

# Shared Knowledge: Navigating Residency Applications Requiring Artistic Outcomes

**KONTEJNER | bureau of  
contemporary art praxis**

Zagreb, Croatia / [www.kontejner.org](http://www.kontejner.org)



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# **A brief guide for emerging artists on the key components typically required for residencies with artistic outcomes.**

**Dr. Sunčica Ostoic, KONTEJNER |**  
bureau of contemporary art praxis, Zagreb

## **1. Biography**

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- A concise story about your artistic practice and career – your calling card.
- Narrative form.
- An objective approach to your artistic career capturing who you are as an artist, what you do, and what you have accomplished – a succinct definition of your artistic practice, education, and key achievements in your professional life.
- Includes past and present.
- It positions you within the art world, provides a foundation for interpreting your work, and facilitates connections with you.
- Length: One to three brief paragraphs cca 250 words of follow the residency guidelines.
- Write in the third person.
- Determine the purpose and audience before writing – emphasize info important for the residency.
- Opening sentence – highlight what is significant about you as an artist.
- Make it engaging and easy to read with a professional tone.
- Goal: after reading your biography, one should be interested in seeing your work.
- Content should be appropriate, focusing on the most important information without overwhelming the reader.
- Avoid unnecessary details and excessive self-promotion.
- Check spelling, grammar, and style
- AI – «An artist can use AI to write a biography as a tool to quickly generate ideas or structure, but should ensure the final version reflects their authentic voice and artistic journey.» (ChatGPT)

- Save as PDF with the file name format: surname\_name\_biography.
- Over time, some elements remain constant while others are updated or removed as your career progresses (less relevant items will naturally phase out).
- Do not mix your biography, CV, and artist's statement.

## Elements

### 1. About Your Life and Education:

- Name, Surname, Year of Birth, and Residence: Include your full name, birth year (optional), and where you currently live.
- Profession/Title: Specify your profession or title (e.g., sculptor, painter, digital artist).
- Education: State what and where.

### 2. About Your Art:

- Media and Techniques: Describe the media and techniques you work with.
- Main Themes and Areas of Interest: Outline the central themes and subjects of your work and any specific areas of artistic exploration.

### 3. Most Significant Achievements and Experiences:

- Key Exhibitions, Awards, and Collections: List your major exhibitions, any awards received, and notable collections that feature your work.
- Partnerships and Collaborations: Highlight any collaborations with significant institutions, artists, or artistic groups.

### 4. Contact:

- Include your email, website, and social media links.

## Examples

- [archive.aec.at/prix/](http://archive.aec.at/prix/)
- [tate.org.uk/art/artists/a-z/a](http://tate.org.uk/art/artists/a-z/a)
- [guggenheim.org/artwork/artist](http://guggenheim.org/artwork/artist)
- [artnet.com/artists/](http://artnet.com/artists/)

## 2. CV

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- Selected and structured chronological overview of your artistic education, professional history, experience, and achievements (exhibitions, awards, artist residencies, lectures, publications, etc.).
- Written in list format.
- It should have logically organized content divided into sections.
- The design should be clear, simple, and consistent: uniform margins, aligned rows, one to two fonts, use of white space, no colorful letters or decorations, highlighted section titles (education, exhibitions, awards, etc.), etc.
- Check for spelling or typographical errors.
- PDF format.
- File name: last\_name\_first\_nameCV.
- It needs to be continuously updated.

## 3. Project Concept

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- Concept: A unique personal artistic idea reflecting the artist's unique perspective, personal experiences, and intentions determining the specific approach to the treatment and presentation of the theme.
- Format: PDF, video, or combination.

### Elements

#### 1. Introduction

- Begin by stating the central theme or idea of your work.
- Mention the medium or materials used and describe the overall appearance or structure of the work.
- If the piece consists of multiple elements, briefly outline what they are and their role in the work.

#### 2. Main Part

- Theme and Motivation: Explain why you chose this subject and its relevance to your practice or personal experience.

- Process and Techniques: Describe how the work was created, focusing on significant or unique techniques. Highlight how these methods contribute to the concept.
- Interpretation and Intent: Discuss the intended message or effect. What do you hope viewers will feel, think, or question?
- References and Inspirations (if relevant): Mention any external influences and references – artists, cultural phenomena, research – that shaped your approach or concept.

