**MAWA’s Foundation Mentorship Program**

The goal of the year-long Foundation Mentorship Program (FMP) is to develop the art practices and professional skills of the mentees. The FMP also endeavors to foster self-reliance, resourcefulness, decision-making skills and self-esteem, and to pass on knowledge and wisdom based upon experience.

With the help of the mentor, the mentee will define artistic goals that they will achieve during the program. The mentee, during the mentoring process, will be expected to complete a body of work or creative research, and to actively participate in the group learning experience with the other mentees and mentors.

Activities undertaken during the mentorship will include: one-on-one consultations between mentor and mentee; completion and/or development of mentee’s goals; attendance at group meetings; and sharing of information regarding resources and opportunities. A group project may be undertaken at the end of the year if agreed upon by the group.

**Selection of Mentees**

Each mentor chooses 2 mentees who they will work with, based primarily on the support materials (images of artwork) submitted by applicants and the applicants stated goals for the year. The mentors review the applications (May), develop a short list (May), interview prospective mentees (late May or early June) and make their selection.

Mentors choose mentees that they can help. The question is not, “Is this an interesting artist?” but, “Am I willing to work with this artist, and do I have skills that will help them advance their practice?”

There are usually 5 mentors and 10 mentees.

**Structure of the program**

Mentors and mentees commit to meeting for 4 hours per month, at a time mutually agreed upon and negotiated. These meetings can include critique of the mentee’s work, professional advice, going to exhibitions or lectures, discussion of readings, and/or other activities.

Mentors and mentees also commit to attending monthly, in-person 3-hour group meetings (all of the mentors and all of the mentees) or bi-weekly, online 1.5-hour group meetings (all of the mentors and all of the mentees) led by the mentors. These meetings can include professional practices workshops such as grantwriting, questions about curation, critical readings, group studio visits and critiques, field trips, workshops, etc. The curriculum of the group meetings is determined by MAWA staff and mentors after reviewing the goals of the mentees.

The program runs from Sept. - Sept. each year.

Mentees often choose to organize a year-end exhibition, project or event after the conclusion of the program, with a small budget provided by MAWA.

**Who are the mentees?**

Mentees are of any age or educational background. They are committed to their art practices, in any visual media. They are ready to move their practices forward and are willing to invest significant time and energy in doing so. They are open to critique and guidance from a more experienced artist.

**Applicants**

Any woman, non-binary, trans, or 2-Spirit woman-identifying artist can apply.

**Who cannot apply?**

MAWA strongly advises against accepting mentees who are currently students. Often, they have not developed an independent work habits and “voice”. There can also be unproductive tension between this program and their other instruction.

Former mentees may apply after a 7-year gap. This “broadens the circle of opportunity” and makes room for participants who have not experienced the program before. There are only three cases of a former mentee being admitted to the program.

Keep in mind that every year MAWA receives 2-3 times more applications than we are able to accommodate. Unsuccessful applicants are encouraged to apply again. One mentee applied for 4 years in a row before being admitted into the program. During that time their body of work grew and improved. Finally, there was a “fit” with a mentor.

**When does the program begin?**

The programs begins with a “Mentorship Essentials Workshop” for all mentors in September. The first group meeting/orientation for all mentors and mentees is on the following day.

**Duties and responsibilities of the mentor include:**

* being a MAWA member
* commitment of 4 hours a month to one-on-one mentorship (studio visits, going to exhibitions or lectures, discussion of readings, and/or other activities determined with mentee) x 2 mentees
* guidance of each mentee as they set goals and a work plan for the year; support of mentee in achieving their goals and work plan, while remaining mindful that the goal and work plan may change and evolve
* honest discussion with mentee of any problems that might arise in mentor/mentee relationship and apprising MAWA of such
* attendance (delivering content) at monthly 3-hour group meetings or 2 bi-monthly 1.5-hour group meetings
* leadership (delivering content) at group meetings on pre-arranged subjects as discussed with other mentors
* written interim progress report
* written final report
* being available to consult with MAWA Program Coordinator regarding the program
* attendance of follow-up gathering at conclusion of program

**Duties and responsibilities of the mentee include:**

* payment of the $300 program fee at the beginning of the program, unless other arrangements are made with MAWA
* commitment of 4 hours a month to working with their mentor
* devotion of a significant amount of time towards their art practice during the program
* setting individual goals and work plan for the year, developed in consultation with their mentor
* honest discussion with the mentor of any problems that might arise in the mentorship relationship
* time and energy devoted to achieving those goals, while remaining mindful that the goal and work plan may change and evolve
* attendance at monthly 3-hour group meetings or 2 bi-monthly 1.5-hour group meetings
* presentation of a brief artist talk at a group meeting near the beginning of the year
* hosting a studio visit at which they will present their work, mid-way through the year
* interim progress report
* final report
* participation in and organization of a group project/exhibition, if agreed to by the group
* attendance at a follow-up gathering at the conclusion of the program