

ALAS RESOURCES

Applied Live Art Studio | Creative Health • Socially Engaged Practice • Cultural Strategy

Resourcing Practice

A toolkit for finding what your project needs, crowdfunding with care, and growing a community around your practice



ALAS presenting Seek Courage in Ashford, Kent

An ALAS edition of the co-authored Social Art Resource Guide, made in collaboration with Social Art Network (SAN) and Kickstarter.

Free to use, share and adapt.

START HERE

Welcome

This toolkit is for artists, collectives and community groups making work *with* people: live art, participatory projects, creative health programmes, socially engaged practice of every shape. It brings together two resources co-authored by the Social Art Network (SAN) in collaboration with Kickstarter, *Before You Start* and *The Crowdfunding Chapter*, and extends them with the questions we ask at Applied Live Art Studio (ALAS) whenever we resource a project.

At ALAS we believe that how a project is resourced is part of the artwork. The way you ask, who you ask, what you offer back and how you look after the people involved all shape the work long before an audience arrives. So this is not only a fundraising guide. It is a toolkit for making projects that are well held: fairly paid, honestly budgeted, accessible, consented and sustainable for you.

How to use this toolkit

- **Go slowly.** The prompts are designed to be answered on paper, alone or with collaborators. Give yourself an afternoon, not ten minutes.
- **Take what fits.** You do not need to crowdfund, and you do not need to use Kickstarter. Borrow whatever seems right for your practice and apply it to any platform or setting.
- **Use the worksheets.** Part Four gathers the key exercises into printable tables you can fill in by hand or in Word.
- **Come back to it.** Needs change as a project grows. Revisit Part One at each new stage.

Contents

Part One	<u>Before You Start: What Do You Need?</u>
Part Two	<u>The Crowdfunding Chapter</u>
Part Three	<u>Care in Practice</u>
Part Four	<u>Worksheets</u>
Part Five	<u>Further Resources and Links</u> <u>Credits, Partnership and Getting in Touch</u>

The ALAS way, in five words

Care. Look after participants, collaborators and yourself.

Reciprocity. Every ask should come with something real offered back.

Honesty. Budget truthfully, including your own time.

Access. Build it in from the start, and cost it right.

Slowness. Good resourcing takes preparation. Planning is part of the practice.

PART ONE

Before You Start: What Do You Need?

It's easy to assume that you know your own needs for a project, but often unless you actually sit down and make a list, those needs may remain loose and unformed, which holds back the project's progress unless addressed.

For example, you might assume that the project simply needs funding, and the more the better. In practice, however, without a clear budget, you won't have a clear idea of how much funding you need as a minimum for the project to be able to run at all, and you may not be able to forecast how much time and energy will be needed to acquire those finances.

Money is only ever the go-between. What will it be spent on? Perhaps some of these resources can be acquired from organisations and venues directly, rather than approaching them for funds? These are often quite intuitive things to have planned and researched before embarking on a project, but, as many creators know, the importance of the work itself, and the need to make it happen, often becomes the sole focus when you're in the planning stages.

Research resource avenues

There are a number of ways to gain support and resources for your project. Each project is unique, with distinct timescales, amounts of support needed and skill sets required. Some resources and funding avenues will be more appropriate for certain types of projects or groups. Before deciding which is best for you, try to understand what the various avenues available to you entail.

If you've already run through [Prompt list 1 in the Crowdfunding Chapter](#) and have your answers and project ideas in place, you'll have an idea of the resources needed to make it happen. If there is non-monetary support needed, think about how you might be able to acquire those resources. For example:

- **Space.** What options might be available from relationships you already have? Is there someone in your community who would benefit from a service you're providing, who would be happy to offer you space in return?
- **Exposure.** Think about who you need to see the work. Where can they be found? Do you have access to these platforms or places? In what capacity do you want to reach them? What is the call to action? Are you asking for inclusion in a newsletter, a social media shout out, attendance at an event, an invitation to collaborate, a request for funding?
- **Materials.** Many ALAS projects are made with little or no budget. Reuse networks such as Freecycle and Freecycle, local businesses, market traders, scrap stores and community fabric banks can supply a surprising amount, and often become part of the project's story.
- **Skills and time.** Could a partner organisation lend a technician, a translator, a facilitator or a volunteer steward? Could you exchange skills rather than money?



Woolwich Speaks by ALAS for London Borough of Greenwich

Funding avenues at a glance

If your project requires funds there are many different avenues and it's useful to consider all that might be appropriate. The original guide listed these options; we have added a note on what each is good for and what to weigh up.

