

Presenter Name: Sara Washbush

Proposal Title:

Proximity and Collaboration: Current Research for the Ontario Crafts Council's Craft Export Readiness Project

Description:

How does the concept of “closeness,” relating to geography and to common goals, play into the Ontario Craft Council's Craft Export Readiness Project? Research/Project Manager Sara Washbush will touch on this as she presents the project, describing the methodology and current status of the research. Sara will additionally speak about how people from arts backgrounds can participate in multidisciplinary teams to engage in meaningful research and outcomes.

Craft Export Readiness is a unique, multi-year plan to affect greater access for Canadian makers to the American craft market. The OCC recognizes the challenges that Ontario makers face in bringing their work to market, and their need to access thriving economies through export. During 2013-2014 the Research/Project Manager will research stakeholder perspectives and challenges, online engagement strategies, and design the Craft Export Readiness Project to connect craft makers, galleries and guilds to Canadian and American markets. Regional hubs in Guelph, Hamilton, Kingston, London, Ottawa, Sudbury, Thunder Bay and Toronto will host learning events to connect with the community and capture information.

About the Ontario Crafts Council

The Ontario Crafts Council is a member-based multidisciplinary arts service organization that promotes the recognition of Ontario craft and craftspeople by supporting and developing a strong, talented, distinctive craft community and advocating on its behalf.

We champion, promote and support craft by:

- being the leading advocating voice for craft makers in Ontario
- maximizing craft makers' potential as artists and entrepreneurs
- providing a forum for critical debate
- enhancing the public's enjoyment of craft through education and access and
- providing opportunities to commission, lease and purchase objects