

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) I-Park 2023 General Residency Program

[11/30/22]

Overview

What is the essence of the I-Park residency program; does it have a particular vibe or focus?

The program offers a quiet, retreat-like setting conducive to exploration and experimentation. Artists are free to conceive and execute new ideas or work on existing projects. I-Park has, over the years, developed a particular interest in interpreting and engaging its natural and built environments with site-responsive, ephemeral works. As an artist-in-residence, you will have the opportunity to tap into this vein. But you will feel no pressure whatsoever to do so – and your interest in this field, or lack thereof, is not a consideration in the selection process.

Is I-Park actually a park?

In its present form, it is a fairly wild and natural 450-acre tract of land that has a park-like feel to it – more so in recent years. Most programmatic activities take place on about 50-acres. There are presently about 25 walking trails on the land, some designed by artists and others by the I-Park creative team.

Residency Program Basics

How many artists are in residence during your sessions?

In 2023, we will have 7 artists per session.

What are the time frames of the residencies being offered?

In 2023, all 6 General Residency sessions are 4-weeks in duration. I-Park's primary goal is to support serious creative explorations while fostering a safe, comfortable, intimate sense of community. This is best achieved when the session participants arrive together, stay together as a group and then depart on the same date. To foster group cohesion and equity, we rarely agree to late arrivals or early departures.

What are the dates for the 2023 residency season?

Refer to the 2023 Residency Program Calendar for specific session dates.

Application Process, Eligibility, Travel Grants

What kind of application process is involved?

I-Park uses the SlideRoom third-party online submission system. All forms and work samples are submitted online. By necessity, each discipline has its own application form. Within the SlideRoom structure, each discipline is considered a separate “program.” In fact, each residency session, by design, consists of a mix of artists from various disciplines. To that extent, the word “program” is somewhat misleading. If there is any doubt whatsoever as to which discipline to apply under, please get in touch with a staff member.

Is there an age requirement and can students apply?

Students may apply but we do not allow artists under the age of twenty-one to participate. There is no upper age limit.

Am I permitted to apply to more than one program; can I be evaluated as an artist or designer in more than one discipline?

You are permitted to apply to a maximum of 2 programs in any calendar year. You would need to submit 2 separate applications from start to finish and there would be 2 application fees. In the event you were to be accepted by the juries in both disciplines, you would only be offered a single residency. You would, of course, be able to choose which invitation to accept.

What is the policy on international applicants, including language skills?

We enthusiastically welcome international applicants. However, we are not well versed in the workings of the visa application process. While we are happy to provide a formal letter of invitation, and will provide whatever additional support information is requested of us, it will be your responsibility to carry the burden of the visa acquisition process through the appropriate channels. Related, it is your responsibility to keep informed with respect to Covid-19 travel restrictions, if any, as they may pertain to your ability to travel to or from the U.S. If you are planning to come from abroad for a residency, you should start working on your travel arrangements early. Accepted artists must be reasonably fluent in English.

International travel grants in 2023?

Thanks to the generosity of I-Park's supporters, a minimum of four \$500 travel grants will be awarded in 2023. If you are a non-U.S. citizen permanently residing outside of North America, and have a need for a travel grant, answer the relevant questions in the (optional) Confidential: 2023 International Travel Grants form. Should you be recommended for a residency by your respective selection panel, we will review your responses within the form and communicate with you. You may be asked to submit a statement of need and/or two or three references and proof of your residency at that time. I-Park's three-person Grants Committee will decide which artists are most deserving of the grants. The grants will be funded upon the submission of a receipt for your travel costs. Note that your request for the grant is not visible to the selection panelists and is therefore not taken into account during the selection process.

Can two or more individuals apply to work on a collaborative project?

For the General Residency Program, we are not in a position to accommodate such arrangements. However, if both parties applying to the program are selected (in whatever discipline), you are welcome to explain your situation and request scheduling in the same session.

Are I-Park fellows (former residents) allowed to participate in subsequent residencies?

Yes, subject to certain restrictions. Fellows seeking a follow-up residency, including in the season directly subsequent to their first I-Park residency, will need to submit a new application and fee and be approved by their discipline-specific panel. Those wishing to participate in a third residency, however, must then take a break of 5 seasons before being eligible to apply again. In some instances, fellows can return sooner if recommended and approved for participation under our Invitation Program (see below). I-Park's internal guidelines state that no more than 15% of the participating artists in any season can be fellows.

