

Open Studios: Application Guidelines 2019



About Herts Open Studios

For 3 weeks in September, Herts Open Studios connects our members with art-lovers – a unique opportunity for inspiration, discovery and perhaps purchase direct from the artist. Established almost 30 years ago, it's a popular and well-established part of the Hertfordshire annual art calendar. Open Studios is funded by the artists who participate, commercial advertising and other sponsorship where available.

As part of Herts Open Studios you joining all other artists as equal partner – our success relies on everyone working together. In applying for Herts Open Studios, you are therefore agreeing to all the following.

Who can take part?

Open to artists, artisans and designer-makers who live or work in or on the borders of Hertfordshire, there is no selection process but you must be a Herts Visual Arts member. Herts Visual Arts (HVAF) is a voluntary, not-for-profit organisation run by/for artists, artisans and designer-makers who live or work in or near Hertfordshire. Our members have wide-ranging opportunities and benefits throughout the membership year (1st April – 31st March): take a look at our membership pages.

Can non-HVAF members take part?

Open Studios is a members-only event.

If you are taking part, please do not include non-members work in your Open Studios, even as a friendly gesture. Please do not invite non-members to exhibit with you – you will be barred from future events.

The only exceptions are two very special cases designed to encourage participation, personal development and perhaps future membership: school entries and the new art class/therapy group entry. For these two categories, the lead artist must be a member. Other participating artists are not identified in the brochure.

What kind of art can I display?

The work must be your own, made by you. It must fit the themes and ethos of Herts Visual Arts and Open Studios. It must be safe for visitors and suitable for a general audience, including children.

Why be part of Open Studios?

Our artists take part for many reasons. Everyone has different priorities, challenges, ideas and motivations, depending on their personal art journey. From artists starting out in their living room or garage for the first time, to established artists with a secure customer base - everyone is different. Whether you open your studio, use a space in your home, put on an exhibition, work solo or with others, there are many benefits. Being part of Open Studios is a cost-effective way to take your work directly to a County-wide audience, show your work, talk about your techniques and inspirations, listen to visitors and perhaps sell something. While sales are lovely, they can also be unpredictable and variable, but it is an opportunity nonetheless.

Wider benefits relate to new experiences, developing skills, having fun, meeting new/existing customers and extending your business/art networks and practice. The message from repeat Open Studios participants is clear: Each Open Studios is part of a journey, a step or two into your future, another opportunity to meet and connect with new artists and customers, to develop your art practice and more. Individual objectives for any year may be totally different from previous or future years. Where will your journey take you?

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How do I take part if I don't have a space of my own?

If you don't have a venue or group, try contacting other artists in your area. You can also look for shops, local halls or exhibition space— the possibilities are endless. You don't have to use your own home, or even join in close to your home – you can use any suitable individual or group space available across the County.

Groups are a really good way to make the most of Open Studios. Take a look at last year's brochure for ideas about working in groups. Venues and groups sometimes get in touch with HVAF to offer spaces, and individual artists can ask for a space or for a share. Opportunities (venues, groups and artists) that HVAF finds out about will be on Facebook and the web site. See below for our Open Studios 'classified'. If you have a venue or artist in mind, contact them directly to see if it would work for you.

Do I have to open for the whole 3 weeks?

No, you can open as much or as little as you like. However, to maximise visitors, we recommend that you:

- you open at least 5 days, and
- you coordinate at least some of your opening days/hours with nearby artists.

You must, however, be open and present to receive visitors on each of your selected days, during the hours that you have publicised. Weekends are generally busier, with more visitors. Your visitors will have made a special trip to see you, sometimes travelling long distances, please make sure their journey is worthwhile.

What are the Open Studios fees?

Individual Artist: £90

- An individual entry/description/photograph in our brochure and on the web site listing (age 18+)

****New from 2018** Art Class/Therapy Group: £90**

- A single entry/description/photograph (representing the whole group) in our brochure and on the web site listing. See below for further details about this new category. (Leader age 18+)

Registering/Lead Artist for a Group: £90

- An individual entry/description/photograph in the brochure, in first position within the group (age 18+)

Additional Artist in a Group: £55

- An individual entry/description/photograph in the brochure, within the group
- Each artist must be Herts Visual Arts Member and signed up to Open Studios to take part

Schools: We always encourage schools to take part, including ArtsMark schools. If your school would like to join in, please get in touch via openstudios@hvaf.org.uk

Galleries/Art Businesses: If you would like to take part, please get in touch via openstudios@hvaf.org.uk to find out about options and opportunities.

