



PROFESSIONAL WRITING



Unfortunately you can't be a student forever!

Once you leave DUT you need to find a job, whether as a professional artist, a gallery curator or any other form of 'day job'. All kinds of work will require some form of writing. These types of writing include: CVs, proposals to exhibit in a gallery, applying for project funding, artist statements and artist biography etc. All these documents need to be well written and presentable, as your job might well depend on it.

PROFESSIONAL WRITING



Most businesses nowadays want a single page CV when you apply for a job. This can make fitting everything in quite difficult. It is up to you to include the most appropriate information in your CV, what is appropriate depends on the job you are applying for. Imagine who might be reading your CV to help you decide what information will be the most appropriate. For jobs in the arts only include experience from an artistic field. Don't over exaggerate or lie, ever.

For example if you are applying for an admin. post you should include a skills section, which would include things like your ability to work on computer programs such as MS Word, Excel and PowerPoint.

If you are motivating for holding an exhibition or applying for an academic post in the arts, the Exhibition section and Work experience is vital as they show your artistic output, your areas of interest/specialisation and how much you will bring to the job/how relevant you are to the field.

CV /CURRICULUM VITAE



CV /CURRICULUM VITAE

What to include:

Personal information

Full Name
Date of Birth
ID Number
Contact Number
Email address
Gender
Nationality
Driver's license

Education

This must be a list of your qualifications from newest to oldest; including the years they were obtained.

Awards

This will include any relevant awards you have received, again with years from newest to oldest.

Exhibitions

This section, as with the above, must be listed from newest to oldest. It will include the title of the exhibition, where the exhibition was shown, and if it was a solo show, group show or competition.

Work experience

Again from newest to oldest, state where you worked and what position you were in. You can include your references in this section, listing them alongside the relevant job.

References

Your list of references will include the name, position and company your reference is from, with up to date contact information.

This section is partially adapted from:

Cox, F. ed. 2008. *The Artist's Handbook: A Guide to the Business of the Arts* Cape Town: The African Art Centre (page 104)

What do you need a biography for?

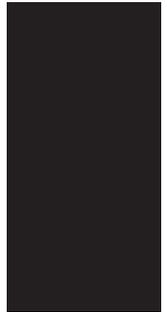
There are a few things for which you will need an artist's biography, these include:

- Exhibitions
- Proposals for exhibitions
- In some cases with CVs
- Press releases
- Competitions

What is a biography?

A biography is a short paragraph that includes information about your life. It is usually written in the third person. So instead of saying 'my' and 'I' you will write it as if you are speaking about someone else. It is almost as if someone is writing this biography for you. An artist biography focuses mainly on your experience and production in the arts. It is very different to an artist statement (see pg 54).

ARTIST'S BIOGRAPHY



ARTIST'S BIOGRAPHY

What to include:

- (Your full name) _____ was born in _____ (city), _____ (country) in _____ (year).
- Then you include a sentence about your qualification(s), mention the qualification(s) you have and the university you got it (them) from.
- If you have had solo shows you include where you have had the shows, name of gallery and place.
- You would also include a sentence with the number of group shows you have been included in; you may list a small selection of the best shows.
- You should also include a bit about what you are currently doing: (Your Surname) _____ is currently living and working in _____ (City).
You finally could add a bit about the type of art you make e.g. sculptor, abstract painter, or performance artist.

Write the above in full sentences. Include only factual information. Keep it short and to the point.

This section is partially adapted from:
Cox, F. ed. 2008. The Artist's Handbook: A Guide to the Business of the Arts Cape Town: The African Art Centre (page 105).

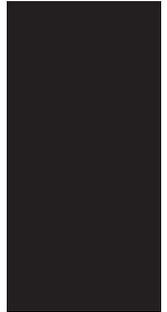
If you are writing a proposal or application, whether for a bursary, funding, exhibition or artist residency, it is important to read the terms and requirements carefully, as each type of proposal will require very specific information and will be formatted in a particular way. There is however some basic information always needed. This includes:

- Biography
- Motivation Letter
- The proposal (sometimes included in the motivation letter)
- A relevant portfolio, with good quality images
- CV
- Copy of your marks/diploma/degree (if applicable)
- Letters of recommendations (if applicable)
- Copy of your ID (if applicable)

Motivation letters/cover letters

A motivation letter is approximately one page long and follows a letter format. It motivates why you are the most suitable candidate for the bursary/funding/residencies etc. It is a personalized document that will often accompany your CV or other application documents. A good motivation letter helps you to stand out from the other applicants applying for the same opportunity. You should always check if there are any special requirements that need to be addressed or answered in this letter. There is no universal template so write information that is appropriate and applicable for the fund/ residency/ bursar. Opposite is a guide.