If I was on the waiting list or was accepted for a residency in a prior year but was unable to attend, do I need to re-apply?

Unless you received a commitment in writing from us in 2022 to defer your residency, we cannot automatically "carry-forward" artists from the previous years' waiting lists or accommodate artists who declined a 2022 invitation. So, you will need to re-apply. However, in such instances, we're happy to waive the application fee. For a fee waiver, you will need to contact the I-Park office prior to submitting your application so we can initiate the paperwork through SlideRoom. Note that the fee waiver offer would only apply if you received an invitation notification in 2022.

Do you require letters of reference?

We do not, as a general rule, require letters of reference, though we reserve the right to do so in certain circumstances.

What is the policy on spouses, collaborating partners, studio assistants?

Spouses, partners, family members and studio assistants cannot be accommodated with the General Residency Program. We do, however, allow collaborating partners and studio assistants in certain of our Special Programs – but there are no such programs slated for 2023.

Selection Process

What is the general philosophy behind I-Park's selection process?

Selections are based on the strength of the artist's existing body of work, their professional career path, the panel's interest in the creative projects being proposed and, to the extent possible, a sense of the likelihood that the artist will be comfortable and productive within the particular setting that's been created at I-Park. We embrace the goals of diversity, equity and inclusion within our residency population and encourage applications from artists of all backgrounds.

What are the mechanics of your selection process?

We utilize discipline-specific panels comprised of artists and experienced professionals from the following fields: Visual Arts, Creative Writing, Music Composition/Sound Art, Moving Image/New Media, Architecture and Landscape/Garden/Ecological Design. Panelists receive an honorarium to compensate them for their time and expertise. Each panel has at least one I-Park fellow. All applications go through a 2-step evaluation process. The first assessment of work samples, the Preview Round, entails reviewing a very limited amount of submitted content. A much more in-depth assessment happens in the Final Review Round. The Optional Survey Form cannot be accessed by the selection panelists. Beyond that, the details of our selection process (identity of jurors, artists' individual scores, comments and deliberations relating to individual applicants) are not publicly divulged. That said, we pride ourselves on having established a process that is extremely thoughtful, thorough and fair – one that assures open-minded consideration to all who have submitted a timely, complete application package. New panels are assembled each season to keep I-Park's perspectives fresh, though exceptional jurors from previous seasons are occasionally invited to serve on subsequent panels.

How important is the resume/CV?

The document is not required reading for the Preview Round. Panelists are essentially processing your work samples and possibly scanning the Project Proposal. They will, however, review educational achievements, professional credentials and public/peer recognition in the Final Round. That said, I-Park warmly welcomes self-taught artists and those working outside the academic, commercial or cultural mainstream. Selection panelists' response to the quality of the work samples is the most important factor in their scoring.

In terms of my chances of acceptance into the program, is there a level playing field? For example, are I-Park fellows given special consideration?

As a matter of policy, I-Park reserves the right to allocate up to 15% of the available spaces to invited artists (Invitation Program), artists whose work is admired by, or brought to the attention of, members of I-Park's Inter-disciplinary Curatorial Panel. We're very open to, and appreciate, referrals. And, as indicated above, up to an additional 15% of the space may be awarded to returning fellows. Fellows requesting a return residency are scored alongside, and on the same basis as, new applicants. These guidelines are intended to inhibit favoritism and to keep the selection process welcoming and fair. As a practical matter, we rarely exceed a 15% combined total of fellows and invitees per season.

Any other important factors that will improve my chances of acceptance?

A reasonably coherent project proposal or, alternatively, an interesting concept for an investigation or experiment is usually well received. Also, a submission package that evidences commitment and depth of development and direction within one's practice will tend to be viewed more favorably than a broad survey or sampling of capabilities. Panelists also tend to appreciate brevity and restraint in applicants' responses to the questions posed in the application form.

What happens after the selection panels make their recommendations?

