

# My Artrepreneur Program



Artists are, by nature, inventors, engineers, explorers, and discoverers. Artists see possibility everywhere. Monetizing curiosity, however, can be a daunting task. At the Idaho Commission on the Arts, we recognize that creating a sustainable life in the arts is complicated, that there is no singular approach to building a creative enterprise, that it doesn't happen quickly, and that success has its roots in relationship-building. To help artists build a sustainable life in the arts, we are adopting the highly successful *Montana Artrepreneur Program* and bringing it to Idaho as *My Artrepreneur Program*.

*My Artrepreneur Program (MAP)* is an art-centered business development program taught by working artists and open to all visual artists.

- Over 40 hours of college-level instruction
- 35 practical business tools
- Demystify the world of business
- Affirm the title of “Artist” as a credible profession

A sustainable career in the arts is attainable by developing one's skill and expertise in a chosen medium, understanding and engaging in the arts community, articulating one's story and purpose as an artist and strategically seeking patrons for one's work. *MAP* provides practical coursework covering 35 pragmatic, professional practice tools of art and business.

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## The Artrepreneur's Toolbox<sup>©</sup>

1. Log of Studio Hours (at least 120 hours total)
2. Annotated list of area heritage and cultural resources
3. Landscape journal for creative ideas and marketplace branding
4. Product line list with both retail and wholesale prices
5. System for record keeping and organization
6. Written mission, values, and vision statements for the artist's business
7. Three goals and three objectives to reach each goal
8. Artist Statements (three versions required: one typewritten page, one-two paragraphs, and 25-30 words)
9. Customer Profile
10. A small window or table display of the artist's work
11. Diagram and photos of the artist's booth for use at a show
12. Documentation of five hours spent with an art mentor
13. 6 professional quality product photographs of artwork
14. 2 professional quality process photographs (the artist at work)
15. A logo for use in the artist's business of art
16. A business card for use in the artist's business of art
17. A brochure for use in the artist's business of art
18. Hangtags to use on the artist's work
19. A sample of packaging for use in sales, customer transport, and shipping of the work
20. A sample of business transaction materials (eg. invoices, statements, receipts, and order blanks)
21. 2-minute video presentation
22. Research of four shows (one local, two regional, and one national)
23. Research of credit card/PayPal capability
24. Proof of participation in an area show
25. Ten hours of internship with a creative sector business
26. Press Release
27. Press Kit
28. A Quality Portfolio
29. A website
30. E-portfolio
31. Resume and cover letter for use with a gallery
32. Studio Budget for the coming year
33. Mini-proposal for funding a project in line with the artist's goals
34. Plan outlining the artist's strategies for marketing
35. Business plan to use in building a business of art

# The Philosophy

*MAP* validates artists for doing the art that brings them the greatest joy and reminds them to commit to seeking their authentic voice in their medium. We ask artists to reach beyond what they're simply capable of doing and to really access their potential. It's not enough to just be "artsy." Once they develop their unique body of work, we teach them to authentically articulate the story of their art – the "why" of what they do. Artists find relief knowing that they don't need to develop a sales schtick or become someone else to sell art.

Some artists believe that selling art equals selling out, which is simply an expression of how our culture is enamored with, and perpetuates, the mythos of the "starving artist." *MAP* affirms the choice of "Artist" as a credible profession. Artists are entrepreneurs.

*MAP* artists examine their passion for art through coursework that encourages artistic growth and demystifies business by framing it as a way of discovering your story, showing your story, telling your story and funding your story. Artists develop specific strategies to achieve carefully and sensibly planned goals and objectives. They take a bold stand for possibility and commit to the promise of art as profession. Upon finishing the course and completing the tools, many artists claim that a sustainable life in the arts feels "doable" and, rather than reaching the end of a process, they feel they have encountered the beginning of the life they had previously only imagined. Many artists call the experience "transforming."

# The Results

*MAP* has earned national acclaim, impacting nearly 400 artists across Montana to date. In May 2014, Decision Support Partners, Inc. was contracted by the Montana Arts Council to develop a survey to gather data from Montana Artrepreneur Program (*MAP*) participants from 2009 through April 2013. Following that initial inquiry, the consultant was contracted to augment that first study with 2014 data from the responding *MAP* artists. The survey was intended to help the Montana Arts Council better understand the impact of the program on participating artists and to help inform the future of the program.

*MAP* artist survey respondents reported being:

- More confident in their business management skills (79%)
- More specific and clear on their art business financial goals (78%)
- Actively making art and pursuing their art businesses (75%)
- In progress toward their art business financial goals (71%)
- More satisfied with their art business (65%)

Participating artists in the survey sample have:

- Generated \$470,837 in net art sales, a 397% increase in net art sales on average since participating in the program, some as high as \$29,500.
- Generated upwards of \$2.02 million in gross art sales, which is a 123% increase since participating in the program.
- Increased sales of their art outside of the state of Montana by 44% on average, from years prior to the program to years after participating in the program.
- Reported that in 2014, 37% of their gross personal income of \$1.48 million was derived from their art sales (\$547,553).

## The Instructor

Who Is Dr. Edrienne Kittredge?

Born and raised where the Great Plains rise up to meet the Rocky Mountains, Dr. Kittredge as a young woman felt the need to escape from her ruralness and reach out to a wider world. Living and working from Virginia to Arizona, Wisconsin to Washington, gave her a wealth of experience but found her searching for a way home to the high plains.

Returning to Montana allowed her to utilize her academic background in the humanities. It also required her knowledge of being rural, her teaching experience and community-based action work, her training in entrepreneurship and cultural resource management, her knowledge of the traditional arts, and her abilities to communicate across cultures.

As a writer, an artist working in the fiber arts, and married to a calligrapher and metal artist, she understands the artist's perspective. Besides helping artists learn about the business of art, she is interested in issues affecting rural agrarian communities and continues to research and write about the subject. She blogs about the topics at [www.elkittredge.com](http://www.elkittredge.com). She lives on the ranch where she grew up and where she and her husband raise Highland cattle and Icelandic sheep.



## The Course

- Four 14-hour workshops
- A 377-page textbook containing all the course materials
- Working time with a mentor to improve your art
- Working time with an arts business to gain hands-on experience

## The Cost

The Idaho Commission on the Arts matches student dollars 1:1, reducing tuition from \$1,000 to only \$500 each. These scholarships may not be available for all students, so if you have the means to pay the full standard price, please indicate on the application if you would like to offer your scholarship to someone else. Students are responsible for their own lodging and transportation.

## Questions?

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