

WCA/NH Exhibitions Toolbox

JURIED EXHIBITION PROPOSAL GUIDELINE

This is a guideline for juried exhibition proposals. Members can pick and choose the sections listed as needed. Each proposal is unique; some galleries may prefer that you use their form. Be concise, and try to keep proposal to one page if possible.

1. The best way to approach a gallery or other venue about a WCA/NH exhibition is to approach a place where you **already have a contact**. If you don't personally have a contact, find out if another WCA/NH member might know somebody there. **The personal approach** is always the most effective.
2. Next, call your contact (or have someone who knows them make the call) and ask for an **appointment** to talk about an exhibition. An **in-person meeting** is a great way to demonstrate our professionalism, which is something that sets us apart from many other potential exhibitors.
3. Before the meeting, have everything in place for the formal proposal as far as you know. After the meeting, ideas and details may well have changed.
4. **At the meeting:**
 - a. Introduce everyone—the gallery contact might not have met the other WCA/NH members at the meeting, or not remember them well.
 - b. Show photos of some of our recent exhibitions.
 - c. Have a clear idea of what kind of show we'd like to do there, BUT leave the door open for input from the director/curator. They may or may not want to participate in coming up with a theme—if they do, they should (it is their space, after all). If not, let them know that we can handle those things.
 - d. Offer to submit a formal proposal, if they want one (see below for format). If you have covered most of the details in the meeting, it might make more sense to move straight to a letter of agreement, rather than a proposal.
 - e. Thank them again before you leave.
5. **After the meeting:**
 - a. Send a thank-you note (email is fine) the same day, reiterating everything you talked about and agreed to at the meeting (this serves as both a sign of good manners and professionalism, and as a paper trail). Even if they decline our show, send a thank-you note the same time.
 - b. Follow up in a timely manner with either the proposal or the letter of agreement. You may need to be in touch with the director again several times by phone or email to get the details clear before you have a final document.

FORMAL PROPOSAL

NOTE: If you are not able to arrange an in-person meeting, you can go straight to the formal proposal. If you have not had a chance to show them photos of our previous exhibitions, be sure to include them here. Remember that you might not have all the information at this point; it can be added later.

Use letter format, addressed to the director of the gallery.

Joseph Blow, Ph.D., Director
Big Important Gallery
Big Important University
1245 Street Name Road
Big City, ST, Zip

Dear Dr. Blow:

1. Begin by introducing WCA/NH and stating why we are writing to them. If they were recommended by someone they respect, include that (i.e. So-and-so suggested that we get in touch with you to propose an exhibition by the New Hampshire chapter of the Women’s Caucus for Art at such-and-such gallery.)

The second paragraph should be an Introductory Summary of who we are, what we are proposing, and why we think the work would fit their Gallery. Include the WCA mission statement (“The mission of the Women’s Caucus for Art is to create community through art, education, and social activism.”) and background about the NH chapter, especially our dedication to high-quality, contemporary, exhibitions of work by women artists.

2. Proposed Exhibition (*this is where you put all the details of the proposed exhibition, as far as you know*)

- Title
- Juror (*if known, or TBD if not—the gallery director might be willing or prefer to be the juror*), juror’s bio, a line or two about why they were chosen.
- Concept: Theme, inspiration, and vision for this exhibit. Include some detail about why the theme is important and specifically, why it is appropriate for WCANH.
- Exhibition Description: Mediums to be included (i.e.; 2D, 3D, sculpture, installation, etc.), estimated number of artists, whether the show is chapter-only, regional, or national. (Be sure to include the details you may have already agreed on in the in-person meeting).

3. Close: Thank them politely for their attention. Include the Exhibit Coordinator’s name and contract information (phone and email) and WCA/NH Website info.

4. Attachments

- Photos: Sample photos of past WCA juried exhibitions. These should be presented nicely to enhance WCANH’s professionalism.
- Letter (s) of support from someone the director knows or a director we’ve worked with in the past: One or two of these are nice to have but not absolutely necessary.
- Preliminary budget if possible

NOTE: Be sure that at least two other WCA/NH members comment on and proofread the proposal before you send it! We have lots of people with proposal experience who can help you make your proposal terrific.