Once the selection panels have reported their results, I-Park communicates with all applicants as soon as practical. If you are selected for a residency, you will receive an e-mail inviting you into the program. Your final acceptance, however, is subject to your agreeing to the terms of the program, as spelled out in the I-Park Residency Agreement – as well as your commitment to participate in a short telephone conversation at some point prior to your session. Invited artists need to cooperate in the timely scheduling of this conversation. This informal chat takes about 20-minutes and is primarily intended to give you the opportunity to address any of your questions and concerns, to confirm that your project is feasible within the constraints of the facilities and to finalize your travel arrangements. We'll also gather some basic information from you so we can make an informed studio assignment. Finally, we'll want to establish that basic social, including language, skills are in evidence such that we are comfortable that you can communicate and function within the intimate social setting that exists at I-Park.

When do you expect to notify artists of their selection status?

At some point in March, 2023.

Costs, Obligations

What expenses will I need to cover?

Use of the facilities, the meals program, local transportation and staff support are provided at no cost. However, residents will need to pay for transportation to and from the general area and for any art tools and materials required for their projects.

Do you charge for use of the kiln?

If your project requires heavy use and you are producing for a commercial application, we charge for the estimated cost of the electricity consumed. In most cases, though, there is no charge. You must, however, have a demonstrated ability to safely operate this equipment. In fact, we haven't used the kiln in ages and it may or may not be artist-ready. Please check well in advance if you expect to need it.

Do the resident artists have any obligations other than the expenses mentioned above?

We ask that you evidence your stay – leave your mark, so to speak – by creating one or two pages of original work on paper for your residency session's scrapbook. This could consist of a sketch or some doodles, a few photos, a narrative, musical notations – something that comes directly from your I-Park experience. These entries are typically light and loose in nature. While I-Park has been the beneficiary of many works of art over the years, and we'd be flattered if you are moved to contribute in this way, this is by no means an obligation. We do, however, request that artists be generous with their insights and suggestions for making the program and facilities better. To that end, we ask that you put serious thought into the responses you provide in the end-of-session survey that we'll ask you to fill out before you depart. We'd also appreciate, for our archives, copies of the photos you took during your residency. Finally, we hope you will help us to promote future open calls for our residency program, by word of mouth as well as other means.

Will there be any specific accountability for my work product?

As indicated above, you are free to work on what you choose. And, it is not at all unusual for artists to change, or even scrap, their initial project proposals once they get into the groove of their residencies.

Is there a written agreement associated with the residency?

Yes, there is short agreement that defines the obligations of the parties and limits the legal exposure of the I-Park Foundation, Inc. and related entities. As part of this agreement, residents agree to abide by the program's rules and procedures as set forth in the I-Park Handbook. The completed, signed agreement must be received prior to arrival at I-Park.

Lodging

What kind of living quarters are provided?

You will have a private bedroom and a shared bathroom (no more than 2 individuals per bathroom) in an historic two-story house. The house has been completely renovated and is air-conditioned. Kitchen facilities are shared by all the residents, but also the chef. Because we will be inviting 7 artists per session and the residence facility has only 6 bedrooms, one artist will be assigned to an alternative lodging space. There are 5 such spaces at I-Park, with varying features that may be desirable to certain artists. Typically, 2 or 3 of the artists will volunteer for one of these spaces – and we have never been in a position of having to force anyone to do so.

Will I need to bring towels and sheets? What about laundry facilities?

We will provide towels and bedding items and have a washer/dryer available for your use.

Support, Food, Amenities

What about meals?

I-Park provides a basic meals program at no cost. Breakfast and lunch ingredients are stocked in the refrigerators and pantries from which meals can be prepared by the artists at times of their choosing. Monday through Friday, our chef prepares a group meal, that is served at 7:00 pm. While most artists look forward to these gatherings, attendance is voluntary. We do ask, though, that you let us know in advance if you're not going to join in or if you'd like a doggy bag put aside. Sometimes we mix it up by ordering take-out, doing a barbeque, having a volunteer prepare the meal or organizing a potluck/participatory dinner. In some instances, though never more than once per session, outside guests/supporters may offer to host such a meal. For Saturday and Sunday, there will be ingredients available, often including leftovers, from which group or individual meals can be cobbled together. The pantries and refrigerators are stocked with staples and the kitchen is outfitted for group cooking. A meal pattern quickly develops for each session that reflects the preferences of the group. Alcoholic beverages are not provided by I-Park.

Can/will you cater to individual dietary needs?

