



The Pedlar's Shop

General Information on the Product Assessment Process

The Pedlar's Shop, in keeping with the mission of Ross Farm Museum, will provide for show and sale hand-made Nova Scotian products that demonstrate excellence in the modern application of traditional craft practices. The Pedlar's Shop will help tell the story of Nova Scotian cultural heritage through a variety of expressions of traditional craft, and aims to become a destination for those seeking made-in-Nova Scotia artisan products.

Achieving Our Goals Through the Product Assessment Process:

One of the ways we can assist in the development and promotion of traditional and fine craft is to offer a 'product assessment' process to craftspeople. This process is designed to help craftspeople improve the quality of their craft and marketability should they wish to sell their work in different settings. This process replaces what was commonly called 'jurying'. It is a more supportive and educational approach to help support craftspeople in their careers.

Who Will do The Assessments?

The assessment is performed by a carefully selected committee of qualified artisans, marketers and craft sector professionals. These people have been selected because of their creative practice, marketing skills, knowledge and experience.

What are the Benefits of Being Assessed Successfully?

Once your work is accepted by the committee, your name is entered in our registry of successfully assessed craftspeople. Inclusion in this registry indicates that your work has been recognized for its level of skill and craftsmanship and can give you access to certain specific craft marketing programmes and opportunities (some programme restrictions may apply) including commissioned sale in The Pedlar's Shop, where the craftsperson receives 65% of retail price, and The Pedlar's Shop 35%.

How Does the Process Work?

You will receive an application package that you must read carefully. You are then asked to submit your application and a number of pieces of your work for the committee to assess. After the committee meets, you will receive a letter outlining the committee's thoughts on your work. Your work may pass assessment on the first round. It may also be suggested that you make certain changes or improvements to your work and resubmit your product. You are free to follow these if you wish. If your work does not meet basic standards it will be declined.

Application Fees

The fee for assessment is \$15. Note, sales tax is added to these fees. (Total \$17.25)

Residency

Artisans wishing to have their work represented through The Pedlar's Shop marketing programs/projects must reside in Nova Scotia at least six months per year.

The Pedlar's Shop Product Assessment Criteria

The Pedlar's Shop is an organization whose aim is to showcase Nova Scotia's craftspeople who excel in their chosen craft. In this role, we work with craftspeople to assist them in the production of handmade work of the highest quality and skill. The following are guidelines for craft that we consider for product assessment. Please read them carefully before applying.

A Craft is:

A 'craft' is an artistic occupation requiring special technical and manual skills in the making of objects. Expertise in technique and handling of materials must be evident.

Your Craft Must:

- Be original. The craft object must be the original idea or design of the maker. Traditional, historic and classic designs are also acceptable, especially if the craftspeople has brought her/his personal interpretation to this design.
- Exhibit good design. The use of colour, creativity and innovation are an integral part of good design.

- Be well constructed. The craftsperson's skill should be evident in the finishing. Functional objects should function properly. Materials used must be appropriate to the function and be of the highest quality.
- Be appropriately packaged and labelled, as if for sale. Packaging must be attractive, functional and complement the item. It must also include all necessary information regarding the product such as artist identification, pricing, safety and care instructions, especially as required by law (food, textiles, children's clothing and toys etc). The craftsperson is responsible for being aware of and meeting these requirements.
- Be well presented for assessment. Craft should be presented as if for sale with packaging, pricing and accompanying print materials such as brochures. All application and information forms must be read and filled out completely. Submissions should be safely packed for return.

Acceptable Non-Traditional Crafts

The Pedlar's Shop recognizes these craft categories with the following provisions and restrictions:

- Food Products: Only food items of the highest quality, production standards and craftsmanship will be considered for inclusion in a fine craft setting. Products and ingredients must be grown, created or derived from local ingredients as much as possible. Traditional recipes, ingredients and processes will be given priority.
- Fine Art (two and three dimensional): Accepted providing work is appropriately framed. If exhibited at least 50% must be original work by the artist.
- Commercially Produced Art Prints are acceptable as long as they comprise no more than 50% of the exhibit. Numbering commercial prints (editions) is not allowed.
- Kits by the Craftsperson: kits created by craftspersons for commercial sale are acceptable for assessment by the committee. If exhibited there must be at least 50% original work by the artist.

The following types of work are NOT eligible for product assessment:

- 1) Crafts that require no specific training, skill or mastery of a technique to create. Examples of these might be: simple strung bead necklaces, greeting cards with computer clip-art, children's crafts.
- 2) Crafts made from commercial craft kits and patterns or copyrighted designs are generally not considered acceptable, unless the maker has brought particular design or

skill techniques to enhance the product. Examples of crafts from kits and patterns may include: knitting/hooking kits, decoupage, paper tole kits, tole painting from contemporary patterns, 'cheater' quilts, liquid embroidery, etc.

3) Items made with too many commercially manufactured parts. Items such as these are only permitted when these parts are subordinate to the overall design (i.e: screws, hinges, bases, handles, etc.) or when these parts are used in an innovative and creative manner to produce an entirely new item. Examples of items with too many commercially manufactured parts may include: earrings made from 3 purchased beads with purchased findings. An example of an innovative use of purchased components might be attractive jewellery made from recycled computer parts.

4) Product made with commercial molds, such as ceramics, jewellery and candles. This work will only be considered if the mold is subordinate to the overall design of the work. Examples of this might be: mold-formed pillar candles with a highly decorative textured surface, a ceramic bowl made from a purchased mold with a very ornate hand-painted glaze or pattern.

All crafts will be individually assessed on their own merit. If you feel that your work does not meet the criteria above but deserves consideration, please submit your work for assessment.

The Application Process:

- The Assessment Committee meets only at specific times. Please enquire at The Pedlar's Shop for the upcoming dates. Please ensure that your application is complete. If your application is incomplete it may not be assessed during the session you have applied for.
- Results of the assessment will be available 2 weeks after the session. If for some reason the results are delayed (due to weather, the need to call in media-specific specialists, etc.) we will inform you of this delay. The results will detail the comments of the committee, the pass/resubmit designation and suggestions for improvement if applicable.
- It is your responsibility to make sure your work is delivered and retrieved. Please pack it securely for travel and itemize all pieces carefully. If you wish to have your work shipped back to you, please make arrangements and provide the necessary shipping fees with your application.

- Persons, who for health or other valid reasons, are unable to make their submission in writing may be permitted to do so in person. Please contact us with your reason for this request.
- You may submit **ONLY** your own work. If work is submitted by more than one person doing a different craft (i.e., a husband who does woodworking and wife who quilts) you will be required to each apply separately.
- Only two craft media per person may be assessed at a given session.

Please note, staff at The Pedlar's Shop are not members of the assessment committee and are therefore not responsible for the decisions of the committee. Please do not request information from them regarding your results. Direct such questions, in writing, to the committee. ***If you wish to appeal your assessment results, please send your comments in writing to the Chair of the Board of Directors and it will be brought to the attention of the Museum's Board of Directors at the next regular meeting. A response to your appeal will be mailed to you following this meeting.***

We thank you for your interest in exhibiting your work for consideration to be included in the new Pedlar's Shop at Ross Farm Museum, and very much appreciate your efforts to help make The Pedlar's Shop a premiere destination in Nova Scotia for hand-craft collectors and enthusiasts.