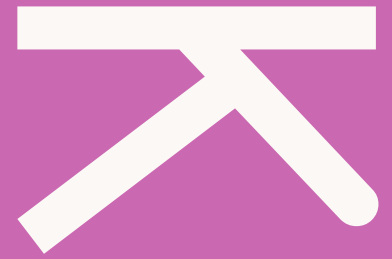


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9 TO 5

A handbook for the Artist Assistant Scheme



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Hi there,

The Artist Assistant Scheme, a UKS love child, was launched in 2017, providing established artists with support to hire assistants, and newly established artists with the experience of working for and learning from a colleague. Though fantastic, the scheme gave rise to a lot of questions about taxes, holiday pay and pension schemes, and in 2023 we launched [9 til 5: En håndbok for Kunstnerassistentordningen](#). The handbook synthesises a massive amount of information about working life in Norway, rights and duties for employers and employees, tips for creating a good working environment, and more.

We quickly saw the need for an English edition of the handbook. Norway has a lot of English-speaking artists, and it takes time both to learn the language and digest the vast amounts of information about which rights and duties you have in working life. The information is dispersed, and little, if any, is aimed at the field of culture, which is characterised by precarity and loose working relationships. The translation hopes to make the scheme more easily accessible and contribute to opening up the handbook to a wider readership. It operates as a toolbox for understanding often-labyrinthine bureaucratic processes in an easy and down-to-earth manner, while spreading important information about employer and employee rights and duties.

A sixth, English chapter, is also included in the original handbook, even if we don't include it here, it still makes for a valuable read. It looks at the scheme through the lens of artists from outside of the EU/EEA living in Norway. However, the premises for this chapter have changed dramatically, as a consequence of the Norwegian government's decision to introduce student fees for students from outside the EU/EEA. What this means, in practice, is that few to no students without a European passport are applying to study arts in Norway, to the great detriment of the Norwegian arts scene. Free education for all!

A final note about links and dates: You will find links in this document that direct you to the official pages of institutions and government information portals. Many of these are in Norwegian. Nevertheless, we have chosen to include these links even when translations are lacking, in order to direct you to the correct source material. Be aware that stated figures are correct at the time of publication of the original handbook, but may since have changed. You will find that we have added a glossary to ease navigation, and since this handbook is in digital format, please do make use of the search functions inside the document.

Happy reading!

Sincerely,

Ragnhild Aamås, Chair of UKS, and Johanne Laache, Deputy Chair of UKS

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INTRODUCTION

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1 INTRODUCTION

If you are, or wish to become, part of Arts and Culture Norway's Artist Assistant Scheme, whether as a newly established artist, assistant and employee, or an established artist and employer, then this handbook is for you. Here we have compiled information about the application process, employment conditions, the rights and obligations you have in an employment relationship, and more. Our aim is to make the application process easier for you and to facilitate a fruitful working relationship.

Some parts of this handbook are for both of you, while others are aimed specifically at the assistant or the established artist.

Tips, feedback and experience are gratefully received at info@uks.no.

1.1 WHAT IS THE ARTIST ASSISTANT SCHEME?

The Artist Assistant Scheme, or "Kunstnerassistentordning", is a grants scheme run by Arts and Culture Norway that gives an established artist funding to employ a newly established artist in a 50% position for one or two years. According to the [formal announcement](#) of the Artist Assistant Scheme, it is intended

to give artists in the establishing phase of their career the opportunity to work as an assistant for a more established artist in a 50% position for one or two years. In 2022, grants for 14 such positions have been awarded, each worth NOK 310,000 per year. The assistant will be able to continue their own artistic practice and receive other types of grants in parallel to the assistant position.

The aim of the scheme is to promote the sharing of experience and the transfer of expertise between established and newly trained artists, professionalisation, the provision of networking opportunities, and income security for both parties.

The idea behind and the purpose of the scheme is to strengthen both established and newly established artists through collaborations, with the primary emphasis on the junior party during the vulnerable phase of getting established. This purpose is served by giving the newly qualified artist a valuable and artistically relevant part-time job, practical experience of working professionally as an artist, the benefit of support and guidance from a more established colleague, and access to the latter's artistic and professional network.

The benefits for the established artist include the labour of a qualified assistant, the time that is thereby freed up for other artistic work, and hopefully increased production and earnings. The established artist will also gain knowledge from the newly established artist, as well as access to their network and working methods, and so on.

The grant is to be used primarily to pay the salary of the newly established artist, who must be employed by the established artist, as well as related expenses. Employment status is fundamental to the grant scheme, in that it gives the newly established artist certain rights and renders them eligible to other forms of social support. The employment relationship is firmly and broadly regulated by law, and imposes obligations concerning working hours, working environment, the right to sickness benefits, sick leave, and more.

Employment places the established artist in the position of an employer with obligations towards the assistant. Thus, the established artist learns what it means to employ someone, with everything this entails, from submitting the monthly "a-melding", bookkeeping, wage processing, and so on. For a professional sector where working conditions are often regarded as precarious and insecure, this involves an aspect of occupational politics. Training artists to become good employers will help the art world to become a place with safer and more predictable working conditions.

1.2 BACKGROUND

The Artist Assistant Scheme was first proposed by UKS in a letter to the Ministry of Culture in November 2014. The proposal found support among both politicians and other artist organisations and was eventually implemented in 2017. Concerning the proposal, UKS wrote:

One of the peculiarities of the artistic profession is that just as you are becoming more established, your workload increases significantly but without a corresponding increase in income. During this period, as an artist, the support of an assistant can be a massive help, although usually you cannot afford one. To ensure that both parties derive the optimal benefit from the scheme, UKS suggests that the newly graduated and the more established artist should make a joint application to the scheme on the basis of intersecting artistic interests.

The scheme was inspired by the artist assistant programme of Konstnärnsämnden (the Swedish Arts Grants Committee). The difference is that the Swedish scheme provides grants to cover five to ten months of assistant labour. For UKS, it was important that the grant should be used to pay wages or salary rather than fees, since income in the form of wages or salary accord the assistant the social rights of being an employee, such as insurance, sick pay in case of illness, pension contributions, and so on.

In 2021, the scheme was [evaluated by a team from Telemarksforskning](#) (the Telemark Research Institute) consisting of Mari Torvik Heian (project manager), Åsne Dahl Haugsevje and Roy Aulie Jacobsen (project staff). One of the findings of the evaluation was that there was not enough clear information for people applying to the scheme. The authors recommended that this deficiency should be rectified. The established artist has responsibilities and duties as an employer and the assistant has rights and duties as an employee. UKS has prepared this handbook to help applicants and grant recipients create a secure framework for the working relationship. The handbook has been developed with support from Arts and Culture Norway.

1.3 HOW TO USE THE HANDBOOK

The handbook is intended both for the established artist who provides employment and for the newly established artist who becomes the employee.

[Chapter 1](#) takes a look at and describes the scheme as such. It considers its background and evaluation, and explains how to use the handbook.

[Chapter 2](#) provides a thorough overview of things you should think about before applying. This part contains guidance on expectation management, the assistant's tasks, and artistic follow-up. In addition, we have included section 2.6, called [Someone to talk to](#). Under this heading we have collected resources you can turn to in case of disagreement or if you need guidance from others.

[Chapter 3](#) is a collection of tips and advice for completing the application.

[Chapter 4](#) is intended for the assistant and consists of practical information on salary, pension, holiday leave, sickness, pregnancy, etc. Much of this information will also be of interest to the established artist, since it concerns the rights the assistant will have as employee.

[Chapter 5](#) is intended for the established artist and covers employer responsibilities, HSE (Health, Safety, and Environment), accounting, finances and wages, the monthly "a-melding" report, and so on. The focus here is on the duties you will have as an employer and what is expected of you, as well as what you can expect from the employee.

Chapter 6 was written specifically for international applicants and in particular those from countries outside the EU/EEA. It contains a summary of the handbook in English, and covers the particular challenges for assistants coming from outside the EU/EEA, such as visas and residence permits. Chapter 6 can be found in the original handbook.

There are many links baked into the text, all of which are collected at the end of each chapter under various headings. While the handbook has been written with the Artist Assistant Scheme in mind, we are confident that it contains information that will prove useful to anyone in an employee-employer relationship.

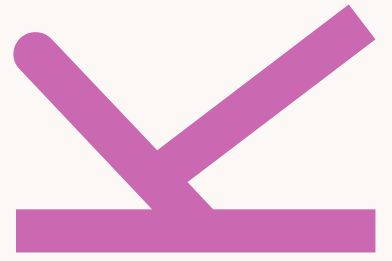
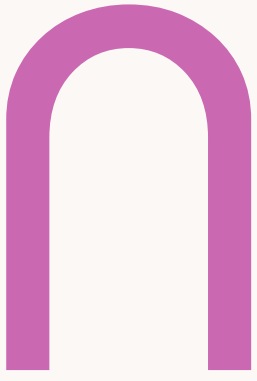
1.4 RESOURCES AND LINKS

WHAT IS THE ARTIST ASSISTANT SCHEME?

<https://www.kulturdirektoratet.no/stotteordning/-/vis/kunstnerassistent>

BACKGROUND

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/360217081_Unge_kunstnerskap_i_utvikling_Evaluering_av_kunstnerassistentordningen



BEFORE YOU APPLY



2 BEFORE YOU APPLY

2.1 WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO TALK ABOUT EXPECTATIONS?

Before beginning to draft an application, you should sit down together and talk through the expectations you have of the working relationship. Do this in good time before applying! By putting into words what you expect from a working relationship, you will discover whether you are well matched. A good collaboration may emerge from a shared understanding of materials, interest in specific thematics, overlap in knowledge and concerns, preferred work routines, or similar approaches to the structuring of work.

To foster a good working relationship and help avoid unnecessary friction and conflicts, a degree of awareness of one's own preferences, boundaries and wishes is useful. For example: as a potential assistant, if you have a small child and know that on a regular basis you will not be able to work after 3pm, then make sure this is clear from the start. If the established artist you are applying to work for is someone who prefers to work evenings, clearly this will be a bad match. In other words, it is important that each party is aware of the conditions under which the other wishes or will be able to work before deciding to enter into a working relationship. This awareness will enable you to enter into a relationship that is well informed, making it easier for each party to respect the other's boundaries, needs, and expectations, and to cultivate their potential. As a result, your working relationship will be far more rewarding.

2.2 MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

Here we have compiled some possible talking points. These can be used however you like, both as preparation for the application process and during the employment relationship. It would be good to return to this list in a later [medarbejdersamtale](#) ("performance appraisal").

