



# Session Toolkit

## **BUILDING AN ONLINE PRESENCE**

Using social media to grow your  
networks



OTTAWA ARTS  
COUNCIL | CONSEIL DES  
ARTS D'OTTAWA

# SESSION OVERVIEW

The COVID-19 pandemic spurred on many challenges for performing artists. It also created some new opportunities for artists to produce and create in innovative ways.

The following toolkit summarizes **Debbie Owusu-Akyeeah's** video session lending her expertise in building an online presence using social media platforms and growing your network.



## Bring your authentic self



## Building an online presence using social media



## Possibility Models



## Developing a network inside and outside the office

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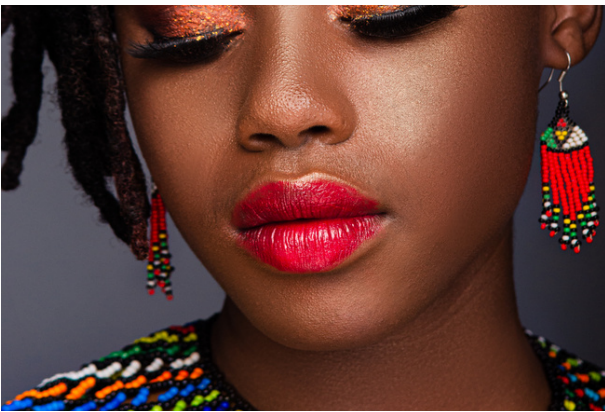
Canada



## Bring your authentic self

The benchmarks and even rules for workspace professionalism have historically been built upon the context and benefit of those in privileged and advantageous positions; so when thinking of bringing our authentic selves to a professional space, it can be daunting for those of us who may not follow or embody those privilege points. Please remember:

**TIP#1** Representing yourself in your work and artistic practice is important. You can be proud of your authentic self through representation in so many ways! Using personal cultural references in your creative practice or through the branding of your work (ie. the look and feel of your promotional materials) can act as an authentic expression of you. Remember that our diverse identities can be used as leadership assets rather than points of divergence.





## Building an online presence using social media

Personal branding is a strategy people use to establish and promote their niche, expertise, and skills. Having an understanding of all that you have to offer and telling the story of all those assets in a cohesive and thought-out manner will make you stand out to the audiences you would like to reach.

**TIP#2** Self-defining or building a personal brand, is an important exercise to take ownership of your narrative, especially for young artists and BIPOC artists who often face being stereotyped.

Social media is a powerful tool in growing a community online. Reaching out and signing up for like-minded groups (poetry collectives, book clubs, social impact initiatives, cultural groups) can help you connect with networks.

**TIP #3** Social media platforms like LinkedIn and Twitter can act as platforms for sharing your thoughts and stories on what you specialize in. Consider publishing content regularly- this will allow readers and audience members to be reminded of your expertise.



## Possibility Models

Unlike a “role model”, a possibility model gives people space to find their own path, their own possibilities, rather than base their ambitions directly on the achievements of another. - Dr Ruth Pearce

With this in mind, a possibility model can expand from the historic criteria of the traditional role model, and you can find them anywhere, perhaps half-way around the world on Twitter! The possibilities that can arise from a kind comment online are endless.



## Developing a network inside and outside the office

Networks can provide great connections, affirmation of your work, give industry insight, and give access to career opportunities. Networking can have a troubled connotation and for young creatives and BIPOC artists can result in isolating experiences. Nevertheless:

**TIP #4** Consider building an online network on social media, organizing a networking group online, or perhaps create or participate in an artistic support group.