



## Open Studios Art Tour

Application Guidelines and FAQ

*Hispanohablantes - Podemos ayudar.*

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### **Tour Dates**

October 12 to 13 and October 19 to 20, 2024

*\*Studios must be open 10am - 5pm on both days of the weekend regardless of participation in just one weekend or both weekends.*

### **Application Window**

The application opens March 6th and closes on June 21st, 2024 at 5pm. **Late applications will not be accepted.**

### **Application Details**

1. \$200 Participation Fee (non-refundable)
  - The participation fee is the same regardless of time of registration, participation in one or both weekends, and shared studio space.
2. Applications will only be accepted online
  - You will need to prepare a short description of you and your artwork/art practice.
3. High-resolution images of your work
  - You will be asked to submit one default image representative of your work for the catalog and one backup image.
4. CA State seller's permit number
  - If you don't have a permit, visit the [CA Department of Tax and Fee Administration Temporary Sellers website](#). Temporary permits are available 90 days prior to the business start date (the dates of the tour).
5. *Optional:* Submit an image for the OSAT catalog cover
  - This year we are inviting all participating artists to submit an image of their work, studio, or even an image from a demonstration of their art practice for the 2024 OSAT catalog cover. *Note: cover art submissions close June 3rd, before the application deadline.*

### **What is Open Studios Art Tour?**

The San Luis Obispo County Open Studios Art Tour, a program of SLO County Arts Council, takes place over two weekends in October each year. Free to the public, fine artists and crafters open their studios to showcase their art and share their processes. Visitors create their own self-guided tour using the catalog.

## Residency

All applicants and participating artists must be permanent residents of San Luis Obispo County with proof of residency provided if requested.

## Eligibility Requirements

We welcome all artists 18 years or older, from emerging to professional. Your body of work should be well-developed and demonstrate your competency, proficiency, and skill in your craft. A minimum of 10 original pieces are on hand for the opening day. The photo of your artwork is what brings people to you. It works to your advantage to have similar work available for purchase. We recommend high-quality photographs of your work (hiring a professional photographer is optimal).

## Studio Eligibility

An Open Studios studio is defined as the artist's regular workspace. This can be a room in a house, a space in a warehouse, a garage, or something different altogether. Retail spaces are not eligible. Artists for whom 3 or more of the following characteristics are true are not eligible for Open Studios: Commercial or retail location, retail signage, employees, and/or paid apprentices, the majority of retail business is by "drop-in" rather than by appointment.

## Digital Images

Format file names according to specifications in the application. **Please save as either JPG or JPEG in high quality, at least 300ppi, cropped to a SQUARE format of at least 1500px x 1500px.** Please make sure the photo submitted is a recent, original piece and does not include any shadows. Choose pieces that look good in a square format when cropped. Photos submitted require a plain background to be accepted. Please refer to the eligibility requirements.

## FAQ

### **Q: How will information and updates be disseminated?**

A: We will share all updates through email. Once you apply, you will be added to an OSAT-specific newsletter (via Mailchimp) that we will use to share any relevant information and updates. **Check your spam folder if you do not see emails from us!**

### **Q: What if I want to participate with a group of artists? Or if I choose to participate for only one weekend? Is the participation fee the same?**

A: Each artist receives equal publicity in the catalog and marketing materials and, therefore, must submit their own application and participation fee. There is space on the application form to note if you are participating with other artists. If you are

planning to only participate for one weekend, there is a space to note this on the application, but the participation fee remains the same.

**Q: Do I need to participate in both weekends?**

A: When filling out the application you will be asked when you'd like to participate in the tour. You can select both weekends, or just one! You are REQUIRED to be open from 10am to 5pm each of the days you state on your application and may not choose to close the second weekend if you have previously said you would be open both weekends.

**Q: How does a visitor know which days I am open?**

A: To help visitors plan their route, the catalog contains color indicators that show if you are open on the first, second, or both weekends.

**Q: I would like to participate, but I don't have a space where the public can visit. Do you provide a location or can I show my work at a business?**

A: Many artists share their space and visitors like to go to locations where there are multiple artists. SLO County Arts wants to help as many artists as possible participate. If you are an artist who is interested in sharing studio space with another artist, please email us.

**Q: Do I have to demonstrate my artistic process?**

A: Participating artists are not required to demonstrate; however, it is a benefit to you to show the value of your work to Tour-goers. Actual demonstrations, storyboards, and showing a work-in-progress you can discuss are all ways to show your process.

**Q: Can I show reproductions of my work?**

A: Yes, copies of your original art may be included in your display along with your original work. These items may include prints, tiles, greeting cards, etc. You may not display art from another artist or any other items that weren't made by you.

**Q: How can I promote myself for the Open Studios Art Tour?**

A: In addition to your tour listing, we will be promoting the event through tourism boards, radio and print media outlets, and posters, alongside the Preview Show. Keep in mind that SLO County Arts promotes the Tour as a whole and it is up to artists to market their studios individually. We encourage artists to self-advertise through existing mailing lists, social media, and local media outlets' free event listings. We will be providing you with social media graphics that you can easily share, and we ask that you tag @SLOCounty\_Arts on Instagram with the hashtag #OSAT2024. Consider partnering with neighboring artists to host small satellite events, like artist meet-and-greets or mixers, or announce special deals for visitors. Mostly, have fun!

Invite musicians to play a set at your studio, offer beverages, or consider offering an artist talk — the possibilities are endless!

**Q: Why October? There seem to be a lot of events that coincide with the Tour.**

A: Open Studios Art Tour began in 1998 and visitors expect the mid-October event and even plan their vacations so they can attend. The Tour also coincides with National Arts & Humanities Month.

**Q: What are the reasons to participate in the Open Studios Art Tour?**

- Exposure and building relationships with the public
- Increase your mailing list
- Sell your work and your services (i.e. workshops)
- Help educate the public as to the value of your artwork and what time, training, tools, and equipment go into producing quality original artwork
- Four days of commission-free sales opportunity

**Q: What does SLO County Arts provide for my participation?**

- Preparation support for marketing
- Possibility to enter into a juried selection for the Preview Show
- Provides you with free admission to the Preview Show opening and any other OSAT events
- Addition to both printed and online catalog
- Provides you with directional signs
- OSAT advertising and publicity in local and regional publications/media
- Proceeds from your Tour sales are 100% yours — SLO County Arts takes no commission

**Q: Are there typical expenses I should expect as an Open Studios artist?**

A: While many marketing options are free, there are other marketing and promotional expenses (optional) that you might consider investing in and budgeting for:

- Artist postcards
- Food, and beverages at your Open Studios
- Material costs to prepare artwork for sale (framing, matting, displays, etc.)
- Paid advertising in local papers and online
- Professional photographs of your artwork
- Website design/updating

**Q: How is the Preview Show curated?**

A: SLO County Arts invites a curatorial committee to select artists to participate in the Preview Show. We will be specifically looking to admit works from artists across the county in a variety of mediums. We will admit as many artists as the space provides.

The first ten artists to register for OSAT who indicate interest in participating in the Preview Show will be automatically included.

### **Further Questions?**

Contact SLO County Arts Programs Coordinator Summer Truschke  
**[summer.truschke@slocountyarts.org](mailto:summer.truschke@slocountyarts.org)**

Contact SLO County Arts Office (\*for faster response, please email)  
**[office@slocountyarts.org](mailto:office@slocountyarts.org) | (805) 544-9251**