

Art 494 Professional Practices

Concept and Biography Statements

What is a Concept Statement/Proposal?

A concept statement/proposal is related to the artist statement in that both deal with formal and conceptual aspects of your work. However, a concept statement generally describes work you plan to do versus what you already have done. A concept statement is frequently required for grant applications, and proposals for public art pieces and exhibitions (especially for site-specific or installation work). In a concept statement, you apply your work to a particular situation and how you will address a given theme, project, or agenda. DO NOT simply discuss your work.

What should be included in a Concept Statement/Proposal?

The degree of specificity required in a concept statement varies with different situations. Read the application guidelines carefully to ascertain the questions you need to answer and the information to provide. In case of doubt, ask the curator or project director. All concept statements should give a sense of the themes you will explore, the kind of artwork you will do (e.g., a series of paintings, an installation), the way the work fits in with the given theme or site, the media you will use, scale of work, a rough idea of any unusual requirements (e.g., temporary walls, electrical and lighting needs, equipment, and certain raw materials). The tone of the concept statement should be unembellished, straightforward and explanatory, while generating excitement for the proposed work. In most instances, you will be limited to one page, so be concise.