### 3. Conclusion

- Summarize the work's intent and its broader significance.
- Reflect on the anticipated impact or engagement with the audience.
- Situate the work within a larger context, emphasizing its relevance or contribution to artistic, cultural, or personal dialogues.

### 4. Visuals

- The concept should be accompanied by sketches, research findings, photographs, and other related materials, as these elements help clarify and shape the artistic vision.
- Sketches allow for initial visual exploration and testing of ideas, offering a tangible representation of the concept's development.

### 5. Contact

- Include your email, website, and social media links.

## Examples

- [archive.aec.at/prix](http://archive.aec.at/prix)
- [tate.org.uk/search?q=artwork&type=artwork&page=1](http://tate.org.uk/search?q=artwork&type=artwork&page=1)
- [guggenheim.org/artwork](http://guggenheim.org/artwork)
- [theartstory.org/artists](http://theartstory.org/artists)

## 4. Portfolio

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- A portfolio is a curated collection of documentation showcasing your selected works and texts.
- It includes a selection of works (photo/video/audio documentation), but never all of them, along with concise and informative texts!
- Purpose: To represent you and your artistic practice; it serves as a fundamental document for presenting and introducing your work when it cannot be experienced in person.
- The portfolio should spark interest in your work.
- Through its content, concept, and visual presentation, the portfolio should reflect your:
  - ▷ Professional development  
(skills and knowledge you've acquired)
  - ▷ Creative potential
  - ▷ Interests
  - ▷ Achievements
  - ▷ Style
  - ▷ Personality
  - ▷ Passions
- PDF, online (your website, Wix, Behance, Pixpa, Squarespace, Dorik, WordPress, etc.).
- File Name: surname\_firstname\_portfolio.
- A portfolio should be professional, organized, concise, and accessible to everyone, and it should speak for itself.
- It is used for presentation and evaluation, so it needs to help you stand out.
- The content, organization, and design of the portfolio should be tailored to its purpose (e.g., applying for an MA at an art academy, a job as a television animator, exhibiting in a gallery, or artist residency).
- Check residency guidelines and follow their instructions (e.g., submission date, method of submission – online, email, post, or in person; number of works to include; file size limitations).
- Regularly update your portfolio – it evolves and grows with your artistic practice.
- Seek feedback on your portfolio.

- Adjust the file size based on the purpose and the technology used to view it.
- Email attachments – max 25 MB
- Use services like WeTransfer, Sendspace, or Dropbox for larger files.

## Elements

- Name and Surname of the Artist – on the portfolio cover.
- Contact Information, Website, Facebook, Instagram, etc. – on the cover page or the following or last page, or at the top/bottom of each page.
- Biography + an optional quote about you from a relevant curator, critic, etc. – max. 150 words.
- CV – only achievements – most significant awards, exhibitions, and publications about you, as other details are mentioned in the biography.
- Artist Statement – after or before the biography/CV – written in the first person – 100 to 200 words.
- Artwork Documentation and Text – 8 to 20 works, with a description for each work of up to 100 words.
- List of Media Publications – with important media texts (optional).
- Other Information or Documents – if requested (e.g., motivation letter / requested as part of or in addition to the portfolio, budget, price list...).

## Artworks

- Select works that will best represent you for a specific purpose demonstrating quality, mastery of the medium/techniques, creative process, theme, and a willingness to experiment...
- Have professional documentation of the artworks (Visually or audibly poor presentation of a work appears unprofessional and makes it difficult to assess the true quality).
- Total 8-20 works (unless otherwise specified).
- Number of pages: One per work (recommended).
- Each work should have 1-4 images (unless otherwise specified).

- A short explanation of the concept of each work in a few sentences - to 100 words (don't go into too much detail).
- Write a list of professional collaborators (if any).
- Write a selected list of where the work was presented and the awards it has won.
- Include a selected list of media publications about the work and a quote from a relevant text (if significant).
- Provide links to additional photos, videos, sound recordings, or your website (if relevant).
- Organize/group the works so that they are easy to navigate:
  - ▷ Chronologically (from the most recent to the oldest)
  - ▷ By themes
  - ▷ By media  
(if you use various media such as sculpture, printmaking, video)
  - ▷ By techniques...
- In some cases, only completed works are requested, while in others, documentation of the creation process and sketches may be required.
- Sign or credit all images appropriately:
  - ▷ Title of the work
  - ▷ Year of first exhibiting
  - ▷ Medium/technique
  - ▷ Dimensions
  - ▷ Duration (for animated films, videos, performances, etc.)
  - ▷ Location and date (optional for site-specific works, public space works, and performances)

## Design

- The foundation of the portfolio is the image (documentation of your works), which should take precedence over text.
- Top-quality photo, video, and audio documentation of your works is crucial.
- The portfolio should reflect visual literacy, creativity, and artistic expression:
  - ▷ It should be clear and well-organized.
  - ▷ Works should be presented simply and clearly.

