

Hey there,

I'm a local potter who identifies as LGBTQ2S+, and I love being a working artist here in Guelph.

I support the development of a Community Artspace because it is very hard to find suitable workspaces, especially with specialized equipment like a kiln. Most professional potters have an at-home studio, but because I am a renter I don't have that luxury. I am locked out of the housing market so this will never be an option for me.

Thus far I've relied on donated space to work and use my kiln, but because they are at two different locations my productivity is not as streamlined as I'd like it to be. Because of this I'm having a hard time growing my business. I've had to maintain a second full-time night job in order to keep the bills paid. When ownership of these properties inevitably changes hands in the future, I worry about what that will mean for my ability to run my business.

I've sought out several commercial spaces but am not prepared to pay the exorbitant rents that many of these spaces demand; since I am already negatively affected by our dysfunctional housing system I am not in a position to pay high rents just to do my work. I am also managing several health conditions and know that working even harder just to break even will negatively affect my ability to have a sustainable career, since pottery is a very physically demanding.

My hope is that a new community space can offer artists creative solutions regarding space use, affordability, and accessibility.

Thanks for doing this!  
Denise De La Franier