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**How can I show my art with b-side FAQ's**

**Random Proposals**

*'I've got this idea, I don't know what to do with it, maybe b-side would be interested or could help me with it?'*

*or*

*'I want to get funding for this brilliant project, I've missed the b-side festival application deadline, I wonder if they'd still like to hear from me?'*

We don't have a big pot of spare money and our budgets are usually set several years in advance, so we might not be able to fund your idea ourselves. However, we might be able to help you find funding and we can sometimes read drafts of your application or write letters of support to go with your application.

**Supporting your funding application**

We get asked to do this a lot, so if you have found a source of funding and would like our help, please give us plenty of notice. We can't say yes every time, but we'll always try.

**Please note, if you would like to name b-side in a funding application we do require to read the application before it is submitted.**

**Festival Fringe**

Sometimes we can help by putting your work into the b-side festival. This still requires resources from b-side so it isn’t always possible, but the Festival Fringe, what we call the "b-side bangs" is an exciting and alternative way of showing work during the festival if you are able to self-manage your exhibition or event.

**Open Call**

*'What is it, when is it, can I join in and what does it involve?'*

An 'open call' is a big shout out to anyone who wants to apply to us with an artwork they would like to create for our **festival or for other projects** we might be starting.

We advertise the open call on all our social media channels, in our newsletter and via online networks (e.g. Arts Council Art Jobs, Visual Arts South West, Curatorspace, local press).

Anyone can apply for a commission (we pay you to make **your *new* idea** happen). You do not need to have been to art school, but we will need to see that you have some experience. If you have had no experience, see our Bursary and Training section below.

**How good do I have to be?**

We believe that quality isn't just about the finished artwork. Production values are important of course but we also value the commitment you make to work with our hosts, the island community. We want all work made by commissioned artists to be considerate, to be accessible as much as possible, to people with varying needs and to respect the ecology of the island. But we also invite artists and hosts to take risks with their practice, so if you are unsure, talk to us about your approach. We continue to encourage challenging and sensitive work and believe that both these things can happen simultaneously.

Join our mailing list [HERE](https://us1.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=49febcf0f1a9a72e1fa276555&id=fc51799c6e)

**What sort of proposals are you looking for?**

**New work**

We commission new work in live art, text, sound, visual art, digital art and/or work that involves participants, the community and responds to sites in some way. For some proposals, your idea doesn't have to come fully formed, in fact we support experimental or early stage projects that challenge you as an artist and us as audiences or producers.

**What do we mean by sites?**

These are likely to be places on Portland, such as heritage sites, social places, architectural, digital spaces, landscapes, whatever you find stimulating that is particular to Portland. We encourage researching these places and in doing so you might find connections to themes that also have a national or international resonance. We welcome approaches that explore looking in and out from Portland.

However,you do need to show us how you think you will make your idea work so it's important to think it through in stages.

The open call advert will have a description of what we're looking for and will guide you through the application process. You can always call or email us if you want to talk through any part of it before you apply.

Open Calls for our Festivals are highly competitive and we usually get hundreds of applications. We will make sure that you can apply by video as well as in writing and we are always looking for new ways to ensure everyone gets an opportunity to apply.

So please get in touch if you need support in making your application or if you'd like to discuss access requirements before making your application.

**I'm at the beginning of my art career can I still apply? I'm new to working in this way can I still apply?**

**Bursaries**

These are pots of money paid to artists who could be at the beginning of their career or have been making art for a while in a particular way but want to try something new. The money is to support you to test out new ideas, without the pressure of making an artwork for a festival.

If you are very new to the world of making art professionally, come and talk to us as it could be that a bursary is a good way to get started. We may also know of other organisations who fund the early stages of creating your own work.

**Training**

Over the years b-side has run a number of training programmes, often with other UK based arts organisations, that help you find out what it would be like to begin a career in the arts. Courses have been in artistic and project production and curation. Some are for young people specifically who find it hard to access the arts through the usual educational routes. Some courses are for people of any age.

Contact us if you want to find out more. If we don't have a course running we may know of other organisations who do, we regularly share opportunities on our website, social media and enews.

**How Much Should I Charge for My Time?**

Good question! You need to decide your fee, the amount you want to get paid for your work, there are some recommended guidelines, so have a look for the sorts of daily rates that artists are recommended to charge for their time depending on their level of experience. Don't under sell yourself but stick closely to the guidelines too. You can get information on artist pay rates [HERE](https://www.artistsunionengland.org.uk/rates-of-pay/)

Also, consider the value of the commission carefully because keeping to your budget is incredibly important and b-side can't cover overspends. If the commission fee is £4,000 including materials, then be careful that you really do count all your expected costs.

Additionally, we can sometimes help you look for further funding if our budget isn't enough for your idea.

**How much support will I get to make my work?**

Each person in receipt of a commission works closely with one of the b-side team as their b-side commission manager. A commission manager supports the artist's work, by connecting them to people locally who may have knowledge that is needed for research or with academics or specialists that would be helpful. We help secure sites and venues on the island and we also provide a creative sounding board to bounce ideas off.

**What if my proposal gets turned down?**

It's controversial we know, but we can't give everyone detailed feedback on all Open Call proposals, this is because we regularly receive 100's of proposals. We read and re-read all the proposals carefully, we talk about them and importantly we look for a good balance of work for the event and our audiences.

We look for a mix of art forms, sites/venues, duration, scale, challenge, engagement, participation, research areas - lots of things contribute towards our decisions and of course we want to make all our projects and events the very best they can be. These are the factors we take into consideration when we are selecting work. So if you don't get shortlisted and we are only able to give you very simple feedback, please don't give up.

**I have an existing artwork that I think b-side would be interested in.**

b-side usually shows new work that is made in response to the island. However, we occasionally show work that has already been made or has been adapted for Portland if it fits with a theme that we are working with and would add something to the festival programme or other events we are programming.

If you have a piece of work that you think would work with b-side, please feel free to get in touch.

As mentioned above we aim to get back to you within 6 weeks of receiving a proposal to show an existing piece of work.

Please note that b-side pays an exhibition fee to artists whose work has already been made and is included in our programme.

**I am working with another organisation/funder and I think b-side might be interested.**

It's hard to get funding to make new artworks and we understand that it is often preferable, practically and creatively, to have several partners supporting your idea. We welcome applications and enquiries from artists who are working with several partners. Sometimes this also means that the work you make can tour and we are happy to discuss being part of this.