What is included in my entry fee?

- professionally-produced print media, with studio details and a square photograph (similar to 2018)
- downloadable promotional materials for your personal use, including arrows, signage, posters etc.
- your details/work listed in the brochure (minimum 15,000 print run) and on Herts Visual Arts website
- national, county and local publicity via social media, arts centres, libraries, tourist offices, etc.
- targeted press coverage
- first-time individual or group lead artists will receive a strip of Open Studios bunting

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What are the Optional Extras?

Additional pavement branding can be purchased when you apply for Open Studios:

- additional strips of bunting £10 per strip
- A2 yellow Correx signs £5
- Yellow banners with eyelets 40cmW*80cm tall £7

Art Groups applying for Open Studios 2019

New from 2018, we're delighted to add this latest option for Open Studios participation. Established groups can take part for the same rate as an individual artist, subject to additional participation rules.

Who can take part in this special group rate?

Active art classes or therapy groups established prior to 31st September 2018, and in active operation since the qualification date and throughout 2019.

Who cannot take part in this special group rate?

Art studios or groups of individual artists who otherwise operate individually. It also does not apply to Art Societies, Art Galleries, shops or similar businesses.

What does established mean?

The group/class must be operational with regular meetings, with a membership of at least 5. HVAF must be able to clearly see that you are an operational group that meets the group criteria. Please check our terms and conditions before signing up. We recommend that you provide evidence to HVAF prior to registration.

How can we take part?

The group leader must be registered as an individual Herts Visual Arts member in the usual way. The leader then applies for Open Studios as an individual, paying a single fee and entitled to a single entry/image in the Open Studios Brochure. Leaders who run more than one group can apply/pay for multiple classes/ groups at different locations. For example, if classes are run in Letchworth and Watford, separate entries would be justified for each class. The OS brochure entry/image represents the group, not the group leader.

Why take part?

Herts Open Studios provides an amazing opportunity for group members to work together and gain invaluable confidence and experience in all aspects of showing their work, supported by their group leader.

How can a group/class take part in Open Studios?

Find a space to use, decide when, how and what you want to show. The reason for this special class is to offer class/group members an opportunity to show their work and engage with an audience.

The exhibition, studio or other event must offer equal opportunity to all class members, without favour and without bias towards the group/class leader. Whether you are an artist who delivers art classes, a therapy or other group leader, this Open Studios should showcase work by students or group members, not the leader.

The work on show may have been created during classes/meetings, as a result of classes/meetings, it may be created by individuals, collectively or collaboratively by the group.

Evidence required (in addition to standard Open Studios information requirements)

- Name, type, purpose of the group/class
- Name of the group/class leader
- Date of start-up (approximate if prior to 2018) and class/group dates
- Web site, Facebook or other public information sources
- Details of membership/participation

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How do I join in?

Apply/pay on line before the closing date – this year applications close 30th April 2019. Payments are made via PayPal using a Debit/Credit Card. You do not need a PayPal account.

Already a Member? Log in and (when booking has opened) you can click ‘Apply to Open Studios’

Not renewed yet? Log in, renew your membership first, then you will be able to apply as above.

Not a Member? Join first, and you can apply as soon as applications open.

Open Studios 2019 registration video tutorial

Video made by [Creative Genie](#) will help you go through your online registration for Open Studios 2019.

What information do I need to apply?

We recommend you prepare your information before starting the sign-up process.

Contact Details: including email and telephone number for admin purposes only.

Venue Details (to be published): Address, including postcode, web site and any telephone/email other details that are essential to help visitors find you. Venues are generally listed in areas determined by Hertfordshire District/Borough Council, but districts may be split or joined depending on final numbers

Venue Directions: Clear and accurate directions to your venue (there is a maximum characters count, including spaces) to help visitors (who may not know the area) find you.

Demonstrations?: Visitors like to watch/experience artists at work if possible.

Dates and Opening Times: Try to keep your opening times simple. We recommend you open at least 5 days, and that that you coordinate at least some of your opening days/hours with nearby artists.