While we are accustomed to providing a vegetarian option on request, and though we make a reasonable effort to do so, we cannot commit to accommodating everyone's individualized dietary restrictions. Artists may need to bring special ingredients from home, have items shipped in and/or are welcome to accompany staff when they make their weekly run to the grocery store. Each artist is assigned a small space in the refrigerator and some shelf space in the pantry for their individual needs. I-Park pays for the chef-prepared meals and for "common" pantry and refrigerated food items. Artists are responsible for food purchases geared to their individual preferences and/or health requirements.

Cleanup, composting?

Artists are responsible for cleanup after their meals and for maintaining a reasonably neat and organized kitchen between visits by the cleaning staff: timely washing of dishes and clearing of the tables and counters, emptying the trash and, as needed, sweeping the floor – so as not to invite mice to the festivities. Housecleaning staff will visit the residence facility every week to 10 days. We are conscientious about composting and recycling.

What kinds of communications are available at I-Park?

We have good wi-fi reception in all the inhabited structures including the workshop. At the Pond Studio, we recently installed a Starlink satellite receiver which you will be able to connect to for light duty functions such as e-mail, Google searches and the like. We are still working through the kinks with the Starlink equipment. Therefore, if you're uploading/downloading large files, you may need to do so from the workstation in the Common Area. We have a Chromebook with a high-speed internet connection in the residence facility for light use such as checking e-mail. If you have a smart phone, laptop or tablet with wireless capability, you should be able to readily access our network, though not on the land. With a recently installed tower in our neighborhood, cell phone reception (not wi-fi) is quite good throughout the property, though we cannot claim that all service providers' networks are available. For example, those using T-Mobile/Sprint will not have service, though you should be able to send and receive texts. We also have a loud bell that we use to call the folks to dinner.

What kind of computer hardware, software and support will be available?

In addition to the above-mentioned shared workstations, we have two standard format inkjet printers capable of copying and scanning to pdf; one is located in the residence facility, the other in the Common Area. The printers are available for casual use only as they are shared resources. If you require heavy access to a computer or printer for your work project or specialized equipment or software needs, you should inquire about this well in advance to determine whether or not we will be able to accommodate you. It is assumed that computer users are reasonably familiar with the current state of the technology and that they will not be looking to staff for high end technical support or training. Residents must abide by the computer rules posted at the workstations.

Are the facilities and grounds wheelchair accessible?

Within the residence facility, the kitchen, 2 bedrooms and one bathroom are ADA compliant. The Common Area is ADA compliant as well as 3 of the 8 studios. Beyond that, we are always pleased to make facility and other adjustments for situations beyond the need for wheelchair access. Please make us aware, in advance of your residency, if you will be requiring any particular accommodations so we can prepare appropriately.

Nature, the Land

How does one get familiar with the site?

A guided group site walk of the land is scheduled within the first few days of the residency. While this is voluntary, most artists choose to participate. It's a good opportunity to get familiar with the basic trail system, site features as well as the general character of the natural environment. We will also provide you with a trail map that can be used for subsequent self-exploration. If you're seriously interested in the fauna and flora, do sign up for the intense bird walk led by some members of a local chapter of the Audubon Society. You will be given binoculars and will acquire some clever tips on how to identify the various types of birds that inhabit I-Park. You can even ask questions about mushrooms, the history of the land and invasive and indigenous plants.

Is it alright to use onsite found materials in my work product?

Yes, there is quite a variety of natural and man-made materials, including wood from the Woodstock Shed and lots of interesting objects from our infamous Junk Trail – that you’re welcome to utilize. Please just ask permission first as there may be a few caveats/exceptions.

Is it possible to create installations on the land?

Yes, subject to project approval. The main considerations are site location, safety, feasibility and intensity of the intervention (all installations are considered temporary). A written proposal and sketch will be required in advance and the artist may be responsible for removing the piece at the end of their residency. In certain cases, installations may remain up for a longer time frame and I-Park will either maintain or dispose of them at its discretion – or, per the terms of a separate Site Installations Agreement. Certainly, those working in the field of site-responsive art encouraged to engage the landscape and will find here a rich natural canvas for their creations.

Does I-Park provide support for such installations?

I-Park is accustomed to providing limited staff and equipment support for site installations. If you have a particularly ambitious project in mind, it may be useful to discuss it with staff prior to your residency.

