CHECKLIST FOR ARTISTS'
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

To prepare for a successful and fulfilling career, in addition to training in artistic discipline or craft, artists must also be equipped to engage the marketplace effectively. Based on research conducted as part of the Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation's Marketplace Empowerment for Artists program, this tool is designed to help artists and/or arts students seeking training and professional development to assess the content, scope and approach of programs and courses intended to provide professional development skills. This checklist may also be useful to parties seeking to assess or improve training and professional development options for artists.

The tool is organized into two sections: (a) content and (b) approach/philosophy. For each section we provide a set of questions for the user to consider when evaluating training and professional development options.

Content
Equipping an artist to effectively engage the marketplace requires training in many different aspects of professional life. The following content areas should be considered in crafting a comprehensive approach to your training and professional development needs. Keep in mind that all areas may not be treated in a single course or program but care should be taken to ensure that through one or some combination of resources all of the following topics are addressed. In this text the main topic is listed followed by a series of questions pertaining to specific aspects of it.

Career Planning
Does the course/program offer……
- Exposure to a wide range of career paths within the traditional arts field and also at the intersection of arts and other fields such as education, health, community development?
- Self-assessment exercises that allow the student to assess interests, strengths, weaknesses?
- Personal planning training including goal setting, time management and similar skills?

Business and Financial and Planning
Does the course/program offer……
- Training in business and financial planning?
- Financial literacy—understanding of basic financial processes and documents including, tax issues, banking, etc.?
- Business etiquette—information about how to effectively communicate and basic negotiation skills in a business environment?
- Information on small business development?

Marketing
Does the course/program offer……
- Skill development for presentation of work to multiple audiences—brief oral presentations (elevator speeches), portfolio, catalogue?
- Public speaking for arts audiences and non-arts audiences?
- Information and exercises about conventional marketing methods in arts markets?
- Information and exercises about web-based markets and marketing strategies?
- Information and exercises in social media planning and use?

Insurance/Risk Management
Does the course/program offer……
- Skills and tools to assess potential personal risks and liabilities.
- Information about how to find, select and secure health insurance? Retirement insurance? Property insurance?

Space
Does the course/program offer……
- Information about how to find, select and secure affordable space for working, doing business and living?

Project Management
Does the course/program offer……
- Information and applied exercises on project development and management (budget, work plan, proposal, etc.), including collaborations with other artists, arts administrators and people outside of the arts field?
- Information about archiving and documenting work?
- Information about documenting social impacts of work (if applicable)?

Legal Issues
Does the course/program offer……
- Information and applied exercises on negotiations and contracts inside and outside of the arts field?
- Information on intellectual property and fair use?
- Information on applicable tax laws?

Networking
Does the course/program offer……
- Information and exercises about how to develop networks in the arts field?
- Information and exercises about how to develop networks outside of the arts field (fields possibly intersecting with the arts)?
- Information about creating and joining networks using social networking tools?

Ethics
Does the course/program offer…..
- Discussion of ethical issues and practices in the arts business field?
- Discussion of ethical issues and practices among artist colleagues?

Research and Development
Does the course/program offer……
- Information and applied exercises on research and development to secure material supports (fundraising, financing and employment) in the arts and intersecting fields?
- Analysis of socio-economic conditions of artists' town/city/locality and creative workers within that context?
- Training in basic research methods so as to better understand studies and reports (in the arts and other fields) that are based on basic qualitative and quantitative methods?

Approach/Philosophy
Assessing the fundamental approach taken in training and professional development is essential. Consider the following in evaluating a prospective course of program.

Is the program/class student-centered?
> A program that is student-centered will begin with self-assessment of the artist's life/career/ professional development goals. This self-assessment (which may be guided by a professional career or life coach) pushes the artist to develop his/her goals and assess the skills and knowledge base necessary to realize those goals. Note: A student-centered program will provide knowledge and skills commensurate with the artists' career stage.   A "one size fits all" approach is usually not student-centered.

Is training both theoretical and applied?
> In the best case, instruction is offered in a way that students can explore an idea and also apply that knowledge in real life or simulated situations. For example, students will be introduced to important concepts/practices such as the artist statement or business/career plan, as well as have the opportunity through hands on exercises or assignments to develop their own artist statement or business/career plan.

Are artists involved in the delivery of instruction, mentoring and critiquing?
> The participation of artists in one or more elements of the course or program ensures that the program is sensitive to the realities of artists. Programs may hire practicing artists/arts professionals as well as recent program alumni to lecture or interact with students in other ways. Students themselves may also share skills and expertise through peer mentoring during a program/course. Artist instructors also often serve as important role models for students.

Is peer support an integral part of the program?
> The importance of peer support to sustain an artist's professional development is often modeled through group exercises and networking events during a course or program. Students should be encouraged to seek feedback on each other's work as well as professional development achievements and challenges.

Does the program rely on local partnerships with other institutions and organizations in the arts? Outside of the arts?
> A quality program recognizes that artists are an integral part of society and have a myriad of avenues to pursue their goals, both within and outside of the arts. It is recognized that it is impossible for resident staff to comprehensively provide all the knowledge and skills required in these various avenues and therefore it is beneficial to partner with outside institutions and professionals. For example, a program may partner with the Legal Arts organization to provide artists with and overview of legal issues of importance to artists such as copyright laws. Artists interested in pursuing careers within the education field would benefit from speakers from the education field to discuss opportunities and key competencies required for artists to successfully work within the education sector.

Does the program use state of the art delivery methods to expose students to beneficial materials and resources?
> Increasingly, there are valuable professional development resources and networks available online. Examples include the Chicago Artists' Resource (CAR), products from the New York Foundation for the Arts, curricular resources like the GYST (Get Your Stuff Together) program, podcasts by the Atlanta Contemporary Arts Center and Side Street Projects, among others.