

OPENWORK

Second Call: Exhibition Proposals from Curators

These are **preliminary** application guidelines: **Finalized guidelines and forms will be posted by Saturday, June 7.** → **Expressions of interest** now being accepted.

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External Links:

[Openwork project](#)

[The Lost & Found Project Space floor plan, images, and details](#)

[Expression of Interest Form](#)

Application Form (to be updated June 7)

Submission upload link

Deadlines and Dates

Step 1:

Expression of Interest Form Due: **Monday June 23, 11:59 PM EST**

*Required for access to the Openwork Portfolio Database, and to qualify for Step 2.

→ Interested curators are asked to submit an [Expression of Interest Form](#) by Monday June 23, 2025. This will give you access to the Openwork Portfolio Database.

Step 2:

Proposal Deadline: **Monday August 25, 11:59 PM EST**

→There will be a zoom info session, a 1 hour Q&A in July 2025, date TBA.

Please review our timeline: tlaf.ca/openwork.

Funding

This is a funded opportunity. The selected curator or collective will receive an honorarium of \$1000 CAD (total), and an exhibition budget of \$1800 CAD. CARFAC Artist exhibition fees will be paid to participating artists by TLAF Collective. Additional CARFAC professional fees (for exhibition programming) for the artists and curator must be paid out of the exhibition budget.

Openwork is generously funded by a grant from the Ontario Arts Council.

Overview

Openwork aims to engage with independent or new/emerging curators, connect them with artists, and foster an interest in experimental craft based practices.

We are seeking exhibition proposals from curators or collectives for **group exhibitions of 4-6 artists**.

Proposals should reflect critically engaged curated exhibitions that recontextualize traditional ways of making, engage with the historical legacies of craft materials and techniques, and explore their contemporary relevance. We are looking for proposals that seek to push boundaries and expand the field of contemporary craft.

We will prioritize submissions that contribute to diversifying representation in contemporary craft and curation, and foreground underrepresented voices and stories.

Specifically, proposals that include works by members of the following Ontario Arts Council (OAC) and Toronto Arts Council (TAC) priority groups will be given priority in the jurying process: Artists of Colour, Deaf Artists and Artists with Disabilities, Indigenous Artists, and New Generation Artists, as well as artists who self-identify as 2SLGBTQIAP

Please review our [definitions of experimental craft](#), below.

We require interested curators to review the artist portfolio submissions from our first call in developing their exhibition proposals. These portfolio submissions comprise the Openwork

Portfolio Database. Curators may also choose to work with artists who have not submitted a portfolio to the Openwork Portfolio Database, as long as they fit within our definition of experimental craft practices.

→ Interested curators are asked to submit an Expression of Interest Form by Monday June 23, 2025. This will give you access to the Openwork Portfolio Database.

Prospective curators should contact the artists they are interested in working with while developing their exhibition proposal. Openwork's stated goals include connecting artists and curators. This will be key to a successful exhibition. Curators should be in ongoing dialogue with each artist they plan to include in their proposed exhibition. Curators may choose existing works from an artist, or may work with the artist in developing a new piece(s) for exhibition.

Proposals must include a strong curatorial vision, a rough budget, and an outline for exhibition programming. Community engagement, innovation, and representation of diverse voices are encouraged. Canadian, Indigenous, and international applicants are welcome.

Since our funding is provided by the Ontario Arts Council, at least one Ontario-connected individual (artist or curator) must be included in each submission. At least one participating artist or collective must be selected from the Openwork Portfolio Database. Proposals that include more than one artist from the Openwork Portfolio Database are encouraged and will be prioritized during the jurying process.

Selected exhibitions will be funded. Artists will be paid CARFAC fees. Curators will be paid a curator honorarium. A small exhibition budget will be provided. CARFAC Professional Fees must be paid out of the awarded exhibition budgets for exhibition programming.

The exhibition will be 3 weeks in duration and will take place at The Lost & Found Project Space in Toronto in Spring-Summer 2026 (exhibition dates TBD).

