

Finding work as a community artist/cultural practitioner

This worksheet provides information on how to look for work as a community artist/cultural practitioner, including employment or a commission for a residency.

Talk to any community artists/cultural practitioner and local organisations you know. Ask them where they search for job and contract opportunities. They often have small work teams – so be patient. In exchange for information, you may be in a position to volunteer your services or support to their organisation (voluntary work often leads on to paid work or commissions in time).

Be active in the communities where you would like to develop a residency.

Do some background research on residencies that are relevant to your interests. Look at how and where contracts were advertised. Enquire whether local universities have been involved in developing any public engagement work with communities.

Allocate regular time to search online, sign up for newsletters (and bookmark any useful information).

Be active on social media sites – and *connect with people*. Regularly check the websites for State supported arts organisations such as the ministries responsible for arts, culture and communities.

As well as searching for work, you can also make your own opportunities:

Top tip

Remember to search for jobs or commissions that are about civic engagement that might not have "community arts" or "cultural animation" in the title. You could use search terms like "civic engagement", "community consultation", "community engagement".

Look out for

Job listings for arts work/cultural animation websites.

Professional associations and networks for community work/community arts work and cultural animation.

Get to know people, share examples of your work and become familiar with the formal and informal networks in operation: information, links and opportunities advertised by organisations connected to civic engagement. These might not mention the arts – but you could propose the use of the arts to help address issues, which they are broadcasting about.

Think about...

- ... establishing yourself as a self-employed/freelance contractor and making suitable arrangements for tax, insurance, finance and other practical issues. Many of the jobs or commissions offered will be fixed term or short term contracts for self-employed people.
- Government and charity websites often provide information and advice on being self-employed.

Help & advice

National & Regional Arts Councils, Universities with Community Arts and Cultural Animation courses, and professional associations can all provide information, help and advice on where to find work.

Consider the communities that are of interest to you, where they are, and what shared interests define the community.

Do some background research on these communities and consider what you can learn from this.

Identify people who have an interest in the arts who live or work in the community.

Approach these people and ask them for advice on where you could find voluntary work, paid work, or a commission.