



Session Toolkit

ARTS PATRONAGE IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Diversify your creative practice revenue
with online patronage platforms



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 **Colin Whites'** video session lending his expertise in diversifying your creative practice income through online patronage platforms like Patreon.



What is Patreon?



Economic stability is good for artists



Making Patreon work for you



Final thoughts

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What is Patreon?

An overview of the patronage platform and its benefits

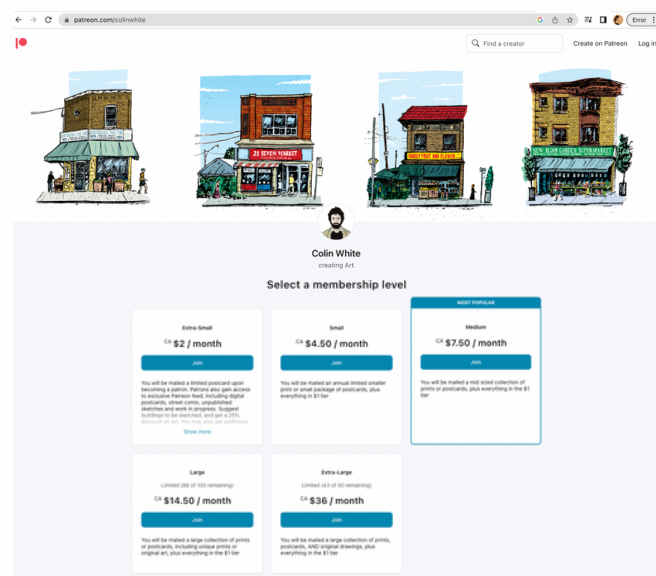
Patreon is a social media platform that allows creators to develop a membership-based subscription service helping artists to create recurring revenue streams. The platform is free to join, the idea is for people to become paid supporters of specific creatives through pledges of money allowing these supporters access to exclusive content or benefits of their creative of choice. A pledge can be as little as \$1 a month.

TIP #1 It is encouraged to offer tiers of support pledges tied to specific benefits on Patreon (ie. \$5 a month gets you 'X' benefit, \$10 a month gets you 'X and Y' benefits).

The platform's success can be attributed in part to the accessibility it lends to people who want to support an artist for a small amount per month; this allows artists to connect with a wider variety of patrons and have a continued flow of revenue to create with. As a more democratic system for artists to generate income, people from a wider range of socioeconomic backgrounds can participate in patronage and cultural exchange.

TIP #2 Benefits given to supporters doesn't necessarily mean always providing your creative output to them, you can share behind the scenes processes, give talks and Q&As exclusive to your patron audience.

Patreon page example:





Economic stability is good for artists

A platform like Patreon can serve as a form of DIY basic income for artists rather than relying entirely on direct sales of their work, which can oftentimes strain creative production.

The point of Patreon is to create a regular income for artists, it does not mean a one for one exchange of money for art. Patreon allows artists the freedom to explore, learn, and grow without the necessity of selling their work immediately.



Making Patreon work for you

TIP #3 To make Patreon work best for you, ask yourself first: How can I give my dedicated supporters something extra? Exclusive access, behind the scenes, preliminary content can all be ways in which you can steward your supporters.

TIP #4 Ask your patrons! Feel free to reach out to your patrons, ask them what they would like to see, give them suggestions to choose from and allow for dialogue to build your relationship with them.

TIP #5 When building your Patreon account, consider writing out a plan you can follow; create tiers of support and benefits that go with each support tier; and make sure it is a feasible amount of work for you to be able to deliver on—overselling on benefits can lead to burnout.



Final thoughts

Supporting artists in the digital age is important, and as artists we know monetizing our practices is challenging even in the best of times. Arts patronage can help creators continue to explore and reflect on the human experience especially when we as a society need it the most. If you are a creator looking for additional methods to monetize your work, sustain your practice, and maintain autonomy of your creations, then arts patronage is worth considering.

Resource link

Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/>

Canadian Artists Representation | La Front des Artistes Canadien (CARFAC): <https://www.carfac.ca/tools/fees/>