



Take Stock

The Crafts Council support scheme for retailers of contemporary craft.

Take Stock is an annual scheme which offers independent UK-based retailers of contemporary craft the opportunity to access specialist retail support to develop and deliver innovative and forward-thinking projects of their own design.

The scheme aims to provide between three and five retailers with one-to-one business support in the form of mentoring and guidance over an 18-month period.

Award objectives:

- **Stimulate** independent retailers to experiment and challenge perceptions of how craft is presented for sale
- **Encourage** the progress of established retailers to expand into new areas of operation
- **Raise awareness** of the availability of high-quality independent craft retailers among the buying public in the highstreet

Project proposals

On an annual basis, applicants will be asked to respond in their application to key themes, presented by the Crafts Council, by devising a project applicants wish to develop and deliver under the guidance of an allocated mentor.

Applicants are asked to submit proposals for projects that clearly present a progressive and forward-thinking attitude toward the selling and presentation of contemporary craft, based on **one** of the following topics:

- Branding and identity development
- In-store presentation and design development
- Website and e-commerce development

The mentors

Take Stock chooses mentors for their specialist knowledge, relevance and appropriateness to the proposed project, and the successful applicant's needs.

They will be required to explore, develop and offer guidance in delivering the proposed project, and challenge and push the participant to fulfil their aims.

Eligibility: In order to be eligible to receive support through **Take Stock**, applicants must fulfil the following criteria

- Be based in the United Kingdom¹
- Have traded for a minimum of two years
- Be an independent commercial enterprise and not associated with any government-funded organisation
- Be able to demonstrate that their business gains the majority of its income from the sale and promotion of contemporary craft
- Be able to specify a space, either physical or on-line, where a range of makers work is presented for sale
- Be able to demonstrate a commitment to presenting and selling the best contemporary craft suitable and relevant to their chosen retail activity

Take Stock will not fund:

- A part-completed or incomplete project currently in existence
- Maker co-operatives, selling spaces and websites
- Publicly funded spaces
- Retailers of painting, photography, prints, sculpture, or mass-produced design-focused products.

Assessment Criteria: A panel of independent judges will assess applications against the following criteria:

- Within a commercial context, the **degree of 'innovation'** in retailing contemporary craft the proposal demonstrates
- The applicant's willingness to work constructively with their mentor, and their openness to new ideas and new ways of working
- The ability of the proposal to allow the retailer to **develop** into a **new area of activity**
- The likely **effectiveness** of the proposal within a commercial context.
- The **quality of the craft** being represented by the retailer and the suitability of the craft to the venue and its audience
- The **estimated audience** for the proposal.
- The **potential** of the proposal to **secure support** from other sources in order to maintain and sustain the project.
- The **potential of the proposal to the national development** of retailing in contemporary crafts.

¹ Welsh and Scottish applicant's eligibility dependent on securing funds from relevant bodies.

Application process:

The application process comprises two phases, as detailed below. Application forms are available to download from the Crafts Council website. Hard copies are available by request.

Application: Phase one

Submission of initial application providing a clear outline of the proposed project and to include:

- Proof of an established history of selling contemporary craft for a minimum of at least two years. **Acceptable evidence: a combination of trading accounts; examples of publicity; examples of media coverage**
- Project outline giving background to the proposal and reasons why they wish to undertake the project
- A clear indication of the desired final project aim along with the detailing of clear milestones and dates of other expected achievements
- A definition of why the project would be seen as innovative
- A clear willingness to receive external input and to take part in a two-way developmental process
- Demonstrable evidence that the project will be supported with a commitment to staffing and appropriate financial contribution
- A business plan which incorporates the project within it

Application: Phase two

Applications will be short-listed from the initial submissions and invited to attend an independent panel interview.

Successful applicants will be informed within 10 days of the interview. Feedback will be provided upon request.

The award

It is required that the proposed project is explored, developed and begun during the 18 months of the project.

The award is broken down into three stages, by the mentor and mentee, during the first stage of the relationship.

Interim reports are requested at the end of Parts 1 and 2; a final report and a presentation during a networking day for retailers will be requested at the end of the contact period.

Support and management

Contact with the Crafts Council is maintained throughout the project. The Crafts Council will be responsible for managing the relationship between the mentor and mentee.

The Crafts Council will provide feedback, advocacy and advice as and when required.

Schedule

Closing date for applications: Friday 14 August

First round selection: End August

Interviews: End September

Applicants informed: Early October

Participants announced: Origin 2009 (Weeks beginning 5 and 12 October)

Contact details

If you wish to discuss a potential application or have any other enquiries relating to Take Stock, please contact Retail Development at retail@craftscouncil.org.uk

Tel: 020 7806 2554