



## **CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: VANS MENTORSHIP PROGRAM 2017 - 2018**

APPLICATION DEADLINE: JULY 14th, 2017 by 5pm

### **BACKGROUND**

In 2006, the VANS Mentorship Program was created in response to the growing requests from visual artists in Nova Scotia for additional support beyond VANS' already successful workshop series, information sessions, panel and peer discussions and other educational programs. Basing its structure on similar pioneer programs such as MAWA (Mentoring Artists for Women's Art) in Winnipeg, CARFAC Saskatchewan's Visual Arts Mentorship Program and the Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia's Mentorship Program, the VANS Mentorship Program joined the ranks of a handful of such programs Canada-wide.

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The VANS Mentorship Program is designed to support the individual artistic methods and professional ambitions of emerging artists in Nova Scotia by providing access to the skills and experience of selected mentors. Mentees are selected from a pool of applicants based on their demonstrated commitment to their practice, the clarity and level of ambition outlined in their goals for the program, and the ability of the applicant to utilize the program to its fullest potential.

Over the course of the program, mentors will meet with mentees one-on-one, at least once a month, and additionally four times as a group. The mentors may be asked to provide support in any one or more of the following areas: proposal development for exhibition in public galleries or artist-run centres, grant writing assistance, artist statement development, documentation of work, technical advice, skills development, critiques of work, research assistance, and thematic development of work, networking, budgeting, organizational tips, and creative brainstorming.

The VANS Mentorship program is tailored to support the needs of selected emerging artist's methods and ambitions, and is shaped by the skills of participating mentors. Its impact depends on participants' enthusiasm, openness and initiative in the program and their commitment to the development of their art work.

By investing intensely in a few individuals each year, the VANS Mentorship Program contributes on a wider scale to the overall strength, sustainability and vibrancy of the visual arts community in Nova Scotia.

### **ELIGIBILITY**

**Mentees** are artists in the early stages of their career as a professional artist; of any age over 19 years; a resident of Nova Scotia for at least one year previous to the application; and a

member of Visual Arts Nova Scotia (artists may join at time of application). **Individuals enrolled in post-secondary study are ineligible to participate.**

**Mentors** are professional artists with at least ten years professional experience (extensive knowledge and experience with grant writing, juries, curatorial resources, and exhibitions in public, commercial, or artist-run galleries is an asset); they are recognized by their peers as a mid-career or established artist as defined by the Canada Council for the Arts; they are great communicators and demonstrate the ability to educate through an informal, one-on-one, adult-based learning experience; they are living and working in Nova Scotia; and a member of Visual Arts Nova Scotia (artists may join at time of application).

## APPLICATION PROCESS

**Mentees** must submit a proposal to VANS which includes:

1. a **cover letter**, indicating concisely who you are, how you meet all of the eligibility requirements, your overall interests in participating in the VANS Mentorship program, and a **bulleted table of contents** indicating that all application requirements have been included (1-page max);
2. a **proposal** including considered, succinct, half page responses to the following questions:
  - The goal of the program is intended to support emerging visual artists who seek additional career development, or technical guidance to develop their practice as visual artists in Nova Scotia. Describe your goals for the program, the work you intend to take on, what kind of support you are looking for during program, and how you would utilize the program.
  - The program requires that apprentices make a focused commitment to their visual arts practice and dedicate a significant portion of their time to their work throughout the program. The mentorship program is best suited to emerging artists who maintain an active studio practice and have created a body of work outside of formal training environments, Please summarize your studio activity over the last year and describe the challenges you have (had) in prioritizing your practice, strategies to overcome those challenges, as well as how you plan to achieve your goals in this program.
  - The success of this program relies on the enthusiasm, openness and initiative of each participant. Please discuss any challenges you have had in taking initiative or communicating your art practice with your peers; how you have addressed these issues and how you would take advantage of the opportunity; if support from peers or mentors has been a part of your process and if so, who you have had support from.
3. 10 JPG (500 kb max) **images** (or a maximum of 10 minutes of media in standard definition) of previously completed work;
4. a corresponding numbered **image list** (01, 02...10) describing in order: title, media, dimensions and year;
5. each numbered work on the image list must include its own **art annotation**;
6. your **artist statement** (300 words max);
7. your **CV** detailing your training/education, exhibitions, reviews, awards/grants and related experience with full contact information including phone number, email address and postal address (2 pages max);

8. one **letter of reference** from an established artist and/or curator who has experience with your work. This letter should demonstrate that you are a good candidate for the program;
9. the names and contact information of **two additional references** who have experience with your work;
10. If you want your submission returned, you must include a **self-addressed stamped envelope**.

**Mentors** must submit a proposal to VANS which includes:

1. a **cover letter** which outlines who you are, the reasons for wanting to participate in the program; highlighting the applicants specific eligibility to participate - professional and personal skills, experiences and qualities that the applicant will bring as a mentor to the program (coaching, communication skills, experience, etc.) - and a **bulleted table of contents** indicating that all application requirements have been included (400 words max);
2. a **CV** detailing your training/education, exhibitions, and other related experience and information (3 pages max);
3. 10 JPG (500 kb max) **images** (or a maximum of 5 minutes of media in standard definition) of previously completed work;
4. a corresponding **numbered image list** (01, 02...10,) describing in order: title, media, dimensions and year;
5. an **artist statement** (300 words max);
6. names and contact information for **three references** (reference letters not required);
7. If you want your submission returned, you must include a **self-addressed stamped envelope**.

**Send either an electronic copy or hard copy of your Application Proposal, by July 14th, 2017 at 5pm, to:**

VANS Mentorship Program  
c/o Visual Arts Nova Scotia  
1113 Marginal Road  
Halifax, NS B3H 4P7  
[vans@visualarts.ns.ca](mailto:vans@visualarts.ns.ca)

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

The jury first selects mentee applicants for the program. The jury will then match each selected emerging artist with a mentor that the committee feels would benefit the emerging artist's work based on their demonstrated goals, working methods and geography. If necessary, the jury will solicit the participation of an eligible established artist who they feel would best support a selected mentee, but who may not have formally applied to act as a mentor.

The jury is comprised of professional artists and art educators, including past participants of the Mentorship Program. The selection committee will review emerging artist applications, check references and then select three mentees based on their demonstrated commitment to their practice, the clarity and level of ambition outlined in their goals for the program, and the

ability of the applicant to utilize the program to its fullest potential. Applicants may be contacted for an interview.

## **NOTIFICATION OF THE RESULTS**

Notification of results will take place approximately one month after the deadline. Submissions will be returned the same way they are received, provided that a SASE is included. If a SASE is not included, the application will be discarded.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Program Duration: 10 months, from September to June.

Mentors will be paid an honorarium for their participation in the program.

## **PROGRAM INFORMATION SESSIONS:**

**Wednesday, June 21, 6pm - Visual Arts Nova Scotia, 1113 Marginal Road, Halifax**

**Skype info sessions will be scheduled for those outside of HRM. Please email [vans@visualarts.ns.ca](mailto:vans@visualarts.ns.ca) for an appointment.**

VANS gratefully acknowledges the support of Jack & Joan Craig and The Craig Foundation. VANS also acknowledges operational support from Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture & Heritage, the Halifax Regional Municipality, Business for the Arts, Boorman Consulting Inc, and the many individual contributions from our members and supporters.

Please visit our website under Programs for further details of past program participants and answers to Frequently Asked Questions when applying for the mentorship program:  
<http://www.visualarts.ns.ca/programs/mentorship-program/>

## **For inquiries, please contact:**

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