You might also want to reflect on these questions before looking for a fellow applicant. You might not fully realize what you truly need or want until you unexpectedly find yourself in a situation where something feels off. Articulating your own needs in advance will help you to communicate them more easily to others.

For the assistant:

- What kind of work do I want to do?
- What do I want to learn during the work period?
- What kind of feedback do I want concerning my own practice?
- What accommodations will I need in the workplace? Such as shorter but more frequent working hours, a certain number of breaks, and so on.

For the established artist:

- What knowledge can I pass on? What kind of resources can I share?
- What kind of employer will I be?
- What kind of working environment do I want to offer?

- What kind of work do I need doing? What kind of work could be done by someone else in my studio?
- What do I expect from an assistant?

For both:

- What are my reasons for wanting this employment relationship?
- What values matter to me in a working relationship? For example: reliability, predictability, flexibility, creativity, etc.
- How do I prefer to work?
- What kind of environment do I need in order to work well? For example, how do I feel about noise levels and sound, physical surroundings, the balance between different work tasks, and between working alone and together?
- What are my strengths and weaknesses?
- Do I have any professional plans in the near future that could affect the working relationship?
- How do I react in conflict situations? Do I tend to react in ways that the other party might like to be aware of in case of a disagreement?
- How do I prefer to communicate? Via SMS, e-mail, phone? How do I regard availability and communications outside working hours, such as e-mail and SMS, at weekends and in the evenings?

2.3 EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT

A good way to approach the discussion about expectations is to sketch out an [employment agreement](#). In most cases, you will not sign an agreement during the application process, because normally this step is dependant on a grant being confirmed. A written and signed employment agreement is a precondition for Kulturdirektoratet to pay out the grant and must be sent together with the contract. You will find good templates for employment agreements that you can use on the websites of both [Altinn](#) (the Norwegian authorities' joint solution for reporting and dialogue with business and industry) and [Arbeidstilsynet](#) (the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority). It is the established artist who has responsibility for drawing up the employment agreement.

Drafting an employment agreement is a good way to start the conversation that will form the foundation of your employment relationship, and we encourage you to supplement it with any information you feel might be useful. Discussions about expectations before or during the application process will help you when writing the employment agreement. Having your needs and ideas in writing can be reassuring and increase predictability for both of you. [§14–6 of the Arbeidsmiljølov](#) (Working Environment Act) specify the minimum requirements for an employment contract: it must stipulate where the workplace is, working hours, breaks, the point in time when wages will be paid, and so on.

If you are unsure whether your employment agreement covers all the necessary points, you can ask a lawyer to check your draft. If either of you is a member of Norske Billedkunstnere (NBK; Association of Norwegian Visual Artists) or Norske Kunsthåndverkere (NK; the Norwegian Association for Arts and Crafts), you will have access to legal help. You can also get in touch with [Gratisrettshjelp.no](#), a free

legal aid service. [Here you can find more information](#) about who to contact for further help.

Of course, you are not required to have everything carved in stone. You might want to keep your working relationship flexible to some extent. Neither is it always possible to foresee every eventuality one or two years into the future. You should therefore aim to define the things that can be agreed now, where you want flexibility, and the things that might change later. Perhaps you find that the best arrangement is for the assistant to work every second week throughout the contractual period? Or perhaps you prefer to agree the working hours at the beginning of each month for the month ahead? [You can find more information about working hours here.](#)

For the established artist: remember that your idea of flexibility could leave the assistant experiencing precarity and feeling insecure. When you have an employee, you cannot always be as flexible as when you work for yourself. If some aspects of your practice require flexibility, make sure this is clear when [clarifying expectations](#). The assistant can then decide whether and to what extent this is something they are comfortable with. Although flexibility is required of both of you, remember you are entering into an employment relationship which is thoroughly regulated and that you have responsibilities as an employer.

Finally, it is important to know that the grant cannot be used to cover wages and expenses incurred prior to a decision on whether you will receive a grant. In other words, the hours the prospective assistant devotes to the application should not be claimed in the application and cannot be reimbursed from the grant, except in the case where you are already in the scheme and are applying for a renewal. Thus, work carried out by the assistant before commencement of the employment covered by the scheme cannot be financed from the grant, but must, where necessary, be paid from your own funds. In practice, the employment period can begin at the earliest one month after the meeting of the grants committee, which in 2022 was at the turn of February-March.

2.4 WORK TASKS

It is important to clarify early on the work the assistant will be expected to carry out, since your ideas about relevance may differ. The tasks of an assistant working for an artist are likely to vary from the exciting to the mundane, and it is important to cover the work one would like to do and the work that is needed during the preliminary [discussion about expectations](#). Some artists work a lot administratively and at a PC, while others do a lot of physical studio work.

As a newly established artist, having found an established artist to apply with, you should think about what you hope to learn during the employment. You should also think about your own strengths and what you could share with the established artist. It may be a good idea to choose someone whose practice resembles your own, making it more likely that your own work will benefit from what you learn, or someone who works in a field you yourself would like to explore.

As an established artist, you should think about the kind of work you need doing, whether you need expertise in any particular fields, and what kind of training the assistant might receive. It is also advisable to think how you can present the tasks in the context of your work as a whole; it will be important and helpful for the assistant to receive a comprehensive introduction to your practice. How can you make sure this happens?

The assistant is employed to do artistic work for you, not to be a personal assistant. You should not expect the assistant to do personal errands, such as shopping for Christmas presents or picking up your children from nursery school.

In artistic work, the boundary between the private and the professional is often fluid. But the degree of fluidity varies from one artist to another, and this too makes it important for both of you to clarify the kind of tasks the assistant will be expected to undertake in the written employment agreement.

The best approach is to discuss work requirements and to list the tasks and projects to be addressed. A list of the possible tasks for the assistant should be included in the [employment agreement](#). At the same time, since circumstances and situations can change, the threshold for reassessing whether a task is relevant or not ought to be set low.

This is hardly unique to the Artist Assistant Scheme; in many sectors, employment agreements will contain a job description detailing the kind of work the position entails. While the employer is under no obligation to prepare a [job description](#), it can be a useful instrument for organising the work.

2.5 ARTISTIC FOLLOW-UP

One important aspect of the Artist Assistant Scheme is feedback on and assessment of the assistant's artistic practice. The scheme is intended not just as a working relationship, but also as a mentoring arrangement, in which the established artist follows up and supervises the junior colleague. For this reason, it is advisable that you both think carefully about what you need and have capacity for. Kulturdirektoratet describes this aspect of the relationship as "competence transfer", and it will be useful to keep this term in mind when detailing the tasks the assistant will carry out and giving feedback on the assistant's own practice.

For the assistant, the kind of follow-up required will vary, depending not least on how far you have come in getting established and where you stand in your career. As a newly established artist, you will know best what is useful for you. Think about what you have use for, and discuss it as part of [managing expectations](#) prior to applying. By defining your needs clearly, you will make it easier for the established artist to say what they can offer and do to meet those needs.

In many cases, the newly established artist will only recently have graduated, but the scheme should not be viewed as an extension of the student situation. The arrangement should give the assistant scope to work as a professional artist, regardless of their tasks as assistant.

Here are some questions you might ask yourself:

- What kind of feedback on my work would I find useful now? Feedback on text, technique, concept, process? Do I want studio visits, reading of texts, something else?
- What do I need feedback on? And how much feedback do I need?
- Do I have any major exhibitions or projects on the horizon which would benefit from guidance or extra feedback?
- Would I find it useful to schedule regular feedback sessions or to make more spontaneous arrangements as the need arises?

Obviously, the amount and kind of follow-up the assistant can expect will depend on the established artist, what they can offer in terms of time, resources and expertise.

Should we formulate an explicit plan with dates and the like?

It can be useful to draft a concrete plan with dates for feedback sessions and discussions, which you can attach to the application. Even if needs change, having a written plan will help you to keep the goal of competence transfer in mind. Under the pressure of everyday routines, follow-up can easily slip down the list of priorities, and perhaps a looser arrangement would be better for the both of you, one in which the assistant asks for guidance when needed. You must decide what works best for you.

Is artistic follow-up the same as a performance appraisal?

No, they are two different things. For more about performance appraisals, [click here](#). One simple distinction between the two is that follow-up of the assistant's practice is concerned specifically with artistic matters, whereas a performance appraisal is concerned with the many other aspects of the working relationship, such as the work environment, allotted tasks, and so on.

2.6 SOMEONE TO TALK TO

Hopefully, the period of employment will run smoothly for the both of you, but no matter how clear the expectations are and how well the employment agreement is formulated, points of conflict may still arise. And if they do, they can be all the more uncomfortable in a working relationship involving just two people who have little choice but to work close together. In such a situation, it can be helpful to engage an outside person as a mediator, to prevent a minor disagreement from growing into a major conflict. In many cases it only takes a little help to work things out.

Fortunately, there are many places you can turn to for help or someone to talk to. It is better to make one phone call too many than one too few, and you should not wait until you feel a situation has turned serious. Prevention is better than cure! In this section, we have compiled a list of resources with a range of functions. What they have in common is that they are free and apply a low-threshold approach. Most offer their services to everyone, but a few cater specifically to the members of certain organisations.

In the rare case that a conflict becomes so serious that you see no option other than to terminate the employment and return the funds, you must contact Kulturdirektoratet.

BALANSEKUNST

[Balansekunst](#) (literally: balancing act) is an association and collaborative project that primarily serves 130 Norwegian arts and cultural organisations in the pursuit of equality in the arts and cultural sector. [Balansekunst runs a counselling hotline](#) for anyone who has experienced or is experiencing discrimination, sexual harassment, or abuse of power in the Norwegian cultural sector. This service is free, low-threshold, and available to anyone. I.e. you do not have to be a member of any particular organisation in order to use it. Here you will receive advice on how to proceed with a case. You can also call to ask whether the behaviour that troubles you can be regarded as harassment, discrimination or similar.

You can reach Balansekunst's hotline on (+47) 400 38 800.

Balansekunst also maintains [a list of other resources and organisations you can contact for help](#).

THE GENDER EQUALITY AND ANTI-DISCRIMINATION OMBUD

If you are experiencing discrimination, you can also contact [Likestillings- og diskrimineringsombudet](#) (LDO; the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud). This office provides free counselling to anyone with questions about discrimination. Discrimination is defined as inappropriate differential treatment on the basis of, for example, gender, disability, religion or worldview, etc. You can also contact them if you think some behaviour you have encountered might constitute discrimination, but are not quite sure.

It is important to emphasise that the LDO cannot legally represent those who contact them.

LDO can be reached by phone, e-mail or [via a contact form](#), but remember you should not send sensitive personal data by e-mail. They also have [specific guidelines for anyone who wishes to submit a complaint to the LDO](#).