PROPOSALS & APPLICATIONS



PROPOSALS & APPLICATIONS

What to include:

- Your address on the right and the date. Skip a line.
- The address of the place you are applying for/to on the left margin.
- It is a letter so start the off with “Dear...”, find out who to address the letter to. If you can not then address it to “Sir/Madam” .
- Follow this by a title clearly stating what you are applying for. “Motivation for...”
- This letter should showcase your knowledge, personal abilities and attributes.
- It should explain why you are suitable for the position you are applying for. (Why that residency is the perfect residency for what you want to do/ gallery/ bursary etc.).
- This could include a brief explanation of what you intend to do. Your future plan for a bursary, what you intend to do with the qualification/ the concept of the exhibition/ your intent for art making if awarded the artist residency. (This section will be elaborated on in the proposal if a proposal is required).
- Sign the letter “Sincerely Yours” or “Faithfully” and type your name underneath followed by your signature.

Remember that your CV will usually be attached to this so avoid repeating information you already have in the CV. Make sure it is well written with no errors.

This section is partially adapted from:

How to write motivational letter for scholarship (online). 2012. Available: <http://motivationalletter.com/tag/motivational-letter-bursary/> (Accessed 7 November 2014)

You may want to include a separate proposal from your motivational letter when you are applying for residencies, funding etc., especially if you are required to generate a plan or concept that you aim to achieve if awarded the position or grant.

A proposal usually includes:

- Your concept or artist statement that you are proposing. (You must state clearly why it is worth doing/ exploring).
- Aims and objectives (what you plan to achieve).
- A break down of how you plan to achieve your aims and objectives (a basic timeframe).
- A break down of your costs (if applicable).

PROPOSALS & APPLICATIONS

Exhibition proposal

As an artist it is important to exhibit. What is the use of making art if you are not going to share it with the public? Exhibiting is how many artists make a living. Nowadays there are a number of ways to do this, especially with access to the Internet, but the tried and tested way of showcasing your work is in an art gallery.

How a gallery works

Each gallery usually exhibits a certain type of artwork. There are commercial galleries, which exhibit anything that will sell. A contemporary gallery will only exhibit contemporary artworks. There are galleries that may only exhibit sculptures, and some that only do abstract artworks. Some galleries will only exhibit young, up and coming artists and others only the well-known artists. It is therefore important to find out which gallery suits the work you make.

An art gallery, as you may know, exhibits artists work in solo and group shows. These works are usually for sale. What we need to remember is that a gallery is a business and therefore they need to make money. They do this by charging the artist a rental fee for the space as well as adding a fixed commission fee to the given price of each artwork, and in some cases they also charge a hanging fee. Exhibitions usually stay up for two to four weeks, so there are only a certain number of exhibitions that can happen in a year. Well-known galleries are often very hard to get into because of this. It is therefore important to apply and/or book a gallery up to a year or more in advance. But how do you apply? You apply by sending in an exhibition proposal.

PROPOSALS & APPLICATIONS

How to write an exhibition proposal

Before you even consider writing a proposal make sure your artwork is of a high standard, in both the craftsmanship and the concept. If you are unsure, even slightly, of what your proposed exhibition is about it will show straight away in the proposal. That is the same for the craftsmanship of your work. If your work is not made really well down to the finest details, or the images of your artworks are not good, you will have no chance and you risk irritating the gallery curator. If all this is in check ask the gallery if they have a specific format they prefer the artist to use for proposals, if not, this is how you write your proposal:

Keep your proposal short. No more than a page if possible. Galleries are busy and receive a lot of proposals. They will appreciate a well-written, short proposal. Find out if the gallery prefers the proposal hand delivered or emailed. If they don't specify do both.

PROPOSALS & APPLICATIONS

1. A good way to start is by addressing the director or curator by name (spell this correctly). In some cases proposals are considered by a board, in which case address the board.
2. Then thank the gallery/curator/board/director for taking your proposal in for consideration and explain who you are (your credentials).
3. Describe, in as few lines as possible, your proposed exhibition. (This will include a shortened version of your artist statement, if you are applying for a solo show).
4. Briefly explain why their particular gallery is best suited for the type of art you make. This shows the gallery that you have done some homework. If you are applying for a group show explain the number of artists to be included.
5. State the space that will be required for your exhibition. Some galleries have given rooms/ spaces names. Make sure you know the correct name and spelling of the room you are requesting. If there are no particular rooms/ divided spaces, you may ask for meters or squared-meters of space. You must indicate if wall or floor space will be required.
6. An important part of the proposal is your support material. This includes good quality images of all the works or at least a large sample of the works you wish to exhibit, each must include all the artwork information. Also include CV's and Biographies for each artist participating in the show.

This section is partially adapted from:

Stanfield, A. (online) 2008. Draft a Winning Exhibition Proposal. Available: <http://www.artbizblog.com/2008/09/exproposal.html> (Accessed 29 October 2014).