Eligibility

Eligible Curators:

- Independent curators at all career levels, including recent graduates and new curators without previous experience.
- Curators who have no experience working in experimental craft, but would like to expand their curatorial practice.
- Curators with a craft-based focus.
- Curatorial collectives.
- Artist-curators.

- Collaborative artist collectives with no more than 4 members may apply with curated exhibition proposals and include their own work only if the focus of their proposed exhibition includes the works of 2 - 4 artists outside of their collective. (Please see the Budget section of this document for more information).
- Out-of-province applicants are welcome.
- International applicants are welcome.

Ineligible Curators:

- Students who will be enrolled full-time in postsecondary programs in the 2025-2026 school year are not eligible to apply. (Exceptions can be made for graduate students in certain circumstances).
- Students graduating after December 31, 2025 are not eligible to apply.
- Individual artist-curators who include their own artwork in their exhibition proposals.
- Curators who intend to act as an agent or dealer for the artists in their proposed exhibition (curators must not, at any point, profit from the sale of artwork connected to the artists participating in the Openwork project and exhibition).

We encourage submissions from underrepresented curators, and those who identify with the following Ontario Arts Council [Priority Groups](#): Artists (or Curators) of Colour, Deaf Artists and Artists with Disabilities, Indigenous Artists, and New Generation Artists. We also encourage applications from curators who self-identify as 2SLGBTQIAP.

What we are looking for

We are looking for:

- A strong curatorial rationale creating dialogue between chosen works.
- Completeness of application, quality of writing.
- Artwork included should be: thoughtful, experimental, innovative, and connected to craft-based media/practice. Chosen artists should have a practice that is critically engaged while exhibiting technical knowledge and proficiency in their medium.
- Activities and exhibition programming that encourage participation of the local community.
 - ◆ Applications that engage with the local community will be given more weight during the jurying process. The Lost & Found is located in Trefann Court, Toronto, on the boundaries of Moss Park and Regent Park. Our location also falls within the boundaries of the Corktown Neighbourhood. These areas include a high percentage of community housing, and higher rates of representation of marginalized communities, refugees, immigrants, and Indigenous people. There are few art spaces.
- Well planned logistics and budget surrounding the exhibition.
- Exhibition design that enhances the curatorial direction, and considers accessibility.

- At least one person (curator or artist) involved resides in Ontario.
- No full-time students or current coursework.
- Involves those belonging to OAC and TAC priority groups:
 - ◆ **Artists of Colour:** The term “artist of colour” is based on the Government of Canada’s definition of “visible minorities,” which is defined as “persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.”
 - ◆ **Deaf Artists and Artists with Disabilities:** This priority group includes people who have physical, mental or learning conditions with long-term, temporary, or varying effects that may be apparent or not.
 - ◆ **Indigenous Artists:** The term “Indigenous” refers to First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples.
 - ◆ **New Generation Artists:** The term “new generation” refers to a person who is 18 to 30 years of age.
 - ◆ **2SLGBTQIAP:** Refers to individuals who self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, queer, intersex, asexual, pansexual or two-spirited.
- Artist-curators intending to present their own work will not be considered.
- Collaborative artist collectives may apply and present their own work but must also include 2-4 additional artists. Please note: collectives count as 1 entity for the purpose of the curator honorarium. Collectives that include their own artwork will be paid individual artist fees. Artist fees must not exceed the assigned total (please see [Budget](#) section of this document).
- TLAF Collective, The Lost & Found Project Space, and the selected curators will not function as art dealers. No artwork will be for sale during the exhibition. Interested parties are free to contact artists to purchase work privately after the exhibition closes. Selected curators and TLAF Collective may not profit from sales of artwork.
- No admission may be charged for exhibition programming. Workshops may charge the public a nominal admission fee to cover materials (fees should be determined in discussion with TLAF Collective) .

Selected Curator Responsibilities

Responsibilities for Selected Curator or Curatorial Collective in realizing their awarded exhibition:

The Selected Curator will be responsible for...