Artwork: Your brochure image is so important - choose a clear, attractive image that makes your studio look worth the visit. A **square** digital image (300 dpi) will represent you and your work on-line and in print – a major factor for visitors. It can be of an entire piece of work or a close up/detail but must be suitable for a general audience, including children. It must be a single image only (not composite) that has not been used for Open Studios before. (Please make sure the image is in focus!). Herts Visual Arts reserves the right to decline images if unsuitable for any reason, including obvious advertising content.

Publicity Materials: You are agreeing to help distribute print copies of the brochure. Every artists will receive 30 copies and can order up to 60. Please let openstudios@hvaf.org.uk know if you know of any events or locations that could use more copies.

Helping Out: Open Studios is run by and for artists. You are agreeing to support artists in your area. Please help make Open Studios a success, distribute leaflets in your area, or even acting as an Area Coordinator. Let us know if you have any specific ideas or good contacts openstudios@hvaf.org.uk

What happens after 2019 applications close?

Before March: Area meetings begin

2nd April: Open Studios registration starts

30th April: Closing Date for Entries

Mid May: Artists entry proof emailed to artists – 7 days to notify errors/amendments.

April – 19th June: brochure preparation, leading to final print proof

March – August: local meetings – organise your own and join in with any area coordinators

March – August: work with others in your area to create trails or special events

February – October: publicity and promotional activities by individual artists and Herts Visual Arts

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12th July: Brochure launch at the Big Art Fair, Hitchin

July: Artists collect Artist & Publicity Packs at Area Meetings

July - August: check your insurance needs and organise as appropriate

July - August: Artists/HVA distribute local publicity information and packs

July - August: Artists prepare for and publicise any Private View or other special events

July - August: Artists contact your local outlets, on-line and print media to publicise your own venue

7th – 29th September: Open Studios: make sure directional signage is good and be open for brochure hours

31st October: deadline for on-line participants and visitors questionnaires

General Terms and Conditions

- Every effort will be made to ensure the accuracy of information included in any materials produced by Herts Visual Arts, including the Brochure and the Web Site. Herts Visual Arts cannot be held responsible for any omissions or mistakes that occur.
- Herts Visual Arts has no responsibility nor liability for any business or other transactions that may arise from an artist being a member of Herts Visual Arts or taking part in any of our events.
- Herts Visual Arts accepts no responsibility for the actions of third parties who may make use of information published as part of Herts Open Studios
- Entries that remain incomplete on the closing date for Herts Open Studios may be rejected at the discretion of the organising team. This includes non-payment and Open Studios content.
- Failure to abide by any of application requirements may prevent participation in subsequent years.
- All venues must be free to enter
- Artists agree that the information they provide for the Brochure can be published in the brochure, on the web site and in various marketing materials, including 3rd party publications.
- Copyright of all supplied images remain with the original owner. The artist confirms that either they own the copyright of any image submitted as part of their Open Studios application or that they have written permission from the copyright holder.
- Artists grant Herts Visual Arts and other third parties a worldwide, irrevocable, perpetual licence to use supplied images in print, on the website, other electronic/other forms, in any publication, for the purpose of marketing or promoting Herts Visual Arts and Open Studios.
- Artists similarly agree to publication of images take during Open Studios.
- The brochure, web site and other materials are the copyright and intellectual property of Herts Visual Arts/Open Studios and may not be reproduced or distributed without prior written permission.
- **Please Note:** The Open Studios fee is non-refundable even in the unlikely situation that Open Studios has to be cancelled due to circumstances beyond our control.

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What are my Open Studios requirements and responsibilities?

When you sign up to Open Studios, you are also agreeing to:

