

on my own time™

toolkit 2026

Contents

Select a title below to jump directly to that section.

| | |
|--|----|
| Program Overview | 3 |
| What On My Own Time™ Looks Like at Your Place of Business | 3 |
| Business Council for the Arts ensures a great experience for you with the following: | 3 |
| Your company is responsible for the following: | 4 |
| Getting Started | 4 |
| Master Timeline | 4 |
| Encouraging Participation | 5 |
| Employee Eligibility & Other HR Concerns | 5 |
| OMOT Liaison Role & Resources | 6 |
| Promotional Materials | 6 |
| Jurying | 6 |
| Coordinating the Visual Arts | 7 |
| Classification | 7 |
| Collecting Visual Art Submissions | 8 |
| Planning the Exhibition Space | 8 |
| Virtual Galleries | 9 |
| Collecting Artworks | 9 |
| Installing Your Exhibition | 10 |
| Exhibition Layout | 10 |
| Labels | 11 |
| Selecting Winners & Advancing to the OMOT Regional Art Show | 12 |
| Art Delivery and Pickup | 12 |
| Coordinating the Literary Arts | 12 |
| Classification | 12 |
| Collecting Literary Art Submissions | 13 |
| Publishing In-House Entries | 13 |
| Selecting Winners and Advancing to Literary Night | 14 |
| Participating in the Regional Events | 14 |
| Evaluating the Success of OMOT | 15 |
| Appendix A: Eligibility Guidelines | 15 |
| Visual Art | 15 |
| Literary Art | 16 |
| Questions | 17 |

Program Overview

On My Own Time™ (OMOT) is a trademarked program organized and produced by Business Council for the Arts. Its purpose is to elevate the company experience by highlighting employee creativity and talent in the visual and literary arts.

Company participation in On My Own Time™:

- Celebrates talent, creativity and individuality within the company
- Supports diversity and belonging
- Creates common ground between employees across departments and hierarchies
- Strengthens company brand and loyalty
- Gives public recognition of company creative talent at NorthPark Center, Dallas College, and through social media

What On My Own Time™ Looks Like at Your Place of Business

Your Company Liaison(s) will gather visual and literary artworks from across your company, spreading the word that your company values employee talent and creativity. In late summer, you can have an exhibit and literary showcase on-site at your company. This brings together all company employees, both creatives and their appreciators. You may choose to enhance the showcase with a reception for employees, families, clients, and others.

BCA will send qualified jurors to select the best work from your company. Winning works of visual art are featured in the OMOT Regional Art Show at NorthPark Center, with a reception open to your company award winners, families, colleagues, and friends. Winning literary pieces are shared with a live audience at Literary Night at Dallas College. The event is open to all and includes a welcome reception for networking.

Business Council for the Arts ensures a great experience for you with the following:

- Promotional materials to help stimulate interest and begin familiarity with OMOT.
- Guidance on putting your exhibit and literary showcase together.
- In partnership with Dallas College, providing inaugural workshops to stimulate employee creativity.
- A community of corporate liaisons that can share their own tips.
- Vetted arts professionals who will select the art and literary works to move forward to our public forums at NorthPark Center and Dallas College.

- A professional team of art handlers to oversee the installation of your employee artworks at the OMOT Regional Art Show at NorthPark Center.
- An online catalog that includes information about your company and its award winners.
- Receptions at NorthPark Center and Dallas College celebrating all award winners and inviting all employees.

Your company is responsible for the following:

- Organizing your in-house art exhibition and designing the reception that suits your company culture the best. Some companies hang the works in lobbies, while others lay them out on desks at lunchtime. It is up to the discretion of the liaison to determine what is best for your company.
- Including the BCA and/or OMOT logos in your displays and promotional materials (online and printed). This helps us spread awareness for OMOT and encourages more companies to participate!
- Submitting your company profile and logo by the deadline. We want to be sure we have any updated information so we can adequately celebrate your company.
- Transporting all selected art to and from the OMOT Regional Art Show within the periods of time designated by BCA.

Getting Started

The Business Council for the Arts strives to make your participation in On My Own Time™ an enjoyable experience, impacting your workload as little as possible. This guide, along with online resources, provides the information needed to successfully implement the OMOT program.

