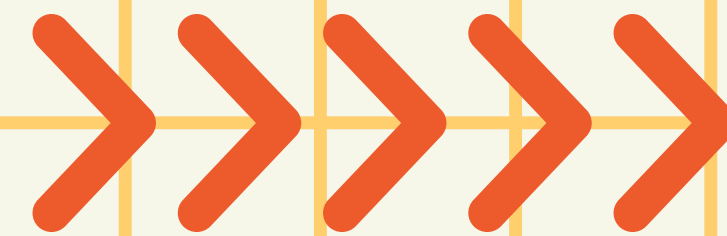




# CREATING YOUR CV AND COVER LETTER

With Nadja Pelkey





# PURPOSE

CVs and Cover Letters are "core documents" for artists, creatives, and arts workers. Your CV records all professional activity and relevant experience you have had to date.

A cover letter is a narrative that relates to your CV and connects your experience to whatever you are applying for or submitting.

CVs and cover letters should be tailored for every opportunity to ensure that whoever is reviewing your information sees the most relevant experience.






# STEP 1: MAKE A FULL CV

Your full CV will be a record of EVERY professional and volunteer experience you have. Nothing is too small or brief to include here.

This CV needs to be updated regularly. When an opportunity presents itself you will copy and paste from this CV into a new CV document. Your full CV should never be edited down - only added to. It is a living document, and over time it will grow. Some of your experience will be less relevant, but don't remove it, you never know when it may be relevant again.





# FULL CV CATEGORIES

- Education
- Skills
- Certifications
- Professional Experience (If you were paid to do it, it goes here)
- Volunteer Experience (Unpaid)
- Solo Exhibitions/Performances
- Group Exhibitions/Performances
- Professional Associations and Memberships
- Publications
- Publications as author
- Grants and Awards
- Residencies
- Workshops
- Public presentations/ talks
- Teaching Experience


**WHAT'S MISSING FROM THIS LIST?**



# HOW TO WRITE ABOUT EXPERIENCE



Your CV should communicate what your responsibilities were, what skills you have developed, where your strengths lie, and what you have achieved.

- Begin by stating the name of the place, location, dates, and job title (e.g. manager, volunteer) Use reverse chronological order (most recent first)
  - Use short, clear statements with strong verbs.
  - Use numbers, amounts, dollar values, and percentages (e.g., "Increased youth membership by 25% "Supervised and trained five volunteers", "Designed 5 posters for ..... ").
- 



# HOW TO WRITE ABOUT EXPERIENCE

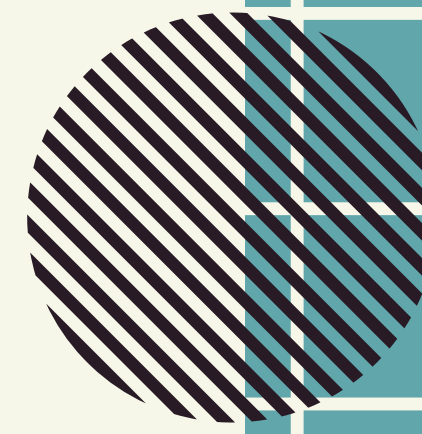
- Don't summarize or describe the company/ organization. Describe your responsibilities and accomplishments in relationship to the job/organization.
- Limit your description to the three or four most important points.

## EXAMPLE:

July 2023-August 2023

*Assistant Gallery Coordinator (YCW), Artcite Inc, Windsor, ON*

Worked with Staff and Board members to organize and plan gallery activities.

- Maintained and updated exhibition schedule
  - Trained and supervised gallery volunteers
  - Developed and coordinated emerging artists exhibition, featuring 25 local artists
- 

# ACTIVITY

## COMPUTER / TABLET

Open a new CV template and  
your current CV  
Begin to populate the new  
template

## PAPER

Take a piece of paper and begin  
to make a list of all of your  
experience to add to a template  
later.

# FORMATTING YOUR CV

- Use a CV or resume template that is clear, and easy to read.
- Make sure your CV is accessible (high contrast - legible)

Access Google templates here: [Templates](#)

**Your Name**  
**Name**  
**Arts Worker**

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**Skills**

---

**Experience**

**Your Name**  
123 Your Street  
Your City, ST 12345  
123.456.7890  
no\_reply@example.com

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Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Aenean ac interdum nisi. Sed in consequat mi. Sed pulvinar lacinia felis eu finibus.

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**Company Name / Job Title**  
MONTH 20XX - PRESENT, LOCATION  
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Aenean ac interdum nisi. Sed in consequat mi. Sed in consequat mi, sed pulvinar lacinia felis eu finibus.

