



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

SSW x Counterflows Caregivers Residency | Application Pack

Deadline for applications: Tuesday 27 August, 12pm (midday)

The care of others is central to the collective survival of our world yet is deeply undervalued within our society. This is often mirrored in the structures of support created for artists.

The [SSW](#) x [Counterflows](#) Caregivers residency is shaped to support artists who undertake this essential care work. It is set up to provide a nourishing, open and flexible residency structure to serve their diverse needs.

Caring for family (bio or chosen), community and/or kin, either professionally or informally can form and create artistic practices as well as disrupt them. We recognise how difficult it is for artists with caring responsibilities to grasp time, energy, resources and focus for their practices. This is particularly the case when support networks have been disrupted, home and work have become tangled up and funding systemically diverted away from caregivers infrastructures of support.

The SSW x Counterflows Caregivers residency offers artists funding, flexibility, respite and space for self-care, to focus on their own needs and support their continued learning and development. The residency is now in its third year and builds on work undertaken through these residencies and on SSW and Counterflows engagement with Creative Scotland's [Radical Care project](#).

The four weeks of residency will take place between **October 2024** and by the end **March 2025**, depending on the artist's needs and SSW's availability. The residency can be scheduled in one longer or shorter blocks.

Whilst the residency offers access to our large communal studio, ceramics workshop and blacksmithing, metalwork and stone work, for this residency applicants should have experience in working with sound and/or experimental performance in some form. In 2024/25 the SSW x Counterflows residency will support 2 artists. Through this residency we want to continue to learn with the selected artists to develop how both organisations can best support caregivers, in this residency and in our wider activity.

Pack contents

These sections are also available in large print and as audio recordings on the SSW website.

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1. Details

To support residency activity, the two selected artists will each receive:

- £1500 artist's fee
- £300 travel budget
- £300 materials budget
- A four week residency at SSW with use of studio, workshops and technical support
- Accommodation on site at SSW or in the house we rent in Lumsden, depending on availability and your needs.
- A budget of £1000 to support access and care costs to enable the artist to take part in the residency

As a caregivers' residency, we understand the need for flexibility for everyone involved. Here is what the residency can offer;

- 4 weeks funded residency at Scottish Sculpture Workshop in Lumsden, Aberdeenshire. The timeline for when and how this happens is flexible. It can be considered as one longer stay or several shorter visits depending on your (and those who you care for) schedule and needs. The residency should take place between **October 2024** and by the end **March 2025**.
- No outcome from the residency is required. It is an opportunity to dedicate time to your practice and fulfil your own needs. If you would like to share your process or work developed on residency through the Counterflows 2025 programme this is possible. This could include an intervention on the Counterflows website or as

part of the Counterflows blog series but this is not a requirement of this residency.

- Following the residency period both organisations will continue to support your work and advocate for your practice.

2. Eligibility

To apply for the SSW x Counterflows Caregiver's Residency you must:

- Identify as a caregiver - see FAQs on our website for more detail
- Have experience making experimental sound or performance-based work
- Be based in Scotland
- Be willing/ able to travel to SSW and participate in the residency with the support outlined in Section 1.

3. Application process & resources

To support you to apply, we have:

- Built a more inclusive applications process, with no requirement for CVs and the choice to submit in various formats
- Created a range of additional resources to support you in making an application, such as FAQs and audio recordings
- Introduced decentralised artist-led decision making, by inviting artists with diverse lived experiences and perspectives to work with us on the selection process

4. Important dates

Open Call live	Thursday 11 July
Deadline for applications	Tuesday 27 August, 12pm (midday)
Outcomes announced	Thursday 12 September

5. How to apply

The following section is intended to support you to make a strong application, by giving us the information we need.

- Read this carefully before completing your application.
- Submit your application before the deadline. Get in touch with us if you are having problems submitting on time.

- When you finish submitting your application you will receive a confirmation message.

[Please contact us at SSW](#) if you have any questions about this residency, if you have technical difficulties or you have any access requirements that we can support you with in the application process.

Please apply using the format that feels most comfortable for you, either text, audio or video. We have no preference and will only evaluate the content of each application, not its production.

We want to hear about your work, ideas and research in your own words. Try to tell us about these without using jargon or complicated words.

The application form

- We accept applications via the online form. If, for access reasons, you would prefer to not submit through the online form, there is a .doc and .pdf copy of the questions available via the website. Once complete, email the completed application to arts@ssw.org.uk with “Caregivers Residency Application” in the subject, before the deadline.
- Unfortunately the form does not save as you are filling it in, so we advise you write and save your answers separately, then copy and paste your answers or recording links into the form in case you lose your connection or refresh the page while you are filling it in.
- The application form allows you to include links and any related passwords for recorded applications, such as voice notes or video.
- In each section there is an indicated word count or recording duration. This is to give you an idea of how much to say and how in depth we expect your answer to be. Please try and tell us everything that is relevant within the word /duration count.
- If there is another format that would support you to do your best application then please get in touch via arts@ssw.org.uk and we will work with you to try and make it possible.