Master Timeline

| | |
|----------------|--|
| May 11 | Office Hours |
| May 19 | Workshop: <i>The Art of Gesture Drawing</i> |
| May 26 | In-House Visual Art Juror Availability Due |
| June 16 | Company Profiles & Logo Due |
| June 8 | Workshop: Transforming Art into Wearable Expression (English) |
| June 9 | Workshop: <i>Transforming Art into Wearable Expression</i> (Spanish) |
| June 16 | Workshop: <i>Blackout Poetry</i> |
| June 18 | Office Hours |
| June 26 | Workshop: <i>Monotypes & Monoprints</i> |
| July 6 | Office Hours |
| July 7 | Artwork and Literary Submission Deadline |
| July 13 | In-House Shows Begin |

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| July 14 – August 18 | In-House Jurying |
| September 11 – 12 | Art Drop-Off at NorthPark Center |
| September 16 | Regional Art Show Exhibition Opening at NorthPark Center |
| October 5 | Regional Art Show Closes |
| October 15 | Literary Night at Dallas College |

Encouraging Participation

It can be intimidating for anyone to share their creative talents. Be sure to emphasize that ALL creativity is important, healthy, and appreciated, whether professional or amateur.

The best kick-starter is to have your company higher-ups participating first!

Remember to use internal company channels to alert employees about this opportunity to showcase their talents. Some companies offer their own special incentives for award winners, such as gift cards, special recognition in annual reports and other materials, and even company calendars or notecards featuring employee art.

Many companies allow their employees to invite family members to participate. Allowing employees to show off the talent of spouses and children is a great way to engage your employees as a family unit.

One caveat to this is that works by artists under 18 cannot be showcased at the exhibit in NorthPark Center. Please do not include works by artists under 18 in your jurying process. Works by children can receive awards and certificates at the company show if your company chooses.

Best Practice Tip: Host a “Lunch & Learn” or another type of informational meeting to kick off your OMOT program. If you’d like, you can even invite a BCA staff member to attend and make a presentation to your colleagues.

Employee Eligibility & Other HR Concerns

BCA suggests that any employee of your company (full or part-time) who works in the North Texas area is eligible to participate. You may expand this to have employees participate from across the country, though it is the business’s responsibility to transport work to NorthPark Center if they wish it to be included in the regional show. Spouses and children of employees may be included in your exhibition at the discretion of the liaison.

We ask all artists to present work that is “business appropriate.” As an OMOT Liaison, you may choose to omit work that is not appropriate for your workplace setting. Any work containing offensive depictions of nudity, profanity, illegal activities, or negative depictions of social, religious, ethnic, or political groups or individuals will not be exhibited at the regional level. All literary and visual art must be original and must be owned by and produced or created by the artist submitting the work. All works must be properly framed and labeled. Works of art that are not properly framed or labeled may not be included in the exhibition. In those cases, the work will be safely stored and can be picked up during the designated pickup window.

OMOT Liaison Role & Resources

OMOT Liaisons are the dedicated representatives in each company who are responsible for coordinating the OMOT program at the company level. They manage the in-house art exhibitions and publications, and they serve as a connection between your company and BCA. Companies may choose to have one to four OMOT Liaisons to help with the program. You may also choose to develop a committee of OMOT volunteers to assist as needed.

Promotional Materials

BCA will provide each company with headers, flyers, email templates, and social media images to help publicize the OMOT program. You are free to use your own designs for promotional materials as well, but please remember to include the official On My Own Time™ or BCA logo on any digital or print publications as OMOT is a trademarked BCA program.

Jurying

BCA will assign arts experts from the community to jury the work of your employees and select winners in each category. The community of jurors is made up of art consultants, curators, gallerists, and arts educators who are volunteering their time on behalf of BCA and your company. At the end of your company’s jurying process, jurors will communicate the winners with BCA, and we will then share the winners with company liaisons. BCA will reach out to individual winners to coordinate for the Regional Art Show or Literary Night.

Best Practice Tip: Once your winners are chosen, BCA recommends that you review the winning selections with your HR department or other interested parties to ensure your company is comfortable with its representation at the OMOT Regional Art Show.

Coordinating the Visual Arts

Most of the information below is for the employees who choose to submit artwork. The only role of the liaison is to oversee the in-house show (if you wish to have one).

