

PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP A SCULPTURAL RESOURCE IN NORWICH

I completed my MFA at NUA in 2017. My practice is primarily in large format 3D from mixed media including metal. This has been problematic for me as without an equipped workshop I can't experiment and am reliant on fabricators. Also, studio spaces that I have seen are generally too small with low ceilings, or do not have ceiling fixtures that allow work to be hung for either construction or documentation, or both.

Because I could not be the only artist who needs access to equipped workshop space, I consulted other 3D artists who were all keen on the opportunities this would provide them, even when they have existing studio space in which to work - it is the equipment and technical support they value.

So taking **Print to the People** (<http://www.printtothepeople.com/open-access>) and **Berlin Art Glas** (<https://berlinartglas.com/>) as my models, I developed this proposal as a specialist resource for the region.

I would be keen to know whether other artists

- would find such a resource valuable to them and their practice,
- how often they would use the resource
- would value this as a means of developing new technical skills
- would find the opportunity to hang work in a 'gallery' space useful for documentation
- know of suitable premises (see Location below)

This selection of media should be understood as a starting point and that with time and use the workshop could be expanded.

3D-Workshop proposal

Mission

To provide professional construction workshop spaces for 3D artists in the region. The goal is to set up and staff these spaces through capital investment and then to be a self-funding cultural enterprise thereafter. Membership fees, workshop charges, and commissioned professional fabrication by technical staff (for artists, businesses, or consumers) will provide the income stream. Compare, for example, Berlin Art Glas.

Although the aim is to provide professional equipment and skills to 3D artists, a possible income stream could emerge from training courses for artists who generally work in other media.

It may be desirable to have a funded residency programme as part of the offer, where the residency would provide studio space, a final exhibition, and a specified materials budget. Through careful selection such a programme could bring additional skills and perspectives to the workshop, and positive publicity. Ideally this would be an open call - regional, national, and international.

Location

Industrial space in Norwich and importantly, on or within walking distance to public transport.

The building needs to be in sound condition and secure with a lengthy lease – eg. 5 years

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because of the significant installation costs.

Space required

- large technical workshop space able to be subdivided
- materials store for member purchase
- storage space for members works for periods up to say 4 months – while work is under construction and, potentially, while waiting for exhibition
- dedicated 'gallery space' : two adjacent white walls, clean floor, white ceiling with hanging points and lighting for documentation of work

Media spaces

- metal for cutting, shaping and welding, *excluding* foundry. Commercial foundries are available
- flat-bed glass kiln
- modelling and moulding for clay, plaster, plastics, resins, wax, sugru and other modelling materials
- small ceramic kiln
- resin casting
- stone working (not building masonry)
- two 3D-modelling software station/s

Administrative structure and governance

Staffing:

- Managing administrator (operations officer), responsible for overseeing functioning of centre and staff; for maintaining monthly accounts of incomings and outgoings, membership registrations, liabilities such as insurances etc; and to market professional fabrication capability.
- Technical staff to induct users to equipment and oversee daily use of studios, to instruct users as needed, to act as professional fabricators as needed.
- Store and materials manager to oversee store, sourcing and purchase of materials, and use of gallery space. This role should also develop networks of quality external professional services such as laser cutting, laser printing, wood working facilities, auto spray painting, neon manufacture.

Governance:

Governance will depend on the legal form adopted and the statutory requirements. *This will require professional advice*: Social enterprise? Cooperative? Limited company (but not limited by guarantee)? Any board would ideally provide both financial and cultural knowledge and skills. There should be an elected membership presence.

Membership and fees

Open to professional artists for a standing fee payable annually, or biannually by arrangement only. Insurances will be costly for staff, users, equipment, and buildings.

Use of the workshop spaces by members would incur an additional daily charge.

Materials available to artists at preferential prices - cheaper than retail but with a margin.

Capital investment for setup

Capital source will probably have to be crowd funding so pledges would have to be

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carefully managed. We could also look to develop patrons.

Possible public funding : there could be public cultural funding bids to organisations such as HLF or Arts Council UK but public funding will most likely come with outreach obligations. This may not be desirable for professional artists.

Capital raised should cover operating costs for a minimum of the first 18 months for rent, insurances, salaries, utilities, materials, professional fees. If some large equipment is leased rather than bought then monthly payments become part of the ongoing operational costs rather than depreciating. *Advice would be needed from an appropriate accountant.*