



INSPIRE MANUAL
The Inspire Coordinator
And
Presenting Visual Arts Exhibitions

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Colby Richardson, *Inner Vision*, Video (continuous loop), 2015.

Introduction to OSAC and Inspire

What is OSAC?

The Organization of Saskatchewan Arts Councils (OSAC) is an umbrella organization that enables community Arts Councils and schools to tour and hold live, professional music and theatre performances, visual arts exhibitions, workshops and special events across Saskatchewan. The aim of the Organization of Saskatchewan Arts Councils' (OSAC's) Arts on the Move program is to assist Arts Councils in hosting high quality, engaging and relevant visual arts exhibits, to enhance the quality of life in Saskatchewan, and to develop a future audience for the visual arts.

Inspire

Demographics across Saskatchewan are changing and so is the arts and culture landscape. Organizations are working towards being more inclusive and more diverse to reflect the communities they serve. The Inspire program is designed to engage people under age 29 as audiences, participants, and decision-makers and enable them to make an impact in their communities.

Meaningful youth engagement is more than seeing younger faces in the gallery or having a token youth on the Arts Council; it is about genuine inclusion and allowing new members to participate in decision-making processes. The greater the sense of ownership and personal investment a person has in an endeavour, the more excited and engaged they are likely to be. Through this approach, Inspire aims to develop the next generation of visual arts presenters in Saskatchewan communities.

Working with the local Arts Council's Visual Arts Coordinator as a mentor, the Inspire coordinator will select and present an exhibition which they believe they can market to their peers.

Who are the OSAC Presenters?

OSAC community presenters are Arts Council volunteers in communities that range in size from 500 to 200,000; the majority live in communities of less than 3,000. Every year at Showcase, close to 30 communities throughout the province will book one or more shows through OSAC as part of the block booking process. Many will book the full five exhibitions on offer.

Who is Inspire's Audience?

OSAC audience members represent a variety of ages (adult, family, and children), but the majority is typically middle-aged and older and very appreciative of having quality exhibitions in their communities. The audience size can range from 30 to 4,000.

The more important question is "*Who is Inspire's Audience?*", and that is up to you!

Inspire coordinators are strongly encouraged to select an exhibition who they believe they could market to their peers. What exhibition would you and friends want to see? This may be the same type of show that the Arts Council currently presents or it may something a bit different.

Mentorship

Mentorship is when an experienced and knowledgeable person works alongside an emerging person in the same field to help them in their professional development and to succeed in their goals. In the Inspire program, the mentor would be the Arts Council's Visual Arts Coordinator or other qualified Arts Council member, the mentee is the Inspire Coordinator, and the shared goal is to present a visual arts exhibition in the community.

One of the tenets of the Inspire program is that the mentor offers support, sound advice, and practical tools to empower the mentee to present a quality exhibition, but in their own unique way. While working under the guidance of a mentor, the Inspire coordinator is encouraged to implement a few ideas of their own that may be new to the Arts Council.

Do's and Don'ts for Mentees

DO

- Be open to feedback you need to hear
- Be willing to make mistakes
- Ask for help when needed
- Work together to problem-solve
- Be open to the mentor's perspectives
- Stay positive
- Reach out and touch base regularly

DON'T

- Only seek feedback on what you *want* to hear
- Take things personally
- be afraid to "bother" the mentor with "silly" questions
- Expect the mentor to have all the answers or solve all problems
- Be biased or jump to conclusions
- Get discouraged too easily when facing obstacles
- Assume that silence means everything is okay

The Mentor and the Mentee Working Together

Elements of the successful mentor-mentee working relationship:

Mutual Respect and Understanding. A priority in mentorship is having a positive relationship in which both participants feel a sense of trust and that their opinions are heard. Being approachable and unbiased opens up opportunities for more honest questions and feedback.

Availability and Commitment. Both the mentor and mentee must respect the time that the other is dedicating to the program. Be available and accessible, respond in a timely manner, and honour commitments so that the other person knows that their time is not being wasted. Give notice in advance if you are delayed on a certain task or unable to make a meeting.

