hARTslane Presents:

Making a Buck Without Selling Out

For artists who want to build a sustainable practice—on their own terms

With Cristiana Bottigella and Sophia Kosmaoglou

Whether you're just starting out or years into your art practice, Making a Buck Without Selling Out will help you build momentum and define success on your own terms—without conforming to institutional expectations, compromising your ethics, or reshaping your work to fit the market.

This programme is for visual artists who want to develop or revisit their professional practice and carve a path that makes sense for them. The course employs critical inquiry, collective exploration, open dialogue, and peer review to support artists in the articulation of their practice, and the cultivation of their creative agency.

Across seven group sessions, and 1-to-1 tutorials, we'll address questions of visibility, identity, and sustainability in contemporary art. We'll review your work, identify its unique characteristics, and connect these with the strategies, and resources that support an independent art practice. You'll join a small group of 8 peers, exchange feedback, and receive individual support from experienced tutors. Each session is practical, participatory, and designed to produce tangible outcomes.

We'll also explore how to sustain yourself in the long run—by establishing boundaries, aligning your work with your values, and resisting the pressure to perform.

What's included

- **7 online group sessions (2:15 hrs each)**
- **Weekly activities with tangible outcomes**
- **Peer review, group tutorials, written feedback, and collective learning**
- **Workbook to map your direction, plan, reflect, and track your progress**
- **Practical guides, resources and tools—from funding to self-care to AI**
- **1-to-1 tutorial to review your action plan, proposals, or questions**

What you'll work on

Each session focuses on a specific set of tensions that artists navigate in order to keep making new work. We'll explore four intersecting areas:

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Voice & visibility

Write or refine your artist statement, draft a proposal, build or improve your website, and shape your online presence

Sustainability

We'll look at funding applications, alternative revenue streams, and how to create your own opportunities as part of a sustainable and self-directed practice

Opportunity

We'll map different types of opportunities—exhibitions, residencies, open calls—and learn how to identify what aligns with your priorities, and your values

Self-care

Burnout and boundaries, managing time and expectations, reclaiming autonomy, and approaching wellbeing as a political and practical necessity.

Who it's for

This open access course is for artists at any stage of their career who want to take stock, build momentum, and develop strategies grounded in their practice and aligned with their values.

You might be at the beginning of your journey, navigating a shift, or returning after a break. You might be figuring out what's next, or how to make space for your practice. We'll shape a plan together—just bring your questions and a willingness to explore them with others.

Designed with the visual arts sector in England in mind, the course reflects the creative, practical, and personal realities artists face today. It recognises that there's no single path through a career in the arts, and no one way to define success. Whether you work independently or with others, formally trained or self-taught, consistently or in stops and starts—there is space here for you.

This is an inclusive and supportive environment for a wide range of experiences and ways of working, including neurodiverse artists and those who have faced systemic or structural barriers.

Participation & Accessibility

This course is shaped by collective, co-operative principles and alternative approaches to art education. It's not a webinar or a lecture series—it's a space for active participation, reflection and shared learning. Participants are invited

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to contribute their questions, ideas and priorities to help guide how the course unfolds.

We believe that professional development is part of artistic practice, and that learning is strongest when it's grounded in dialogue and mutual support. Be prepared to take an active role in discussions.

To help us start from an equal footing, please let us know in the registration form if you have any access needs or concerns that might affect your participation.

Course schedule

Module 1. Professional or Entrepreneur?

This opening module explores the unspoken ideals and motivations that inform artistic practice and shape artistic identity. We'll begin by reflecting on our personal definitions of success and consider how these influence the way we position ourselves in the art world. Through reading and discussion, we will examine the changing status of the artist, contrasting the figure of the professional artist with that of the creative entrepreneur.

We'll continue by unpacking values and expectations, and setting goals - in order to start articulating a direction for practice. We will also consider the structural obstacles to sustaining a practice and map out strategies to navigate them. Using the workbook, participants will begin to draw up individual plans that integrate professional practice with their artistic practice, laying a foundation for the rest of the course.

