

Minnesota Artists Exhibition Program (MAEP)

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL APPLICATION

GENERAL ADVICE

- Familiarize yourself with the program. Attend the exhibitions, go to the artists' talks, and speak with past artists about their experiences. All events are free and open to the public. Attend the MAEP Annual Meeting and consider running for a spot on the panel. (Open to all artists living and working in Minnesota). Like the [Facebook](#) page to get announcements or see the [website](#) for more information.
- Spend some time in the US Bank Gallery which houses MAEP. Explore the museum. Imagine your work in the gallery. Get specific. Think about how you would want your exhibition to live in the galleries.
- Start the writing process early. Have others read your proposal, artist statement, CV and look at your work samples. It can help to get opinions from those who know your work and others who are unfamiliar with it. If they have questions, you may need to clarify your writing.
- Share your proposal with the program coordinator three weeks before the deadline, they will be able to give you feedback.
- Your artist statement and proposal are different from each other and offer different aspects of your work. (Read below for detailed descriptions.)
- Use regular, clear and concise language in your writing. Use the most specific and detailed wording possible. An active direct voice is best. Use phrases like "I will..." rather than "I would like to...". Avoid repetition in your writing.
- Do not start written statements with a quote. Your voice is the most powerful one!
- Before you apply, consider your overall budget and installation details. Will you need to obtain external funds to complete this project? You do not need to state

this in the proposal, but it will help to flesh out the feasibility of your project if you are planning a show with technology, a complex installation, or expensive framing costs. The budget and installation plan are the first details discussed with the MAEP Coordinator after acceptance.

- Don't be discouraged if you're not selected. On average, accepted proposals have been revised and submitted multiple times (from 2 to 6 times). There is an average of 70 applicants per round. Many deserving artists are not selected for an exhibition. Don't forget, half of the panelists change every year.
- Get feedback! MAEP feedback is available by appointment. Take advantage of it, but don't stop there. Invite other artists, critics, and arts administrators to your studio. Take into consideration consistent comments and critiques to make your work and proposal stronger.
- Reapply! Usually, within an hour of a deadline closing, the next application period will open. There are currently three deadlines per year---February, June, and October.

PROPOSAL RESTRICTIONS

- All accepted proposals must meet the Minnesota State guidelines and restrictions for electrical use, and comply with ADA guidelines.
- Mia houses a historically rich and diverse collection of objects that span millennia. Because of the fragile nature of our collection, proposals/artworks containing mold, untreated dirt, spores, living flora and fauna will not be accepted. Some rare exceptions may apply. Inquire with the MAEP Coordinator before applying.
- For the safety of the museums 700,000 annual visitors, guns are banned from the museum premises. No live ammunition, weaponry, or explosives will be permitted.

WRITTEN MATERIALS

ARTIST STATEMENT

- The artist statement should give an overall sense of your work and the concepts and questions that drive it. Tell the panel: What your artwork is, describe its visual (and/or other) qualities. Why is it important to make this work? In what direction is your work evolving? What is your inquiry---the questions you are asking, or that your artwork is asking? How do your ideas come together with the physical form of your work? What is your process? What is your connection to your work? Think of the artist statement as the WHAT, HOW, and WHY of your work.
- Your writing should be conceptually connected and relevant to your work samples. Avoid extraneous information. Make each sentence vivid enough to propel the concepts further in the mind of the reader. By the end of your writing, the reader should want to see your work!
- If possible, describe the direction your work is taking – what is motivating your next moves? Where are things headed in your work? What fuels your creativity? What are the trajectory of your art and your questions? Why?

PROPOSAL

- The proposal is a specific description of the exhibition you are proposing. What you state should make sense as a next step or direction in your work, your inquiry.
- Use regular, clear and concise language as you describe what you plan to do for this show. Be as accurate as possible about the artwork, how you plan to use the walls and/or space of the gallery, and what specifically the exhibition will be like. Spend some time imagining your work in the space. What will the viewers encounter and how might they move through the gallery? Be as specific as you can, even if things evolve and change later.

- Avoid extraneous information. Make each sentence vivid enough to propel the concepts further in the mind of the reader. By the end of your writing, the panelists should want to see this exhibition come to life!
- Visit the US Bank Gallery in person, if possible, to see the space. Print out the gallery floor plan, and map out possibilities for your exhibition as you brainstorm.
- You may submit a floor plan drawing or other visualizations in your work samples to help the panel understand your proposal, but even if you do not provide a floor plan with your work samples, this action can contribute to coalesce ideas.
- Given that you will have close to a year to prepare if awarded an exhibition, it is understood that your ideas and your work will likely evolve and develop. Despite that, give the panelists the best possible description you can at this time, of what you want to explore and create for the exhibition.
- If possible, describe your reasons for wanting your work to be exhibited in the context of The Minneapolis Institute of Arts. Why is this the right venue for your work? How would this exhibition take your work to the next step?

RESUME/CV

- For info on resumes, look the websites of past MAEP artists, and also artists who show in major art centers (NYC/LA/Berlin) for examples of consistent trends in how to write and format a resume. In general, the resume should include the following headings where applicable: Education, Exhibition Activity, Awards/Grants/Fellowships, Residencies, Press, and other related artistic activities.
- Resumes should list your most recent activity first under each heading and then go back chronologically from there. Include complete information about past activities as an artist – i.e. the dates, venues, locations, and titles of each previous exhibition or activity.

Work Samples

- The work samples you select should make a direct connection to what is discussed in your artist statement and proposal. The work samples should include strong, well-photographed artwork that set the stage for the direction of the work you are proposing.
- Think about the order in which you want panelists to view the work samples. What story are you conveying and how does that relate to your proposal? It can help to print small images of your work and play with the order ahead of time.
- You may submit a floor plan, diagram, or other visualization of the proposed exhibition as part of your work samples. It is not required but can help the panelists see how you envision the exhibition at this phase of development.
- Take advantage of the space for written comments with each image. What are you drawing the panelists attention to with each image?
- If possible, include image/s of your work installed in a space or from previous exhibitions. This gives the panelists a sense of how you present your work as a whole and how museum-goers might engage with it in a gallery space.