Communication Plan. Regular communication is important in keeping both parties on the same page. At the start of the program, it may be helpful to agree on how Mentor-Mentee meet-ups will happen (ex: in person, over the phone, or email) and roughly how often they will take place. While it is important to be flexible, having this conversation early on will ensure that expectations are aligned and help prevent misunderstandings down the road.

Clear Communication and Active Listening. Mentorship is not like a course in which the more experienced person projects everything they know onto the less experienced person. Rather, communication between the mentor and mentee is a two-way street. Conversations are focused on learning from each other and sharing knowledge, experiences, and practical information. Listen

actively, ask thoughtful and open questions, and clarify. Confirming any action steps is a good way to remain accountable to each other and stay on track.

Follow-up. Conversations are an invaluable piece of mentorship, but moving forward on the action steps is what gets things done. This means that both parties follow through on their commitments and report back on their progress. Provide positive feedback or a simple thank-you to show appreciation.

Getting Started

Preparation. Read through this manual. Visit your Arts Council's website and/or Facebook page as well as the OSAC website and Facebook page. Jot down questions and ideas.

First Meeting. At the beginning of the mentorship, arrange a casual meeting to get to know each other and discuss the program. If you and the Visual Arts coordinator are not already well acquainted, allow time to get to know each other. Partnerships based in trust do not happen overnight. Every mentorship is different, and the nature of the initial meeting will depend on how well acquainted you are with the Visual Arts Coordinator, your familiarity with the Arts Council, and your experience working in arts presenting. Some topics to cover may include:

- Introductions and sharing reasons for participating in Inspire
- Discuss how exhibitions have traditionally been presented in the community, what concepts to keep, and new ideas to try. This may include but is not limited to: marketing, branding, media relations, programming, target audience, program design, and other event details.
- Overview of the timeline for presenting the exhibition. Make a checklist and set target deadlines.
- Agree on how often you will meet and best means of communication (phone, email, etc). Exchange contact information.
- Allow time for questions!

Throughout the program. Every now and then, take a step back to evaluate how the mentorship is going.

- What is working well?
- Have successes been recognized and praised?
- What needs to be done differently?
- Are there any concerns and how can they be addressed?
- How can OSAC help?

Guide to Presenting Visual Arts Exhibitions

The following guide is intended to give an overview of presenting visual arts and is adapted from the Visual Arts Handbook. The complete handbook is available at http://osac.ca/images/VISUAL_ARTS_Handbook_2017-2018.pdf

Planning for an Exhibition

The following steps should be adhered to when planning for OSAC exhibitions:

- 1) Sign up for exhibitions on display at OSAC's Saskatchewan Showcase conference. If unable to attend Showcase, selections can be made from the written descriptions of the exhibits mailed to arts councils in the fall and posted on OSAC's website: www.osac.ca
- 2) Confirm in writing with OSAC the correct dates and location from the tentative tour schedules sent to arts councils.
- 3) Advertise the exhibition and upcoming events well ahead of time. Press releases should be sent out as follows:
 - 6-8 weeks in advance for printed media (ie: magazines, newsletter, bulletin), excluding newspapers.
 - 2-3 weeks in advance for broadcast media and web based media (ie: radio television, newspapers, Facebook, website, Twitter, and Instagram.
- 4) Plan events to coincide with the exhibition, for example: plan an opening reception, invite the artist to attend, lectures, slide presentation, tours, workshops, etc.
- 5) Decide if the Visual Arts Program Grant should be utilized in planning events in conjunction with the exhibition. Refer to section 3 for further information about the grant.
- 6) Receive exhibition kits sent to visual arts contact person two months prior to each exhibition starting date. Should you not receive the kit, notify OSAC's Visual & Media Arts Coordinator immediately and one will be mailed directly. Arts councils listed first on the tour schedule may receive exhibition kits closer to the exhibition dates.
- 7) Publicize the exhibition in your community. Use the press release in the kit and posters if they are included. Hold an opening for the exhibition, using invitations which are sometimes included with the kit.
- 8) Arrange for tours of the exhibition with school groups or other interested parties within the community. Insure that the education packages are distributed to the schools.