Classification

Each artist must classify their visual art submission(s) into one of the following categories.

| Visual Art Category | Description |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Painting | Oils, acrylics, watercolors, and other paints |
| 2D Works on Paper and Canvas | Drawing, prints, and collage on paper |
| Black & White Photography | Images created with a digital or film camera printed in black and white; Must be “straight” photography, with only minor digital enhancements |
| Color Photography | Images created with a digital or film camera printed in color; Must be “straight” photography, with only minor digital enhancements |
| Digital Art | Includes art that is made using digital technology |
| AI Art | Artwork that uses any amount of AI technology |
| Sculpture | Objects such as castings, constructions, and assemblages |
| Ceramics, Wood & Glass | Objects such as carvings, woodturning, pottery and fired clay, mosaic, and glass – not including sculpture |
| Jewelry & Metal | Objects such as jewelry and metal works – not including sculpture |
| Mixed Media | Works using more than one medium |
| Textiles & Fiber | Objects utilizing fabric, yarn, thread, or textiles, including but not limited to: weaving, quilting, needlework-embroidery, needlepoint, crocheting, tatting, knitting, sewing, basketry, wearable art, rugs, and surface designs such as batik |
| Video/Film/Animation | Film, documentary, and 2D or 3D animation of any kind |
| Corporate Collaboration | Visual art created by 3 or more employees (e.g., a collaborative painting, mosaic, sculpture, or collage) |

You can also decide the number of times an employee can submit artwork to a specific category or overall during the competition.

Each artist must also indicate which division their work is being entered: **Division A (Amateur) or Division B (Professional)**. If the artist's answer is "yes" to any of the criteria listed below, they must enter Division B (Professional):

- The artist routinely sells his/her work in the category he/she is entering.
- The artist has had a professional, curated, or gallery exhibition.
- The artist is employed in an art-related job and the category he/she is entering is related to his/her profession.
 - Examples include architects entering artwork containing structural drawings; photographers entering photographs; graphic or advertising artists and illustrators entering graphic works. If the artist is entering artwork in a category that differs from his/her professional field, he/she may be considered Amateur.

Please note that an artist can be Professional in one category and Amateur in another. Awards, exhibitions, or sales directly related to On My Own Time™ do not automatically place the artist into the Professional category.

Note: If you have questions about classifying a particular submission, please contact BCA for advice. It is important to classify the artworks as best as possible to make the jury process equitable.

Collecting Visual Art Submissions

Artists must fill out a **Visual Artist Entry Form** for each work of art he/she plans to submit. We will create a template for online submissions and ask that your liaison shares with your employees directly. The form requires basic information about the artist and the artwork, as well as a photograph of the piece. These photographs are very important for the tracking of artworks during the OMOT Regional Art Show, jurying, and may also be used for the OMOT catalog.

BCA will be creating a spreadsheet from each Visual Artist Entry Form and sending it along to liaisons with updated entries every week. This way, the liaison can see the number of submissions from week to week.

Planning the Exhibition Space

When selecting a physical location for your in-house exhibition, be sure to consider the following:

- **Space requirements.** Using the dimensions provided by each artist, estimate how many linear feet you will need to exhibit every category of work. Smaller objects can be grouped to maximize your space. If you have large quilts, ask the artist if the piece can be folded. 3-D work must fit inside a 23 ¾" x 23 ¾" x 30" or 18" x 12" x 30" vitrine to be exhibited at NorthPark Center.
- **Visibility.** To ensure as many people as possible view the exhibition, BCA suggests high traffic areas such as lobbies, break rooms, corridors, meeting and conference rooms, dining areas, as well as customer service and retail areas.
- **Facility restrictions.** Check with your facility's management if your exhibition requires putting nails/hangers in the walls, temporary removal of furniture/fixtures, or requires the use of portable walls (for fire codes). If marring the surface of facility walls is an issue, consider renting exhibition panels or using easels or adhesive hooks. Some companies have used old cubicle walls in the past.

Virtual Galleries

A virtual gallery may be a great way to let all employees see your exhibition. Using commercial tools such as Adobe Photoshop or free utilities such as Flash Image Gallery, you can build an online exhibition that can then be archived when the exhibition is over. If you do a virtual gallery, be sure to decide whether to accept People's Choice votes from employees viewing online only. Check with your company's webmaster or IT department for assistance in hosting a virtual gallery, as they may already have the utilities available.