Avenue	Good for	Things to weigh up
User funding with a sliding scale	Workshops, classes and events where participants can contribute	Keep a genuinely free tier so cost is never a barrier to taking part
<u>Crowdfunding</u>	Projects with a clear story, a defined goal and a community ready to back them	Needs sustained time and visibility over roughly 30 days; see Part Two
Community funding as a CSA (community supported art)	Ongoing practices that can offer regular work or access to a group of subscribers	Needs a steady rhythm of delivery and someone to hold the relationships
Project grant funding	Defined projects with outcomes, partners and a public dimension	Long lead times, reporting requirements, eligibility rules
Research grant funding	Enquiry led work, often with a university or research partner	Usually needs an institutional partner and a clear research question
Private sponsorship	Projects with a strong local or thematic link to a business	Check the sponsor's values align with your community and your work
Donation	Small costs, materials, one off needs	Say thank you publicly (with permission) and report back on what it made possible
In kind support	Space, equipment, printing, food, expertise	Value it in your budget so the true cost of the work is visible

If you're thinking about applying for funds, do you know anyone who has secured funds this way before, who you can ask for tips? Or are you able to speak to the funding body about what they're looking for? This can often be really helpful, as there may be something in your project which they encourage you to highlight in your application. Having this information beforehand can be a great start.

Build an honest budget

A budget is a map of your values. Before you choose an avenue, sketch what the project really costs, including the parts that are usually invisible. Use the [budget worksheet](#) in Part Four. As a starting point, make sure you have considered:

- **People.** Fees for artists, facilitators, producers and collaborators, including you. Use sector guidance such as [a-n The Artists Information Company](#) for day rates rather than guessing.
- **Access.** BSL interpretation, captioning, large print, travel support, quiet space, access riders. Access costs belong in the core budget, not the wish list.
- **Participants.** Refreshments, travel reimbursement, childcare, and payment or vouchers where people are giving their time and lived experience.
- **Space and materials.** Venue hire, insurance, equipment, consumables.
- **Documentation.** Photography and film, with consent processes built in.
- **Fundraising costs.** Platform and payment fees, reward production and postage if you crowdfund.
- **Contingency.** Around 10% protects the project and the people in it when things shift.

Then name your two numbers: the **minimum** that lets the project happen with integrity, and the **ideal** that lets it flourish.

Is crowdfunding right for this project?

Before moving to Part Two, sit with these questions. If most answers are yes, crowdfunding may be a good fit. If not, another avenue in the table above may serve you better, and that is a good outcome too.

Question	Yes / Not yet
Can I explain the project in two sentences that make someone curious?	
Do I have at least 25 people I could personally ask to back it?	
Do I have time and energy for around 30 days of active campaigning, plus preparation?	
Can I share images or process without compromising participants' privacy or safety?	
Do I have meaningful things to offer backers in return?	
Is there someone who can support me through the campaign?	

PART TWO

The Crowdfunding Chapter

This chapter is focused on the crowdfunding route, drawing from the experience of a project co-run by the Social Art Network with Kickstarter, in which a group of social artists came together to support one another through the process of running a crowdfunding campaign. The information here is helpful whether or not you want to crowdfund or use the Kickstarter platform, so we hope you find it a useful tool whatever your direction. If you haven't yet, work through [Part One: Before You Start](#) to help figure out which avenue is right for you.

You are welcome to borrow whatever seems right for your practice and project and apply it to any platform or setting where crowdfunding can be beneficial.

Prompt list 1: Identify your foundation

Clarifying your foundation before you begin is a great way to show you, and others, where you are, as well as where your blind spots may be. Respond to these prompts on a sheet of paper, or use the [foundation worksheet](#).

Consider the project as a whole

- Describe the project in two sentences.
- What are the project's aims, dreams and goals?
- What resources do you already have?
- What's working so far with the project? What makes you *love* the project?
- What's not working, or what could be improved?
- At the heart of every campaign is a story. [Here are some Kickstarter resources on how to tell your story and engage people in your idea](#).

Clarify what you're looking for, and what your community needs

- If the project requires funds, identify two numbers: how much you need as a minimum, and how much would be ideal. Your [honest budget](#) will help here.
- Is there a specific timeframe within which funds are needed?
- Who is the project *for*, and have they had a say in what it needs?

Think about the current stage of the project

- Do you need a team? Have you built one yet?
- Does the idea need to be developed further before you look into acquiring the right resources?
- Have you already tried the project once or a few times? How did it go?

Prompt list 2: Suitability and planning

Figure out what works for your project, your network and resources, your time and energy, and your other commitments.

