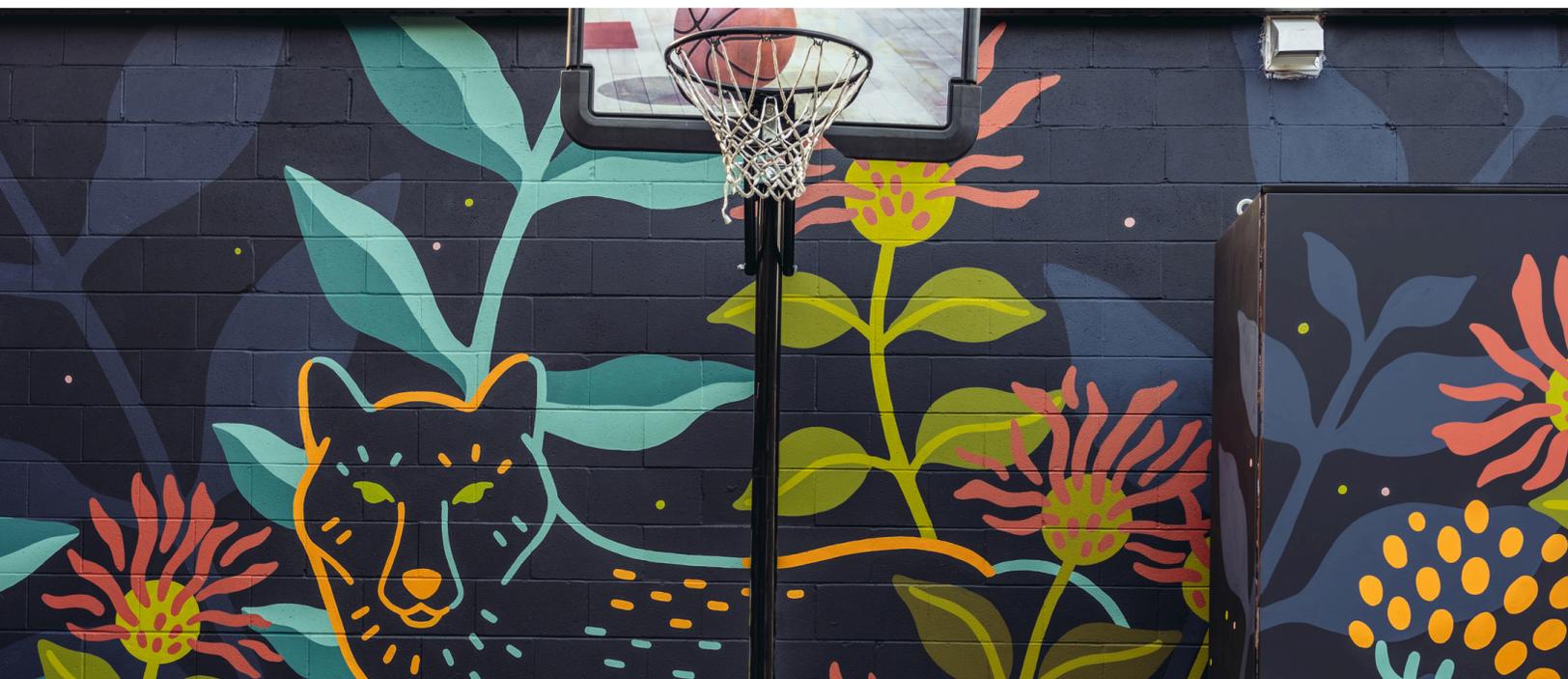
The reproduction right in the Copyright Act gives **the artist or copyright holder the sole right to reproduce an artwork**, and royalties apply when their work is reproduced in a variety of ways, including audio-visual, digital, and print reproductions. See Sections 2+3 in CARFAC's [fee schedule](#) for rates.

Artists always retain moral rights (unless they waive them), which include the right to: protect their artwork against distortion, alteration, or mutilation in a way which prejudices your reputation; to associate their name as the author of their work or to remain anonymous; and to protect their visual image from association with a cause, a product, service, or institution to which they are personally opposed.

PROVIDE SUPPORTS

In addition to ensuring they are appropriately compensated for their time, talent, and expertise, here are some other best practices for respectfully working with artists:

- **Contracts** - If the artist you are working with does not have their own Artist Agreement/contract, please develop and ensure one is in place (see resources below).
- **Providing Resources** - Consider what in-kind resources you can offer the artist, e.g. storage, equipment rental, promotional support, fees for training/certifications (e.g. Working at Heights, etc.), help navigating administrative processes including permitting, etc.
- **Safety:** If the artist is creating the work on your property, take all necessary measures to provide a safe and healthy work environment.



RESOURCES

[Sample Artist Agreements](#) from Mural Routes

CARFAC - [Contract Samples](#)

[Best Practices for Artist Calls](#) (County Arts)

[Resources](#) from Mural Routes

CARFAC - [Know Your Rights](#)

CARFAC - [Indigenous Protocols for the Visual Arts](#)

CARFAC - [Minimum Recommended Fee Schedule](#)

CARFAC - [Public Art - Minimum Recommended Fee Schedule](#)

[Access Copyright](#)

Modern Fuel Artist-Run Centre's [Artists' Legal Rights Project](#)

Got questions?

We are happy to serve as a resource! Reach out to our Programs Director Stacey Sproule with any questions: stacey@countyarts.ca



Best Practices for Artist Calls

Information to include in an Artist Call

- Be clear about **deadlines and timelines** – and give ample time for artists to gather material and put together an application (generally at least 2 months).
- **Budget** – State the amount available for the project and indicate if there is a separate amount for artist fee versus materials.
- **Conditions and context**, for example: Where will the piece be located? Who is the audience for this piece? Is it indoors or outdoors? If a mural on what surface will it be painted? What is the size? Will the surface be pre-prepped? How long will the piece stay up? Are you providing any equipment or support to the artist in the form of personnel? Is there limited access to the space for install due to business activities?
- **Theme** – Provide a prompt, idea, concept, something you'd like to convey with the work. Keeping this specific yet open-ended is ideal.
- **Mandatory elements**, ie brand name, imagery depicted etc. But again, keep this minimal – if you are hiring an artist for their creative expertise your requests shouldn't be too limiting.
- **Point person** – Include name and contact information for questions about the call/application.

Request a portfolio - or pay artists to create a specific design proposal

Instead of asking artists to propose a design (and provide free labour with no guarantee of a job), best practice is to ask for images of relevant work from the artist's portfolio (5-10 should generally suffice) to use those to assess whether the artist is the right fit for the job; if necessary, you can shortlist and invite artists (and pay them a fee) for developing a specific proposal for your project.

Advertisement of the Artist Call

County Arts is happy to help get the word out about opportunities that benefit artists. Our member newsletter is a great way to reach artists in the County, but please note that we will only highlight commission opportunities in our Member Newsletter and on our Apply Page that include an artist fee.

Assessment of the Artist Call

Best practice is to have Artist Call applications assessed by professional artists who are paid industry-standard fees. Alternatively, the applications can be assessed by you or people close to the project – just be sure to provide details about the assessment process in your Call.

Questions?

County Arts is happy to act as a resource for anyone wishing to work with local artists. Please contact our Programs Director Stacey Sproule (stacey@countyarts.ca) with any questions.