THE NORWEGIAN LABOUR INSPECTION AUTHORITY

As an employee, you have the right to report issues of concern in the enterprise where you work, [as laid down in the Arbeidsmiljølov](#) (Working Environment Act). Here you can report anything from unsafe working conditions and health hazards to corruption, etc.

If you need more information about how to report or relevant guidance, [you can contact Arbeidstilsynet](#) (the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority) by phone under the number (+47) 73 19 97 00. You can also contact them if you do not know who to report to. Moreover, all employees of supervisory or public authorities are required

in virtue of their position [to accept any report about issues of concern](#) submitted to them by employees of external enterprises.

The question of whether or not to report an issue of concern can sometimes seem serious and overwhelming. [Here you will find a page with relevant resources](#) and answers to questions you might have in such a situation.

NORSKE BILLEDKUNSTNERE

If you are a member of [Norske Billedkunstnere](#) (NBK; the Association of Norwegian Visual Artists), you also have access to [legal advice relating to your artistic practice](#). NBK's lawyers are often in high demand, so it sometimes takes a while to receive a response.

You can reach NBK's lawyers by e-mail at jus@billedkunst.no, or phone on (+47) 22 12 02 16.

NORSKE KUNSTHÅNDVERKERE

If you are a member of [Norske Kunsthåndverkere](#) (NK; the Norwegian Association for Arts and Crafts) (student members excluded), you are entitled to [one hour of legal counselling](#) per case with the lawyers [Graasvold & Stenvaag](#). You should speak to NK before contacting the lawyers. If NK cannot help you with your concerns, you can call or send an e-mail to the lawyers. If writing, you should describe your case and attach any relevant documents such as contracts or correspondence.

Norske Kunsthåndverkere can be reached by e-mail at post@kunsthåndverk.no or by phone on (+47) 22 91 02 60.

The lawyers Graasvold & Stenvaag can be reached by e-mail at hmg@graasvold-stenvaag.no or by phone on (+47) 22 94 32 10 or (+47) 40 03 88 00.

VERDENSROMMET

[Verdensrommet](#) (literally: outer space, but the name can also be read as "the world space") is a support network organised by and for cultural workers in Norway who come from countries outside the EU/EEA. The process of applying for visas and permits to live and work in Norway comes with its own unique challenges. These are addressed in greater detail in Chapter 6, which you can find in the original handbook. Verdensrommet manages [a Facebook group where you can ask others in the network for advice and help](#).

You can also contact them by e-mail at info@verdensrommet.network, but be aware that Verdensrommet is run by volunteers and has only limited resources.

GRATIS RETTSHJELP

Run by law students who offer free legal aid, [Gratis rettshjelp](#) (Free Legal Aid) runs four separate initiatives. All of them accept cases at certain fixed hours during the week, whether contacted by phone or in person. You can also submit your questions via their online form. Read the description of the four initiatives below to choose which suits you best:

If you are located in Northern Norway: [Jusshjelpa i Nord-Norge](#) (Legal Aid in Northern Norway). [Click here to submit a case online](#). The number to reach them by phone is (+47) 77 64 45 59.

If you identify as a woman: [Juridisk rådgivning for kvinner](#) (Jurk; Legal Advice for Women). Currently, they do not accept cases sent via e-mail. Instead they have fixed times when you can call or visit in person. They can be reached by phone: (+47) 22 84 29 50, and e-mail: post-mottak@jurk.no. The address (to visit in person, if you live in Oslo) is Skippergata 23, 0154 Oslo.

Available to all: [Jussbuss](#), (the Law Bus) to which you can [submit a case](#). Jussbuss can be reached by phone on (+47) 22 84 29 00. Despite its name, [Jussformidlingen i Bergen](#) (Legal Aid Service in Bergen) helps people anywhere in the country. You can [register a case online](#) or by phone during opening hours on (+47) 55 58 96 00.

FREE LEGAL AID FROM YOUR LOCAL COUNCIL

For certain issues, local councils in Norway also offer free or subsidised legal aid. [Fri rettshjelp](#) (Free Legal Aid) provides representation by a lawyer and is fully or partially covered by the state. In general, the situations that entitle one to this support are cases concerning violence, child protection and the like, but employment law and employment relations are also covered by the provision.

[Oslo municipality](#) offers easy access to [free legal aid](#) for residents of Oslo and the surrounding area. If you live in some other part of Norway, you should [contact the state administrator in the county where you live](#) for more information.

THE NATIONAL MEDIATION SERVICE

[Konfliktrådet](#) (the National Mediation Service) is a free public service that offers mediation as a means of conflict resolution. Anyone can report a conflict and it costs nothing.

The method might sound alarming, but basically it consists of a dialogue between you and the other party in the presence of a mediator. This approach is based on the principle of “[restorative process](#)”.

Norway has twelve National Mediation Services that operate in 22 locations across the country. [Click here to find your nearest service](#), or [here to report a case to one of them](#). Most of the civil law cases handled by the National Mediation Services concern conflicts between neighbours, within the family, or in the workplace.

2.7 RESOURCES AND LINKS

EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT

<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/en/pay-and-engagement-of-employees/contract-of-employment/>
<https://info.altinn.no/en/start-and-run-business/working-conditions/employment/employment-contracts/>
<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/lonn-og-ansettelse/arbeidsavtale/maler-for-arbeidsavtaler/>
<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/regelverk/lover/arbeidsmiljolooven/14/14-6/>

WORK TASKS

<https://arbeidsgiver.dfo.no/stillingsbeskrivelse>

SOMEONE TO TALK TO

<https://www.balansekunst.no/radgivningstelefonen-en>
<https://www.balansekunst.no/english-balansekunst>
<https://www.ido.no/en/Ido-english-page/>
<https://kontakt.ido.no/skjema/LDO003/?lang=3>
<https://www.ido.no/en/diskriminert/pa-jobb/klage-pa-diskriminering/>
<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/regelverk/lover/arbeidsmiljolooven/2a/>
<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/arbeidsmiljo/varsling/#Dukanf%25C3%25A5veiledning>
<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/arbeidsmiljo/varsling/slik-skal-offentlige-myndigheter-handtere-varsling/>
<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/en/contact/report/>
<https://www.norskebilledkunstnere.no/english/>
<https://www.norskebilledkunstnere.no/juridisk-radgivning/>
<https://www.norskekunsthandverkere.no/information-in-english>
<http://www.graasvold-stenvaag.no/>
<https://www.verdensrommet.network/>
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/513606482667094>
<https://gratisrettshjelp.no/>
<https://jusshjelpe.no>
<https://nettskjema.no/a/jh-nett#/page/1>
<https://foreninger.uio.no/jurk/>
<https://foreninger.uio.no/jussbuss/>
<https://foreninger.uio.no/jussbuss/elektronisk-saksmottak/>
<https://jussformidlingen.no/>
<https://www.statsforvalteren.no/en/portal/People-and-society/Legal-aid/>
<https://www.oslo.kommune.no/helse-og-omsorg/rusomsorg/fyll-dagene-arbeidstilbud-og-aktiviteter/alle-tilbud-i-oslo/kontoret-for-fri-rettshjelp/#gref>
<https://www.frirettshjelp.com/>
<https://www.statsforvalteren.no/en/portal/About-us/Contact-us/>
<https://konfliktraadet.no/en/>



<https://konfliktraadet.no/en/restorative-process/>

<https://konfliktraadet.no/finn-ditt-konfliktrad/>

<https://konfliktraadet.no/meld-inn-sak-til-konfliktraadet/>

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HOW TO APPLY?

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3 HOW TO APPLY?

3.1 CAN I APPLY?

Before you start preparing an application, it is worth checking whether you qualify for the grant. To be eligible to apply, you must be an established artist and a newly established artist who wish to enter into a working relationship.

The scheme requires that the established artist must already have completed at least five years of activity as a professional artist in order to be eligible. You must also be registered as a business with an official organisation number; for most artists this will be a single-person business ([enkeltmannsforetak](#)). The scheme is designed such that it is the established artist who submits the application and receives the grant.

The newly established artist must be in the phase of getting established. This phase is defined as the period up to five years after graduation or up to and including the year you turn 35.

Further, both the newly established and the established artist must live and work primarily in Norway in order to be eligible for the grant.

These criteria for eligibility are clear, but if you fail to meet one or more of them, you can request that an exception be made; for example, if the assistant falls outside Kulturdirektoratet's definition of being in the establishment phase. If, for example, you begin to establish yourself at a mature age, or after a lengthy interruption after completing your training, you can describe your circumstances in the separate letter of motivation that you write as a prospective assistant. It is the Expert Committee for Visual Arts that assesses applications and weighs them against each other before deciding which will be approved.

3.2 REQUIREMENTS FOR THE APPLICATION

The most up-to-date and accurate information concerning applications will be found on [Kulturdirektoratet's application pages](#). This chapter is supplementary and contains additional information that we think you will find useful when preparing an application. Here you will find information and tips for the attachments that require the most work: the work plan, the letter of intent, the letter of motivation, and future plans.

THE WORK PLAN

The established artist must prepare a work plan, preferably in dialogue with the assistant. The plan should describe the work to be undertaken during the period the grant is intended to cover, which exhibitions you are working towards, the assistant's tasks, other upcoming projects, and where the work will be carried out. While it is only realistic to expect that the plan will change along the way, it is wise to use the opportunity to [discuss expectations in depth](#). What kind of tasks do you need help with? What projects do you have?

In [Telemarkforskning's 2021 evaluation](#) of the scheme, one clear recommendation was that the established artist should involve the assistant in all aspects of their artistic practice. The assistant should acquire insights into and experience in the use of technical skills in the studio, administration and project planning, and the development of artistic ideas. The established artist should also initiate the assistant into their network and include them in social and professional meetings. In other words, the established artist should treat the assistant not just as someone to prime their canvases, but as someone who will participate in and learn from all aspects of their artistic practice. It is wise to keep this in mind when drafting your work plan, as it will help you to demonstrate an all-round awareness of the work tasks and the learning prospects for the assistant. We recommend that the plan should include details for the artistic follow-up of the assistant's own practice. This could consist in, for example, a schedule for studio visits and feedback sessions, or a section on other ideas for the implementation of this aspect. Good planning and an awareness for how skills can be transferred will strengthen your application, while also providing structure for the working relationship. For more information on follow-up of the assistant's artistic practice, see [2.5 Artistic follow-up](#).