New for 2023

As an experiment, I-Park will be integrating its long running Site-Responsive Art Residency & Biennale within 2023’s General Residency Program. Two \$5,000 prizes for the most engaging site-responsive art installations will be awarded at the end of the residency season. If you’d like to learn more about this opportunity, click on the Site-Responsive Art in 2023 link on the General Residency Program webpage. This invitation to participate is entirely optional/voluntary.

What is the weather like at I-Park? What kind of clothing should I pack?

New England is known for the unpredictability of its weather. We recommend packing long pants, tall socks and some long sleeve shirts, regardless of the season, to reduce tick exposure. Sturdy hiking shoes or boots are also recommended. The mean temperatures for this area, as well as the average lows and highs, are as follows (as measured in degrees Fahrenheit):

May	57 (44 – 68)	July	71 (58 – 82)	Sept.	61 (48 – 74)	Nov.	41 (30 – 51)
June	65 (52 – 77)	Aug.	68 (56 – 81)	Oct.	50 (36 – 64)		

Are there any insect problems I should be aware of?

Ours is an area, like much of the Northeast, where ticks are prevalent. You are advised to educate yourself on the precautions you can and should take to minimize the risk of contracting Lyme and related diseases. We discuss this topic at length during the group orientation session. We offer DEET and non-DEET insect repellent as well as Permethrin. If the forecast is for a bad tick season, we may also do some preventative spraying along the main pathways. In addition to ticks, we have (in season) deer flies and, in the house, we tend to get a wave of un-ladylike “ladybugs” in the spring and early fall (harmless but somewhat annoying). If you are in residence during a particularly wet season, the mosquitos can be bothersome in the early morning and at dusk. Other than that, the insects are pretty unobtrusive, though, to city dwellers, their evening cacophonies may take some getting used to.

Are there wild animals in the area that I might want to know about?

You will regularly come upon deer and wild turkeys. We have frogs, squirrels, chipmunks, raccoons, mice, possums, rabbits, snakes, turtles, skunks, woodchucks, beavers, muskrats and otters. The variety of birds on site is quite impressive. Learn more by signing up for the Audubon walk. In transit, wild geese will stop and pay us an extended visit each year to birth, raise and flight-train their young. There are also foxes, the occasion bobcat and coyotes. And we understand that fisher cats and black bears are making inroads into the area.

Transportation

Can I drive my vehicle to I-Park?

Absolutely, we have ample free parking. Trucks, vans, motorcycles and trailers park out back.

How about getting around onsite, given the scale of the property?

Walking is the most common mode of transportation. We generally have a couple bicycle available – and we have a van and an all-terrain vehicle onsite that can be used to move people and materials around as needed. Artists are not allowed to operate I-Park vehicles.

What public transportation resources are available if driving to I-Park is not an option?

The closest airport is Bradley International, sometimes called Hartford/Springfield, which is about a one-hour drive from East Haddam. The T. F. Green airport in Warwick, Rhode Island is another option. Most international artists arrive by way of a New York area, including Newark, airport. They will then typically travel by train from New York City (Metro North or Amtrak) to Old Saybrook. There are bus stations in Middletown, Hartford and Old Saybrook, each of which is about 30 minutes from I-Park. There are detailed directions on our website and in the pre-residency Orientation Packet for getting to I-Park from the major international airports. However, flying directly to Bradley International, whenever practical, will save you several hours of transit time. Feel free to reach out to staff if you would like assistance prior to finalizing your travel arrangements.

How do I get to I-Park from the airport, train or bus station – and how do I get around when there?

I-Park will be pleased to pick you up at an airport or train or bus stations that service the local area (i.e., Connecticut). Pickups and drop-offs are subject to 7-day advance scheduling and are based on making these runs at the beginning and end of the scheduled residency session – during normal work hours (9:00 am – 5:00 pm). We do attempt to “pool” our pickups so there could be some waiting involved. Note that we are not staffed to do out-of-state pickups. In the case of international arrivals, timely enroute communications are vital. As for getting around the local area once you’ve arrived, we go grocery shopping at least once a week and are happy to take you along. Special arrangements can be made for unusual purchasing needs with advance notice. We can help you source local transportation options (rental cars, Uber/Lyft, taxis, limousines, private drivers, an affordable local van service) if you have more personalized transportation needs (e.g., a pickup truck). Except in the case of an emergency, should you have occasion to leave I-Park before the official end of your residency, you would be responsible for your own local transportation costs. At this time, while you can generally get here via Uber, Lyft or taxi, because of our remote location and low population density, we do not have reliable access to these options if you’re looking to leave I-Park. If you anticipate doing a lot of off-site errands or research, you should consider renting a vehicle.