- 9) Unpack the exhibit carefully and note any damaged or missing works on the condition reports supplied in the exhibition kit. Damage of a serious nature should be reported to OSAC immediately (Visual & Media Arts Coordinator (306) 586-1252). Refer to the kit for a more detailed care and handling package. Hang the exhibit according to the order indicated in the kit.
- 10) Enjoy the exhibition! Encourage viewers to sign the comments book.
- 11) Repack the exhibition, complete the condition reports and ship the crates plus one copy of the condition report to the next community listed on the Notice of Next Booking supplied in the exhibition kit. Note the date when the next arts council has the exhibition and ensure that it will be received by the date specified. Shipping must be billed directly to OSAC by the arts council.

Know your shipper and their routes. If you are shipping to a new destination or with a new shipper, inquire when the shipment will arrive.

Whenever possible, ship with Jay's Moving and Storage as OSAC has a contract with them and are charged only for actual weight as opposed to cubed weight which can be substantially more expensive.

- 12) Return forms to be completed and sent to OSAC as soon as possible:
 - condition reports
 - exhibition program reports (now available online at <http://osac.ca/index.php/visual-media-arts/for-art-councils/exhibitionrep>)
 - shipment of exhibits

NOTE: If there are any problems with an exhibition (eg: late arrival, damaged works, exhibition kit has not arrived), please call OSAC immediately (306) 586-1252.

Marketing and Advertising

Arts Councils are responsible for the advertising of their exhibitions. However, the OSAC Visual & Media Arts Coordinator advises Arts Councils on publicity campaigns if requested.

Use of artist images. If printing your own posters, brochures or other marketing items, please check with the OSAC Visual & Media Arts Coordinator to be sure you are using authorized images and artist descriptions. Images found on Google or even the artist website may not be authorized for advertising.

Mandatory Logos. It is imperative that Saskatchewan Lotteries, Saskatchewan Arts Board and Government of Canada logos are used on all advertising and promotions. It is important to keep the general public aware of the types of events those dollars support. Also be sure to use the OSAC and Inspire logos in all ads, programs, etc., so you may build a cumulative impact. Logos are available from the OSAC Office and website.

Press Release. OSAC creates a press release including a detailed tour schedule for each exhibition presented by Arts Councils. A copy of the press release is sent to each Arts Council inside the Exhibition Kits. Arts Councils can use the press release copy "as is" for the local first press release but can expand on the information and supply their local media people with more details about opening receptions, workshops or events planned in coordination with the exhibition.

OSAC provides:

- ✓ posters
- ✓ exhibition brochures
- ✓ media releases for all shows
- ✓ mass distribution of our monthly E-Update (newsletter)
- ✓ online promotion through the OSAC Facebook, Twitter, and website

Exhibition Programming

This is the fun part! Plan an event to show off the exhibition. This could be an opening reception, artist talk, workshop, Sketchbook Meet-Up, etc. Think about what you and your friends would want to spend time doing in a gallery. Do you want a place to hang out and draw or collage? Do you and your friends want to look at new art and discuss what you see, like, don't like, explore the topics introduced in the art, etc. (this is essentially a critique). Talk with your mentor about what kinds of events they hold in the gallery. Do any of them seem like something you'd like to try? Set a date and make a Facebook invite. Update the gallery website and let OSAC know what you are planning, we can help promote it! Talk with your mentor about a budget, and if this event can qualify for an OSAC Program Grant. You might need very little to throw a good event (light refreshments, space and time), or you might want to plan something more involved (inviting the artist out to host a workshop would require artist fees, etc.) If you are interested in applying for funding, check out our website here for more information: http://osac.ca/images/Program_Grant_Application_2018-2019.pdf

Exhibition Kits

Exhibition kits are specifically designed to complement each exhibition chosen to tour the province. Each arts council will receive the exhibition kit two months prior to the opening date of the exhibition. If, for some reason, the kit does not arrive, notify OSAC immediately. Arts councils booked at the beginning of the tour may receive the kit only one month prior or even closer to their opening date.