Capacity

- Crowdfunding campaigns are hard work, require advance planning and need resource input over a sustained period of time. Do you have time to run a campaign that may last 30 days? If so, consider how this will integrate with your other commitments.

Purpose

- Why does your project exist? Think about how you can communicate the need for your project to those you would like support from.

Communicate clearly

- Think about one specific and simple tagline that will serve as your main message.
- For most funding and support options it is key to communicate the project in a way that gives people the excitement which drove you to create it in the first place. Honing this can be difficult to do alone, so try it out on a few people for feedback. Ask them to describe it back to you. Did they understand the core message? Did they have an emotional response? Can it start a conversation?

Connection

- Find the right way to make your supporters feel connected to the project. Consider whether elements produced as part of the project can be given to supporters, or a way in which they can participate in the main element or events around it.

Visuals

- You'll need plenty of high quality photos, videos or gifs on your project page. These should show your creative process: the hands on work that goes into bringing your project to life in your studio, out in the field, or wherever you create. [Look here for info on how to make great project images.](#)
- Unless your project is grant funded or supported in kind, it's really useful to have visuals that communicate the idea even before it has taken place. See [Care in Practice](#) for working with images of participants.

Building blocks

- Create a timeline for the whole project, including planning promotion. [Here's a Kickstarter project timeline tool](#), offering a checklist of things to do.
- For some platforms, rewards tell the story of your project. The [best rewards are an extension of what you're already doing](#), and give backers access to your process or the project. [Get creative with simple, digital rewards](#), and keep in mind that creating merchandise is unnecessary.

ALAS note: rewards that feel like live art

Some of the most meaningful rewards for socially engaged work are experiences rather than objects: a place at a closed rehearsal, a postcard written during the performance, a named contribution to a collective score, a one to one conversation with the artist, a zine documenting the process, or a free place gifted to a community member on the backer's behalf.

Cost every reward, including your time and postage, before you publish it.

Prompt list 3: Building a community around you

Crowdfunding offers more than simply raising funds. Your backers will become a community invested in your project and join you on your journey to bring your ideas into the world beyond the campaign.

Map your network

Take a large piece of paper, or use the [network map worksheet](#), and list:

- The people you know already. Who loves your work? Who is already a part of the project?
- Who do they know? Who doesn't yet know about your work?

Draw a line between the people who know the work and people who don't

- List the tools you have to talk to people or share your project.
- Kickstarter has created a pack of resources on [building your community](#), which includes templates for newsletters, sample personal emails and more.

Find your peers

- Think about reaching out to other creators in your network who are, or have been, through a similar process.
- Is there anyone else who might have insight or want to do something similar in future?
- How can you support others through the process?



Hand marionette by artist Jess Shead

Prompt list 4: Opening the door to your project

Throughout a crowdfunding project, you'll be communicating with backers and keeping them informed of your progress. You'll need to engage them through interesting and shareable updates and encourage them to spread the word.

Backers love to understand how work like yours is actually made. Show them! Depending on the platform, you can post text only updates, or you can include images, video and even sound clips.



Text Bender by ALAS for Home Slough

It's important to ask whether you and the project benefit from attention before the project has taken place. With crowdfunding, this is an essential part. You have to get your message out, and to do that you need to share your work with people you may or may not know. For some, this can create quite a vulnerable space, so it is important to consider if it is the right option for you.

Some other prompts to consider

- **Sharing images.** As with everything, GDPR and copyright are important to be aware of when sharing content. For some projects, such as community based workshops, the visual content is sensitive and sharing photos might present challenges. If this is the case, think about visuals which are descriptive rather than directly of the content, or illustrations rather than photos.
- **Credit lines and collaborators.** It's always important to credit those involved and the project's collaborators. Before you do, make sure you have the express permission of those involved.
- **Sharing work in progress.** It can be a mental hurdle to share the work whilst it is in process, but this is a critical part! People love to see the process, especially if they're not in the arts themselves. Sharing this part can be a huge opportunity for growth in your practice.

Prompt list 5: Getting the word out

Gathering a community around your idea is vital for crowdfunding successfully. Kickstarter's data shows that projects with 25 backers have an 80% chance of success on the platform, so making a list of 25 people who might back your project, and deciding how to engage each of them, is a valuable use of time. Use the [25 backers worksheet](#). Rather than social media or group messages, Kickstarter has seen that personal emails are the most effective way of securing a pledge. [Here's an email template you can use](#).

Further prompts

- Do you have regular updates, milestones and developments you could share during a campaign? If so, do you have the time to share these regularly in a way which is insightful, engaging and offers a call to action?