Ultimately, your company's exhibition is dependent upon what you think works best for your company culture. The goal is to celebrate your employees, and that can look different across all our participating companies.

Collecting Artworks

During the submission period, BCA will send out updated Visual Artist Entry Forms for each company to track where submissions are. Using the Visual Artist Entry Forms from your company, create a simple spreadsheet or "art roster" to help track artworks. If you are not installing art immediately, you will want to identify a safe location to temporarily store all collected objects.

If you stack framed pieces, be sure to stack them front-to-front and back-to-back with similar-sized objects together. This will prevent the hanging hardware from damaging the fronts of frames and the glass. Place blankets or cardboard between the pieces if you can.

For more details on what “exhibition ready” means, please see the Eligibility Guidelines in Appendix A.

Best Practice Tip: Schedule one or more art check-in days/times to collect the artworks in an organized manner. Staff check-in tables with volunteers. At check-in, make sure all pieces are labeled and exhibition ready. If you receive a piece with hanging hardware that looks inadequate, don't accept it! Ask the artist to correct the issue first.

Installing Your Exhibition

BCA recommends that you form an installation crew to help organize the space, install work, and hang labels to make the process easier and quicker.

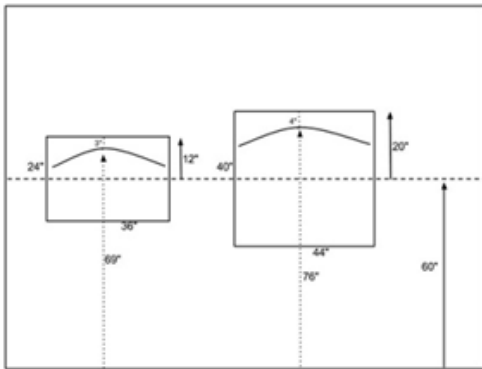
Remember that artists are supposed to have their works exhibition-ready when dropping them off. If you receive a piece with hanging hardware that looks inadequate or suspicious, don't hang it! If you see a piece that looks too fragile or expensive to show securely, discuss it with the artist – he or she may be able to provide you with a case for jewelry or a mannequin for clothing.

Best Practice Tip: If you are nervous about hanging art, ask each artist to join you for the installation of his/her work and have him/her bring any special hardware needed to make sure the object is secure for the length of the exhibition period.

Exhibition Layout

Because works are judged by their media category (e.g., works on canvas, works on paper, etc.), it is best to group them that way in your display. Be sure to organize each section before hanging the artwork so you can determine which pieces look best together and how to space them.

If you have enough space to hang work in a single line (not stacked), try to align the center of each piece along a single sightline (example: 60” from the floor). Otherwise, you can hang the artwork salon style.



Gallery style installation with 60" sightline



Salon-style installation

Labels

Each artwork must be labeled at the company exhibition and upon delivery at NorthPark Center if selected for the OMOT Regional Art Show. Labels should include the artist's name, title of work, category, and division.

Here is an example:

Stacie Adams or #1
Chaos
 Painting
 Division A

If you would like to keep artists anonymous during the People's Choice voting process, you can label works with a voting number (as seen above) rather than a name. Add a column to your art roster to help you track which number corresponds to each piece. At the end of your voting period, you can replace the numbered labels with personalized labels to reveal who created each piece.

Labels can be created with regular copy paper, shipping labels, cardstock, or perforated business cardstock.

Best Practice Tip: Using a 16 or 18-point sans-serif font (e.g., Helvetica, Arial, etc.) helps provide readability at a distance. Having a specific title for each work (rather than "Untitled") helps avoid confusion when installing many pieces of art.

When installing the labels for your in-house exhibition, do your best to use consistent placement so that it is clear which piece each label corresponds with. For example, you

might choose to place each label near the bottom right corner of each hanging work. Don't forget to label any 3-dimensional artworks as well!

Selecting Winners & Advancing to the OMOT Regional Art Show

BCA will assign arts experts from the community to jury the works of your employees and select winners in each category. The community of jurors is made up of art consultants, curators, gallerists, and arts educators who are volunteering their time on behalf of BCA for your company.

Best Practice Tip: Once your winners are chosen, BCA recommends that you review the winning selections with your HR department or other interested parties to ensure your company is comfortable with its representation at the OMOT Regional Art Show.