- General curatorial administration and logistics (e.g. communication with artists, arranging shipping/delivery).
- Coordinating with artists to choose existing works for exhibition or develop a new work (or works).
- Coordinating with artists to apply for additional funding such as OAC Exhibition Assistance grants to help with shipping and installation costs. Another option can be

Canada Council Arts Across Canada grants. We can provide a letter confirming the exhibition for these purposes.

- Exhibition design including signage, didactics (e.g. wall text, labels, booklet) and presentation and display of works.
- Organizing and coordinating the exhibition opening including any serving of refreshments (optional: acquiring a special occasion permit for the serving of alcohol).
- Planning, organization, and promotion for ancillary exhibition programming and community engagement.
- Liaising with The Lost & Found and TLAF Collective in planning your exhibition and programming.
- Providing a finalized list of proposed works, floorplan, and a list of installation requirements.
- Authoring a short exhibition text.
- Promotion of the exhibition including writing press-releases, and coordinating with The Lost & Found for website and social media promotion. If the budget permits, printing and distributing showcards (this can be coordinated with artists who apply for and receive their own grant funding for the exhibition).
- On-site presence during installation and opening (in exceptional circumstances, virtual presence may be acceptable).
- Maintaining good condition of gallery premises during installation and takedown, and adhering to guidelines, terms, and conditions set by The Lost & Found Director (there will be an accompanying agreement).
- Gallery sitting arrangements.
- Funding acknowledgments: including the OAC and Ontario government logos, as well as The Lost & Found Logo in the gallery and on promotional materials.
- Budgeting to make sure CARFAC Professional Fees are paid to any artist involved in the ancillary exhibition programming.

Support offered and not offered

Support offered by The Lost and Found and TLAF Collective to the Selected Curator:

- The Lost & Found offers 378 square feet of professional exhibition space in a storefront property in downtown Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
 - Details, images, and floorplan can be found here: <https://tlaf.ca/submissions/>
 - Gallery 1 and gallery 2 are separated by movable dividing walls on a track. These are solid mdf and suitable for hanging work on. These can be placed in any configuration or moved to the side, out of the way.
 - The beam supporting the dividing walls can support a lot of weight.
 - The walls in Gallery 1 are plywood-backed and suitable for hanging heavy works.
 - Some gallery furniture and equipment available: display stands and tables, lighting, mini projectors, media players, folding chairs, ladders.

- Commercial liability insurance.
- Light cleaning, and light painting and patching of walls (if the walls remain white) will be taken care of by The Lost & Found.
- TLAF Collective will offer guidance and advice to selected curators re promotion, grant applications for additional funding, exhibition design and layout, and other aspects of exhibition planning.
- A curatorial handbook, compiled by TLAF Collective will be made available.
- TLAF Collective will provide installation consultation and problem solving support:
 - Micah Donovan is an experienced exhibitions coordinator and installations manager for museums and public institutions. He has worked as a curator, educator, television creative producer and host. He will be offering exhibition design feedback, installation guidance, and technical support, to the selected curator.
 - Nurielle Stern is an installation artist and the founder and Director of The Lost & Found Project Space. She will be on hand during the exhibition installation and take-down to offer support and guidance.
- TLAF Collective will provide an exhibition confirmation letter for grant applications.
- Promotion of the exhibition on The Lost & Found's social media and website.

What The Lost and Found and TLAF Collective does not offer

- Artwork insurance.
- Gallery sitting (this must be arranged by the selected curator).
- Point of sale.
- Additional funds, including for shipping costs or travel.
- Billeting or help with arranging travel or accommodations.
- Transportation, storage, or shipping of artworks.
- Exhibition installation.
- Storage of works or packaging materials.

Submission Guidelines

How to Apply:

→Submit all files and documents here:

[Google File Upload Link \(to be updated by June 7\)](#)

(If, and only if, you are having trouble with this option, please email your submission with all files as attachments to [thelostandfoundto \[at\] g m a i l \[dot\] com](mailto:thelostandfoundto@gmail.com). Use Subject Line: "Openwork Exhibition Proposal Submission".)

Contact us at thelostandfoundto [at] g m a i l [dot] com with any questions. TLAF Collective will not preview or offer feedback on applications.

