

EXHIBITION REMUNERATION IN FINLAND (Exhibition Copyright Fee & Exhibition Payment)

A brief overview by Teemu Mäki, the Chairperson of Artists' Association of Finland (AAF, <https://www.artists.fi/en>).

In Finland visual artists are paid for exhibitions in museums and equivalent exhibition spaces through two separate systems. In international comparison it makes sense to couple these two together and say that:

In Finland Exhibition remuneration system has two components: the *Exhibition Copyright Fee* and the *Exhibition Payment*. These components are handled by two separate systems.

1.

EXHIBITION COPYRIGHT FEE

Exhibition Copyright Fee (in Finnish: *Näyttelykorvaus*) is based purely on copyright law. The copyright collecting organisation Kuvasto (<https://kuvasto.fi/in-english/>) takes care of collecting the fees and distributing them to artists.

Here is a link, unfortunately only in Finnish, to Kuvasto's listing of fees on their website: <https://kuvasto.fi/hinnasto/#nayttelyhinnasto> The system works pretty well. Kuvasto distributes about 1,5 million Euros per year to visual artists, but it's good to know that only about 250 000 € of that is Exhibition copyright fees — the rest is other types of copyright fees (<https://kuvasto.fi/2022/06/kuvaston-vuosi-2021/>).

The pricing in the copyright fee system takes into account three things:

1.

How many artists are in the show?

If only one artist, then the basic fee is 1300 €.

2 artists: 800 € per artist.

3 artists: 580 € per artist.

4 artists: 465 € per artist.

5 artists: 410 € per artist.

6 artists: 375 € per artist.

7 artists: 350 € per artist.

8 artists: 330 € per artist.

9 artists: 315 €

If 10 or more artists, then the basic fee is 300 € per artist.

2.

How long is the exhibition?

The aforementioned basic fees are used if the exhibition is open to audience for 60 days or less. If the show is longer, then the fees are raised like this:

Exhibition open up to 90 days: boost the fee by 50 %.

Exhibition open up to 120 days: boost the fee by 90 %.

Exhibition open up to 180 days: boost the fee by 120 %.

3.

How big is the audience?

The basic fees are used as long as there are less than 10 000 visitors. If the audience is bigger, the fees are raised like this:

10 000 – 19 999 10%

20 000 – 29 999 20%

30 000 – 39 999 30%

40 000 – 49 999 40%

50 000 – 59 999 50%

etc.

The maximum fee per artist is 5 000 €. The fees are without VAT, i.e. VAT is added to the fees mentioned.

The fees are to some extent negotiable, for example typical summer exhibitions tend to get discount, because they are big shows organised with meagre funds, with a lot of artists participating, and so on.

Kuvasto has list prices also for many other things, for example online exhibitions and so on.

2.

EXHIBITION PAYMENT

Exhibition Payment system is based on agreement between Artists' Association of Finland (and Ornamo Art and Design Finland), The Finnish Museums Association and the state of Finland. The fee in this system is called **Exhibition Payment** (or, in Finnish: *Näyttelypalkkio*).

I was in the committee that wrote the agreement and guidelines in 2021. The final report of the committee, unfortunately only in Finnish, is here: https://api.hankeikkuna.fi/asiakirjat/1060cd83-9ac7-46ac-865d-cc5d1b551eab/53fd1ad9-9fde-407d-a25e-d9f9b7bb36ff/RAPORTTI_20210623082411.pdf

This payment is for the (non-artistic) work that artists do, when they participate in an exhibition in a museum or in an equivalent space: planning the show, negotiating with the staff (meetings and email correspondence), packing and unpacking the artworks and so on. Artists' Association of Finland did a survey on this and the conclusion was that even with group shows an individual artist has to spend typically at least three days on these practicalities. And since almost all visual artists are freelancers they were not getting paid for this work — until now. Of course the museum show can lead to sales and boost the artist's career and so on, but that is no excuse for not paying the artist for the hours the artist puts into creating the show.

Two things were left outside of this system:

- A) The system is meant for museums, art halls and equivalent organisations that arrange exhibitions, whose main purpose is NOT selling artworks. In other words, commercial galleries are excluded from the Exhibition Payment system. This does leave some organisations or companies in the grey area, but we don't see this as a significant problem. For example artists' unions' galleries and galleries that are run or to large extent funded by the state or municipalities should be counted in. The dividing line is: if your organisation's main aim, economically, is to sell art, and your organisation's main source of income is the selling of artworks, then you are out of this system.
- B) Exhibition Payment system does NOT (usually) pay for the making of artworks. If you make paintings and then exhibit them in the museum, the Exhibition Payment does not compensate for the hours you spent on painting. This is of course an important limitation in the system. Without this limitation the Finnish Museums Association and several other parties would not have accepted the system. It also makes sense from the artists' viewpoint. If you spend two years painting the paintings for a show, the exhibition payment should be tens of thousands of Euros if it was meant to cover the actual artmaking, not only the practical work directly related to organising the show. When the "actual artmaking" is not paid for by the Exhibition Payment system, that also means that other, even more significant means of funding artmaking are still needed and we can lobby for them too, for example: we need more artists' grants, we need more salaried jobs for visual artists... and we do also welcome various ways of strengthening the art market.