LETTER OF INTENT

The letter of intent must be signed by both the established and the newly established artist. The agreement must say something about the work you intend to do, where it will be done, and the period during which the employment relationship will exist. This is similar to an employment agreement, and you may find it useful to use an employment agreement as a template, but since the outlined arrangement will depend on whether or not a grant is approved, this agreement is not binding.

LETTER OF MOTIVATION

The letter of motivation must be written by the newly established artist. Here you should describe your motivations for wanting to work as an assistant for the established artist. Think carefully about why you want to work as an assistant. Are there any special techniques the established artist works with, which you would like to learn more about? Do they apply a particular approach to their work, which is relevant to your own practice? Does the established artist work with themes you are also interested in? Perhaps you find the planned tasks motivating in themselves, or perhaps it is the prospect of the artistic follow-up that appeals to you, or access to the established artist's network and resources. Whatever it is that attracts you, the most important thing is – as in any application – that you describe it clearly and specifically.

FUTURE PLANS

Both the established and the newly established artist must describe their artistic plans for the future. The success of the application will depend not just on the ambitions of the established artist, but on both of you having clear plans for the entire period of the prospective grant. The application should demonstrate balance and awareness for the artistic plans and practices of both artists. If the assistant is right at the start of their career, the likelihood is they will not yet be preparing many exhibitions or commissions, but the plan can still include concrete tasks such as

preparing applications for memberships or inclusion in exhibitions, or artistic plans to develop materials or themes.

If you are applying for two-year support, it is important that you detail planned artistic activity for both of the prospective years; in other words, for the entire application period.

3.3 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I find someone to apply with?

There are many ways to find a partner for an application to the scheme. Many apply together with former teachers/students from the art school they have attended. Others contact artists they find interesting and ask them directly. On Facebook, UKS administers a [Matching Group for the Artist Assistant Scheme](#), which helps established artists and potential assistants to get in touch.

Which should I apply for: one- or two-year support?

If you intend to apply for two-year support, you should present clear and detailed plans for the full two-year period. If you are granted one-year support, you have the option to apply again. The advantage of applying for renewal during the first one-year period is that you will have a better sense of how you work together, what works for you, and how you might do things differently if awarded a second year. In this way, an application for renewal is likely to be better, more informed and more specific.

I still have a year to do of my MA / BA course and want to apply together with an established artist so that I can start working immediately after graduating. Students are not eligible to receive the grant. Can we apply while I am still a student if the period of employment is set to begin after I graduate?

Yes, you can. The grant cannot be awarded to students while they are still studying, but you are eligible to receive the grant as soon as your studies have finished. In your application, you should state clearly that you are aware of these rules and that the period of employment will only begin after the prospective assistant has graduated, for example, in August of the same year. If in such a situation the Expert Committee for Visual Arts approves your grant application, they will do so on the understanding that the assistant must have completed their studies before starting the period of employment. You are not allowed to work as an artist's assistant while still officially studying.

I am applying both to do an MA / PhD degree and for the Artist Assistant Scheme together with an established artist. What should I do if both applications are successful?

In that case, you must choose between them.

I am in the PhD programme and would like to apply to engage an assistant through the Artist Assistant Scheme. Can I do that?

No. As a doctoral student, you are still technically a student, which means you are not eligible for a grant from the Artist Assistant Scheme at the same time. As in the earlier answer, you can of course apply towards the end of your scholarship period,

provided the period of employment is not scheduled to start before your scholarship is over.

What can we do to be sure of a grant from the Artist Assistant Scheme?

If you meet all the formal requirements in your application, you are well on your way. In their [evaluation of the Artist Assistant Scheme](#) (p. 27), the Telemarksforskning team include a summary of what the grants committee and Kulturdirektoratet's administration consider most crucial for a successful application:

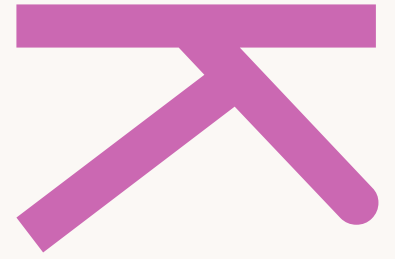
- that the applicants are producing art that is interesting and of high quality
- that participation in the scheme will foster positive development in the careers of both artists
- that the applicant and the prospective assistant seem to be well matched, for example, in that they share professional interests or complement each other's fields of expertise
- that the application is well-founded and considered
- that the planned tasks are varied and appropriate
- that both parties show a clear understanding of what the collaboration will entail

3.4 RESOURCES AND LINKS

Heian, Haugsevje og Jacobsen. Unge kunstnerskap i utvikling. Evaluering av kunstnerassistentordningen 2022. Norsk kulturråd.

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/360217081 Unge kunstnerskap i utvikling Evaluering av kunstnerassistentordningen](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/360217081_Unge_kunstnerskap_i_utvikling_Evaluering_av_kunstnerassistentordningen)

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FOR THE NEWLY
ESTABLISHED ARTIST
AND EMPLOYEE

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4 FOR THE NEWLY ESTABLISHED ARTIST AND EMPLOYEE

4.1 INTRODUCTION

While for most people of working age, being an employee is a normal part of life, for many artists, employment is an unfamiliar condition. Consequently, many artists are unsure of their rights and obligations as an employee. You are probably entitled to more than you are aware of! This chapter explains some of your basic rights as an employee and includes links to help you find out more for yourself. All the links are also collected in a separate section at the end.

[What is an employee?](#) An employee is one person employed by another to undertake work on their behalf. In practice, this means that you are subject to a number of laws and regulations that accord you certain rights, entitlements, and protections, and define certain obligations you have in consequence of the employment relationship. You will find a good [summary of what the employment relationship entails on the website of Arbeidstilsynet](#) (the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority).

4.2 WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Could there be a more excellent law than [Arbeidsmiljøloven](#) (the Working Environment Act)? The purpose of [Arbeidsmiljøloven](#) is to ensure safe employment conditions and equality of treatment in working life. It may seem a little abstract, but this law protects you from having to work 17-hour days without a break or 80-hour weeks. In any situation where one person is an employer and another an employee there is an imbalance of power. The purpose of [Arbeidsmiljøloven](#) is to compensate for this imbalance and to ensure good and inclusive working conditions.

WORKING HOURS AND WORK SCHEDULE

Many people believe that artistic work cannot be planned and organised into normal, foreseeable [working hours](#), but this is nonsense. As an employee, you have a right to regularity and to know when you will work. [Arbeidsmiljøloven](#) regulates [when and how much you can be required to work](#). Without such safeguards, it would be difficult for you to plan your life, your own artistic practice, and possibly other jobs as well.

Your working hours must be explicitly stated in your employment contract. Since the assistant position is 50% of a working week, you might decide to fix your work days as every Monday and Tuesday and every other Wednesday, with working hours from 9:00 to 16:30 and a lunch break from 12:00 to 12:30.

Quite possibly, this will not suit your working relationship. Most artists have periods that are busier than others, for example in the run-up to an exhibition. The [one- or two-year work plan](#) that you wrote together when preparing the application may be

of help when planning. If you find it difficult to establish fixed working hours in your employment contract, you must set up a [work schedule](#).

You have a right to know well in advance when you will be working, and you should have access to your work schedule no later than two weeks before the period it deals with. In larger workplaces, the work schedule is drawn up in collaboration with the employee's union representative, but since your working relationship involves just two people, the obvious course of action is to work it out together. If you know that you yourself will have a major exhibition in May next year, it may be appropriate to ask to be exempt from work in April and May and to make up for it by working full-time in June. The overall number of working hours would still amount to a 50% position, but they would be distributed unevenly across the year. The two of you must work together to find a feasible solution by considering each other's needs.

You might also consider [flexible working hours](#). As an employee, you have the right to [flexible working hours](#) provided this can be arranged easily and would be of no detriment to the work in hand. If you adopt a flexitime approach, then essentially you agree to a system that would allow you, for example, to start work a little earlier for several days in order to be able to take a few hours or days off later. If you have tasks that could be done from home, you might arrange something in that respect. The employment agreement should indicate the arrangements you have agreed on, even if the agreement is to make plans on a rolling basis.

You might find it useful to set up a document accessible to the both of you that lists the pre-agreed working hours and where you record the actual hours you have done.

In busy periods, it might be desirable to work longer hours than were envisaged in your initial agreement. If this happens, it is important to keep a record of the extra hours. Provided they do not exceed the statutory limits for [ordinary working hours](#), it counts as so-called additional work and can be compensated in the usual way, either by taking the same number of hours free on other days, or in ordinary wages. On the other hand, if you work more than nine hours in any one day, or 40 hours in any one week, the extra hours count as [overtime](#), which is strictly regulated. Overtime entitles you to extra breaks and extra pay, and there is an upper limit to the amount of overtime allowed. Your employer is not permitted to use overtime as a fixed arrangement, but only when "there is an exceptional and time-limited need for it", according to Arbeidstilsynet (the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority). Unexpected or increased work pressure during a limited period can be a sufficient reason for overtime, but it must be handled responsibly and you should be aware that there are limits to how much overtime can be demanded of you.

You are also entitled to breaks during any working day of more than five and a half hours, and if the working day exceeds eight hours, the breaks must be at least half an hour in total. It is important to note, however, that this is the minimum legal requirement, and that you are of course free to agree longer and more frequent breaks.

4.3 PAY

What is pay?

Perhaps the best thing about being employed is regular income, which forms one of the main pillars of the Artist Assistant Scheme. Pay is simply the [money paid for labour or service](#). Pay usually takes the form of wages or [salary](#). A salary is usually paid on a fixed day each month, at which point you will also receive a [payslip](#) which tells you, among other things, how much has been deducted in tax, how much has been set aside for pension and holiday money, and how much you have earned in the current year so far.

Basically, there's nothing you need to do (other than your job) to receive your pay. It is good to make a habit of checking your payslip to be sure you have received the correct amount.

In 2022, the value of a grant from the Artist Assistant Scheme stood at NOK 310,000. This is not what the assistant will receive in payment, but rather the amount paid out to the established artist. In addition to the assistant's salary, this sum must also cover holiday pay, national insurance and pension contributions, occupational injury insurance, and administrative expenses.

The guidelines for the scheme state that your [wages/salary](#) must be at [level 50 on the government's salary scale](#). [A normal working week for an employee in a 100% position is 37.5 hours](#) and [a work-year is calculated at 1,750 hours](#) after deduction of holiday.

How much will I receive each month?

On applying for a grant, the established artist must draw up a budget that takes into account all expenses, including your wages/salary. In the [employment contract](#), the two parties can make their own agreement about how much, and when the wages/salary will be paid. For example, you might prefer to record the hours you work on an on-going basis and receive the corresponding amount at the end of each month (a wage arrangement). Or you might opt for a fixed amount each month regardless of how many hours you actually work in any particular month (a salary arrangement). These different approaches should not affect how much you receive in total; after a year of employment, your total earnings should be the same regardless of the agreed payment regime.