Submission checklist:

- ☐ **A.** Expression of Interest Form due **Monday June 23, 11:59 pm EST**
- ☐ **B.** Contact and connect with the artists you would like to work with
- ☐ **C.** Submit the following by **Monday August 25, 11:59 pm EST**:
 - ☐ **1.** Exhibition Proposal PDF, include:
 - ☐ **1.1.** Curator name and contact info, and names and contact info of proposed artists.
 - ☐ **1.2.** Curator website and social media links if applicable.
 - ☐ **1.3.** Curator bio (150 words max).
 - ☐ **1.4.** 10 career highlights in CV format.
 - ☐ **1.5.** Curator statement (350 words max).
 - ☐ **1.6.** Plan for exhibition programming (250 words max).
 - ☐ **1.7.** Plan for exhibition design and list of installation requirements (200 words max).
 - ☐ **1.8.** Floor plan showing planned location of works (see below for link to floorplan).
 - ☐ **1.9.** Bios and 1-2 images or video links with descriptions for each participating artist.
 - ☐ **2.** Rough/ working budget
 - ☐ **3.** Writing sample, optional (pdf format, 3 pages max).
 - ☐ **4.** Submission Form: Filled, signed and dated. [Curator Submission Form link \(to be updated June 7\)](#)

What to Submit:

1. Exhibition Proposal:

- 1.1.** Curator name and contact info
- 1.2.** Curator website and social media links (if applicable).
- 1.3.** Curator bio (150 words max)
- 1.4.** 10 career highlights in cv format (please focus on curatorial relevance if possible)
- 1.5.** Statement detailing the curatorial concept for the exhibition (350 words max). We are looking for a strong and cohesive curatorial vision. Include:
 - Exhibition title (or working title).
 - Artists you plan to include, and why you have included them.
 - How this exhibition engages with experimental craft.
- 1.6.** Plan for exhibition programming or community engagement (250 words max). Please

note: CARFAC Professional fees must be paid to any artist presenting exhibition programming. Please consult the 2026 CARFAC Artist Professional Services Fee Schedule: <https://carfac-raav.ca/2026-en/2026-en-4/>

- 1.7. Overview of the exhibition design (200 words max).
Also include a list of installation requirements (i.e. ceiling mounted projector, electrical outlet access, special lighting requirements, extension cord and trip hazard covers, any work that is hanging or fragile, spaces for performances to occur). The exhibition and layout are preliminary and the selected curator will be encouraged to refine this at a later date, in consultation with TLAF Collective.
- 1.8. Use the TLAF floorplan to provide an initial layout of proposed works. Exits and doorways must be kept clear at all times. Please refer to the floorplan here: <https://tlaf.ca/images/LostandFoundGalleryfloorplan.jpg>
Additional details about the space can be found here: <https://tlaf.ca/submissions/>
- 1.9 Bios, images and descriptions for each participating artist. Include:
 - One paragraph bio of each proposed artist with their social media and website links.
 - 1-2 images or video links for each artist showing existing work. In the case of proposed work, images should be representative.
 - For each image, include: title, date, year, materials, dimensions, photo credit. For time-based works/video documentation include a video still, title, date, year, etc. and a link to youtube, instagram reel, or vimeo if applicable. For video links, include preferred viewing range if applicable, maximum 2 min.
 - One paragraph description of each work that explains its relevance to your proposed exhibition. Identify how each chosen work engages with experimental craft. If this image is representative of work to be made for this show, please explain how it demonstrates the artist's intentions.

2. Budget:

Curator proposals must include a rough budget.

→ Template can be copied here (google account needed, please contact us if you have trouble accessing this):

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1RMEgj5_01pJkFXjT2b0EMk43iPCrGiydaoYPfJNb8JM/copy?usp=sharing

We are able to provide an exhibition budget of \$1800.00 CAD:

- The exhibition budget should be used to pay CARFAC professional fees such as artist talk fees or fees for exhibition programming.
- CARFAC Professional fees must be paid to any artist presenting exhibition programming. Please consult the 2026 CARFAC Artist Professional Services Fee Schedule when constructing your budget: <https://carfac-raav.ca/2026-en/2026-en-4/>
- Curator fees are not regulated by CARFAC. Curators may set their own programming presentation fees out of the exhibition budget.
- The \$1800 budget can also be used for exhibition design (paint, didactics, display stands), exhibition programming and community engagement, promotion, and shipping.

