PlySpace is an artist-in-residence program in Muncie, Indiana, that is dedicated to offering visual artists, writers, performers, designers, and other creative individuals time and space to investigate and pursue their own practices. Additionally, it serves as a platform for experimentation and provocation by catalyzing conversation and collaboration with various Muncie communities. PlySpace facilitates opportunities for residents to engage with the public through partnership and programming that is tailored to their area of interest.

What is an artist-in-residence (A.i.R) program?

When artists and other creative professionals are developing new projects, or working on their own studio practice, it can be difficult to find time, support, equipment, and inspiration while also maintaining the requirements of daily life, work, and family. An A.i.R program steps in to help facilitate the creative process. It provides artists with dedicated studio space, time to work away from distractions, and access to new, stimulating equipment or communities. An A.i.R is different from a rented studio space in that artist residencies are short term, usually 4 weeks to one year, and are located away from the artist's home location. They also often include community collaboration, outreach, exhibition, and publicity components, and help creatives become more connected in their professional community. Additionally, A.i.R programs can be found around the world and are a boon of creative invigoration for the communities that host them.

PlySpace Residency Terms:

Spring Term: Residents arrive after February 7 and depart before April 30.

Summer Term: Residents arrive after May 7 and depart before August 31.

Fall Term: Residents arrive after September 7 and depart before November 30.

Who are the PlySpace Residents?

PlySpace will welcome professional and dedicated artists, writers, musicians, creative professionals, and social activists as part of the resident community. Some may be individual practitioners while others may be collective teams. All residents will be able to demonstrate a portfolio of activities that relate directly to their community project.

What is a PlySpace Community Collaborator?

We're thrilled to bring outside practitioners in a variety of creative fields to Muncie and provide them with dedicated time and space to pursue their own work. We also understand the tremendous influence an artist can have on a community and want to ensure Muncie is benefiting in a real way from their time spent with us. Each resident will also be partnered with a Community Collaborator for the duration of their residency stay (from 4 - 12 weeks). Collaborators will be non-profit organizations or community groups who value the opportunity to work alongside a visiting creative professional and are interested in new or interdisciplinary approaches to problem solving and public programming.
How are residents connected with a Community Collaborator?

When an applicant submits an application for the PlySpace residency, they will include a proposal for a community based project. This may be a project that requires a specific Community Collaborator or one that is broadly based and an extension of the work they will be doing in the studio (like a workshop or research project). The PlySpace Selection Committee will review applicants and rate the plausibility, thoughtfulness, and creativity of their community project proposals. The committee will identify potential Community Collaborators that fit with the applicant’s proposal or will identify a need within the community that the applicant would be able to address.

When a resident is accepted whose interests and skill sets match up with the needs of a specific local organization, we will contact the organization to discuss the project and resident collaboration. We make the connection between the resident and the partner organization after confirming that the organization is ready to move forward with the partnership. We will assist both parties in creating a timeline and clear outline of goals and expectations for their collaboration. The PlySpace staff will act as a liaison between the resident and Community Collaborator contact person in order to facilitate a productive partnership.

How does an organization become a Community Collaborator?

Step 1: Join the PlySpace newsletter.
Visit www.plyspace.org/subscribe

Step 2: Attend the PlySpace Community Collaborator Info Session.
Info sessions will offer an overview of the nuts and bolts of being a Community Collaborator. Interested partners can ask questions about the program and get personalized information about how the collaboration could work for their specific organization. Info Sessions will be offered in advance of each residency term, Spring, Summer, and Fall.

Info sessions for Summer 2018 will occur before April 1. Notifications about upcoming sessions will go out to all PlySpace newsletter list subscribers.

Step 3: Submit a short letter of interest by email to hello@plyspace.org.
Letters can be submitted at any time. Once the PlySpace coordinator receives a letter of interest, we will keep the letter and project details on file in order to match the organization with a resident. We will also hold orientation sessions prior to each term for the community organizations that are matched with a resident. If your organization’s interests or needs change before you are connected with a resident, just let us know by submitting an updated letter.

PlySpace is a program of the Muncie Arts and Culture Council in partnership with the City of Muncie, Ball State University School of Art, and Sustainable Muncie Corporation. PlySpace is generously supported by the National Endowment for the Arts. Learn more at www.plyspace.org
Letter of Interest

What to include:

1. **What is your group’s or organization’s mission?**

   Please include the organization’s mission and a brief description of the population served.

2. **What goal does your group or organization want to achieve with the help of the resident?**

   This can be a loose goal, like *improve organizations visibility in the community*, or can be a specific goal like *perform a creative workshop for our community members*, or *execute a mural for our organization*. Organizations do not need to have a project in mind. Each resident will also propose a possible project with their application.

3. **What can your group or organization provide to assist with a creative project?**

   Each organization is different in what it can provide as part of the collaboration. Some organizations may have a specific goal, like a mural, and may have a budget to complete this goal. Others may not have funding, but have plenty of activated community members at their disposal to work toward a project. Maybe the organization serves a specific community and has space to host a related workshop, seminar, or series of conversations. Does the organization have supplies at its disposal to use? Has the organization identified a space where they would like a creative project to be installed or take place? What kind of assistance or man-power can the resident expect to have during the project?

4. **Who is the primary point of contact and liaison from your group or organization for this collaboration?**

   Please give us the name of the person who will act as the primary contact for the collaboration. This person will be the contact for PlySpace, as well as the resident, and will work directly with the resident during the project.
Things to know as a Community Collaborator

Time commitment
Community collaborations are expected to require a minimum of 5 to 10 hours per week for PlySpace Residents. Residents may need to set hours with the Community Collaborator based on the nature or scope of the project.

Funding projects
PlySpace does not provide extra funding for projects at this time. If the Community Collaborator accepts the offer to work with an artist on a project that will require extra funding, they may need to obtain or provide this funding.

Canceling partnerships
Community Collaborators will need to be able to see the project through to completion, or until the end of the residency term. Partnerships should not be canceled after they have been agreed upon by both parties.

Project dates
Residents can select their dates of residence, so not all residents will be at PlySpace for the entire 12 weeks of a term. We will screen projects and timelines to identify any issues with proposals and dates of residence. Be sure to let us know in your letter of interest if you have specific dates in mind, or can only collaborate with a resident during a particular period of time.

When to expect a partnership after submitting a letter
Because we only accept three residents per term, we can not partner a resident with each interested collaborator every term. Some Community Collaborators will need to wait for the resident best-suited for their needs. This could take more than 6 months. If you have a project that is time sensitive, please be sure to include details in your letter of interest.

Project space
PlySpace has a community gallery space that might be available as a work space or venue for specific project. In cases where a project space is needed, if the PlySpace gallery isn't suitable, and the partner does not have a brick and mortar location, we will assist in finding a location for the project.

Challenges
Collaboration can be a complicated pursuit, and often challenges arise during the process. PlySpace will act as a liaison for any issues that occur between residents and community partners. We will also attempt to identify any possible issues before they arise by carefully planning and considering the viability and feasibility of each proposal. Because the community partnership is only one part of the residency experience for the PlySpace residents, we ask that Community Collaborators also be patient and flexible with their time. We confident that clear communication between parties will produce successful collaborations and allow for a positive experience for everyone involved.

Questions?
Ask away! Come to our info session, or just send us an email at hello@plyspace.org

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