Studios, Workshop, Equipment

What kind of studio facilities are provided?

Basic, private, well-lit, multi-purpose workspaces in two converted barn structures and in a series of free-standing cabins. In 2017, we built two relatively large visual artists studios, though one of them is temporarily serving as a composer’s studio. All studios are heated, air-conditioned and have ample natural light, though none have bathrooms. We use a monthly checklist to assure that all studios have the basic amenities at the beginning of each session (copy available). I-Park will attempt to accommodate specialized equipment needs, within reason, especially if this equipment is likely to have future utility. However, such requests should be made well in advance of the residency. Some customization of the workspaces may also be possible with advance discussion. Studio photos and specifications are typically available on the website, though at this time, that webpage is in the process of being updated.

Are the studios set deep in the woods?

Except for the Pond Studio, no, they are actually in fairly close proximity to the residence facility. The Pond Studio is about a ten-minute walk from the house. The new visual arts studios are nestled into a wooded area about a 3-4 minute walk from the house.

Can I request a specific studio or room in the house?

Studios, as well as the bedrooms in the house, are assigned by staff based on their best judgment, taking into consideration many factors. We try to match the specific personal working practices and functional needs of the artists with the particular characteristics of the various available spaces. We also need to be flexible in the face of changing circumstances (we often do not make final studio assignments until a day or two prior to the start of the session). So, while you can request a specific studio or bedroom, and we will consider it, we cannot make any firm commitments in advance of the residency – and staff decisions on studio and living space assignments are final.

Does I-Park have studio spaces outfitted with equipment for photography and/or computer-generated/new media art?

In some cases, we have been able to assist with specialized equipment and/or software. But these days, most artists bring their own gear. Nonetheless, I-Park has successfully hosted many artists working in these fields. Inquire as to your specific needs and we will attempt to accommodate. With adequate advance notice, we can create black-out spaces for filmmakers and photographers in certain studios.

What about “workshop” space?

I-Park has a workshop with tools and equipment that is available to all artists, primarily for working with wood and metals. If you are unfamiliar with any of the tools or equipment you would like to use, please ask staff for assistance. If more than one artist per session is in need of this space, a sharing or scheduling arrangement will be negotiated. We also can erect temporary canopies so that spaces out on the land or outside assigned studios can be used as workshops. If you require specific tools or equipment for your project, please get in touch with us in advance to clarify what we provide versus what you may need to bring with you or purchase.

What kind of storage space is available for my “stuff?”

The studios are of reasonable size and your specific requirements will be discussed in advance during the pre-residency phone conversation. The living quarters have a fair amount of closet space for clothing but not a huge space. We suggest you pack light.

Orientation, Rules, Policies

What kind of orientation do you provide?

If you peruse the I-Park website and this FAQ, you will become quite familiar with the basics of the program. The pre-residency phone call provides you the opportunity to ask more detailed questions and you are, of course, welcome to contact the office at any time. We schedule a sit-down orientation gathering involving all the artists and staff during the first full day of the residency. The I-Park Handbook in your room and the Orientation Notebooks in the library offer even more information about where things are and how they work. We go to great lengths to minimize unpleasant surprises.

Can I bring my pet?

Sorry, no pets are allowed. There are no exceptions to this policy. However, there are nearby offsite resources for boarding your pet and even a nearby café that offers a cat petting area (they provide the cats).

What is the policy on smoking and vaping?

Smoking and vaping are not allowed in any of the indoor spaces. Smoking and vaping on the grounds is permitted with due consideration for your non-smoking fellow residents as well as fire safety. If we have smokers in the group, we'll create a designated smoking area for you to use. Please discard all associated waste products properly.

If I happen to live close by, is it a problem if I return home occasionally?

We view the grant of an I-Park residency as a precious gift. Those who live close by may, quite naturally, be tempted to go home on occasion, or even on some kind of routine schedule, to attend to . . . whatever. This makes for a less than fully engaged residency experience and, as we have learned, it has an impact on the group dynamic. We frown on this and, except in extraordinary circumstances, we're not inclined to offer residencies to those unable to fully utilize the program as intended. An I-Park residency involves a serious commitment on the part of all parties.