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**Company Name / Job Title**  
MONTH 20XX - MONTH 20XX, LOCATION  
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Aenean ac interdum nisi. Sed in consequat mi.

If you are applying to large companies, they may screen CVs using AI.

Any design clutter, or formatting will send your CV to the bottom of the pile.





# THINGS TO NEVER PUT ON A CV

Avoid adding the following to your CV:

- Personal Information
  - relationship status
  - social media accounts
  - home address
- Age / Education dates
- Inaccurate information
- Irrelevant information
- References

Keep your CV clear and concise, make them curious enough about you to make it to the next stage.



# STEP 2: WRITE THE LONGEST COVER LETTER EVER


Yes, really.

Open a new document, and write a paragraph about EVERYTHING on your CV.

*What's the point?*

Keeping your full CV up to date and contributing to a giant cover letter with information about all your activities will make applying to things easier.

BONUS - seeing your experience and achievements laid out and written about will help to overcome imposter syndrome. We all have it - we don't need it, it doesn't serve us.  
Apply to anything and everything!





# CREATING A NARRATIVE OF YOUR EXPERIENCE

## CV EXAMPLE:

July 2023-August 2023

Assistant Gallery Coordinator (YCW), Artcite Inc, Windsor, ON

Worked with Staff and Board members to organize and plan gallery activities.

- Maintained and updated exhibition schedule
- Trained and supervised gallery volunteers
- Developed and coordinated emerging artists exhibition, featuring 25 local artists

## COVER LETTER EXAMPLE:

From July to August I worked as Assistant Gallery Coordinator for Artcite Inc as part of the Young Canada Works program gaining experience in gallery operations and management. I developed and coordinated an exhibition of over 25 regional emerging artists, handling all correspondence, contracts, installation and promotional activities.



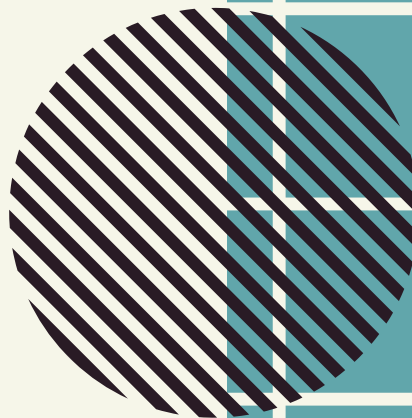


# SELF-IDENTIFICATION

An opportunity may specifically solicit applications from a group of individuals, in this case you may need to self-identify your belonging to that group in your application.

Your age, gender, cultural background, race, and/or disability status may make you a part of an equity deserving group.

This can be done in your cover letter through a statement. Let's write that statement together:



# CONGRATS!

Once you have your Full CV and the longest cover letter you have ever seen you are ready to pursue any opportunity that comes your way!

From your full CV you will copy/paste information tailored to your applications.

## Application types:

- Employment - subsistence
- Employment - career
- Exhibition/Performance/Residency
- Grant Application

# STEP 3: TAILORING YOUR CV AND COVER LETTER

Now that you have your full CV and Cover Letter to edit down from, you are ready to apply.

Finding Opportunities:

WorkInCulture Job Board - Ontario Wide, all career levels

ArtsNotes - Arts Council Windsor & Region [www.acwr.net](http://www.acwr.net)

Link to review [https://www.workinculture.ca/JobBoard/jobs/Public-Programming-Intern-\(1\)](https://www.workinculture.ca/JobBoard/jobs/Public-Programming-Intern-(1)).

# ACTIVITY: USING AI TO TAILOR YOUR COVER LETTER

Chat GPT:

Enter prompts: The next text I enter will be a job description that I need to write a cover letter for, please write the letter using this information about my professional experience: (paste your cover letter).

You **NEED** to edit the text from Chat GPT to make it sound like you wrote it, the raw AI is positively unhinged - re-write in your own voice.

# TOOLS AND RESOURCES

WorkInCulture.ca

<https://www.workinculture.ca/workinculture/storage/medialibrary/Sitelimages/CTAs/Career-Guide-Job-Search-Basics.pdf>

Grammarly

Chat GPT

One of the best resources available to you is your peer network and professional contacts - reach out! Support others.



# ACTIVITY: ELEVATOR PITCH



**STEP 1:**  
Write a list of 20 things about yourself. Include your professional experience, goals, experience, activities, etc



**STEP 2:**  
Take your list and edit it down to what you can say in about 30 seconds.

**THANK YOU**