However, there are exceptions to the aforementioned rule about not paying for the artmaking. If an artist for example makes a site-specific installation for their exhibition in the museum and has to work there, on-site, for a couple of weeks, then this work should be paid for through the Exhibition Payment system. This kind of things are — in our system — seen as *Accessory parts* of the *Exhibition Payment*, to separate them from the *Basic part*. The recommended fees describe the basic part and they should be paid automatically. The recommendations also

approximately describe what can be expected to be covered with the basic fee and when is the negotiation for Accessory part needed, for example the recommendations say that writing very short descriptions about one's own artworks are covered by the basic fee, but writing an article or essay is not.

The basic Exhibition Payment fees are based on A) how many artists are in the exhibition and B) how big is the exhibition space?

The recommended rates per artist are:

Solo show in a small space (max 200 m²): 5 000 €.

Solo show in a middle-size space (200-400 m²): 7 500 €.

Solo show in a big space (over 400 m²): 10 000 €.

Exhibition by 2 artists: 3500 / 5250 / 7000 €.

Exhibition by 3 artists: 2500 / 3750 / 5000 €.

Exhibition by 4 artists: 1500 / 2250 / 3000 €.

Exhibition by 5 artists: 1000 / 1500 / 2000 €.

Exhibition by 6 artists: 900 / 1350 / 1800 €.

Exhibition by 7 artists: 800 / 1200 / 1600 €.

Exhibition by 8 artists: 700 / 1050 / 1400 €.

Exhibition by 9 artists: 600 / 900 / 1200 €.

Exhibition by 10 artists or more: 500 / 750 / 1000 €.

Like I said, the list above covers only the so-called basic part of the Exhibition Payment. If there is additional work that requires paying the "accessory part" too, that has to be negotiated separately, between the artist and the exhibition organisation. The committee's recommendation is that in those negotiations the payment guidelines of Artists' Association of Finland should be followed. AAF has published online its Guidelines for Pricing Visual Artist's Work: https://www.artists.fi/sites/default/files/inline-files/2021-03/Guidelines%20for%20pricing%20visual%20artist%27s%20work_1.pdf

HOW DO THESE TWO SYSTEMS WORK TOGETHER?

In Finland it was good to create two separate systems for artists to get paid for their exhibitions. Why? Because the *Exhibition Copyright Fee* system was well established and working well for decades already — and it was based on the copyright law. *The Exhibition Payment* system was first tested for three years and is now — in 2022 — fully working for the first time, plus it's based on voluntary agreement between representatives of several different parties: the artists, the museums, the state, and so on.

The third way for artists to get paid for their exhibitions is of course selling their artworks, but that is a different matter. Though, on the other hand the exhibition remuneration systems are important precisely because selling and buying is nowadays only rarely the main focus of art exhibitions. Most art exhibitions don't resemble a shop, where the customers would go and look for things that might want to buy and then consume at home. Instead most art exhibitions resemble more theatres or concert halls, where the audience comes to enjoy the actual thing, art, in the exhibition situation. Since this is the situation, it's sensible and fair to start paying properly the artists, who make all the "content" that is enjoyed or consumed in exhibitions and similar events. Instead of telling the artist: "Your reward will come later, when someone actually buys some of the works you are showing here for free."

It's also sensible to some extent to compare art exhibitions with public libraries. Galleries, like public libraries, have no entry fee. And museums, not only in Nordic countries, have very low entry fees, when compared to the costs of maintaining the museums. In other words, museums and many similar exhibition spaces are like public libraries in that they all are mainly funded by the public sector to create a high quality common good that's accessible to all citizens. In the case of libraries nowadays in most EU countries the writers — and other content creators, whose works are distributed through library system — are paid for the content they provide. In Finland that sum is 15,6 million Euros (2022,

<https://www.sanasto.fi/lainauskorvausmaararaha-pysymassa-ennallaan-vuodelle-2022/>). The purpose and justification of Exhibition Remuneration system(s) is similar to the Library Loan Compensation Fee.

A few more related numbers, from Finland, to remember:

- When you divide all the Exhibition Copyright Fees annually collected in Finland together and divide that with how many visitors the art museums get, you can say that the artists get about 7 cents in copyright fees every time someone enters a Finnish art museum. That's not much, and even that 7 cents is shared between all the living artists that are exhibited in that museum on that day. A good point of comparison should be the Library Loan Compensation system, which not exactly generous, but better nonetheless: I get about 27 cents every time someone borrows from library one of my books.
- Finnish art museums spend only 1,4 % of their budget on buying art. 80 % of their budget goes to the maintaining their buildings and paying their own staff. The remaining 20 % is left for everything else, including exhibitions. If you add the Exhibition Copyright Fees and Exhibition Payments to the sum that museums spend on purchasing art, you can conclude that only about 3 % of the annual budget of Finnish art museums goes to artists. (The source: the statistics published by the Finnish Museums Association.)

I think visual artists should work together to get paid, and paid fairly. One aspect of that is to fight for systems that enable us to get paid more often and more fairly when people enjoy our art — not only when people want to buy and become owners of our art.

Helsinki, Finland, 21.10.2022,

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