Can I invite a guest?

Depending on then-existing Covid-19 policies, we can accommodate guests on an occasional, case-by-case basis, but frankly, we discourage it, especially during the work week. We usually have a full house and a guest has the potential to upset the group dynamic, particularly if the nature of the guest relationship is purely social. Permission needs to be requested before the guest is invited. We inform the group in advance whenever guests are scheduled to be onsite so there will be no surprises. In any event, guests are never allowed to enter the residence facility or to stay overnight, in the residence facility or elsewhere. The best time to have a guest visit would be for the Open Studios event at the end of the residency. Artists are responsible for the proper behavior of their guests. Out of regard for the privacy and security of our artists-in-residence, unauthorized individuals appearing on the grounds without prior permission will be escorted off the site.

Are there any specific acts or attitudes that would generate a termination of the residency?

I-Park does not condone alcohol or drug abuse, the sale or trafficking in illegal substances, habitual non-participation, the possession of lethal weapons, prolonged absences without prior notification or the breaking of any federal, state or municipal laws or regulations. In particular, we have a zero-tolerance policy with respect to causing risk of injury to others (including violations of our then-existing Covid-19 policies), sexual harassment, environmental contamination, entering another artist's bedroom or studio without permission, disturbing another artist's work product and stealing.

Social Aspect, Diversions, Surrounding Area

Are there any social or public events planned?

Artists are strongly encouraged to participate in Open Studios, a community event scheduled for the final Sunday afternoon of the residency session – and Artists' Exchange, an intimate sharing amongst the artists (and occasionally a few guests) of their existing bodies of work and, perhaps, aspirations for their residencies. This is generally a quiet evening affair scheduled for early in your session. The following are also typically woven into the session calendar: arrival buffet, welcome dinner, potluck supper, a bonfire out by the pond and the bon voyage dinner. We are also open to consideration of a mid-session field trip if there is group interest. The key is to strike a sensible balance between the work schedules and ambitions of the residents – and their desire for social interaction and exposure to local cultural happenings. All social events are entirely optional.

New for 2023

We have a public event scheduled for the third day of each residency session: Saturday in the Park (basically Open Trails, a community engagement activity). This is a ticketed event, a source of earned revenue for I-Park While, over the past 3 years, we have avoided having any visitors on site while the artists were in residence (except for Open Studios in 2022), we see some mutual benefits for this change. Typically, the artists are on their own on the third day of the residency because it's the weekend. Having staff on site will mean that the artists will have at least an extra half day of artists' support as they're settling into their studios and such. The first few days of the residency are a bit frantic under any circumstances. We thought it best to get that out of the way right up front. You're welcome to join the walk yourself. During the event, the artists' studios will be out of bounds and we are relocating the trail head so that any contact between the guests and the artists, or noise, will be minimized. Just wanted to let you know.

Are there any recreational facilities on site? Is there a place to work out or go hiking or biking?

We have extensive walking trails on the property and we're adjacent to a well-maintained state park with miles of marked trails. We have some free weights and yoga mats available. There are no recreational facilities as such on site, though we have a pond you're welcome to fish in, a few swings and there are a couple bikes you're welcome to use around the facility.

Are there any other diversions available?

The Common Area, which serves as the artists' living room, is a gathering place for coffee, conversation, relaxation. Here, you'll find a TV monitor, a DVD player and a stereo system. We have a stock of movies (decent) and CD's (not so good – plan to bring your own). We have a modest library of art and nature books and a variety of arts-related periodicals. We also have some board games, cards and such.

How remote is I-Park from commercial amenities, civilization?

We're a 15-20 minute drive to most types of retail shopping, and even further from decent art supply stores. Therefore, shopping trips need to be planned more carefully than would be the case in a typical suburb or city. We are, however, a 10-minute drive to a well-stocked hardware store/lumberyard. Our Orientation Notebooks are constantly being updated with information to help you locate the types of items and services you may require. You should, however, try to bring with you, or have shipped in advance, any odd-ball art supplies or specialty tools you might need.

What's available in the local area for entertainment?

