

# firstdraft

116 – 118 Chalmers Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010

Phone 02 9698 3665 | mail@firstdraftgallery.com | www.firstdraftgallery.com

---

## TIPS for writing a FIRSTDRAFT GALLERY APPLICATION

### SIMPLICITY

Be concise and keep it simple. WHAT, WHY, HOW, WHO.

We want to be able to *see* what you *see*. It is an application for a **visual** art exhibition, we want to be able to clearly **visualise** what you want to do with the space, even if it is sound work. Too many applications can read like a Masters application, it's all concept and theory. Not to say that theoretical language is not important in describing ideas; however the application also needs to address **WHAT WE WILL SEE IN THE GALLERY**. This does not mean the work proposed must be already finished, but (to be a bit twee) you must be able to 'paint a picture' with your words.

### HONESTY

Just be yourself. When reading applications, the ones that stand out the most are the most honest applications. An application that is true to the artist's capability at that particular time in their development. There is no need to try too hard, you just need to propose something that **YOU** think will be fantastic, that **YOU** want to see in this space, something that **YOU** want to do. So don't fill your application with 'fancy things' you think should be in there in case it might impress, like a 'new media' component even though it has no relationship to the work proposed. It needs to come from **you**.

**ALSO**, generally there is no need for academic language, if it doesn't suit the application it muddles the idea. However if you just love Deleuze and Guattari go for it, put it in, but not if you don't *really* need it.

**AND** don't lie or 'beef up' on your CV. We don't care, just be yourself. If you had an exhibition at the Venice Biennale great, good for you, that is an amazing achievement, but if you didn't really...well, we will know.

### CLARITY

- Clear visual documentation IS A MUST. We want documentation of your past and present work that is easy to see (NOT blurry and muddy) with easy to open files and easy to navigate layout.
- Explanation of visual documentation is also a plus, particularly with performance documentation. If we are looking at something live, or an installation shot, then there should be some sort of explanation accompanying so we can further understand what the viewer was supposed to see/feel. Dates, media and titles are always handy in further understanding your work and the context of your practice.
- Presentation is also important. Clean, simple PDFs. No hardcopy. No handwritten! Remember, we are looking at over 100 applications, so it is important that your application is easy to pick up and look at. Like a neat little package. A DISK WITH 1 PAGE APPLICATION, 1 PAGE CV AND SUPPORT MATERIAL.

# firstdraft

116 – 118 Chalmers Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010

Phone 02 9698 3665 | mail@firstdraftgallery.com | www.firstdraftgallery.com

---

## **WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR IN EMERGING ARTISTS STUDIO RESIDENCY APPLICATIONS**

- A project that could not be realised without the assistance of a free studio space and financial assistance.
- An artist whose practice or project would benefit the most from being exhibited at the Firstdraft location – a project or practice that engages with the gallery and studio as a space.
- An artist whose practice would benefit the most from a studio to develop aspects of their practice either materially or conceptually.
- Artists who would benefit the most from potential dialogue and exchange with other peers and ARI artists and that may engage with the wider community
- Artists who would benefit most from the experience of deadlines i.e. the studio programs 10-week timeline leading up to an exhibition.
- \* Due to the nature of the funding for the studio program, emphasis will be given to artists working across interdisciplinary, new media and/or collaborative practices – however all practices will be supported.

## **WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR IN EMERGING CURATORS PROGRAM APPLICATIONS**

- Proposals that can handle the whole gallery space and which might engage the gallery space in new ways. This does not mean filling the whole gallery up with work!
- Proposals that can make the whole gallery feel like a cohesive exhibition.
- Innovative and engaging conceptual rationale, with a convincing intent as to why the show should come to fruition.
- Experimental and investigational and ways of seeing and thinking about practice and media, the bringing together of certain works and ideas that have not been placed together before.
- Proposals that ask questions and seek to answer them, or leave them open-ended.
- Good curatorial applications can be as simple as bringing together one aspect of contemporary practice and looking at it in a certain way, or it can delve into the depth of contemporary art theory, and engage with current global dialogue on a particular subject.
- The ability to collate a catalogue to accompany the show, to have some critical engagement (in whatever form that may be) with the exhibition.
- Artists who would benefit the most from potential dialogue and exchange with other peers and ARI artists and that may engage with the wider community.
- We have now also introduced a second stage in the application process; an informal interview. This will take place in the gallery and is an opportunity for a series of short listed applicants to talk further about their curatorial vision with the gallery directors.

# firstdraft

116 – 118 Chalmers Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010

Phone 02 9698 3665 | mail@firstdraftgallery.com | www.firstdraftgallery.com

---

## WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR IN EXHIBITION PROGRAM APPLICATIONS

- Artists who will benefit the most from the experience of timelines and deadlines associated with having an exhibition.
- Artists who would benefit the most from potential dialogue and exchange with other peers and ARI artists and that may engage with the wider community.
- Practices that are experimental and innovative, that offer a new perspective on a type of media or idea in an engaging and interesting way.
- Proposals that offer honest, with well executed and considered concepts.
- Proposals that are aware of the context of contemporary art and its histories; that engage with these factors or deliberately ignore them.

Written by Kelly Doley, April 2009

*Firstdraft is assisted by the NSW Government through Arts NSW.*



*The Firstdraft Emerging Artist Studio Residency Program is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.*



# firstdraft

116 – 118 Chalmers Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010

Phone 02 9698 3665 | mail@firstdraftgallery.com | www.firstdraftgallery.com

## firstdraft

116-118 CHALMERS ST  
SURRY HILLS NSW 2010  
PH 9698 3665  
www.firstdraftgallery.com