What do I have to pay in tax?

The employer deducts tax from your salary, according to the tax rate stipulated on your tax withholding card. How much tax you have to pay depends on whether or not you have other jobs, what you earn from your own artistic work, what kind of wealth or capital you possess, and so on. [Here you will find a tax calculator](#) to help you work out roughly how much you will pay in tax.

4.4 PENSION

What is a pension?

Everyone who lives and works in Norway saves for a state pension via their national insurance contributions. On becoming a [pensioner](#), you will also receive an [occupational pension](#) accumulated from jobs you have had. For most artists, personal finances are characterised by a so-called “patchwork economy”. This means that they receive their income from a variety of sources, including their business as an artist, various full- or part-time positions, freelance commissions, and so on. The fact that the average artist does not hold down a single, full-time position for the duration of their working life means that saving for an occupational pension does not happen automatically.

Why is it important to save for retirement?

Many artists receive only a [minimum pension](#) when they retire. This means the pension is calculated at the [minimum annual rate](#), which reflects a number of factors: whether you live alone or with a partner, how long you have lived and worked in Norway, when you were born, and so on. Artists are used to low incomes, meaning they rarely have much they can set aside on a monthly basis as savings for a private pension. Even so, it is wise to be aware of your pension rights and to think actively about how you can save.

For example, you might consider setting money aside for a pension during the periods when you do have employment and a fixed income, for example, as a beneficiary of a grant from the Artist Assistant Scheme.

As an assistant under the Artist Assistant Scheme, does money go into my pension account automatically?

The [guidelines for the Artist Assistant Scheme](#) state that money from the grant may be directed into a pension for the assistant, but generally speaking, the established artist is not obliged to pay into a [compulsory occupational pension scheme](#) (in Norwegian: obligatorisk tjenestepensjon, or OTP). In order to be obliged to pay into an OTP, an employer must have employees whose labour amounts to the equivalent of two 100% (full-time) positions, or a single employee in a position of at least 75%. For most established artists in the Artist Assistant Scheme, this will not be the case.

Although there is no obligation to pay into a pension fund, you might ask for it to be included in your employment agreement, in which case the employer will pay a fixed percentage of your monthly salary (usually the minimum rate of 2%) into an OTP account. Since employment under the Artist Assistant Scheme is relatively short, and you yourself would take over responsibility for the OTP account once your employment has ended, you should be prepared to continue making regular contributions, otherwise the fees for maintaining the account will quickly eat up the actual savings.

How can I save for retirement?

If you do not want to commit your income to fixed pension contributions, you can consider other forms of saving that might suit you better. For example, you can earmark a fixed percentage of your salary to be paid each month into a savings

account, pension savings account or investment fund. In this way, you can decide on an amount or a percentage of your salary to be transferred automatically to your chosen means of saving as soon as your salary arrives on your bank account.

What kind of [pension savings arrangement](#) you choose is entirely up to you, and it can pay off to ask your bank for advice on how to save. There are [pension savings accounts, individual pension plans](#), high-interest accounts, and so on. Some choose to save for retirement by investing in equities funds, which claim to provide a relatively safe return with only modest fees.

4.5 HOLIDAY

Anyone in employment is entitled to [holiday](#). All employees are entitled to at least four weeks and one day of holiday each year (corresponding to 25 working days, since Saturday counts as a working day). You do not receive pay while on holiday, but during the time you work, you [accumulate holiday pay](#), which usually amounts to 10.2% of the salary received over the year before the holiday. It is common for holiday pay to be paid out to coincide with fellesferien (“the general holiday”), often as part of your payslip in June. In other words, in your first year as an assistant, you are entitled to holiday, but will not receive holiday pay until the year after it has been earned. Any holiday pay you have to your credit when the employment relationship ends must be paid out immediately.

When should I take holiday?

Even if you are entitled to holiday, you must agree with your employer when you will take it. Many employment agreements say something about when holiday can be taken, for example, during the communal holidays in July. You are entitled to three consecutive weeks of holiday in the period 1 June to 20 September, and you can negotiate whether the remaining seven workdays to which you are entitled can be taken in connection with this. The employer has the final say on when holiday may be taken, but they are obliged to discuss it with you. You are also entitled to find out whether your application for holiday has been granted no later than two months in advance of the requested times.

Holiday is calculated in weeks, which you do not have the right to divide into individual days. Since the assistant job is a part-time position, this is significant. If you normally work three days each week, taking three days of holiday in one week will count as taking a full holiday week, and not just as three of the days of the holiday to which you are entitled.

What if I fall ill while on holiday?

If you have been ill during a period of holiday, you can ask to [have your holiday entitlement deferred](#) from the first day of illness. In order to claim this right, your illness must be documented with a doctor’s certificate declaring that you are 100% sick and unfit for work. You must present this claim to your employer as soon as possible when you return to work after the holiday period.

4.6 TRAVEL AND COMMUTING

TRAVEL TO AND FROM THE WORKPLACE

You will probably have to travel some distance – either on foot, by bike, bus or car – to reach the workplace specified in your employment agreement. Is there any way you can get travel expenses reimbursed?

As an employee, you are not entitled to any direct reimbursement of travel expenses. Nevertheless, if your route to work is long enough, you may still be eligible for compensation in the form of a tax deduction. The deduction is calculated according to the shortest distance in kilometres between your home and your regular workplace. If the journey is long, you must keep a record of how many days you have spent travelling and enter the figure in your tax return. If you are entitled to a travel deduction, it means you will pay less in tax. [Here you can check whether you are entitled to a travel deduction.](#)

IF YOUR WORKPLACE IS FAR FROM WHERE YOU LIVE

In some cases, the established artist and the assistant agree that the workplace is where the established artist works, even if the assistant lives in another part of the country. Obviously, in this situation, the assistant will incur expenses in connection with [travel and accommodation](#) in order to carry out the work. If it is a precondition of the employment relationship that your workplace is in a different town or part of the country from where you live, it is important the two of you discuss who will bear the expenses of your travel, preferably before you apply.

If you have agreed that you will [commute](#) in order to work with the established artist and that you will bear the expenses, [you may be entitled to a tax rebate](#). For Norwegian tax purposes, a commuter is defined as someone whose work requires them to spend the night away from home, although there are also other conditions you must meet to be eligible for a deduction. [Here you will find a guide that clarifies whether or not you count as a commuter and are entitled to a rebate.](#)

If the assistant position involves considerable travel expenses, the two of you should work together to find a way to meet them. Are there other solutions to the problem? Can the established artist cover some of the expenses? Can parts of the work be done remotely so as to reduce the number of travel days? Would it be better to apply with an artist who lives closer to you? Before you agree to work somewhere away from home, you should decide whether you are prepared to bear all the related expenses yourself.

OTHER TRAVEL IN CONNECTION WITH WORK

Sometimes you might have to work in places other than the regular workplace. For example, the assistant might be asked to accompany the established artist to another city or country to set up an exhibition, or to represent them in some other way. What rules apply concerning the expenses and extra hours you incur in such a case?

Basically, the reimbursement of travel expenses is something you must agree between yourselves. You should discuss the issue early on and mention any arrangements in your employment agreement. This could be done in [a variety of ways](#); there is no one fixed approach that everyone should follow. You could agree that the employer covers the actual expenses you incur, that they reimburse you at government-recommended rates, at rates that you yourself define, or using a combination of the two.

If you decide that the employer should cover your actual expenses, it is important you keep receipts to show how much you have spent. If you choose to use [fixed rates](#), the money is tax-deductible; [click here for the relevant guidelines of Skatteetaten](#) (the Norwegian Tax Administration). Your employment agreement should state what you have agreed on, so as to make the reimbursement process easy and efficient.

What about the time you spend travelling in conjunction with work? Should you record the hours you use? Time spent in this way can only be considered as work time [under certain conditions](#):

- The travel is necessary in order to carry out your work or some work-related task
- Your employer requires you to travel in order to be “at their disposal”

If you take a bus to the other side of town in order to buy paint or fly from Oslo to Bergen to represent the artist, the time spent travelling will count as work time.

On the other hand, staying in a hotel in connection with a work trip does not count as work time, unless you are simultaneously performing work tasks or your employer requires you to be on call for work during the hours of your stay. The reason this is not considered as work time, except under the mentioned circumstances, is that essentially you are free to spend your time as you wish. It is for much the same reason that the time you normally spend travelling between home and work is not considered as work time.

4.7 SICKNESS AND ABSENCE

SELF-CERTIFICATION

[Self-certification](#), or self-reporting, is meant for short absences from work due to sickness of up to three calendar days. Most employers allow a maximum of four self-certifications per year and you must have been working for your employer for at least two months before you acquire the right to self-report. When self-reporting, it is you who judge your incapacity to work and you do not need a doctor’s certificate.

If you fall ill during your employment as an assistant, you are not required to make up for the lost work days at a later time. As an employee you are entitled to sick pay.

You can only use self-certification during the first 16 days of sickness. This period is called the [employer-financed period](#), because it is the employer who carries the cost of paying your income during this period. If you are sick for longer than 16 days, the

expense of continuing your income is taken over by NAV (the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration).

There is no standard form for self-certification; each employer decides the kind of self-reporting they consider acceptable. The established artist should make a point of explaining clearly to the assistant how they should self-report in the case of sickness.

If you begin a period of sickness with self-certification before receiving a doctor's certificate, the self-reported days cannot be added to the period of official sick leave. They will be subtracted from your self-certification allowance.

SICK LEAVE

If you are sick for more than a few days, your employer may require you to submit a [doctor's certificate](#). This means you will have to visit your fastlege ("general practitioner"). In most cases, a doctor's certificate is valid from the day you see your doctor, but in some circumstances, you can ask for it to be backdated to the first day of illness, for example, if you were unable to get an earlier appointment. You must have worked for your employer for at least four weeks to be entitled to sick leave. Another possibility is [graded sickness benefits](#). In this case, you continue working, but at a reduced level. The smallest permissible reduction of working hours due to sickness is 20%.

During the first 16 calendar days of your sick leave, it is your employer who pays your income. If you are sick for longer than this, NAV takes over the costs. But in order to receive sickness benefits from NAV, you must apply for it after the initial 16 days of sickness.

You submit a notification of sick leave to your employer via Ditt sykefravær ("Your sick leave") at nav.no. You will receive notification when the form is ready to be filled out on Ditt sykefravær.

What must I do if I fall ill?