- ▷ Avoid overdesign – excessive, kitschy, multicolored graphic elements, overly bright and vibrant colors, and patterned backgrounds (the background should highlight your works, not distract from them).
- ▷ Do not use illegible fonts.
- ▷ Use legible fonts; avoid decorative or hard-to-read text styles.
- ▷ Highlight the cover page.

## 5. Technical Rider

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Instructions include a list of information and visual elements required by the exhibition space for research, production of the artwork, organizing the preparation, installation, maintenance, dismantling, packing, and transport of the artwork.

A basic and detailed technical checklist is needed.

The instructions should be precise, clearly written, and easy to understand, ensuring that production, installation, duration, and dismantling of the exhibition proceed as professionally and smoothly as possible, without additional stress.

### Elements

#### 1. Artist Information

- Artist's full name
- Title of the work
- Contact information for the artist (and the person responsible for installation/maintenance/dismantling of the work, if applicable)

#### 2. Basic Information About the Work:

- Type of work (e.g., painting, installation, performance, digital animation, etc.)
- Dimensions of the work
- Weight of the work
- Components of the work
- Any other important information about the work

**3. Description of the Artwork and Set-up:**

- Detailed description of the appearance of the work
- Specify the surface area required for display and any adjustments/interventions needed in the space (e.g., black wall  $2 \times 5$  m, white room  $2.5 \times 4$  m, darkened space  $3 \times 3$  m, gray floor surface  $1 \times 1$  m, etc.)
- The position of the work in the space.

**4. Photo/Video Documentation and Sketch:**

- Attach photo and/or video documentation if the work has been exhibited before.
- Include a sketch of the installation showing how the work is planned to be displayed, its spatial requirements, and the relationships between individual elements of the work.

**5. Technical Equipment and Materials:**

- Provide a detailed list of all technical equipment and materials required for research, production, installation, dismantling, packing, and transportation of the work.
- Specify what will be provided by the exhibition space and what will be provided by the artist.

**6. Technical and Other Professional Staff Provided by the Exhibition Space:**

- Specify the assistance required for the research, installation, maintenance, dismantling, and packing of the work, provided by the exhibition space (e.g., 2 technicians for the installation, 1 technician for maintenance).

**7. Artist Will Provide:**

- Specify what additional items, besides the technical equipment and materials listed under point 5, the artist will provide.
- For example: the artwork or parts of the artwork (and specify which parts), and whether the artist will bring any of their own technical or professional staff to assist with installation and dismantling.

**8. Transport of the Work:**

- Indicate whether the exhibition space needs to transport the work.
- If yes, provide the address where the work is currently located and the address to which it should be returned.

## 9. Duration of Set-up and Dismantling:

- Estimate how much time (hours, days) will be required for the installation and dismantling of the work.

## 10. Instructions:

- If necessary, include instructions for starting, shutting down, maintaining, packing, and transporting the work.

## 6. Budget

List of income (funding sources) and expenses (costs) for planning, research, creation, and presentation of an artwork, artistic residency, scholarship, etc.

Expenses should equal income.

The budget template may be predetermined or not predetermined (e.g., some calls only require a budget to be included without providing a specific template).

There are different approaches to categorizing expenses depending on the type of application (e.g., production budgets for creating a work, exhibition budgets for displaying a work, research residency budgets, etc.).