Module 2. Voice & Visibility (You & Your Work)

This module focuses on how you present and communicate your work. We'll explore ways of articulating your practice through artist statements, online portfolios, websites and other ways of connecting with your audience and building visibility. This session will guide you through the process of creating a strong online presence, from initial setup to refining a digital strategy that feels right for you.

A well-designed website is a vital tool for reaching new audiences, showcasing and documenting your work. Whether you're building your first website or updating an existing one, we'll walk through key features, platforms, and practical steps—from navigation and image selection to writing copy and archiving your work. We'll also consider how platforms like Instagram shape artistic production and visibility, and how artists navigate —or resist— their demands. Alongside this, we'll explore alternative tools such as blogs, newsletters and Web 3.0 platforms.

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Module 3. Funding Strategies for Artists

Framing fundraising as both storytelling and strategy, this module introduces a range of funding sources and income streams. We'll begin by identifying which types of funding suit different practices and projects, with an emphasis on aligning with funders rather than persuading them. Participants will learn how to develop a strong Case for Support that communicates purpose, outcomes, audiences, and partnerships.

We'll then focus on Arts Council England's National Lottery Project Grants (NLPG) and Developing Your Creative Practice (DYCP), demystifying the Grantium platform and breaking down the application process. The session also integrates ACE's strategic priorities as outlined in the Let's Create framework, and offers guidance on fundraising strategies for crafting strong applications, managing budgets, and understanding the competitive landscape of arts funding.

Module 4. Opportunities & Initiatives

Opportunities are not just found—they're created and cultivated through visibility, strategy, and persistence. This module supports artists to connect with opportunities that align with their goals, values and vision. We'll start by demystifying gallery representation: what it offers, how to assess whether it's right for you, and how to approach galleries professionally.

We'll then expand the scope to include open calls, residencies, commissions, and more. You'll learn how to identify meaningful opportunities, evaluate them critically, and begin developing a tailored proposal. We'll also address the emotional and practical aspects of rejection.

Finally, we'll explore self-initiated strategies—such as curating exhibitions, launching collectives, and starting community projects—and how AI tools can support the process. Workbook exercises will help you map your opportunity landscape and develop a proactive plan of action.

Module 5. Group Tutorials

Group tutorials are structured peer-review sessions designed to help you reflect on your practice, test how you present your work, and receive critical feedback from peers. You will have the opportunity to talk about your practice, and consider how others understand its concerns, methods, materials and contexts.

The session offers a supportive framework for practising articulation in front of an audience before developing your writing in the final workshop. We will introduce a peer-support format that you can adapt for your own crits, studio groups or future collaborations.

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The group tutorial will help you identify what is coming across clearly, what needs further development, and what questions you may want to carry into the writing workshop.

Module 6. Self-Care

Sustaining a practice also means sustaining yourself. This module focuses on time, energy, and resource management to support both wellbeing and long-term sustainability. We begin with practical time-management tools—scheduling, journaling, and calendar blocking—to help you protect space for your work.

We'll explore the role of peer networks, collectives, and alternative schools in building mutual support and resilience, as well as the importance of studio space for continuity and autonomy. On the administrative side, we'll cover essential knowledge: self-employment, invoicing, accounts, contracts, intellectual property, pay rates, fair pay, insurance, and liability.

These elements are crucial for building a practice that is not only creative and autonomous but also sustainable and protected. Workbook activities will support you in identifying needs and resources to care for yourself and your practice.

Module 7. Writing Workshop: Articulating Your Practice

In the final session we'll focus on writing as a tool for articulation, reflection, and communication. Whether you're working on an artist statement, project proposal, or funding application, the workshop offers a structured and supportive environment to develop your writing through collaborative review and critical feedback.

This workshop approaches writing as a process that can clarify your ideas, sharpen your focus, and strengthen your practice. We'll explore how writing operates across different contexts—from communicating with curators and funders to collaborators or the public.