Before you apply for funding, a bursary, a residency or a studio program you should research a wide selection of different donors, residencies or programs. Most donors have a list of requirements for approval on their websites. Make sure that you meet their requirements and you have all the necessary documents. This process should benefit both you and the donors/ residency/ programme. There is no set formula for a successful project. The best way to improve your chances of completing a good application is to imagine you are the funder. As you write out motivation letters, highlight some of the information that might not be included in the rest of the documents.

**PROPOSALS
& APPLICATIONS:
BURSARIES,
FUNDING,
ARTISTS' RESIDENCIES
AND STUDIO
PROGRAMMES**



What to include in an:

application for a bursary

- Motivational letter
- Financial Records to highlight your need for funding
- Academic Records
- Letter of recommendation from your school/ department
- Copies of previous achievements.

application for funding:

There are many ways to fund a project:

- Self-funding: funding projects from your own pocket
- Raising Money: from friends and family, putting together resources to make the event happen.
- Crowd Funding: websites like *KickStarter* give you a platform for your project campaign to gather funds on the internet from individual donations.
- Community support/ in-kind assistance: involving the community that will benefit from the project. Volunteers can play an important role in planning an event. Be very clear about your intentions and the roles that you want each volunteer to have.
- Grant makers: These usually have requirements that need to be met.
- Corporate or Private Sponsors: These are companies that have a strong inclination to support the arts as part of their ethos.

To help you narrow down your donor options, it is best that you develop a fundraising strategy that is in line with your project's aims and objectives. Most donors or sponsors have an application form and process that they have for applicants. Having this information at hand can help you fill out the application form, before you edit it to suit the fund you are applying to.

Fundraising Strategy

What to include:

Aims or Mission Statement:

These are the overall goals that your project is trying to achieve.

Objectives:

These are the goals that will help you to achieve what you are aiming to do.

Needs of the project:

This is where a SWOT Analysis would best fit in. SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats) of the internal project/organization and of the external environment.

Resources:

Consider each objective separately to figure out what you would need to achieve them, list these. It is now easier to create a budget using this list you have just drafted.

Key Questions should be answered to help you draft a budget:

- Who will fundraise, and who will be approached (one, two or more)?
- What fundraising activities will you use?
- What will you focus on? (Community, Local, National, International) When will this project happen?
- How much will you ask for from each donor?
- Is this a once-off or ongoing project?
- Do you need a large or small amount of funding for the project?

Budget:

Be realistic. Do not over- or underestimate your expenses. Try to be as accurate with your expenses as possible. From your list of needed resources, find out what each item costs and how much of each item you will need. Add these to get a sub-total for each resource. In a separate column add all the subtotals to get a complete total.

Exit Strategy:

When you plan anything you should consider what will happen after the project. Will this project run for five years or is it a once-off? What are the final outcomes? Will you be applying for more funding? This is an important aspect that shows funders what you intend to do in the long run. Remember that this should be a win-win situation for you and for the donors.

Tips

You should keep written records of previous funders, approval dates, dates of successfully funded projects etc. It is also important to keep a copy of every document or letter that you send.

- Break down your target amounts into smaller amounts. Many successful projects can have multiple sponsors/donors who will fulfill many needs, rather than one donor that will pay for everything. Sometimes a project may get a sponsorship of gifts, and or services in-kind.
- Consider what you need funding for very carefully. Do not assume that everything and anything should be a cause for applying for funding.
- Research previous grant winners. As you write out your motivational and proposal strategy, focus on what makes you stand out from the previous successful applications.

This section is partially adapted from:

Arts Fundraising Toolkit. 2011. 1st edition. Cape Town: Arterial Network (pages 100 and 94)

What is a Residency?

An art residency is a platform, often funded, for artists to make artwork. It can be national or international. These residencies often provide studio space, and sometimes living spaces and a living allowance, for the artist to make work inspired by their surroundings. Every residency has a specific set of selection criteria and requirements for applicants. Research each residency's application process and how it meets your interests. Because most residencies will be international, you will most likely apply electronically, through e-mails or the web.

Some of the common motivations for taking part in a residency include:

- *Education:* Research based in a specific area or learning specific techniques or skills.
- *Production:* Creating work for an exhibition, performance, or an individual project.
- *Sabbatical:* taking time away from the everyday routine to be immersed in a new idea.
- *Collaboration:* work with people with whom you would not ordinarily have an opportunity to work with, to building new networks, or to create new collectives.

BURSARIES, FUNDING, ARTISTS' RESIDENCIES AND STUDIO PROGRAMMES

BURSARIES, FUNDING, ARTISTS' RESIDENCIES AND STUDIO PROGRAMMES

What to include:

- An application form
- A motivational letter
- Scanned copy of your passport
- Curriculum Vitae
- Up-to date portfolio
- Artist statement
- Letters of recommendation
- Your photograph

This section is partially adapted from:

Artists in Residence Toolkit (online). 2014. Accessed: http://www.arts.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_