

Our Top Tips

Project Management:

- **Plan and plan some more** – project template and project schedule are essential.
- **Diary in regular catch up and review meetings** from the start of your project to check progress and budgets!
- **Select collections content as early** as possible. Condition check and think about mounting and preventative conservation.
- **Expect the unexpected!** Timetables can go out of the window, so flexibility and good project management are essential.
- Always factor in **more time** than you think you will need.
- If you can, squirrel away a **contingency fund for unexpected spending**.

Collections Management:

- **Methods of display**- caring for collections is a museum's number one priority. If original objects are to be used in a commission, consider how they will be kept safe: all mounts for objects need to be planned out, secure and made of inert materials.
- **Good Research**- preliminary research into the objects being interpreted is always appreciated. Nobody expects a dissertation but an awareness of overall context (the institution, the town and the collection) will enrich an application.
- **Manual handling techniques**- there are certain manual handling skills that are required if working with museum collections to keep handler and objects safe, for example when to wear gloves with what materials and how to support any potential weak points when holding objects.
- **Access**- museums monitor the temperature, humidity, light levels and manage pests within their collections. If museum objects are to be displayed there needs to be access to the collections for environmental monitoring. There also needs to be access if lights blow or if any moving parts of the installation break.
- **Reducing risk to collections being displayed**- There may be a need for using electrics with low wattage and lights that give off low heat to minimise risk. Consider if using replicas will enhance the artwork by giving greater freedom to its design.

Rationale:

1. What do you want to do?
2. Why do you want to do it?
3. Is an artist commission going to help you achieve your aims?
4. If yes, how will the commission do this?
5. How does working with an artist fit in with the project – is it integral or is it a bolt-on?

Planning:

1. How will you achieve your aim?
2. What will it cost?
3. Who do you want to work with?
4. How can you get them to work with you?
5. How do you find out who might want to work with you?
6. How do you want the artist to work with you and your collections?
7. When do you want the work completed by?
8. How do you want to keep track of the development of work?
9. Who will own the work created during the commissioning period?
10. Who is responsible for the work once created and installed?

Planning outcomes:

- Be able to construct a budget that includes fair pay for artists, material, transport, insurance, installation costs etc.
- Know where to look for additional funding your project
- Be able to make a project plan that is realistic about your capacity to achieve your aims

- Be able to recognise when expert help is needed and who to ask
- Be able to write a brief (whether you advertise or not for commission)
- Understand there are 4 different ways of getting an artist: open selection, limited selection, direct approach by artist, direct approach by museum
- Know when and how to make a contract
- Understand what and how to insure the work being created
- Be aware of how Health and Safety legislation impacts on your project

Commissioning Artists: Further reading and fact-finding

1. Interesting examples of commissioning in museums

Fred Wilson:

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/videos/a/video-a-change-of-heart-fred-wilsons-impact-on-museums/>

<http://judithestein.com/sins-omission-fred-wilson's-mining-museum>

<http://edition.cnn.com/2012/06/22/living/artist-fred-wilson/>

Matt Smith:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/birminghammag/sets/72157625297722618/>

Dale Chihuly:

<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O301268/va-rotunda-chandelier-chandelier-dale-chihuly/>

Hoodwink:

www.hoodwink.org.uk

2. *Paying artists a living wage*



The Arts Council of England won't really commit themselves on this matter:

[www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/doc/how to pay artists.doc](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/doc/how_to_pay_artists.doc)

But Artists Newsletter were commissioned by them ten year's ago to produce this report:

<http://www.a-n.co.uk/publications/article/193995>

The article is ten years out of date, but the comparisons made between different types of work are still very relevant and have been recalculated annually to make an accurate estimation of artist's fees. It is good to read to understand the financial value of work made by artists. For current sample rates for visual artists see:

http://www.a-n.co.uk/knowledge_bank/document/4179625

To construct your own fee schedule and look at different types of contract see:

http://www.a-n.co.uk/knowledge_bank/topic/77174

Public art online has some really practical advice on how to select and contract artists:

<http://www.publicartonline.org.uk/resources/practicaladvice/commissioning/guidelines.php>