- Tell your employer as soon as possible. Sick leave and the obligation to pay sickness benefits start on the day your employer is notified of your absence.
- If you are ill for longer than the self-certification period, you must contact a doctor. Dentists, manual therapists or chiropractors can also issue sick leave certificates, depending on the type of illness involved.
- If your sick leave lasts longer than the 16 days covered by your employer, you must apply to NAV for further sickness benefits.

If you have to be away from work and have used up your self-certification days, but can't get sick leave, you can discuss with your employer the possibility of using your holiday entitlement or taking [leave with or without pay](#). There can be a variety of reasons for wanting to apply for leave; [click here for more information on this point](#).

[For a summary of the various sickness reporting options and benefits, click here.](#)

CHILD-CARE LEAVE

If you have a child who is ill and you need to stay home in order to look after them, you may be entitled to [child-care leave](#), which is in addition to your sickness self-certification allowance.

Child-care leave is counted in days spent at home with a sick child. In order to claim such leave, you must have worked for your employer for at least four weeks and be the official custodian, or carer, for the child in question. The child must also be registered as living at the same address as you. If the child's parents live separately and the child regularly spends time living with each, then the child should be registered as living with both parents. If you have sole custody of the child, you can apply for extra child-care days. How many child-care days you are entitled to in any one year depends on how many children you have and your cohabitation situation.

4.8 OCCUPATIONAL INJURY AND INSURANCE

On engaging someone as an employee, an employer is obliged to take out [occupational injury insurance](#) for them, and the same will apply for you as an assistant. The premium for this insurance can be paid from the grant received from Arts and Culture Norway. One suitable insurance provider is, for example, [Kunstnerforsikringen](#) (literally: artist insurance). [Occupational injury](#) is a personal injury, sickness or death resulting from an accident at work. It might be the result of a sudden unforeseen external event, or of stress or strain that could not be foreseen as part of your usual work, i.e. that is not part of your defined work tasks. A sickness can be defined as occupational if it results from work you have done as an employee, for example, if your job involves working with chemicals that prove harmful to your health. If you suffer an injury, you must remember to report it within one year, otherwise you might become ineligible to make a claim.

4.9 PREGNANCY, BIRTH AND CHILDREN

There are numerous regulations relating to the situation of someone who is both employed and either pregnant or about to adopt. [Click here for a succinct summary](#) of the rights and opportunities you have as an employee who is about to become a parent, or here for the [laws that regulate the leave](#) you and your family are entitled to.

LEAVE

It is important to think about the kind of parental leave arrangements you wish to make and what your and your family's needs will be. As a general rule, you should notify your employer about your intention to take parental leave at least four weeks before the beginning of any planned period shorter than a year, or at least twelve weeks before any planned period of more than a year. In Norway, maternity leave starts at the latest three weeks and at the earliest twelve weeks before the expected date of birth.

If you are expecting to become a parent together with someone, as father or co-mother, you are entitled to [two weeks of parental leave](#) in connection with the birth.

PARENTAL ALLOWANCE OR LUMP-SUM MATERNITY SUPPORT?

[Parental allowance](#) is meant to replace your income when you are at home with your child during the post-natal period or following adoption. If you are granted parental allowance, you can decide for yourself whether you wish to receive it for a single continuous period, or spread across several shorter periods, or in combination with work, and you are free to modify your plans along the way. That said, a parental allowance must be used before the respective child's third birthday, or before you begin receiving a parental allowance for a further child.

If you give birth shortly after your contract ends and do not qualify for parental leave from your assistant job, you will still be entitled to parental allowance based on the income you had as an assistant.

You are entitled to a [lump-sum maternity payment](#) if you are expecting a child, but have had no income during at least six of the past ten months. This may apply to you if you begin your assistant job shortly before giving birth or taking leave and have had no income during the foregoing period.

This applies both to income received as an employee and income earned via your single-person business. As the name suggests, a lump-sum maternity payment is a one-off payment in lieu of a monthly parental allowance, which is based on your income. In 2022, the lump-sum payment was set at NOK 90,300 for each child you give birth to or adopt.

Broadly speaking, there are two conditions you have to meet to be eligible for a lump-sum maternity payment: you must be the mother of the child and you must be resident in Norway and be [registered with the Norwegian national insurance system](#). [In some cases, the father or co-mother can be eligible for a lump-sum maternity payment](#). If you are unsure about what would be best for you – the lump-sum benefit or parental allowance – [you will find a useful guide here](#).

[Click here](#) for more about being at home together if you are a couple who are jointly expecting a child.

MATERNITY BENEFITS AND PREPARATIONS

[Maternity benefits](#) are granted to expectant mothers who are unable to continue their usual employment because doing so would risk the health of the unborn child. This would be the case if you normally work with chemical substances, if your work is physically strenuous, or involves high levels of stress or poor psychosocial conditions in the workplace. If you are pregnant and have an assistant position that regularly involves working with chemicals or heavy lifting, the first thing you should do is discuss how you might adapt the workplace to allow you to continue working for as long as possible. If this cannot be done, you may be entitled to maternity benefits. If either the employee or the employer is pregnant, both will benefit from being able to work for as long as possible.

To qualify for maternity benefits you must
– have been in work for at least four weeks

- have earned at least NOK 55,739 in the year
- document that your work might potentially harm your unborn child

Although your employer has a duty to make the workplace suitable to you in your condition, they might not be aware how this can be done or what your needs are. It is therefore important that you communicate your needs clearly, because you are the one who knows them best. You can also talk to a midwife or doctor about this during your antenatal check-ups or contact [Arbeidstilsynet](#) (the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority) for advice and guidance.

It is also important to note that you are entitled to paid leave if you have to schedule a [prenatal check-up](#) during your working hours and cannot schedule it for any other time.

BREASTFEEDING BREAKS

If you are still breastfeeding when you return to work, you have a right to [breastfeeding breaks](#). You are entitled to one hour of breastfeeding leave with full pay during each working day, provided you are breastfeeding, your child is under one year old, and the working day is seven hours or more. It is you and not your employer who decides when during the working day you will take these breastfeeding breaks, or whether they should be scheduled, e.g. for the first or last hour of the day. The employer is required to meet your needs in this respect.

If your working day is less than seven hours, you are entitled to as much unpaid breastfeeding leave as you and your child need.

4.10 RESOURCES AND LINKS

GENERAL

<https://arbeidsmiljolooven.com/paragraf/arbeidstaker-og-arbeidsgiver/>
<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/lonn-og-ansettelse/kven-reknast-som-arbeidstakarar/>

THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT ACT

<https://lovdata.no/dokument/NL/lov/2005-06-17-62>
<https://www.regjeringen.no/no/tema/arbeidsliv/arbeidsmiljo-og-sikkerhet/innsikt/arbeidsmiljolooven/id447107/>

WORKING HOURS

<https://www.arbeidslivet.no/arbeid/arbeidstid/intro-til-arbeidstid>
https://lovdata.no/dokument/NL/lov/2005-06-17-62/KAPITTEL_11#%C2%A710-1
<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/arbeidstid-og-organisering/arbeidstid/arbeidsplan-vaktliste-skift-og-turnus/>
<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/arbeidstid-og-organisering/arbeidstid/fleksibel-arbeidstid/>

<https://www.arbeidslivet.no/arbeid/arbeidstid/arbeid/arbeidstid/hva-er-fleksibel-arbeidstid-og-hjemmekontor-og-hvordan-fungerer-det>
<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/en/working-hours-and-organisation-of-work/working-hours/>
<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/en/working-hours-and-organisation-of-work/working-hours/overtime/>

PAY

<https://www.parat-com.translate.goog/lonn-og-tariff/hva-er-egentlig-lonn/139405? x tr sl=no& x tr tl=en& x tr hl=no>
<https://www.tripletex.no/ordbok/lonn/>
<https://dfo.no/kundesider/lonnstjenester/selvbetjeningsportalen/lonnsslipper/slik-leser-du-lonnsslippen>
<https://www.tekna.no/en/salary-and-negotiations/employment-law/salary/>
<https://www.regjeringen.no/no/tema/arbeidsliv/Statlig-arbeidsgiverpolitikk/lonn-og-tariff-i-staten/lonnstabellen/id438643/>
<https://www.skatteetaten.no/en/business-and-organisation/employer/the-a-melding/the-a-melding-guide/employment/information-on-employment/no.-of-hours-per-week-to-which-a-full-time-position-equates/>
<https://fiken.no/forklarer/arsverk>
<https://skattekalkulator.app.skatteetaten.no/#/>

PENSION

<https://norskpensjon.no/ofte-stilte-sporsmal/>
<https://norskpensjon.no/om-pensjonssystemet/tjenestepensjon/>
<https://www.nav.no/alderspensjon#minstepensjon>
<https://www.nav.no/satser#alderspensjon>
<https://www.kulturdirektoratet.no/stotteordning/-/vis/kunstnerassistent>
<https://info.altinn.no/en/start-and-run-business/working-conditions/employment/Compulsory-occupational-pension/>
<https://www.dnb.no/en/pension/pension-saving?la=EN>
<https://www.sparebank1.no/nb/bank/privat/pensjon/ips/ips-eller-pensjonskonto-hva-bor-du-velge.html>

HOLIDAY

<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/en/working-hours-and-organisation-of-work/holiday/>
<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/en/working-hours-and-organisation-of-work/holiday/holiday-pay/>
<https://arbinn.nho.no/arbeidsrett/arbeidstid-ferie-og-permisjoner/innhold/ferie/syk-i-ferien/>

TRAVEL AND COMMUTING

<https://www.skatteetaten.no/en/person/taxes/get-the-taxes-right/employment-benefits-and-pensions/travel-home-work/travel-deduction/>
<https://info.altinn.no/en/start-and-run-business/working-conditions/pay/travel-expenses/>

<https://www.skatteetaten.no/en/person/taxes/get-the-taxes-right/employment-benefits-and-pensions/travel-home-work/commuter/>
<https://www.pwc.no/no/pwc-aktuelt/dette-skal-til-for-aa-oppfylle-pendlervilkaarene.html>
<https://www.skatteetaten.no/en/person/taxes/get-the-taxes-right/employment-benefits-and-pensions/travel-home-work/commuter/commuter/>
<https://info.altinn.no/starte-og-drive/arbeidsforhold/lonn/reise-og-diett/#dekning-av-reiseutgifter-for-ansatte>
<https://lovdata.no/dokument/SPHPM/pm-2022-16>
<https://info.altinn.no/en/start-and-run-business/working-conditions/pay/travel-expenses/>
<https://www.vismasoftware.no/artikler/er-reisetid-arbeidstid>