- Are you camera ready? Crowdfunding campaigns benefit immensely from a video introducing the project and building excitement around it. If you are comfortable in front of the camera, this can be a really good tool to engage and captivate supporters.
 - Ask yourself: how do I establish trust? How do I make the project video feel urgent? Here are some tips from Kickstarter on how to make [a great video](#).
- Explore the [social art](#) category on Kickstarter. It's valuable to browse these projects to get a sense of how they presented their ideas, the rewards they offered and the goals they reached.

Email and personal messages

- Create a list of the people in your contacts who you can tell about your project and ask if they will support.
- Are you comfortable asking them for what you need? This can be difficult. Think about the reasons why you're excited about the project and communicate that. Asking for support will then feel a lot more natural.

Social media

- If you enjoy using social media, that can be a great bonus. Consider whether your network will be interested in your call for support and funding. Will they be inclined to support projects such as yours?
- You can also use social media to approach journalists and influencers who may be able to share details of your work with a wider audience. Local and community press are often the warmest audience for socially engaged work.



WTF Just Happened, Covid19 Archive by ALAS at Derby Festival

Here are Kickstarter's [best tips](#) for getting [the word](#) out about campaigns, a [guide to thoughtful promotion](#), and another [guide to getting press for your creative work](#).

Prompt list 6: The shape of a campaign

Most campaigns follow a recognisable arc. Knowing it in advance helps you pace your energy and plan your updates. Use the [campaign calendar](#) to map yours.

Stage	What tends to happen	What helps
Preparation (4 to 8 weeks before)	Story, budget, rewards, visuals and video come together	Line up your first 25 backers, draft emails and updates in advance, ask a peer to review your page
Launch (first 48 hours)	Your closest circle pledges; early momentum signals to others that the project is real	Personal messages to your inner circle on day one; a clear, warm launch post
The middle	Pledges often slow down; this is normal and not a sign of failure	Share process, behind the scenes moments, small milestones and thank yous
Final days	Urgency brings a second wave of support	A countdown, a final personal nudge, and a clear statement of what is still needed

Remember that on Kickstarter funding is all or nothing: if a project does not reach its goal, no one is charged. Set a goal you can realistically reach, using your minimum number rather than your ideal.

Prompt list 7: After the campaign

The campaign ending is the beginning of your relationship with your backers, not the end.

- **Thank people personally**, within a few days, whatever the outcome.
- **Deliver rewards when you said you would**, and tell backers early if anything changes. Honesty keeps trust.
- **Keep sharing**. Invite backers to the work itself, and report back on what their support made possible.
- **Reflect**. What worked? What cost you more energy than expected? What would you tell another artist starting out? Consider sharing this with the SAN and ALAS communities.
- **If you didn't reach your target**, it is not a verdict on the value of your work. You will have built an audience, sharpened your story and made new connections. Revisit [Part One](#) and consider whether a smaller goal, a different timeframe or another avenue would serve the project better.

PART THREE

Care in Practice

Socially engaged work is built on relationships, and resourcing it puts those relationships in public view. This section gathers the care considerations we hold at ALAS, drawing on our work across participatory art, creative health and community settings.

Consent and images

- Gain informed, written consent before photographing or filming participants, and explain clearly where images will be used, including on a crowdfunding page, in updates and in press.
- Make it easy to say no, and easy to change your mind later. Offer a visible way to opt out on the day, such as a coloured lanyard or sticker.
- Take extra care with children, young people and anyone in a health, care or vulnerable setting. Follow your safeguarding policy and the host organisation's policies.
- Store images and personal data securely and only for as long as you need them. The [Information Commissioner's Office](#) has clear guidance on UK GDPR for small organisations.
- When photographs are not appropriate, use drawings, objects, hands, spaces, text or sound to tell the story.

Voice and representation

- Tell the story *with* the community, not *about* it. Where possible, invite participants to shape how the project is described.
- Avoid language that frames people as problems to be fixed. Describe strengths, hopes and what people bring.
- Credit co-creators and collaborators by name, with their permission, and in the way they prefer.

Access

- Make your campaign page and updates accessible: alt text on images, captions on video, plain language, good colour contrast.
- Offer more than one way to support the project, including ways that don't involve money: sharing, volunteering, lending equipment, spreading the word.
- Budget for access from the start, and say so publicly. It tells disabled artists and audiences they are expected.

Fair pay

- Include your own fee. Unpaid artist labour is not a hidden subsidy the project should rely on.
- Pay collaborators and participants fairly for their time and expertise, including lived experience.
- Be transparent with backers about where the money goes. People are more generous when they can see the work being valued.