3. *Health and safety/risk assessing*

Public art online is very helpful in this area again:

http://www.publicartonline.org.uk/resources/practicaladvice/commissioning/health_safety.php

and refer back to the Health and Safety Executive's own publications:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/index.htm>

Artist commissioning process

<p>What happens</p>
<p>Meet with team to discuss the commission brief: project manager will draw up a brief to advertise the commission opportunity to artists. Things to include in brief: what is the artist responding to, collection/building history, about the display space, whether there are any community groups for the artist to work with and the duration of the exhibition. (see example brief)</p>
<p>Advertise commissions to artists: advertise nationally and through your networks for proposals that respond to the brief. Allow about 4 weeks for submission of proposals</p>
<p>Shortlist artist proposals: a selection panel will shortlist proposals using point system based on brief</p>
<p>Select and contract successful artist: the selection panel will meet to select the preferred artist from the shortlist and send out contract, including project plan and payment schedule.</p>
<p>Artist develops work: the artist may need access to the collection/museum and its staff during this period in order to develop their work as proposed. This development phase should be 6 – 18 months depending on size of commission and complexity of work. This phase should include regular progress meetings with artist.</p>
<p>Promote the project before launch</p>
<p>Delivery and installation of work: allow 1-3 weeks installation time, depending on the nature of the work and complexity of the installation. Risk assess and insure work and team</p>
<p>Opening/private view: celebrate the showing of the work by inviting people involved in the project to a special event at the venue, including press and stakeholders</p>
<p>Workshops and events for audience throughout display : led by artist and also museum team to support the work</p>
<p>Evaluation of work: during the process evaluate the impact of the exhibition on visitors, staff and artist.</p>

Artist's Agreement – *The Grand Tour* exhibition

1. Parties to the agreement

1.1 This is an agreement between ...and(Project Managers:.....) made on

2. Purpose of agreement

2.1 To state in writing the requirements of the commission relating to

3. The Commission

3.1 has commissioned to complete the work described in the Artist's Brief in line with the Schedule.

3.2 The Brief and the Schedule may only be changed by agreement in writing, signed by both parties.

4. The Exhibition

4.1 The exhibition opens on ...and will run until at...

4.2 The artist agrees to complete the work by ...

5. Transport & Delivery

5.1 The artist will arrange transport of the materials for display to ...

5.2 Insurance cover will not be provided by... whilst the work is in transit

6. Installation

6.1 The artist will permit staff to view the installation in the course of construction both at the studio and on-site at reasonable times and with reasonable notice.

6.3 The artist will be responsible for installing the work between ... and ... inclusive.

6.4 De-installation....

7. Loss, damage and insurance

7.1 Insurance:

7.2 The artist will create a display using materials and methods that do not contravene current Health and Safety regulations.

7.3 reserves the right to remove or alter without notice any element deemed unsafe for visitors.

7.4 The artist undertakes to rectify, at their cost, any defects in the work or the materials notified to them by the Project Manager as soon as possible, providing the defects are not caused by wear and tear or wilful damage or misuse.

8. Publicity & Promotion

- 8.1 will arrange and fund publicity and promotion for the exhibition. Promotional materials will include:....
- 8.2 will also supply regular press releases to local media about the exhibition. The artist may be called upon for interviews/photo opportunities at short notice.
- 8.3 shall be entitled, without payment to the artist, to take photographs or film of the exhibition and use it in any publicity material it sees fit.
- 8.4 shall also be entitled to, without payment to the artist, authorise others to take photographs for personal or publicity purposes.

9. Payments

- 9.1 agrees to pay the artist the agreed fee according to the Payment Schedule.
- 9.2 The artist will supply a budget breakdown by: .
- 9.3 The artist should invoice on or just after the dates specified in the Payment Schedule.
- 9.4 The fees and expenses include VAT. It is the artist's responsibility to inform if they are registered for VAT purposes and to supply a VAT invoice.

10. Rights & ownership

- 10.1 The artist will be identified as the author of the art work/display in the accompanying exhibition text; however the exhibition as a whole and its concept belongs to
- 10.2 Any models or preparatory drawings shall remain the property of the artist.