The workshop invites you to reflect on how your work is framed and received. We'll consider how to communicate with purpose and rigour, without falling into institutional jargon or generic formulations. Workbook prompts will support an iterative editing process, helping you refine your text and tailor it for future use. You will leave with a working draft and the tools to keep developing it.

Module 8. 1-to-1 Tutorials

We'll schedule one-to-one tutorials with each participant to round off the course. These sessions provide space to discuss your goals, challenges, and

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next steps in detail, and to receive feedback on any aspect of your work—from project planning to website development, funding strategies, or writing.

The tutorials build on the activities and reflections from the workbook and offer a final opportunity for focused dialogue and mentoring. Tutorials will be scheduled after the course, allowing time for participants to integrate the course content and prepare specific questions or materials for review.

What you will need

- A reliable internet connection
- A computer with webcam, mic and speakers or headphones
- You will receive an access code to register on Canvas
- Download and install Zoom
- Notebook and pen
- Examples of your work in physical or digital form.

Dates and fees

This course strives to be an inclusive learning environment that is accessible to everyone. Course fees are payable either in full via invoice by the start of the course or in three monthly instalments via PayPal Pay in 3 (a credit agreement subject to eligibility and approval). If the fee is a barrier to your participation, please reach out to discuss additional options to make it more accessible for you.

Please read the Learning Agreement before registering for the course. If you have any questions please get in touch.

Upcoming courses

January 2027, ONLINE
20 Jan – 10 Mar 2027
Wednesdays, 18:15-20:30
Half-term break: 17 Feb 2027
Registration deadline: Wed, 13th Jan
Course fee: £280/£240/£200
REGISTER

For news and updates please subscribe to our mailing list

Tutors

Cristiana Bottigella is an art producer with over 25 years' experience supporting artists to develop their practice, access resources, and create meaningful cultural impact. Her work centres on socially engaged art, artist-led infrastructures, and strategies for sustainability. She is the founder

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and director of hARTslane Gallery in South East London and a director at Artmongers, where she works on participatory public art projects. Cristiana has a strong track record in securing funding—particularly from Arts Council England—and teaches fundraising to artists at hARTslane and the London School of Muralism.

From 2000 to 2009 she ran the residency programme at the Pistoletto Foundation in Italy. In 2012 she co-founded Bait al Karama, the first women-led cookery school in the West Bank, Palestine. Cristiana is committed to supporting artists to navigate institutional systems on their own terms and continues to mentor artists on strategy, sustainability and international development.

Sophia Kosmaoglou is an artist, educator and organiser working at the intersection of art, politics and pedagogy. Her interdisciplinary practice spans installation, moving image, performance, writing and critical research. She is the founder of ART&CRITIQUE, an alternative art education network committed to critical engagement with practice, theory and research, and co-founder of the Radical Pedagogy Research Group.

Her work explores the politics of visibility, artistic autonomy, institutional critique and collective learning. She has a degree in sculpture and a practice-based PhD in Fine Art from Goldsmiths, where she taught studio practice and critical studies. She is a visiting tutor in critical studies and curating at Chelsea College of Arts UAL and an Artist Advisor at Artquest, supporting artists in navigating their professional development. Her current focus is on building a co-operative art school as a sustainable, self-organised alternative to mainstream art education.

hARTslane Presents: is a collaborative platform co-produced by Cristiana Bottigella and Sophia Kosmaoglou. It is dedicated to education, artistic practice, and critical discourse. Through courses, workshops, and public events, hARTslane Presents creates opportunities for artists and audiences to engage with pressing questions of sustainability, visibility, and autonomy in contemporary art.

As an event and educational strand of hARTslane, it brings together diverse perspectives, fosters collective learning, and supports artists in developing independent practices aligned with their values. hARTslane Presents operates on co-operative and critical principles, bridging art, pedagogy, and cultural practice in order to cultivate dialogue, agency, and experimentation.

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