Art Delivery and Pickup

OMOT Liaisons are responsible for delivering and picking up all company entries for the OMOT Regional Art Show at NorthPark Center. BCA will set up time slots on two different days for art check-in, and there will be one designated day for art check-out. Once the art is delivered to NorthPark, BCA and professional art handlers will be responsible for the installation of the work.

All artwork must be delivered and picked up on the appropriate days. NorthPark Center and BCA do not have storage space for any leftover artwork, and they will not be held responsible for any artwork that is not retrieved by the appropriate pick-up time.

Coordinating the Literary Arts

The literary art category of OMOT lets you showcase the literary talents of your colleagues. BCA provides expert jurors who will judge the entries and indicate which literary works will move on to the Literary Night at Dallas College.

Classification

Each artist must classify his/her literary art submission(s) into one of the following 5 categories:

| Literary Art Category | Description |
|-----------------------|---|
| 10-Word Story | A story containing precisely 10 words (punctuation not counted) |

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Creative Non-Fiction | Non-fictional writing of no more than 650 words that uses factual information (e.g. essays, biographies, memoirs, etc.) |
| Fictional Short Story | A fictional story of no more than 650 words |
| Open Verse Poetry | Poetry of any style or structure; no more than 500 words |
| Corporate Collaboration | Short story of no more than 650 words that are written by 3 or more employees. |
| AI Literature | Literary works that include any amount of AI technology and are no more than 650 words. Prompts required as part of submission. |

Collecting Literary Art Submissions

Artists must fill out a Literary Artist Entry Form for each piece of writing he/she submits. We will create a template for online submissions via Google Forms and ask that your liaison shares with your employees directly. The form requires basic information about the artist and the artwork, as well as a .DOC or .PDF uploaded attachment of the work itself.

Please remind authors that text will be published as-is; no editing or spell-checking will be performed. BCA also discourages the use of special formatting, as it may not be replicable in the online catalog. You may review other Eligibility Guidelines for literary art in Appendix A.

We recommend you track submissions for literary works in the same manner that you decide to track visual artworks in.

Publishing In-House Entries

Just as you will display the visual art submissions in your office, BCA encourages companies to publish a journal of the literary submissions as well. The easiest way is to compile the entries into a single PDF and post the document on a network or website that is accessible to all employees. To maintain the anonymity of authors (if you choose), you may replace authors' names with numbers.

If you are able, you might consider publishing a book of submitted work to create a nice keepsake for participating employees. This book could also double as a promotional tool for next year's OMOT!



Selecting Winners and Advancing to Literary Night

BCA will assign experts from the community to jury the works of your employees and select winners in each category. The community of jurors is made up of editors, authors, professors, and educators who are volunteering their time on behalf of BCA and your company.

Best Practice Tip: Once your winners are chosen, BCA recommends that you review the winning selections with your HR department or other interested parties to ensure your company is comfortable with its representation at Literary Night.

All First, Second, and Third Place winners in each category will be invited to read their works aloud to an audience at Literary Night, which will take place at Dallas College. BCA will share directly with literary winners. However, liaisons have an important role in encouraging employees to read at Literary Night.

Participating in the Regional Events

The OMOT Regional Art Show and Literary Night are opportunities to showcase the winners of your company's OMOT program. Your employees will join other OMOT participants to celebrate the collective creativity of businesses across North Texas.

The regional events are also opportunities to showcase your company to the public. NorthPark Center receives tens of thousands of visitors each day; there is no better place to exhibit your work!

BCA will share information and promotional materials for the OMOT Regional Art Show and Literary Night with OMOT Liaisons for distribution. We encourage you to invite all your friends, family, and colleagues to attend and experience the fun of OMOT!

BCA's online catalog gives your company and employees a place on our OMOT webpage. This online catalog lets anyone who comes to our OMOT page see the artwork of your employees. It also gives meaningful visibility to your company, as a place that cares for the creativity of the people in your workplace. To do this, BCA will need an updated logo and company profile. BCA will send you a detailed request for these items, which need to be turned in by June 16th.

Evaluating the Success of OMOT

BCA is constantly looking for ways to optimize and improve On My Own Time™ to ensure each company is getting the best experience possible. We want to help your company realize its vision and goals for the program, and we hope that OMOT creates a positive new dimension in your overall company culture.

