



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 a school. The artist is a special resource willing to share expertise with students and instructors. The Arts in the Schools Residency program grants are intended to help schools 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 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, and exhibitions 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.

SMAC can assist sponsors in identifying individual artists or arts organizations that provide residencies in the SMAC 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/aie 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.

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. 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 SMAC-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 SMAC; request technical assistance.
- B. Examine your schools 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 artists references. You may request alternative references in order to discuss the artists strengths in regard to a particular age group or residency type. SMAC 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 SMAC deadline date submit your application well before the deadline. Late applications are ineligible. Take advantage of technical assistance from the SMAC staff by submitting a draft application.

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 SMAC as soon as possible. Payments are made within 45 days after SMAC receives signed documents. **Checks are sent directly to the authorizing officials 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 SMAC 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 artists 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 SMAC logo and the following credit line on all material:
This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Southwest Minnesota Arts Council, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.
- 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 SMAC office if you and the artist cannot solve something through discussion. Sometimes an outsiders 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 SMAC office 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 schools final report soon after finishing the residency. Your final report form is found in SMACs online grant program. It is a required part of the residency and due to the SMAC 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 SMAC 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 SMAC prior to the residency.
- C. Call any time 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 SMAC *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 SMAC. 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