The questions

1. Tell us about what interests and excites you in your practice.

- We want to hear what you are thinking about or exploring through your work, .
- Please use clear and simple language.
- We are not looking for a CV or exhibition/performance history here, rather to understand what you are doing and what drives your practice forward.

2. What would you like to do on residency at SSW?

- We are aware that often artists are led by the process of making and doing so this might be difficult to think about.
- Whatever you write here will possibly change while you are on residency, and this is ok.
- We do not need you to tell us about the 'final work' that you want to make on residency. Instead, tell us what you would like to learn and work through while you are here. This could be exploring and/or developing processes, ideas or other things. It could also be focusing on one area of work intensely or crystallising various ideas or bodies of work you have made in the past, among other possibilities.
- How will you use the facilities and technical knowledge at SSW (our large communal studio, ceramics workshop and access to blacksmithing, metalwork and stone work).
- We suggest you look at the SSW and Counterflows websites to understand what is available to you through the residency award and what we can support with our facilities, programmes, location and expertise.
- Try to be realistic about what you propose - it is an exciting opportunity but we want to see that you are able to do these things within the limits of the residency offer. We also understand that your caring responsibilities may impact on what's possible for you in this time and want to ensure space for this.

3. How would the residency would be useful for you? How would it support the continued development of your practice?

- We want to award the residency to someone who needs the dedicated time and space for their practice, who is otherwise unable to do so because of their caring responsibilities. Tell us how the residency would be useful for you, and how it would support your continued development as an artist.

- Try to be as specific with this as possible.
- We are aware that many artist-caregivers will need the funds, time, space and facilities available, so try to connect your specific needs at this time (personal & professional) to what we can provide through the residency offer.

Finally we will ask for some examples of your work to support your application.

- This does not need to be recent work if you have had a break from your practice, but it will give us an opportunity to understand your practice better.
- This can be provided in whatever format is most convenient for you.
- Please be mindful that the panel has a limited time allocated to each application and will not be able to watch whole films or listen to complete audio recordings if they are longer than 2 minutes.
- Please provide a maximum of 6 images, 3 pieces of text or 2 links to external media or websites. We will not be able to look at all pages on a website so direct us to the content you want the panel to see.

Before you make your application we would advise reading or listening to our FAQs. We can also answer questions directly via email or phone. Contact arts@ssw.org.uk or phone 01464 861372 and we can make a suitable time.

6. Selection Process

Shortlisting

Two members of the team at SSW/ Counterflows will make an initial shortlist of 10 applications for the panel. While assessing applications we will consider:

- The artist's clear need for this residency (in relation to caring responsibilities)
- Articulation of how this residency would support the artists ongoing development
- Links and connections between residency proposal in relation to the artist's existing work and interests

- Clearly outline what the artist wants to do on residency and how they will use the workshops and technical knowledge at SSW
- Evidence of how the proposal has an understanding of SSW and Counterflows facilities, location and/or existing areas of programming

Panel

The panel will then read through/ listen to/ view 10 shortlisted applications and review them against the assessment criteria.

The panel will be made up of one of last year's Caregivers artists in residence, Keng Keng Tang and Hang Linton (Caregivers artist 2021) along with Joanne Matthews, SSW Programme Producer, Alasdair Campbell, Director of Counterflows Festival.

SSW and Counterflows will make the final decision from the shortlisted artists. This reflects the challenges experienced by external panels in making a final selection from a very deserving shortlist of artists, some of which are often peers and colleagues.

Feedback

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by Thursday 12 September. Please note that due to our small team we can only offer feedback to the 10 shortlisted applications, this will consist of an overview based on the criteria and more in-depth feedback from the panel.

7. About Scottish Sculpture Workshop (SSW)

SSW is an arts organisation based in Lumsden, Aberdeenshire. SSW expands the possibilities of what sculpture can be – continuously working towards positive social and environmental change.

SSW is embedded in our rural location, with a global outlook and reach. Our artist residencies and locally focussed programmes are set up to rethink and push material and skills based learning, prioritising process and opening up our workshop space as a site where community, creativity and nourishment are a driving force in all that we do.

[Read more about SSW on our website](#)

8. About Counterflows

Counterflows is a contemporary music festival produced by AC Projects & OtoProjects and curated by Alasdair Campbell & Fielding Hope.

The festival features a wide array of artists bound together by their questioning spirit and refusal of easy categorisation. Whether born out of the likes of so-called DIY scenes, the internet or geographically remote communities, we believe that the underground belongs to a myriad of voices and is best engaged with when we come together, share ideas, break down borders, challenge hierarchies and push boundaries.

[Read more about Counterflows on their website](#)