Looking after yourself

- Campaigning is emotionally demanding. Plan rest days into your calendar before you launch.
- Share the load. Ask a friend, peer or collaborator to be your campaign buddy who checks in weekly.
- Decide in advance how much time a day you will spend on the campaign, and protect the rest of your practice and your life.
- Remember that the number on the page is not a measure of your worth as an artist.

A reciprocity check

For every ask you make, name what you are offering back. For every person who gives, name how you will thank them. For every community you represent, name how they have shaped the story. If any of these are blank, pause and fill them in before you launch.



The Print Shop: Rise Up! By ALAS at Freedom Festival, Hull.

PART FOUR

Worksheets

Print these pages or fill them in directly in Word. Add rows as you need them.

Worksheet A: Your foundation

Prompt	Your response
The project in two sentences	
Aims, dreams and goals	
Resources I already have	
What I love about this project	
What could be improved	
Who it is for	
Minimum amount needed	
Ideal amount	
Timeframe	
Team I have / team I need	
My one line tagline	

Worksheet B: Honest budget

Line	Cash cost (£)	In kind value (£)	Source / notes
Artist and facilitator fees (including mine)			
Collaborator fees			
Participant costs (travel, food, childcare, payment)			
Access costs			
Space and venue			
Materials and equipment			
Insurance			
Documentation			
Marketing and printing			
Platform and payment fees			
Reward production and postage			
Contingency (around 10%)			
Total			

Crowdfunding platforms charge fees on funds raised, such as a platform fee plus payment processing fees. Check the current rates on the platform you choose and add them to your goal.

Worksheet C: Network map

Circle	Who (names or groups)	How I will reach them
Inner circle: people who already love the work		
Project circle: participants, partners, collaborators		
Second circle: who they know		
Wider circle: people who don't know the work yet		
Amplifiers: press, networks, organisations, influencers		

Worksheet D: Your first 25 backers

#	Name	Why they might care	How I will ask	Asked ✓	Thanked ✓
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18					
19					
20					
21					
22					
23					
24					
25					

Worksheet E: Campaign calendar

Week	Key actions	Updates to share	Rest days
Prep week 1			
Prep week 2			
Prep week 3			
Prep week 4			
Launch week			
Campaign week 2			
Campaign week 3			
Final week			
After: thank and deliver			

PART FIVE

Further Resources and Links

From Kickstarter

- [How to tell your story](#)
- [Making great project images](#)
- [Project timeline and launch checklist \(PDF\)](#)
- [96 reward ideas](#)
- [70 ideas for simple, digital rewards](#)
- [Building your community resource pack](#)
- [Personal email template](#)
- [Making a great project video](#)
- [Social art projects on Kickstarter](#)
- [Ready, set, share your project](#)
- [How to get press and spread the word](#)

From The Creative Independent

- [A creative person's guide to thoughtful promotion](#)
- [How to get press for your creative work](#)

Added by ALAS

- [a-n The Artists Information Company](#): fees, rates and professional guidance for artists
- [Arts Council England](#): National Lottery Project Grants and developing your creative practice funding
- [360Giving GrantNav](#): search who UK funders have given grants to
- [Information Commissioner's Office](#): UK GDPR guidance for small organisations
- [Crowdfunder UK](#) and [Spacehive](#): alternative UK platforms, including civic and place based crowdfunding
- [Applied Live Art Studio](#): our projects, resources and ways to work with us

WITH THANKS

Credits, Partnership and Getting in Touch

This toolkit is an ALAS edition of the *Co-authored Social Art Resource Guide* (Part 1: *Before You Start* and Part 2: *The Crowdfunding Chapter*), led by R.M. Sánchez-Camus through Social Art Network in collaboration with Gemma Seltzer through Kickstarter and the social artists who took part. We are grateful to everyone who shared their experience so that others could learn from it.

ALAS has adapted and extended the original material with sections on budgeting, campaign pacing, aftercare, care in practice and worksheets, written in the spirit of our work across live art, creative health and socially engaged practice.

A note on partnership

The knowledge from Kickstarter is offered as a way to help all artists understand and benefit from crowdfunding. ALAS has no long term affiliation or partnership with the company. ALAS believes in sharing resources and helping social practice artists be resilient and be paid for their labour. You are welcome to borrow whatever seems right for your practice and project and apply it to any platform or setting where crowdfunding can be beneficial.

We would love to hear from you

The more we learn together, the more we can build this funding resource for everyone. Tell us what worked, what was missing and what you would add.

Applied Live Art Studio: appliedliveart.com

Free to use, share and adapt for non-commercial purposes, with credit to Applied Live Art Studio.