

This is the future; how do we get there?

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The Contribution Contract is a reality. How will we implement it, and how will we make sure that the museums receive extra allocation allowing them to pay per the contract? Here is a blueprint of how the contract can be implemented in four steps:

#1 – The future is closer than we think.

According to information from The National Gallery of Iceland, the Reykjavík Art Museum, Akureyri Art Museum, LÁ Art Museum, Reykjanesbær Art Gallery, Hafnarborg Center of Culture and Fine Art, and Kópavogur Art Museum, it is clear that the salary overhead for artists will increase in 2017 compared to last year. The museums were asked how much this cost would be if they followed the Contribution Contract in line with their exhibition schedule for 2017, as well as how much they intend to pay artists who showcase their work during the year. The display of information is broken down according to gratuity, work contribution, and artists' talk. It was revealed that the plan is to pay a total of ISK 12,038,400 in 2017, which amounts to a 25% increase from one year to the next. That is a positive change and a step in the right direction. This information also reveals that the future is much closer than we think. Icelandic museums are already close to being able to finance payments to artists according the Contribution Contract. If you consider 2017, only 25 million ISK in contributions from the municipalities and the state is collectively needed to pay visual artists according to the Contribution Contract. That would change the visual artist's work environment in accordance with neighbouring countries. If the museum salary cost continues to increase at the same rate during the coming years, museums will be able to pay compensation according the Contribution Contract in five years. We must believe that we can put the finishing touches on the process and push these changes through in the coming years. Everything points toward the changes becoming a reality in the near future.

#2 - The Contribution Fund equalizes the museum's budgets.

So, the future is payments for public exhibitions that come out of a central public fund involving the government and municipalities. Since gratuities for exhibitions are very different from one year to the next for each museum, it will be complicated for museums to calculate and plan gratuity cost for each operating year. This cost is changeable for each museum and to equalize their positions, it is best that a central fund finance this changeable museum cost. That way the gratuity is levelled as an item of expenditure in the museum's operating budget. SÍM, along with BÍL, have requested that the

government establish a separate gratuity fund for visual artists with an independent allocation committee. The fund would need basic amount for start-up capital, e.g. roughly 100 million ISK each year, partly financed by the State and the municipalities. Each year the museums that are largely, or completely, run on public money would seek further financing from the fund to pay the gratuity for the visual artist's work.

#3 The future does not arrive of its own accord.

If Icelandic museums would already pay artists according the Contribution Contract in 2017, the total cost would be ISK 38,342,500. In order to bridge the gap, the museums will need to ask for additional financing when planning their operational budget each year. Furthermore, the museums can expect that the cost for artist's salaries as an item that will increase in the coming years. The Living Art Museum was the only museum to ask for an additional funding last year to pay visual artists per the Contribution Contract for their exhibition schedule in 2017. The Hafnarborg Centre of Culture and Fine Art asked for additional funding to pay visual artists and received one million ISK. It is disappointing that other museums did not ask for additional funding to pay visual artists in line with the Contribution Contract. The future does not arrive of its own accord. Visual artists, museums and the government should work together to effect change. The museums need to ask for, and assume, they will receive extra funding to pay artists according to the Contribution Contract. Because if we do not ask, the answer is always no.

#4 - Dare to request that payments to you be made according to the Contribution Contract.

For everything to work out and for the future to arrive, visual artists and everyone involved in their work environment must stick together. Visual artists who are offered to exhibit in public museums, be they state or municipality institutions, need to stand up for themselves. They should dare to request that payments for their exhibitions be made per the Contribution Contract. If that does not work, they have to ask: *Why not?* Since SÍM started their campaign "We pay visual artists", it seems that the subject of gratuity payments for artists has received more attention and the payments have increased from one year to the next. But we still have not arrived at our destination. The more pressure we put on ourselves, the museums, and their owners, the less time it takes to get there. There is nothing wrong with negotiating pay and conditions and requesting compensation for your work. It takes guts to stand up for yourself and we have plenty of that already. We use them every day in our work. Now we must utilise it to negotiate pay and conditions. And then we need to stick together throughout all these changes.

The table below shows the estimated operating cost of the museums, and how much they plan to pay artists in 2017. The National Gallery of Iceland is the only museum that is not allowed to pursue grants from public funds like the Icelandic Art Fund.

| | <i>Number of artists</i> | <i>Gratuity</i> | <i>Payment for work</i> | <i>Artists' talk</i> | <i>Lectures</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| <i>Reykjavík Art Museum</i> | 24 | 6.608.000 | 3.172.000 | 552.000 | | 10.332.000 |
| <i>Akureyri Art Museum</i> | 52 | 3.056.000 | 808.000 | 240.000 | 140.000 | 4.244.000 |
| <i>LÁ Art Museum</i> | 9 | 1.616.000 | 1.653.000 | 216.000 | | 3.485.000 |
| <i>Hafnarborg*</i> | 8 | 2.200.000 | 1.267.500 | 168.000 | | 3.635.500 |
| <i>Kópavogur Art Museum</i> | 22 | 1.948.000 | 3.276.000 | 864.000 | | 6.088.000 |
| <i>The Living Art Museum</i> | 23 | 1.464.000 | 2.080.000 | 182.000 | | 3.726.000 |
| <i>Reykjanesbær Art Gallery</i> | 24 | 984.000 | 2.080.000 | 576.000 | | 3.640.000 |
| <i>The National Gallery of Iceland</i> | 3 | 1.872.000 | 1.248.000 | 72.000 | | 3.192.000 |
| Total cost | | | | | | 38.342.500 |

*Hafnarborg Center of Culture and Fine Art

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2017 | 2017 |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| | <i>Paid for in gratuity, payment for work and artists' talk in 2016</i> | <i>Estimated cost for gratuity, payment for work and artists' talk in 2017</i> | <i>Estimated total cost according to the Contribution Contract *</i> | <i>Extra funding needed to pay according to the Contribution Contract**</i> |
| <i>Reykjavík Art Museum</i> | 2.648.405 | 3.400.000 | 10.332.000 | 6.932.000 |
| <i>Akureyri Art Museum</i> | 1.290.000 | 1.300.000 | 4.244.000 | 2.944.000 |
| <i>LÁ Art Museum</i> | 740.000 | 1.215.400 | 3.485.000 | 2.269.600 |
| <i>Hafnarborg***</i> | 836.000 | 1.792.000 | 3.635.500 | 1.843.500 |
| <i>Kópavogur Art Museum</i> | 1.930.000 | 1.828.000 | 6.088.000 | 4.260.000 |
| <i>The Living Art Museum</i> | 1.275.386 | 1.688.000 | 3.726.000 | 2.038.000 |
| <i>Reykjanesbær Art Gallery</i> | - | - | 3.640.000 | 3.640.000 |
| <i>The National Gallery of Iceland</i> | 718.000 | 815.000 | 3.192.000 | 2.377.000 |
| Total cost | 9.437.791 | 12.038.400 | 38.342.500 | 26.304.100 |

*Estimated total cost of gratuity, payment for work and artists' talk according to the Contribution Contract as per the exhibition schedule of 2017

**Extra funding needed by the museums in order to pay according to the Contribution Contract as per the exhibition schedule of 2017

***Hafnarborg Center of Culture and Fine Art