

Expression of interest

An Expression of Interest for the 2026 ARTIST IN RESIDENCE at The Fibre Makers Space at Brough House, in Maitland, NSW is now being invited from artists who incorporate fibre in their art practice. The residency is of four month duration and has a stipend of \$2,000 AUD.

Please note that this is a non-residential program.
The EOI ends at close of business on 1st November, 2025.

AIR (Artist in Residence) 2026 Artistic Program is in association with the National Trust (NSW) and developed and managed by the Friends of Grossmann and Brough Houses (FOGBH)

The Friends of Grossmann and Brough Houses (FOGBH), a committee of the National Trust, invites artists who incorporate textiles in their practice to submit a proposal for a 4 month residency upstairs at the Fibre Makers Space, Brough House, Church Street, Maitland. The residency will commence at the beginning of February 2026 and is to be completed at the end of May 2026. It will be followed in July by an exhibition of work created by the artist during their residency.

Background

Grossmann House was built in 1870-71 by the merchant Isaac Beckett. It adjoins Brough House, built as a mirror image by Beckett's business partner, Samuel Owen. Grossmann House has been restored to be a Victorian period House Museum.

Between 1892 and 1963, Grossmann House was Maitland Girls' High School, one of the first four public high schools established in New South Wales. Brough House was the hostel for the country girls until 1969. Brough House became Maitland's Art Gallery between 1974 and 2003. After MRAG was established in High Street and Brough House became vacant, it has been managed by the National Trust through the Friends of Grossmann and Brough Houses.

In 2016, The Friends of Grossmann and Brough Houses (FOGBH) were offered two vintage looms c1920s through the Petherbridge family (a family with extensive connections to the Maitland area), and some other related items. The stipulation from the National Trust to acquire these objects for the Grossmann Collection was that the looms be restored to working order and be on constant display. This was completed in 2017. The looms are in use and are objects of interest to visitors to the Fibre Makers Space which has developed around them.

The Grossmann Collection is housed in the house museum, and includes all objects, furniture and fittings largely provenanced to the later Victorian era which inform the museum, as well as locally provenanced clothing and other textiles such as shawls and various cloths used in the home. This part of the Collection is stored archivally in the Textile Store area at Grossmann House and also includes extensive examples of lace, and a French bobbin lace pillow with work attached. All these pieces in the Collection illustrate the diverse range of technologies used by women in a domestic setting to produce decorative and practical textiles for the home.

The Artist in Residence Program at Brough House has sought to capitalise on the Grossmann Collection as well as the Petherbridge Looms which were the starting point of the Fibre Makers Space. The inaugural residency commenced in 2022.

A.I.R., Fibre Makers Space, Brough House

The Textile Artist in Residence (AIR) is scheduled for a 4-month period, from February 8th to May 31st, 2026.



FOGBH will encourage the artist in residence to engage with the history of the properties, the Grossmann Collection and the significant textile collection housed in Grossmann House.

The artist will spend the month of February becoming familiar with the premises and collection and gaining some direction. From March until May there will be an open studio situation where visitors to the Fibre Makers Space will see work in progress and hear about the Artist's methods and preferred materials, and artistic processes. At the end of the residency there will be a month's break. The artist will have an exhibition at the beginning of July for the duration of 4-6 weeks in the Cecily Mitchell exhibition space of Brough House.

This project provides a textile artist the opportunity to develop new works in an environment free from day-to-day distraction, and to draw inspiration from the Grossmann Collection and properties. The artist will be able to promote their work through the open studio and scheduled events, as well as networks with local artists and the visiting public and grow their audience base.

Commitment from the Artist

- Develop and create a body of work based on their interpretation of the Grossmann House Collection including its textile collection, the history of Grossmann/Brough houses and/or the environment of Grossmann/Brough houses.
- Attend the opening of the A.I.R. Program to be scheduled for International Women's Day March 8 2026.
- Attend the open studio 2 days a week, 10am to 3pm. Days to be negotiated in discussion with A.I.R. Committee.
- Be in attendance on scheduled open days, usually 2nd Sunday of each month (this could be included as one of the scheduled open studio days).
- Present a workshop or Artist's Talk organised in discussion with the AIR Committee.
- Exhibit at final exhibition, work created during the AIR program.
- Attend the opening of the A.I.R. Program exhibition in first week of July.

Commitment from the A.I.R. Committee

- Provide an AIR Program support committee, comprised of designated members of the FOGBH management committee (no more than 3), and the AIR / FMS Volunteer Coordinator
- Provide a stipend of \$2,000 in total. \$1,000 to be paid on invoice at the beginning of the residency and \$1,000 to be paid on invoice at the end, on the understanding that the stipend will be used for materials, travel and exhibition costs incurred as part of the residency.
- Support the artists' residency through the provision of research material, and a secure studio and workshop space.
- Provide access to the textile collection as arranged with the FOGBH Volunteer Collection Coordinator.
- Permit scheduled access for the artist to the site, outside of listed public access times, for a guided tour and information sessions in the lead up to the AIR commencing.
- Publicise and promote the A.I.R. program and the artist via social media (Facebook etc.) and NT print publications, (subject to print deadlines).
- Facilitate collaboration with the National Trust staff to engage or develop new audiences for the project.
- Advertise Workshop/Artist Talk and Exhibition.

Desired outcomes from the AIR at Brough House Program:

- Continue the development of an arts hub for established and emerging textile artists to showcase skills and new textile art in Maitland.
- Raise the profile of the National Trust historic Grossmann and Brough Houses and the Grossmann Collection.
- Provide opportunities to highlight the Grossmann Collection and its significant textile collection as well as its relevance to a contemporary society.



- Diversify the audience which visits the heritage properties, by introducing a new living element to an otherwise static building.
- Enable the property and its Collection to be seen through the unique vision of the Artist in Residence.

Assessment

Artist-in-Residency Proposal Submissions are assessed by the A.I.R. Committee in accordance with their abilities to meet the Desired outcomes from the **AIR at Brough House Program**.

Only those applications which address these desired outcomes and are received by close of business 1st November 2025 will be considered for selection.

A short list of applicants will be notified by email no later than 29th November 2025 to attend a meeting at Brough House to be arranged during December 2025. If shortlisted you should be able to attend Brough House, 73 Church Street, Maitland (unless circumstances mean that a video call would be arranged). Unsuccessful applicants will be also notified by email.

The AIR for 2026 will be notified by close of business Monday December 22, 2025.

Application

The following information should be submitted with each proposal:

- Contact details including name, phone number, email address, address. Website (if you have one) and/or social media contacts (Instagram, Facebook etc.)
- A statement of intent (no longer than 2 pages, typed) which may include.
- An outline of your practice to date
- Reasons you would like to be artist in residence at the Fibre Makers Space, Brough House.
- A brief description of how you will meet the desired outcomes from the AIR at Brough House program.
- A current CV (no longer than 2 pages)
- Up to 5 examples of work as jpeg or pdf (No larger than 5MB in total).

Email your EOI to grossmann@nationaltrust.com.au Attention AIR Program

This residency is open to all artists who incorporate textiles in their practice. Early, late, or mid-career artists are encouraged to apply.

Important dates and details:

1st November 2025 Expression of Interests Applications close

29th November 2025 Shortlist of applicants notified of interviews to be arranged for December

22nd December 2025 successful applicant contacted

5th January 2026, unsuccessful applicants emailed

2nd February 2026 signing of Memorandum of Understanding and National Trust (NSW) documents at Brough House