

AA2A

30 years of nurturing creative talent

University of Sunderland

AA2A 2026-27

Key Dates & Information

University of Sunderland has hosted AA2A for over 20 years. We want our artists to have an exceptional experience and to offer our students exciting role models for creative careers.

Contact for enquiries: helen.baxter@sunderland.ac.uk

Placements will be running from 28 October 2026 to 14 May 2027

We welcome applications from creatives of all backgrounds and are particularly interested in candidates with experience in Fine Art, Printmaking and Photography

Application key dates	Date
Application deadline	16th September
If more information is needed, applicants being considered will be contacted by	6th October
Formal offers issued by	14th October
Offer acceptance deadline	21st October
General induction session	28th October

Dates are subject to change, and delays may occur. If there are significant delays to the scheme's start, the host may extend the end date. Attendance at the induction session is usually mandatory before you can access the host's facilities.

List of facilities: Printmaking (screenprinting, etching, relief printing, Riso printing), wood, metal, basic glass/ceramics, mould making, fashion, 3-D printing, lazer cutting, photography (digital and chemical), video, graphics, animation, painting and sculpture

List of 'extra' facilities/areas:

- Library (reference and lending rights)

Workspace arrangements for AA2A residents: Where possible we will offer working/studio space to artists working in Fine Art. For those working in photography we can offer working spaces when the artists are on campus. We can provide secure storage of a limited amount of work/materials

Wheelchair access: Most areas are accessible but please get in touch if you have specific requirements

Access dates and holidays: In addition to bank holidays the university vacations are 14 Dec 2026 – 3 Jan 2027 and 22 Mar 2027 – 11 Apr 2027 and access will be limited.

Access time: Unless by special arrangement, access will normally be during hours that the department is open to students, which is normally between 9.00am - 6.00pm, Monday to Thursday and 9.00am - 5.00pm on Fridays

Equipment and Facilities

The following equipment and facilities are available to participants on the scheme. If you have any specific queries regarding the facilities listed, please email the host for more information. As a reminder, the AA2A scheme is intended to support artists in developing and refining their existing skills, rather than acting as a formal training programme or an opportunity to learn a new skill.

Booking arrangements and induction meetings will be necessary for most workshop areas. Access to facilities and equipment will need to be negotiated and planned based on your project needs and the needs of the department you're working in. Access cannot always be guaranteed.

Fine Art at Priestman Building

- Studio Space will be available for AA2A artists willing to maintain a regular presence
- Printmaking – Screenprinting, Relief, Letter Press, Etching
- Publication Lab with Riso Printing
- 3D printing
- digital photography,
- digital sewing and embroidery
- woodwork
- metalwork and casting
- support in the development of film and sound.
- Drawing Studio
- Priestman Gallery
- Shaun Project Space

Northern Centre of Photography

- DX and full-frame Nikon DSLRs
- Nikon Z6II and Z7II mirrorless cameras
- Phase One XF digital medium format camera systems with 100mp IQ3 backs for high-end digital studio work

- Film cameras ranging from 35mm Pentax; Mamiya; Hasselblad; and Fuji medium format
- Toyo and Sinar large format cameras
- We stock: portable flash lighting kits, tripods, a huge range of lenses, VR headset, digital projectors, GoPro 360 cameras, LEAF digital camera backs, plus many more specialist items.
- Black and white dark room and processing room
- Colour space - A specialist lab for c-type colour chemical printing, featuring individual colour enlargement bays, colour print processing machine, colour film processor and daylight viewing area.
- Digital print studio and print finishing area - This space is equipped with 24" M1 iMacs; Epson A2 and A1 inkjet printers; Imacon film scanners; laser printer; a cutting table; and a large 4k display screen.
- Photography studios - We have two large pro studios equipped with Bowens digital flash lighting and a range of attachments, as well as high-end tethered shooting with 100mp Phase One XF medium format digital cameras and iMac Pros.
- Pixel lab- A large digital darkroom studio, fitted out with a suite of 24 inch M1 iMacs running Adobe Creative Cloud; flatbed film and print scanners; and large 4k display screen.
- Social / Learning zone and NCP gallery - An open-plan creative space for our Northern Centre of Photography community to meet, study and socialise. Work in progress or final outcomes can be presented on the magnetic gallery walls. You'll also have access to department kitchen facilities.

