



A Few Steps to a Successful Artist Residency

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But first, a couple of definitions...

An **artist residency** is a unique learning partnership between a professional artist and an organizational sponsor. The artist is a special resource willing to share expertise with students and instructors. The Arts in Education and Communities (AiE&C) Residency program grants are intended to help schools and community organizations involve professional artists to strengthen educational arts programs. The artist residency serves to demonstrate the vitality of an arts discipline. The artist acts as a professional role model, assists teachers and students in using the creative process in their work and lives and draws attention to the necessity for arts in the classroom and in the community. Although the artist may teach during the residency, the artist should not function as the primary teacher or be expected to perform as a curriculum specialist.

A sponsoring school or organization may work with any professional artist (or arts-producing organization) who suits the particular needs of the school and community. Artists may be contracted to teach and/or work side by side with students, conduct in-service or special teacher's training, and conduct performances, demonstrations, exhibitions, or special classes for the community at large. Artists are available to work in all arts disciplines including theatre, music, dance, opera, literary arts, film, video, and the visual arts.

SMAHC can assist sponsors in identifying individual artists or arts organizations that provide residencies in the SMAHC area. The Minnesota State Arts Board (MSAB) also annually publishes a Roster of Artists approved for residency programs. Their website is www.arts.state.mn.us or phone 800-866-2787. In addition, COMPAS is a state supported, nonprofit organization specializing in writers and artists in residence. COMPAS may be reached at 800-826-6012 or their website is www.compas.org. And Young Audiences of Minnesota is a nonprofit organization providing arts programs that promote art for art's sake through residencies, workshops, performances, professional development for teachers, and exhibitions. Young Audiences of Minnesota's website is www.youngaudiencesofmn.org or phone 651-292-3399.

Residency Requirements

- 1. Professional artist.** Artists selected must be independent, professional artists. A professional artist considers the arts as a primary profession or career. Art-related background and quality of work will be heavily considered in the application review process. Selected arts-producing organizations must be qualified professional organizations. Artists' fees should follow MSAB guidelines (presently \$250.00/four-hour artist/student contact day excluding mileage, lodging, subsistence, etc.) Exceptions to this will be considered where reasonable justification is included with application.
- 2. One or more core groups.** Must allow at least one core group or class of students to work with the artist daily throughout the residency. At least one core or target group of students must receive extended in-depth contact with the artist for the length of the residency. A core group is defined as a specific group of students who work with the artist during the residency. *A residency must allow for a minimum of four hours of artist/core group contact time beyond the community event.*

Residency Requirements (cont.):

3. **Teacher must be present during all artist-student contact time.** A qualified instructor must be present at all times during a school residency. In the case of non-K-12 projects, a qualified member of the applicant organization must be present at all times. To ensure a successful school residency, the teacher and artist work cooperatively to maintain a productive working environment in the classroom.
4. **Teacher-artist contact time.** Residencies of five days or less must include *at least one hour of training* for school instructors and/or organizational staff. Residencies longer than five days must provide for a minimum of two hours of training. Training provided by the visiting artist is preferred although not required. We suggest that substitute teachers be hired to cover training period(s). Include an outline of the in-service/training component in the project narrative. A pre-residency planning day with the artist and involved faculty and planning committee is strongly encouraged. It is recommended the artist be paid for the planning day.
5. **Community component.** To broaden the total impact of the residency, the general community must be involved in some aspect. Each residency must involve the *general* community in some significant aspect of the residency. The project must be extended to include the general community. Examples: invite the community to an exhibit of students' residency work, host a *Meet the Artist* night, or sponsor a community education class.

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Creating a Successful Residency

*Reprinted from the Minnesota State Arts Board: Arts in Education School Support
grant program guidelines*

While the following steps are not required in planning an SMAHC-supported residency, many schools and organizations have found these steps useful in planning a successful residency that meets the needs of their teachers, students and community members. The following is.

Step 1. Early Planning

- A. Select a residency coordinator and a planning committee.
 - ◆ Members of the committee may include administrators, teachers, parents, community members and possibly students.
 - ◆ Three or four months before the grant deadline, appoint a member of the planning committee as coordinator/primary contact person who will oversee assessment of arts needs, artist selection, outlining residency details and preparing the grant application.
 - ◆ Review material; ask questions of SMAHC; request technical assistance.
- B. Examine your school's artistic goals and arts curriculum objectives.
 - ◆ List at least 5 strengths and 5 weaknesses of your current arts program or curriculum.
 - ◆ List the general artistic goals of your school or organization.
 - ◆ List all the experiences with artists in your school/community in the last three years.
 - ◆ Based on the responses to the previous three items, list at least five things (not just with artists) you would like to see happen in your arts program over the next three years.
 - ◆ Finally, list at least five ways you would like to work with artists in your program over the next five years.

Step 2. Find your Artist

- A. Determine appropriate residency activities; select an arts discipline, or a number of disciplines, and the types of artists you would like to work with.
- B. Interview several artists and view their work to select artists who will partner well with your teachers and help you accomplish your goals.
- C. References and background checks: Contact the artist's references. You may request alternative references in order to discuss the artist's strengths in regard to a particular age group or residency type. SMAHC does not run background checks on artists listed in the *AiE Roster of Artists*. Schools should follow Minnesota law and district hiring procedures regarding criminal background checks for all personnel working with youth.
- D. Ask the artist you select to become part of the planning team to work with you on goals, objectives, evaluations, schedule, core group composition, teacher involvement, community events, publicity, and budget.