### Budget example:

artist's name and surname, title of the work, year	
Cost description	€
<b>1. Fees – artist and other collaborators</b>	
artist	
external scientific, technical, or artistic assistance (e.g. technician, lighting designer, IT consultant, biologist, etc.)	
curator	
exhibition layout designer	
graphic designer of printed and online materials	
photographer, videographer, editor (artwork documentation)	
translation and proofreading	
<b>2. Production</b>	
materials and supplies	
equipment (buying or rental of technical equipment, tools, etc.)	
packaging for the artwork	

<b>3. Exhibiting (installation, duration, dismantling of the exhibition)</b>	
materials (all materials required for the installation, maintenance, and dismantling of the work)	
rental of technical equipment (e.g., projectors, speakers, amplifiers, mixers, monitors, computers, smoke machines, spotlights)	
insurance for the artwork and technical equipment during installation, exhibition duration, and dismantling	
<b>4. Transportation</b>	
shipping costs	
insurance (for the artwork during loading, transport, and unloading)	
<b>5. Travel and Living Expenses</b>	
accommodation	
travel: flights, trains, local transit, etc.	
food, utilities, and other living costs during the residency	
<b>7. Promotional and Networking Costs</b>	
catalog	
flyers, posters, or physical and digital campaigns	
production of video content	
artist talks, workshops, or networking events associated with the residency	
<b>8. Other costs</b>	
office supplies	
postage	
communication expenses	
<b>9. Unexpected expenses 5-10 %</b>	
<b>10. In kind 5-10 % (venues, goods, services..)</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

## 7. Timetable of residency

- Structured planning and flexibility for creative and practical work.
- Start with a Flexible Plan: Use the first week to adjust your timetable based on the residency's rhythm.
- Document Your Process: Keep notes, sketches, or photos to track progress and reflect on your development.
- Engage with the Environment: Utilize unique aspects of the residency setting to enhance your work.
- Allow room for creative blocks or shifts in ideas, and don't over-schedule.

### Example

Week	Focus	Tasks	Output
1-2	Concept Development	Research, brainstorming, visiting partner institutions	Initial concepts and sketches
3-4	Development & Experimentation	Work in the studio and partner institutions, experimentation, curator and peer feedback sessions	Early drafts or prototypes, finalized concept, and production plan
5-7	Production	Creating the artwork, consultations with collaborators and mentors, documenting the process	Completed work
8	Exhibition Launch / Public Performing	Setting up and opening	Exhibition, performance, etc.

## 8. Resources

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- [agifineart.com/advice/writing-artist-biography](http://agifineart.com/advice/writing-artist-biography)
- [help.artsy.net/hc/en-us/articles/360047560573-How-to-Write-an-Effective-Artist-Bio](http://help.artsy.net/hc/en-us/articles/360047560573-How-to-Write-an-Effective-Artist-Bio)
- [reneephillips.com/mistakes-to-avoid-when-writing-your-artists-biography](http://reneephillips.com/mistakes-to-avoid-when-writing-your-artists-biography)
- [agifineart.com/advice/the-artist-cv](http://agifineart.com/advice/the-artist-cv)
- [thepracticalartworld.com/2011/02/12/how-to-write-an-artists-cv-in-10-steps](http://thepracticalartworld.com/2011/02/12/how-to-write-an-artists-cv-in-10-steps)
- [thepracticalartworld.com/2022/04/09/how-to-write-an-artists-cv-when-you-dont-have-much-or-any-professional-experience](http://thepracticalartworld.com/2022/04/09/how-to-write-an-artists-cv-when-you-dont-have-much-or-any-professional-experience)
- [wikihow.com/Make-an-Art-Portfolio](http://wikihow.com/Make-an-Art-Portfolio)
- [gyst-ink.com/portfolios](http://gyst-ink.com/portfolios)
- [agora-gallery.com/advice/blog/2017/07/20/how-to-create-a-professional-portfolio](http://agora-gallery.com/advice/blog/2017/07/20/how-to-create-a-professional-portfolio)
- [websitetooltester.com/en/website-builder-for-artists](http://websitetooltester.com/en/website-builder-for-artists)
- [creative-capital.org/2018/07/19/applying-for-grants-presenting-a-realistic-budget](http://creative-capital.org/2018/07/19/applying-for-grants-presenting-a-realistic-budget)
- [blog.fracturedatlas.org/art-project-budget](http://blog.fracturedatlas.org/art-project-budget)

## **European Media Art Platform**

The European Media Art Platform (EMAP), initiated by werkleitz and co- funded by Creative Europe since 2018, is a consortium of leading European media art organisations specialised in Digital and Media Art, Bio Art and Robotic Art.

In the section “Shared Knowledge” EMAP publishes results from internal conferences and workshops to share them with other cultural organisations and artists. The aim is to exchange and gain knowledge within the sector of media art.

Do you want to share knowledge?

Contact us: [pr@emare.eu](mailto:pr@emare.eu)  
[emare.eu](http://emare.eu)