SICKNESS AND ABSENCE

<https://www.nav.no/egenmelding#chapter-1>
<https://www.nav.no/arbeidsgiver/sykepenger-i-arbeidsgiverperioden>
<https://www.nav.no/sykepenger>
<https://www.nav.no/sykmeldt#gradert>
<https://info.altinn.no/en/start-and-run-business/working-conditions/print-leave-of-absence-and-holidays/paid-and-unpaid-leave/>
<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/lonn-og-ansettelse/permisjoner/>
<https://www.nav.no/sykepenger#ulike-mater>
<https://www.nav.no/omsorgspenger>

OCCUPATIONAL INJURY AND INSURANCE

<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/kontakt-oss/melde-ulykke/yrkesskadeforsikring/>
<https://www.kunstnerforsikringen.no/forsikringer/naring/yrkesskadeforsikring/>
<https://www.nav.no/yrkesskade>

PREGNANCY, BIRTH AND CHILDREN

<https://www.libero.no/barnet-ditt/artikler/gravid/a-jobbe-eller-ikke-under-svangerskapet/>
<https://www.libero.no/barnet-ditt/artikler/gravid/a-jobbe-eller-ikke-under-svangerskapet/>
<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/lonn-og-ansettelse/permisjoner/omsorgspermisjon/>
<https://www.nav.no/foreldrepenger>
<https://www.nav.no/engangsstonad>
<https://www.nav.no/no/person/flere-tema/arbeid-og-opphold-i-norge/relatert-informasjon/medlemskap-i-folketrygden>
https://www.nav.no/engangsstonad#far_medmor
<https://www.nav.no/foreldrepenger/foreldrepenger-eller-engangsstonad>
<https://www.nav.no/foreldrepenger#samtidig>
<https://familie.nav.no/om-svangerskapsenger>
<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/en/contact/>
<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/regelverk/lover/arbeidsmiljolooven/12/12-1/>
<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/lonn-og-ansettelse/permisjoner/ammefri/>

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FOR THE ESTABLISHED
ARTIST AND EMPLOYER

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5 FOR THE ESTABLISHED ARTIST AND EMPLOYER

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Most artists organise their professional activity as a single-person business. When they need to outsource tasks they usually do so by engaging services that they reimburse through payment of a fee on receiving an invoice. The principal rule with regard to employment is that employees should be engaged in a fixed and stable working situation, regardless of the size and duration of the position. In the case of the employment funded by the Artist Assistant Scheme, the assistant must be employed in a 50% position. Having an employee entails a certain amount of responsibility and administration for the established artist, but for the vast majority of enterprises large and small, the obligations that come with being an employer can be met without an excessive investment of time and resources, and there are many forms of help available.

5.2 EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITY

As an employer, you have a particular responsibility for your employee(s). You undertake to write an [employment agreement](#) and to pay a salary or wages with tax deducted and employer's contributions. You also have a responsibility to provide any necessary training and to ensure a good working environment, so as to make the everyday work situation comfortable for both you and the assistant.

HOW DO I CREATE A GOOD WORKING ENVIRONMENT?

The working environment depends on how work is planned, organised and carried out. Effective solutions will vary depending on the artist and assistant in question. Much depends on good communications and on establishing an inclusive work culture and a safe, reliable framework for dialogue about the work to be done, and on constructive feedback.

[Arbeidsmiljøportalen](#) (the Working Environment Portal) brings together resources relating to the working environment, and includes a list compiled by Statens arbeidsmiljøinstitutt (STAMI; The National Institute of Occupational Health in Norway) of six factors that are crucial to a good working environment: demands and influence, clarification of expectations, feedback and recognition, interaction and cooperation between parties, predictability, and openness and respect. Arbeidstilsynet (the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority) has also drawn up [a list of ten factors that contribute to a good working environment](#). These are of relevance to both the employer and the employee.

THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT ACT

[Arbeidsmiljøloven](#) (the Working Environment Act) exists to ensure good, safe working conditions in companies and workplaces. As an employer, you have a responsibility to apply the rules laid down in this law. One piece of advice is to have a [conversation about expectations](#) relating to the working environment at the

beginning of the employment period so as to clarify that parties understand the rules and requirements they have to adhere to.

HSE REQUIREMENTS

HSE, which stands for Health, Safety and Environment, is a collective term for the physical and psychosocial aspects of the working environment. [As an employer, you are required to undergo a training in HSE issues](#). However, the law does not say anything about what form this training should take, nor who is responsible for providing it.

On its website, [Arbeidstilsynet \(the Labour Inspection Authority\)](#) writes that “it is a clear intention that the employer’s training in health, safety and environmental issues should be adapted to the risks and operating conditions of the respective business and sector. Subjects covered in the training should include, among other things: The Working Environment Act and its regulations, and systematic health, safety and environmental work.”

In other words, as an employer it is important that you are familiar with the Working Environment Act. You should also have a broad understanding of the requirements for how work is to be organised and of risk factors relating to health and safety in the workplace. As an applicant to the Artist Assistant Scheme, your workplace will probably be small and you will have only one part-time employee. Your HSE adaptations should reflect the specific work situation.

Arbeidstilsynet (the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority) synthesises the legal requirements relating to the organisation of work in what it calls [the working environment model \(arbeidsmiljømodellen\)](#), although clearly intended for larger enterprises with more than one part-time employee.

Even if you do not work with heavy machinery or dangerous chemicals, your working environment may well pose some HSE challenges. Sedentary studio work can itself be physically stressful. The Labour and Welfare Authority has prepared a pamphlet called [Snakkepakka](#) that aims to stimulate discussion about musculoskeletal problems in the workplace.

MEDARBEIDERSAMTALE

[Medarbeidersamtale](#), a “performance appraisal”, is something different from artistic follow-up. Whereas the conversation about your professional work is something you arrange to suit your particular needs, a medarbeidersamtale is an established element of the working relationship. These conversations can follow a number of formats, depending on the type of workplace, but they are often held once a year and announced well in advance to allow both parties to prepare. When initiating a medarbeidersamtale, it is important for the employer to explain to the employee what they will talk about and how the latter can prepare.

The employer is responsible for leading the conversation and creating an atmosphere where the employee feels safe and able to offer open and honest feedback. The medarbeidersamtale should be an opportunity for your assistant

to mention things that might feel awkward and could be improved in the working relationship, in addition to all the positive aspects.

5.3 FINANCES

HOW TO KEEP YOUR FINANCES IN ORDER

A grant from the Artist Assistant Scheme is intended to cover not just income for the assistant, but also employer's national insurance contributions and other administrative costs. In order to keep track of your expenditure, it might be useful to place the grant money in a dedicated bank account. When you pay salary or wages, you are required to deduct the appropriate amount of tax and to pay this to the tax authorities. If the tasks assigned to your assistant include helping you with administrative work, you should not ask them to handle wage payments, since it is the responsibility of the employer to pay wages and make tax deductions. For this aspect of your work, you will probably find it helpful to engage an accountant or to use specialised accounting software.

BOOKKEEPING

The task of an accountant is to keep a record of all relevant financial transactions according to the current rules of the tax authorities and the principles of bookkeeping. Many artists use an accounting software, such as [Fiken](#), to manage their bookkeeping. With the appropriate extensions, this software can also be used to make salary payments, carry out tax transfers, and calculate the correct employer's national insurance contributions.

An auditor is someone who checks the accountant's bookkeeping and, where required, approves the annual accounts before they are submitted to the authorities. One of the most common situations in which artists are required to audit their accounts is if they have received support from Kulturdirektoratet (Arts and Culture Norway) worth more than NOK 400,000.

If you are required, or simply prefer, to use an accountant and auditor, it is advisable to use someone who already has experience in handling tax affairs for artists. It is also an advantage if the accountant has an established cooperation with an auditor. If anything remains unclear in your accounts, or if there are misunderstandings between the accountant and the auditor, this will probably leave you with additional costs.

Membership of NBK entitles you to a [discount on accounting software](#). Currently, NBK has agreements with Fiken and Tripletex.

A USEFUL TIP! When your employment relationship with the assistant ends, remember to unsubscribe from Fiken's salary module and to notify the tax authorities of the change in situation.

SUMMARY OF INDIVIDUAL COSTS

Here is a little table listing the usual forms of expenditure you can expect on receiving a grant from the Artist Assistant Scheme.

The Artist Assistant Scheme	
Monthly salary (pay level 50)	
Holiday pay (10.2%)	
Employer's national insurance contributions (14.1%)	
Occupational injury insurance	
Pension contributions (OTP 2%)	
Bank charges	
Fiken (or similar accounting program)	
Accountant/administration	
SUM	

5.4 PAY

As an employer, you must [pay salary/wages](#), withhold deducted tax and pay employer's national insurance contributions. All details relating to this obligation must be reported monthly via the "a-melding" (literally: employer's report, or statement). The "a-melding" contains information on wages/salary and benefits, and the status of all employment circumstances. Although you are permitted to register and submit this information yourself via Altinn (the Norwegian authorities' joint portal for reporting and dialogue with business and industry), most people prefer to enlist the help of either an accountant or an accounting program such as Fiken.

The guidelines for the Artist Assistant Scheme state that the assistant's wages/salary must be set at [level 50 on the government's salary scale](#). [A normal working week for an employee in a full \(100%\) position is 37.5 hours](#). To calculate the monthly salary to be paid, you divide the annual salary by twelve. In practice, you will pay this monthly salary for eleven months, plus 10.2% holiday pay when it becomes due.

For more about wages/salary, see [Chapter 4.3 Pay](#).

TAX DEDUCTION (WITHHOLDING TAX)

You must also deduct tax from the wages/salary of the assistant. The amount to be deducted is indicated on the employee's tax card, which can be obtained via Altinn,

or via your accounting program. The advance deducted tax must be deposited into a separate tax deduction account in a bank, and paid to the tax authorities every two months.

HOLIDAY MONEY

[FerieLOVEN](#) (Act relating to Holidays) states that employees are entitled to at least four weeks and one day of holiday. The employer must set aside holiday pay from salary, usually 10.2% of the basis on which holiday pay is calculated. If you have entered into an [employment agreement](#) that provides for a fifth week of holiday, the ordinary rate is 12%.

For more about holidays, see [Chapter 4.5 Holiday](#).

EMPLOYER'S NATIONAL INSURANCE CONTRIBUTIONS

You must also pay [employer's national insurance contributions](#) on wages/salary and in some cases other benefits and allowances. Employer's contributions are paid in connection with wages/salary and help to finance national insurance, i.e. pension and sickness benefits. Rates differ depending on where in the country you live, but the most common rate is 14.1% of gross earnings. You will find a summary of the rates including those that apply in your municipality [here](#).