Each exhibition kit will include:

- a) Care/Handling Information - instructions for the proper care and handling of art work. Information includes display advice, conservation and procedure for assessing damage.
- b) Tour Schedule
- c) Publicity Material - will include a press release, posters, one-pagers, postcards, etc.
- d) List of Works (in suggested hanging order).

- e) Notice of Next Booking - next location to which the exhibit is to be shipped.
- f) Bill of Lading Form – This is the waybill or bill of lading for Jay’s Transport for shipping the crates to their next venue. The weight of the crates, addresses and contact information are included on the form. This form should be signed by the arts council contact and given to the trucker when the crates are picked up.
- g) Condition Reports - it is very important to report on the condition of the artworks as they are received and as they are repacked. Notify OSAC of all damage.
- h) Exhibition Report - this is an evaluation tool needed for office records and is used for feedback to the artist(s). OSAC also gathers statistics from evaluations for the annual report and budget. **It is essential to complete this form online or return it (with the condition report) to the office as this is a tool with which to secure funding for our/your programs!**
- i) Education Package - "Tour Strategies and Activities" guide for each visual arts exhibition will include information about the exhibition, the artists, questions, activities and/or a hands-on component. A "How to Use the Tour Strategies and Activities Guide" booklet should be in the possession of every arts council. Call the office for one! (306) 586-1252. These are also available online at www.osac.ca as well as on our Pinterest page at <http://www.pinterest.com/osacsask/lesson-plans-visual-arts/>

Two other education packages are now included with an accompanying letter, press release, posters, and brochure to be sent to schools.

Scavenger Hunt Activity

A Scavenger Hunt activity is included with the touring exhibitions to encourage youth to explore the artworks on a deeper level, visually and intellectually. The Scavenger Hunt includes 30 plastic sleeves with detail images from works in the exhibitions as well as questions, instructions and master answers, answer sheets for the students to write in their answers, and pencils. There are three categories: **1)** Kindergarten to Grade 3; **2)** Grade 4 – 7; and **3)** Grade 8 – 12. The students are to find the artwork/s that correspond/s to each small illustration or best answers the question on their master card. They are to then fill in the number of the painting that corresponds to each letter on their yellow card. These illustrations are bits and pieces of the artworks in the exhibition. Some are more obvious than others.

Care and Handling Information

UNPACKING:

Clear and concise installation and packing instructions are provided in the exhibition kit and a tour binder that accompanies each exhibition.

- a) Wear white gloves when handling the artwork. Remove only one piece of art work at one time. Carry with one hand on either side of the artwork. Never carry by the top of the frame only. Never

touch the surface of a painting. If you need to lean the works against the wall, only stack 4 at a time. Always lean them front to front and back to back, only if they are the same size.

b) Check each work for damage and complete the Condition Incoming section (immediately) on the condition report supplied in the exhibition kit. Some things to look for that can cause problems include:

- Warping of the frame or support structure.
- Marks on the frame or paint surface.
- Paint loss or damage from abuse, humidity or temperature fluctuations.
- Crate damage

c) Where damage has occurred, do not attempt any repairs yourself. Immediately contact:

Visual and Media Arts Coordinator
Organization of Saskatchewan Arts Council
1102 8th Avenue
Regina, Sask.
S4R 1C9
Phone: (306) 586-1252 Fax: (306) 586-1550
Email: zoe@osac.ca

OSAC must be informed of any damage immediately and will advise of the necessary steps for repair and/ or insurance claims to be made.

d) Check to see that all works of art and supplementary materials are received. A crate content list of all materials for each crate is enclosed in the exhibition kit.