Curators are encouraged to work with artists to apply for additional funding such as OAC Exhibition Assistance grants to help with shipping and installation costs. Another option can be Canada Council Arts Across Canada grants. We can provide a letter confirming the exhibition for these purposes.

Each participating artist (and collective member) will be paid a CARFAC artist fee (exhibition fee) by TLA Collective. This fee does not come out of the \$1800 operating budget. The Openwork allotment for artist fees can accommodate **group exhibitions of 4-6 artists**. (The number of works included in the proposed exhibition is up to the curator's discretion).

In deciding on the number of artists, prospective curators must consult the CARFAC 2026 exhibition royalty fee schedule and make sure artist fees for exhibition total no more than \$3500 CAD (please note, performance works may necessitate additional exhibition fees): https://carfac-raav.ca/2026-en/2026-en-1/#A.1_%E2%80%A2_Guiding_Principles

3. Optional: writing sample in pdf format (please keep this to 3 pages max).

4. Submission form, signed and dated.

Exhibition Proposal Requirements checklist:

Please make sure your application adheres to the following (* indicates requirement)

- ☐ Group exhibition of 4-6 artists, three week exhibition run*
- ☐ Your proposal adheres to our definition of experimental craft. *We recommend that interested curators attend a 1 hour info session, date TBA...* Please contact us with questions. *
- ☐ At least one artist or individual involved is based in Ontario, or has an Ontario connection).*

- ☐ At least one artist or collective has been chosen from the Openwork Portfolio Database.*
- ☐ You have contacted the artists you plan to include in the exhibition *
- ☐ The proposal includes artists with experimental, sculptural, & cross-disciplinary practices that engage with historically defined craft media and craft-based practices in innovative ways.*
- ☐ Please note, if you are a curator and an artist, we do not accept proposals that include your own artwork.
- ☐ If you are curating as a collaborative artist collective, we allow inclusion of your work, as long as 2-4 additional artists who are not part of your collective are included in your exhibition. Collectives count as 1 entity for the purpose of the curator honorarium. Collectives that include their own artwork will be paid individual artist fees. Artist fees must not exceed the assigned total (please see Budget section of this document).

Openwork Definitions: Experimental Craft

We're looking for experimental, sculptural, & cross-disciplinary practices that engage with historically defined craft media and craft-based practices in innovative ways.

We define craft media as including but not limited to:

Clay/ceramics, textile/fibre, glass, woodworking, metalsmithing, papermaking, or any process/material associated historically with the decorative arts, utilitarian object making, and traditional cultural practices.

We are looking for artists and curators who recontextualize traditional ways of making, engage with the historical legacies of these materials and techniques, and explore their contemporary relevance. We are looking for practices that seek to push boundaries and expand the field of contemporary craft.

Innovation and recontextualization can include:

Reactivation of traditional or Indigenous craft practices, community engagement, performance, combining craft materials and other media, cross-disciplinary or inter-arts artistic practices (e.g. textiles and dance), sculptural installations, video works, sound works, interactive works, non-traditional use of materials (e.g. raw clay as finished work) or non-traditional materials (e.g. textile woven from plastic waste), documentation of transient or ephemeral occurrences.

Please reach out to thelostfoundto [at] gmail [dot] com with any questions.

Jury and who we are

Openwork Jury

Jury members for curatorial proposals will be curator Sarah Edo, and artists Nurielle Stern, Magdolene Dykstra, and Shay Salehi.

TLAF Collective

TLAF Collective is Nurielle Stern, and Magdolene Dykstra, both practicing artists in experimental craft media, and Micah Donovan, artist, educator, and installations coordinator at Art Museum U of T. Nurielle Stern is also the founder and Director of The Lost & Found Project Space in Toronto, a part-time brick-and-mortar exhibition and community space.