Animation and Games Art at the David Putnam Media Centre

- Motion capture suite
- Shadow Motion Capture system
- Green screen TV Studio
- Digital design suite with 24 Macs and Wacom Cintiqs
- Industry standard sound recording studios and editing facilities
- A dedicated stop motion room with 3 portable workstations, each with Dragon Stop Motion software
- Line-testing room with 6 rostrum cameras, a multiplane camera and light boxes for 2D work on paper, cut-out and other mixed media techniques
- Two 16mm projectors for direct animation
- Software includes: Toon Boom Harmony Premium, Autodesk Maya, Adobe Creative Suite including After Effects, Illustrator and Photoshop, Pixologic Z Brush, Blender and Unity.
- Our specialist technical staff, including qualified Adobe and Maya Certified Instructors, offer back-up and help you make the most of the software.
- You also have access to industry standard sound recording and editing facilities.

Design (Graphics and Illustration) at Priestman Building

- Digital suites: our digital design suites are equipped with Apple Macs, PCs, HTC VIVE VR and Wacom Cintiqs with Adobe Creative Suite Design Premium.
- Software: ZBrush, Unity 3D, Maya, Blender, Cinema 4D, Dreamweaver and Adobe Creative Suites. Our specialist technical staff, including qualified Adobe and Maya Certified Instructors, offer back-up and help in making the most of the software.
- Extensive pre-production, process, finishing equipment: from 3D design and printing, bookbinding, vinyl and large format printing, fabric printing, animation and VR, as well as laser-cutting and wood and metal workshops.
- Drawing Studio
- Publication Lab with Riso Printing

- Technical support: Along with our software specialist, we have a team of experienced technicians - specialists in their fields who are on hand to support you to realise your vision.

Fashion at Priestman Building

- Industrial sewing facilities
- digital embroidery facilities
- large scale digital fabric printer
- Open access Apple Macs and Wacom Cintiqs
- State-of-the-art digital 3D visualisation CAD software

Library Services - arts and design

The [University Library](#) is your gateway to information resources and services both on and off campus. We've got thousands of print books, e-books, exhibition catalogues and journals, giving you reliable and up-to-date academic and industry articles.

Access to many study places, including quiet and silent zones, PCs and Macs, group work hubs, online module reading lists and study skills support, all in our quality learning environments. You'll have full use of the library, both with extensive opening hours, and 'Live Chat' enables you to access library support and help from anywhere 24/7.

We're much more than a library; the University Library team are on hand to guide you throughout your studies on and off campus.

General Application Information

Eligibility criteria:

- Artists must have at least one year of professional arts practice
- Artists are expected to commit to 100+ hours on-site during the residency period
- Artists can work independently, with minimal technical support from staff
- Artists must be willing to deliver up to 4 sessions to students (workshop, talk, etc.).
- Artists must monitor and respond to AA2A emails promptly throughout the residency period
- Artists must agree to the [terms and conditions](#) of AA2A residencies

Who can't apply:

- Artists in full-time education or on a part-time undergraduate course
- Artists who have participated in AA2A within the last 2 years (i.e. 2024/25 or 2025/26)

Selection criteria:

- Project proposal: A considered project outline describing ambition and goals for the residency, which aligns with the host institution's specific educational objectives, if any, including how it will help your creative development and noting which facilities and equipment will be used
- Proposal for contributing to student development and a commitment to being a positive role model for art students

- Realistic travel plans and an achievable estimate of how much time will be spent at the host with a commitment to attending a minimum of 80 hours
- Clear understanding of residency format - aware of timescales alongside your other obligations and financial situation; must be capable of working independently after equipment and workshop inductions
- Commitment to timely communication with the AA2A team and host staff, plus completion of a two-part AA2A evaluation
- Positive, approachable and collaborative attitude

Full details on eligibility and selection can be found [here](#). You may also find our [FAQ page](#) useful.

Artist Support Fund

AA2A has a fund for artists participating in AA2A schemes to help with the cost of childcare, travel and materials, and costs associated with disability incurred during the residency period. Artists must have accepted a place before they apply for ASF.

Eligibility Criteria	Maximum Amount Available
Artists on benefits associated with low income	Up to £400
Artists with a personal income below £13,000 and a household income below £25,000 (not receiving benefits)	Up to £300
Artists with costs associated with disability	Up to £700

Artists can apply for support with costs associated with disability AND low income/benefits.

As we have a fixed ASF budget, we cannot guarantee we will approve all claims/give everyone the full amount they requested. Click [here](#) for further information.

Public liability insurance

Some hosts recommend, or may require, AA2A residents to have public liability insurance. Through AA2A's partnership with AXIS, residents are eligible for discounted AXIS membership, which includes public liability insurance.

How to apply

To apply for an AA2A residency, please complete the form on [this page](#). You will then receive the link to the main application form. Once submitted, your responses will be sent to AA2A and shared with your chosen host institution(s).

You must apply to a scheme before its stated application deadline. Applications submitted after the deadline may not be considered (unless the deadline has been formally extended).