THE "A-MELDING"

When you pay out wages/salary, you must submit an a-melding to the authorities. This is a report that contains information about the levels of employer's contributions and deducted tax you are obliged to pay. This report must be submitted by the 5th of the month following the payment, but your accountant or accounting software can help you with this.

Employer's contributions and deducted tax must be paid to the authorities every two months. You will receive information about the amount to be paid, the recipient account number and the customer ID number after submitting the a-melding.

5.5 PENSION

The payment of employer's contributions helps to ensure that everyone who lives and works in Norway is covered by national insurance. In addition to national insurance, the employee accumulates an [occupational pension](#) from contributions based on actual earnings. For most artists, personal finances are characterised by a so-called "patchwork economy". This means that they receive their income from a variety of sources, including their business as an artist, various full- or part-time positions, freelance commissions, and so on. The fact that the average artist does not hold down a single, full-time position for the duration of their working life means that saving for an occupational pension does not happen automatically.

[The guidelines for the Artist Assistant Scheme](#) state that money from the grant may be directed into a pension for the assistant, but generally speaking, the established

artist is not obliged to pay into a [compulsory occupational pension scheme](#) (in Norwegian: obligatorisk tjenestepensjon, or OTP). In order to be obliged to pay into an OTP, an employer must have employees whose labour amounts to the equivalent of two 100% (full-time) positions, or a single employee in a position of at least 75%. For most established artists in the Artist Assistant Scheme, this will not be the case.

Although there is no obligation to pay into a pension fund, you might ask for such an arrangement to be included in your employment agreement, in which case the employer will pay a fixed percentage of your monthly salary (usually the minimum rate of 2%) into an OTP account. Since most banks offer OTP schemes, you can speak with your bank about suitable options.

It is important to think about saving for a pension both for newly established and established artists. For more about pensions and approaches to saving, see [Chapter 4.4 Pension](#).

5.6 SICKNESS AND ABSENCE

Artists can fall ill, like anyone else. In case your assistant falls ill and takes sick leave, you need to understand what you are [obliged to do as an employer](#). As an employee, your assistant is not required to make up for work days lost to sickness at a later time. The employee is entitled to paid leave while away from work due to sickness, but only after having worked for you for at least four weeks.

In the event of a short period of sickness, the assistant can notify you of their absence by means of [self-certification](#). You should agree early on, preferably in the [employment agreement](#), how either party should notify the other in the case of sickness. It is important that the assistant should be able to report sickness and an inability to work in a way that is easy and unambiguous. You might require them to fill out a form, but you could also agree that a simple e-mail or text message is sufficient. Receipt of a self-report of sickness helps you to establish the start of the period during which the employer bears the cost of sick pay, the so-called [employer-financed period](#). In the event of a prolonged absence due to sickness, the cost of sick pay is taken over by NAV (the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration).

THE EMPLOYER-FINANCED PERIOD

As an employer, you must pay sickness benefits for up to 16 calendar days in what is known as the [employer-financed period](#), calculated from the first day of sick leave. All days are counted, not just the days when the employee should have been at work.

If the assistant falls ill again when less than 16 calendar days have passed since the previous period of sick leave, this must be counted as belonging to the same employer-financed period. If more than 16 calendar days have passed since the employee's return to work, you must pay sickness benefits for a new employer-financed period in the event of a new absence.

An employment agreement may stipulate that full salary will be paid during a period of sickness, but under the Artist Assistant Scheme it is most likely that NAV will take over the payment of sick pay after 16 days have elapsed. At that point, you must suspend salary payments. If a period of sick leave becomes protracted, you must also contact Kulturdirektoratet and report that it might be necessary to pause the assistant's employment period.

See [Chapter 4.7 Sickness and absence](#) for more information on sickness leave.

CHILD-CARE LEAVE

If the assistant has a child who falls ill requiring care at home, they may be entitled to [child-care leave](#), which is in addition to the self-certification leave allowance. If the assistant needs child-care days, as the employer you can claim to have the [child-care days reimbursed](#). It is important that you establish a good system for documenting child-care leave in order to be able to claim reimbursement.

Read more about [child-care leave for the assistant](#) above.

INSURANCE

When you employ an assistant, you are obliged to take out [insurance](#) to cover them for occupational injury. The cost of this insurance can be taken from the Artist Assistant Scheme grant. You can take out occupational injury insurance with [Kunstnerforsikringen](#) (literally: artist insurance), or with some other insurance company.

As an employer, you can also take out insurance with NAV against your [liability for sickness benefits](#).

5.7 WHAT EXPENSES WILL YOU COVER?

TRAVEL

The assistant is normally required to cover the expense of travel to and from the workplace, unless you agree otherwise. For journeys undertaken during working hours, commuting that requires nights away from home, or longer work-related journeys to places other than the agreed workplace, it is important that you make an agreement before the date of the journey, preferably as part of your employment agreement.

The government issues recommended rates for travel allowance. By adopting these rates, you will save yourself a lot of additional bookkeeping and avoid having to declare some of the travel and related expenses as taxable pay.

For more about travel, see [Chapter 4.6 Travel and commuting](#).

EQUIPMENT AND FRINGE BENEFITS

The employer is responsible for ensuring that the employee has the equipment needed to carry out the designated work, although you are free to agree with the assistant that in some cases they use their own equipment.

If you provide equipment such as a telephone or computer that the assistant is free to use as their own outside working hours, this can be regarded as a benefit in kind, i.e. a benefit the employee receives in a non-monetary form, sometimes also called a fringe benefit. Typical benefits in kind include company cars and free phone/internet. A loan at a reasonable rate from the employer would also count as such.

Benefits in kind are usually considered taxable for the recipient, although certain benefits are tax-free.

TELEPHONE AND INTERNET

If you cover the cost of a telephone and/or internet connection that the assistant can also use privately, this must be reported as a tax advantage. It must be declared together with the wages/salary via a particular tax form that covers benefits incurred through access to any kind of electronic communication services (EK-tjenester).

REIMBURSEMENT FOR OUTLAY

Essentially, the employer is required to cover all necessary regular expenses in conjunction with ongoing work. If it becomes relevant for the assistant to use their own money for work-related purchases or similar, it is important that you have a clear agreement on the kind of things they will pay for and when they will be reimbursed. You will also need the receipts for any such outlays, so that you can enter them in your own accounts.

If your accounting program is equipped to handle such outlays, you can draw up a simple form on which you record what has been purchased, for what purpose, the date, the price and who has reimbursed the outlay.

5.8 RESOURCES AND LINKS

EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITY

<https://www.arbeidsmiljoportalen.no/>

<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/hms/roller-i-hms-arbeidet/arbeidstakers-plikter/slik-kan-du-bidra-til-et-godt-arbeidsmiljo/>

<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/regelverk/lover/arbeidsmiljolooven/>

<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/en/laws-and-regulations/laws/the-working-environment-act/>

<https://info.altinn.no/en/start-and-run-business/working-conditions/health-safety-and-environment-hse/hse-and-hse-requirements/>

<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/hms/roller-i-hms-arbeidet/arbeidsgiver/hms-opplaring-ledere/#Oppl%25C3%25A6ringensinnhold>

<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/hms/arbeidsmiljomodellen/>
<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/contentassets/876cc11192c141ea93bf4c9cb4665204/snakkepakka-muskel-og-skjelettplager-pa-jobb.pdf>
<https://www.juristforbundet.no/lonnarbeidsvilkar/artikler/medarbeidersamtale/>

FINANCES

<https://fiken.no/>
<https://www.norskebilledkunstnere.no/medlemsfordeler/>

PAY

<https://info.altinn.no/en/start-and-run-business/working-conditions/pay/payroll-runs/>
<https://www.regjeringen.no/no/tema/arbeidsliv/Statlig-arbeidsgiverpolitikk/lonn-og-tariff-i-staten/lonnstabellen/id438643/>
<https://www.skatteetaten.no/en/business-and-organisation/employer/the-a-melding/the-a-melding-guide/employment/information-on-employment/no.-of-hours-per-week-to-which-a-full-time-position-equates/>
<https://lovdata.no/dokument/NLE/lov/1988-04-29-21>
<https://info.altinn.no/en/start-and-run-business/working-conditions/pay/employers-national-insurance-contributions/>
<https://www.skatteetaten.no/en/rates/employers-national-insurance-contributions---zone-subdivision/>

PENSION

<https://norskpension.no/om-pensjonssystemet/tjenestepensjon/>
<https://www.kulturdirektoratet.no/stotteordning/-/vis/kunstnerassistent>
<https://info.altinn.no/en/start-and-run-business/working-conditions/employment/Compulsory-occupational-pension/>

SICKNESS AND ABSENCE

<https://info.altinn.no/en/start-and-run-business/working-conditions/print-sickness-and-leaves-of-absence/absence-due-to-illness-and-sick-pay/>
https://lovdata.no/dokument/NL/lov/1997-02-28-19/KAPITTEL_5-4-2#%C2%A78-23
<https://www.nav.no/arbeidsgiver/sykepenger-i-arbeidsgiverperioden>
<https://www.simploer.no/artikler/slik-regner-du-ut-arbeidsgiverperioden/>
<https://www.nav.no/omsorgspenger>
<https://www.nav.no/arbeidsgiver/omsorgspenger>
<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/kontakt-oss/melde-ulykke/yrkesskadeforsikring/>
<https://www.kunstnerforsikringen.no/forsikringer/naring/yrkesskadeforsikring/>
<https://www.nav.no/arbeidsgiver/forsikring-sma-bedrifter>

GLOSSARY

ALTINN

the Norwegian authorities' joint portal for reporting and dialogue with business and industry

A-MELDING

employer's report or employer's statement

ARBEIDSGIVERAVGIFT

Employer's National Insurance contributions

ARBEIDSMILJØLOVEN

Working Environment Act

ARBEIDSMILJØPORTALEN

the Working Environment Portal

ARBEIDSTILSYNET

the Norwegian labour inspection authority

FERIELOVEN

Act relating to Holidays

KULTURDIREKTORATET

Arts and Culture Norway, the main governmental operator for the implementation of Norwegian cultural policy.

LIKESTILLINGS- OG DISKRIMINERINGSOMBUDET

The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud

NAV (NY ARBEIDS- OG VELFERDSFORVALTNING)

Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration

OBLIGATORISK TJENESTEPENSJON (OTP)

Compulsory occupational pension scheme

SKATTEETATEN

The Norwegian Tax Administration

STATENS ARBEIDSMILJØINSTITUTT

The National Institute of Occupational Health in Norway

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COLOPHON

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