PACKING:

a) Check each piece of art work for any damage that may have occurred during the display of the exhibition. Report the condition on the Condition Outgoing on the condition report supplied in the exhibition kit. Do this very thoroughly and attentively.

b) Pack each work in the marked and numbered plastic package provided and place in the appropriate crate.

c) Check the crate content list to make sure all items (including the wall labels, gloves and the pink copy of the condition report) are packed in the crate.

d) It is important that all work travel in their designated upright position to avoid damage. Please pack carefully. All packing material is included to stop works from moving within the crate. Pay attention to simple instructions on the packing such as "This way Up" and other notifications.

e) If the white gloves accompanying the exhibition are soiled, please launder them or contact OSAC for replacements. DO NOT use bleach.

Reporting

Arts Councils report on each event they present by completing the Exhibition Program Report supplied by OSAC. This form is available as a fillable PDF form on the OSAC website at <http://osac.ca/index.php/visual-media-arts/for-art-councils/exhibitionrep> Take a look at the evaluation ahead of time to see what information is required, such as audience number, number of volunteers, and number of volunteer hours.

Did it go as planned? Were the goals met? What did audiences say about the exhibition? These audience quotes are vital for those that help to fund OSAC to understand the difference we are making.

Return the evaluation form promptly to the OSAC Office.

Additional Resources

"OSAC Visual Arts Handbook." OSAC. http://osac.ca/images/VISUAL_ARTS_Handbook_2017-2018.pdf

"Social Media Event Marketing Strategy: Before, During, and After." *Hootsuite*.
<<http://blog.hootsuite.com/social-media-for-events/>>

"The Value of Presenting: A Study of Arts Presentation in Canada." *CAPACOA*.
<<http://www.diffusionartspresenting.ca/>>

Inspire Evaluation

In addition to the performance evaluation, both participants are asked to complete the Inspire Program Evaluation. There are a couple different questions depending on whether one is a mentor or mentee. The official survey is online and the link will be sent, but the survey questions are included below so that participants know what to keep in mind throughout the program.

*1. Please provide your name and Arts Council

*2. Which exhibition was presented through Inspire?

*3. I participated in Inspire as a:

Inspire MENTEES:

*4. Prior to your role as Inspire Coordinator, how involved were you with the Arts Council?

*5. How much do you see yourself being involved in the Arts Council in the future?

*6. Please describe what was done to advertise the exhibition, plan an event, and work with other volunteers to set up and take down the exhibition.

*7. Did you make specific efforts to market this exhibition to your peers/people in your age group?

*8. How likely are you to consider presenting another visual arts exhibition (either with the Arts Council or in any other capacity in the future?)

Inspire MENTORS

*9. In what ways was the preparation for the Inspire exhibition different from other Arts Council shows with regards to advertising, events, and working with other volunteers?

*10. Did the Inspire Coordinator make specific efforts to market this show to their peers/people in their age group?

*11. How different was the audience of the Inspire exhibition from other Arts Council exhibitions?

*12. How did youth engagement (as audience and volunteers) in the Inspire show compare to that of other regular Arts Councils shows?

*13. How much did the Arts Council benefit from this experience?

*14. How likely are you to consider being a mentor again?

Inspire PROGRAM

*15. Were the workload and responsibilities required of you reasonable?

*16. Were your responsibilities clearly defined?

*17. Would additional training or resources have helped you in your role?

18. Please share any comments regarding roles and responsibilities in the Inspire program.

*19. Please rate your experience working in a mentorship relationship.

*20. Did you find there was an appropriate amount of contact between the mentor and mentee?

21. Is there anything you suggest that OSAC do to help Inspire Coordinators in their role?

22. Is there anything you suggest that OSAC do to help Arts Council Visual Arts Coordinators in their role as mentors?

*23. Did you gain personally from this experience?

*24. What contributions or successes are you most proud of from this experience?

*25. How would you rate the Inspire program overall?

26. What did you like the best?

27. What did you like the least?

28. Please share any additional comments on any aspect of your experience with OSAC and Inspire.

*29. Does OSAC have your permission to include quotes from this evaluation as testimonials in future reports?