

Reflection for Application

The reason I'm applying is that throughout my entire four years of university, I have had no — or have not been successful at getting — funding for my studies. This has resulted in me paying my own way and working while studying to sustain myself and my practice: paying for stationery, travelling every day because campus accommodation is too expensive, and couch hopping. Through working different jobs, freelancing, and selling things to sustain myself, I also help support my family at home. I come from a single income household of six, where my mom is the breadwinner.

So my reason for applying is that I want my practice to be sustaining. I want to have the capacity to help out at home, but also to help build up other young artists and my peers. Financial insecurity is a worry that takes away from doing meaningful and purposeful things within the arts.

My professional development plan for the years after graduation is actually part of what I'm researching in my Honours year — what is the solution to precarity within the arts, especially in South Africa? What I'm proposing is that enterprising one's artistic practice is the key to sustainability, but not merely becoming entrepreneurial — rather, adopting hybrid organisational structures. What I mean by this is having a practice as an enterprise, but one that doesn't specialise in one thing. So it's not just the gallery, not just the studio, not just the school — it's multifaceted.

This explanation doesn't do my full research justice and I'm not fleshing it all out here, but I'm hoping that by the end of my studies this year I will have a framework I can apply — and, if possible, secure some form of institutional funding to formalise my practice. Once formalised within the South African context, it becomes not only a place of opportunity for me, but a place where young artists coming after me have somewhere to make work and sustain themselves within that work.

In the meantime, whilst building this idea of a multi-level, multifaceted, hybrid organisational enterprise, I'm looking to leverage my other skills and build up the smaller businesses I already run — photography, videography, caricatures. The

professional network I aim to build is not merely transactional. It's a network of people who are looking to build up South Africa, to build up the arts within South Africa — not just looking to succeed or sustain themselves individually. A network that is like a community. A community of like-minded people who want to make a genuine impact and know that the impact they are making is significant. A network that is honest, that is loving, that flourishes, and that puts others before itself. That's the kind of network I want to build.