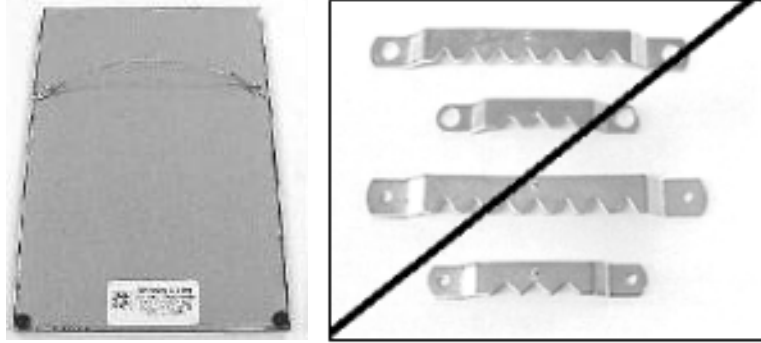
After OMOT concludes in the fall, BCA will follow up with OMOT Liaisons to collect feedback and evaluations. Your thoughts and experience are extremely valuable and vital to the improvement of future OMOT programs.

Appendix A: Eligibility Guidelines

Visual Art

To be eligible for the OMOT Regional Art Show, all visual art entries must be:

- The original work of the employee artist. Artwork created from a kit will not be accepted for jurying or inclusion in the OMOT Regional Art Show but may be included in your company's in-house exhibition at the discretion of your OMOT Liaison.
- The work of an adult artist employee. All employees of participating companies may exhibit in On My Own Time™. Spouses and children of employees may be included in your exhibition at the discretion of your company. If a child is under the age of 18, they are not eligible for the OMOT Regional Art Show.
- New to the OMOT program. Works entered in any previous year's OMOT program are not eligible for the current OMOT program.
- Created "on your own time." Works must be created on the artist's own time and should be unrelated to work projects.
- Manageable in scale. Generally, one person should be able to safely move or install each entry. Art requiring special hanging methods or reinforcement due to excessive weight will not be included in the OMOT Regional Art Show. Complicated or heavy works, if allowed, will require the artist's participation in moving and installing the piece. Works larger than 3 feet wide or 4 feet tall will not be included in the OMOT Regional Art Show due to space limitations.
- Exhibition ready. Each entry must be labeled on the back or base with the artist's name, company name, category, division, and title (no "Untitled," please!). All works must be ready for display, which includes framing and wiring, if applicable.



Wire hangers are the preferred hardware. Do not use sawtooth hangers.

- Content appropriate. Materials containing offensive or discriminatory depictions, nudity, profanity, illegal activities, or negative depictions of social, religious, ethnic, or political groups or individuals will not be considered for the OMOT Regional Art Show.
- Free of copyright or other legal restrictions. Artwork under copyright or that violates any legal statuses should not be submitted to OMOT.

Literary Art

To be eligible for jurying and Literary Night, all literary art entries must be:

- The original work of the employee artist. All entries must be the original work of the submitting author and may not contain content copyrighted by another individual or entity.
- The work of an adult artist employee, spouse, or child over 18. All employees of participating companies may participate in On My Own Time™. Spouses and Children of employees may be included in your exhibition at the discretion of your liaison. If a child is under the age of 18, they will not be included in the jurying process and are therefore ineligible for Literary Night.
- New to the OMOT program. Works entered in previous years' OMOT program are not eligible for the current OMOT program.
- Created "on your own time." Works must be created on the artist's own time and should be unrelated to work projects.
- Reproduction ready. Each artist must attach a .DOC or .PDF file of the work to his/her entry form. Please note that text will be published as is, no editing or spell-checking will be performed. Entries that include complicated formatting may not be replicated in the published programs.
- Content appropriate. Materials containing offensive or discriminatory depictions, nudity, profanity, illegal activities, or negative depictions of social, religious, ethnic, or political groups or individuals will not be considered for Literary Night.

- Free of copyright or other legal restrictions. Literary work under copyright or that violates any legal statuses should not be submitted to On My Own Time™.

Questions

We are so excited to see the creativity of your employees and are here to support you however you may need! Questions can be directed to Libby Bush at libby.bush@ntbca.org