We're in the sticks, so to speak, so keep your expectations low. For major excitement, options might include driving to a local bar that has a pool table, the ice cream shop, a bowling alley, the Goodspeed Opera House (traditional but very nice), one of the organic food markets, the historical society, a cute little library or a trek to one of the nearby casinos. We're about 30 minutes from the ocean (Long Island Sound) where there are public beaches. We maintain a good listing of cultural events and venues in Connecticut so that those interested can avail themselves of such, either individually or as a group.

Discipline-Specific Commentary

Does I-Park support those working in the field of **Performance Art**?

We do not claim to do so. However, some performance artists are accepted into the program by way of the Moving Image/New Media discipline. If you submit a well-crafted video of your performance practice and if high quality documentation is a part of your practice – AND if you have the ability to work solo during your residency (we do not permit overnight collaborating teams within the General Residency Program) – then you may wish to avail yourself of this devious strategy.

For architects, landscape architects and landscape/garden/ecological designers, what kinds of expectations do you have in terms of the types of projects that would/could be undertaken during an I-Park residency – and what types of projects might be of interest to the selection panel? You’re not expecting actual built projects or works on the land, are you?

Absolutely not. There are no expectations that you will create a work that will benefit I-Park in any way. If you’d like some suggestions for how you might productively and gratifyingly utilize the grant of an I-Park residency, go to this link: [Architecture, Landscape/Garden Design Residencies: Why?](#) on the General Residency Program webpage.

Miscellaneous

Do you have staff members living on site?

No. From Monday through Friday, except for certain holidays, we have staff onsite throughout the day. However, on the weekends, you’re on your own. That said, a staff member and an independent contractor lives within a 10-minute drive from I-Park and are accessible if a problem arises. We also have a 24-hour emergency phone call system in case things go bump in the night.

What if I am scheduled for a residency and have to cancel?

You should not accept an I-Park residency if the prospects for your attendance are at all in question. Check that your personal, financial, professional and visa-related affairs are reasonably in order before you commit. If an unexpected emergency arises that makes attendance impossible, please let us know immediately so we may attempt to schedule someone from our waiting list. Be aware that any notification of cancellation fewer than 60-days prior to your scheduled arrival date will create a hardship for us.

Are you open to the public? Can I come up and check the place out?

We’re not open to the general public except on designated days. We strive to maintain a sheltered, no-surprises environment and to minimize distractions. Please make prior arrangements with staff if you’d like to visit. Or come to one of our public events. In either case, we’d be happy to show you around (though no popping in or peeping into occupied studios).

Can I ship materials in advance of my arrival and then ship them back at the end of the residency?

Sure, but it’s a good idea to let us know your intentions in advance so we can be on the lookout for your packages and put them in a safe spot for you. Be sure to send your package(s) to our street address (your name c/o I-Park Foundation, Inc., 428 Hopyard Road, East Haddam, CT 06423) and not to our post office box. Note: at the end of your residency, you are responsible for the shipment of any articles back home. (packaging/crating, coordinating with the shipper, including payment arrangements, etc.).

May I post about my residency on social media?

You are most welcome to post about your studio, your work, your discoveries and experiences in nature. However, please be sensitive to the privacy concerns of your fellow artists. As a courtesy, before posting any images of your cohorts or any staff members, please check with them first. Our Instagram account is @iparkCT and you can use the hashtag #IParkCT if you’d like.

Do you have any advice for an artist who has never participated in a residency program before?

First of all, we love newbies! In our invitations and announcements, we refer to “self-directed” residencies. You need to be prepared to set forth your own goals and organize your daily routine accordingly, I-Park imposes very little organizational structure – you’re basically on your own in terms of making effective use of your time. Not everyone has the discipline or motivation to deal with this freedom successfully. The other aspect of life at I-Park that has been problematic for a few of our residents has been the issue of solitude and quiet. We stress to all concerned the importance of respecting the privacy of your fellow artists, especially in their personal living and working spaces. This tends to foster an emphasis on work over social interaction, at least during the workday. Furthermore, the general area itself is extremely quiet and, on moonless nights, very, very . . . dark. Although solitude and the ability to control one’s own time are highly valued by most who come to I-Park, this environment is not for everyone. Some individuals require a more broadly and predictably supportive social structure, external sources of direction and perhaps even, in some cases, a bit of commotion. Though you may very well find these kinds of stimulation at I-Park, you should not expect them.