- Work with artists in your area to share experiences and coordinate opening times/visitor opportunities.
- Open, read and promptly act on any Open Studios organisation emails, in particular, pay attention to any proof reading and ensure your own entry is correct.
- Join in with, organise, or play an active part in Herts Open Studios and/or local artist meetings/area coordinator meetings from April to August, take part in any locally organised taster or publicity events.
- Collect and distribute Herts Open Studios brochures or other marketing/support materials from locations as specified. Support other artists in your area if needed. Be proactive about distribution, in collaboration with other artists in your area.
- Help distribute brochures and Official Open Studios marketing/publicity materials in your area as required to ensure a successful event.
- Take responsibility for your own open studios, venue and administration, including making arrangements for any periods before or during OS when you may be away. Herts Visual Arts cannot organise this on your behalf.
- If you are in a group, work with other artists to share any costs/responsibilities and organisation to ensure the best experience and make sure each artist is present as much as possible/practical
- Any publicity or marketing materials you produce to suit your own studios, a local trail or otherwise, **must** use template and branding elements that will be made available via www.hvaf.org.uk
- Use Open Studios branded/supplied bunting or signage at your venue and make sure visitors can find you. Ensure external and internal signage and information is fit for purpose.
- Make sure your venue is adequately staffed at all times and never left unattended.
- Open for all the days/hours you have listed in the brochure, make your venue safe and welcoming for visitors. Exceptional circumstances must be identified to Herts Visual Arts as soon as possible.
- Make sure you are adequately insured. You must have suitable personal/public liability and loss/damage to suit your personal circumstances. For more details, see insurance, below.
- *Make sure your venue complies with relevant Health and Safety Legislation.* See Risk Assessment notes in the members area of our web site.
- Notify Herts Visual Arts of any unavoidable contact detail changes.
- Encourage all visitors to complete any visitor questionnaire devised by Herts Visual Arts
- Complete our participant's questionnaire in October.

What are Area Meetings?

Area meetings take many forms. They help you make the most of this opportunity – from supporting first-time participants to distribution of materials and planning local events. You can harness the power in your area to improve visibility and encourage members/visitors: liaise with schools/colleges (contact needs to be made before they break up), integrate publicity and maximise your efforts, share ideas with fellow artists, devise a local trail for visitors so that they see as many artists as possible in your area, plan your local library display to attract visitors, plan any local Taster Exhibitions or specific local events.

Local publicity is vital to make sure as many people as possible know about Open Studios. You are jointly responsible for this, together with the other artists in your area. Herts Visual Arts put considerable effort into marketing, but overall success is also dependent on local marketing effort. You can also coordinate marketing effort across area borders. Look out for information in emails the web site and on Facebook.

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Advertising in the Open Studios Brochure

Our advertising rates and schedule are available on our web site – visible in the Open Studios area.

Please feel free to encourage any businesses you may know to advertise in the brochure. They can get in touch via openstudios@hvaf.org.uk. This may include galleries, art and craft shops, vintage emporiums, art course providers etc.

What else makes a successful Open Studios?

Please read the tips that are available in the member's area of our web site. These tips are offered as just some of the things you might like to consider when getting ready for Open Studios. There may well be other things you are already planning for your own event, or perhaps these lists give you ideas better suited to your situation.

I'm looking for a space or artists to work with

If you would like to share a venue, or have a venue to offer, please send details and a contact email to marketing@hvaf.org.uk and we will add to this list and keep updated. You can also use our [Private Facebook Page](#) to connect with other members.

Groups are a really good way to make the most of Open Studios – Take a look at last year's brochure for ideas about working in groups

Insurance and the practicing artist

Herts Visual Arts insurance Herts Visual Arts events and day to day operation. It covers artist members when they are acting on behalf of or with the permission of HVAF – organising or taking part in events at the request of/with the knowledge of HVAF. It does not cover individual members for their own day to day business operations or actions in individual venues/businesses, or taking part in Open Studios. We are coordinating the event, providing promotional activities and facilitating opportunities for our members. We do not manage individual venues.

Make sure you are adequately insured with suitable personal/public liability and loss/damage cover to suit your personal circumstances. For more details, see the insurance notes in the member's area of our web site. :

HVA Risk Assessment for events and Open Studios

Open Studios Participants: all artists please complete, sign and date a Risk Assessment Form for your event. It must be produced on request and may form part of any insurance claim – it must demonstrate that precautions and care were taken to reduce the risk of an incident. A blank risk assessment form is in the member's area of our web site.

Open Studios blank flyer for your info

Due to popular demand! There's an Open Studios blank poster plus branding elements for you to use. Feel free to download and add your own Open Studios details. Great for local publicity!

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Open Studios arrow signs and pavement branding



Yellow Open Studios arrows for outdoor signage - right click and save to your computer to print.

Pavement Branding : order extra bunting, vertical banners and Correx signs when you register for Open Studios

Open Studios visitor feedback forms

Available closer to Open Studios

Open Studios artist participant feedback forms

Available closer to Open Studios