Step 3. Application Process

- A. Matching Funds
 - ♦ Cash sources may include school budgets, parent groups, fundraising events, local service groups or businesses, other granting agencies, community education and others.
 - ♦ In-kind contributions may include donated materials, labor, space or services for which you do not pay cash. Sources may be local arts supply stores, printing businesses, restaurants and motels for artist meals and lodging, among others. The items must be necessary for and specifically committed to the residency, and listed at a fair market dollar value.
- B. Confirm the SMAHC deadline date and mail or drop off your application well before the deadline. Application must postmarked no later than the deadline date (see pg. 1 of Arts in Education & Communities program guidelines for deadlines). Late applications are ineligible. Take advantage of technical assistance from the SMAHC staff by submitting a draft application (see pg. 1 of Arts in Education & Communities program guidelines for deadlines).

Step 4. If You are Approved for a Artist Residency Grant

- A. When grant contracts arrive, have your authorizing official and project director read and sign all copies of the contracts. Return one copy of the contract to SMAHC as soon as possible. Payments are made within 45 days after SMAHC receives signed documents. **Checks are sent directly to the authorizing official's office.**
- B. When the grant award letter and contract packet arrive, contact the artist you selected to solidify your plans.
- C. Reactivate the planning committee. Review goals and objectives. Fine-tune your plans. If major changes need to be made, contact the SMAHC office in writing in advance of the residency to seek approval.

Conducting a Successful Residency

Step 1. Get Ready for the Residency

- A. Prepare a written contract with the artist. This allows you both to understand and confirm details, including exact residency dates, the overall plan and schedule, supplies and equipment needed, space, travel, lodging and meal arrangements, and payment schedule. Let the artist know if an invoice is needed to trigger your payment process. **Arrange to pay the artist on the last day of a short residency and periodically during a longer residency.**
- B. Inform the entire faculty and/or staff of the residency and discuss how it will affect schedules. Arrange as soon as possible for any in-service or after school time teachers will spend with the artist.
- C. Request that teachers provide curriculum materials and ideas several weeks before the residency to the artist if they wish these materials incorporated into the artist's plans, and vice versa. Inform the artist about the school/community climate: school policy and events, community background, themes or issues of interest or concern to students or staff, etc.
- D. Locate space for the artist to use to relax, eat, change clothes or set up studio projects. Also discuss with the artist the type of space arrangements available for working with students so activity can be appropriately planned.
- E. Order necessary supplies and equipment.
- F. Plan publicity for students, school staff, parents and the public. Include the SMAHC logo and the following credit line on all material:
This activity is made possible in part by a grant from the Southwest Minnesota Arts & Humanities Council (SMAHC) with funds appropriated by the McKnight Foundation and/or Minnesota State Arts Board with funds appropriated by the State Legislature.
- G. Arrange for custodial help.
- H. Arrange for as much release time as possible for the contact person during the residency to accommodate all the responsibilities of the role and to have the residency run smoothly. Also confirm that a teacher will be present for all artist activity with students.
- I. Check the final report form to review what information you need to record and collect along the way during your residency.

Step 2. During the Residency

- A. Introduce the artist to school and community people.
- B. Keep communicating. Establish regular check-in times to evaluate as you go. Continual communication will help you anticipate any trouble spots as well as enjoy the progress of a residency.
- C. Ask for help with difficult problems. Contact the SMAHC office's Arts in Education (AIE) Program Officer if you and the artist cannot solve something through discussion. Sometimes an outsider's perspective provides the needed insight.
- D. Remember yourself. Know what you would like to get out of the residency. Enjoy this new partnership
- E. Notify the SMAHC office's AIE Program Officer of residency highlights or send a complete schedule of activity. Site visits are made when possible.

Step 3. Following the Residency

- A. Remember to pay the artist on the last day of the residency (or whatever date has been agreed upon in advance). Give the artist her/his artists' residency report form, and request a copy of the completed artists' report for your files.
- B. Evaluate your experience. Save some energy and time for this important task. Invite the artist to join staff for debriefing after the residency. A thorough evaluation is the best tool to improve your next project. It also allows you to bask in your accomplishments and gauge the impact on participants.
- C. Tie up loose ends. Send thank you notes, fill out any school reports, and complete all things necessary to a satisfying culmination of the project.
- D. Complete the school's final report soon after finishing the residency. The final report form is included as part of the contract package sent from SMAHC. It is a required part of the residency and due to the SMAHC office 60 days after the end of your residency project dates. Late reporting affects future grants to your school.

Step 4. Final Notes

- A. Please keep the SMAHC office informed of your residency project.
- B. **Request *in writing* any major changes to the original proposal**, including change of dates, artist, core group or community participation. The request should be made well in advance of the residency and must be approved by SMAHC prior to the residency.
- C. Call anytime with questions or requests for assistance, especially if a situation arises during the course of a residency with an artist or staff that could affect work with students.
- D. Notify SMAHC *immediately* if the contact person changes, so that correspondence can continue uninterrupted.
- E. If you have good, clear photographs of residency activity, please send them to SMAHC. We are always looking to feature arts education projects in our newsletter.
- F. Make sure you get a copy of the artists' completed report for your files