11. Sales

11.1.

12. Events

- 12.1 The artist will make their best effort to attend the private view of the exhibition on the evening of:.

13. Changing this agreement

- 13.1 Clauses in this agreement can only be changed with the written agreement of the artist and the Project Managers

14. Termination

14.1 In the unlikely event that the artist or the Museum and Art Gallery need to terminate this agreement, as much notice as possible should be given and every effort made to minimise the impact on the exhibition.

14.2 The grounds for termination should be clearly stated in writing.

This agreement can be terminated in any of the following circumstances:

14.3 In the event that the artist is in serious default of any obligation under this agreement, shall at first give written notice of the default, and allow the artist four weeks to remedy the fault. If the default is not remedied in this period, may terminate the agreement.

14.4 If the project is cancelled or other circumstances arise beyond the control of which prevent the continuation of the commission,may terminate the agreement by written notice to the artist, who may receive and retain payment for all work carried out up until receipt of the notice.

14.5 The artist may terminate this agreement by notice in writing if is more than 35 days late in making any payment or is in serious default of any other obligations under this agreement, provided that is allowed four weeks to remedy the fault.

14.6 This Agreement will terminate automatically on the death or incapacity of the artist. The artist (or their estate) will receive all payments due up to the point of termination.

15. Editorial control

15.1 will have overall editorial control over the exhibition and reserves the right to withdraw any object or alter any element its deems inappropriate.

15.2 will be responsible for writing the accompanying interpretation for the exhibition and will have final editorial responsibility for all written content, in accordance with our in-house style.

Signed by the artist and by the exhibition Project Managers

Project Manager _____ Date _____

Project Manager _____ Date _____

Artist _____ Date _____

Payment Schedule

Stage of project	Date	Payment

A Grand Tour – Early Tourists in the High Weald

Brief for artist

The exhibition is described as follows: *A sumptuous exhibition of art, costume and historical objects exploring the experience of Georgian and Regency visitors to the High Weald in the days before mass tourism. A Grand Tour focuses on the three large local estates which would have been on the itinerary of any self respecting tourist; Bayham, Penshurst, and Eridge: unlocking their stories and revealing some of the treasures that these tourists would have seen. The highlight of the exhibition is a collection of portraits by Gainsborough, Reynolds and Lawrence, which have never been before publicly displayed. The exhibition will feature a number of objects on loan courtesy of The Trustees of the 5th Marquis Camden Will Trust.*

The project team has decided to recreate a Regency interior within the art gallery, to add a historical context to the display of the Camden Loan. Within the gallery space we also want to create a garden area that is the climax of the exhibition. The exhibition is to be the reopening show after the closure for the lift and modernisation building works. We really want it to be a spectacle and have a huge 'wow' factor.

The exhibition space will be divided into two room spaces each painted in a period Regency colour (greeny/blue and yellow/gold). The exhibition will contain two Regency ladies costumes (Kitty and Emma), white muslin day dresses, possibly with shawls and bonnets. As part of the set dressing for the interior spaces we will be using objects from the museum's collection including furniture, grandfather clock, and early examples of Tunbridge Ware and souvenirs. The Camden loan is framed in period frames which have been conserved.

Brief for garden set design:

- To create an immersive experience for visitors
- To transform the gallery into a fictional, but historical Regency garden
- Concentrate on the Humphrey Repton Red book as a source of inspiration for the garden design.
- Create a space that encourages reflections and makes visitors want to linger
- Have at least one interactive element.

Parameters:

Planned exhibition dates Friday 13th September to 24th November (but these dates are subject to change due to lift works)

The exhibition must comply with H&S, Access and Equalities guidelines

All work and materials must be stored off site in either the artist's studio.

The rest of the interior space (the Regency house area) is to be designed by the museum staff.

Fees:

£2000: 8 days work @ £250 per day, plus £500 for materials. Work schedule to be roughly 2 days research and design, 3 days making, and 3 days installation. However the artist can organise the work programme as best suits their ideas. The only stipulation is that at least 3 days are used for the installation.

The work needs to be delivered to the museum (or agreed storage area by Friday 30th August)