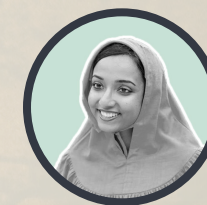


# CAREER EXPLORATION

## Planning for Meaningful Work

“My work allows me to fuse all of my passions together while giving back to my neighbourhood and creating work opportunities for other artists.”

[Tasneem Dairywala - Alumni Story Participant](#)



Take some time to reflect on how you want to apply your creativity as a working professional. Actively planning through **self-reflection** and **career exploration** will lay the foundation for meaningful work that allows you to remain creative, keeps you engaged and satisfies your lifestyle.



### SELF REFLECTION

What does a fulfilling career look like to you, personally? Take some time to reflect on the questions to align your individual priorities with short-term and long-term career goals:

- **What are your values and skills?** Values reflect what is most important to you; they drive your thoughts and actions. Skills are your strengths and competencies.
- **To what extent do you want to make your creative practice your professional focus?** You may choose to make an income *from* your creative pursuits, or make an income to *support* your creative pursuits.
- **Are you interested in working primarily within arts or design organizations, or are you interested in exploring creative opportunities in other industries?**
- **What environment do you work best in?** Consider values alignment, exposure to other creatives, room to grow, remote work, flexible schedule, etc.
- **What lifestyle do you want to sustain?** Consider location, salary ranges, job security, and benefits alongside your living expenses, wellness needs, and long-term life goals.

**Tip:**

Use the **Reflection and Goal Setting** resources on the following page to help guide your self-reflection.



### CAREER EXPLORATION

Now that you have reflected on your priorities, connect your answers the job market by evaluating potential careers. Start by creating a list of occupations that match your skills, then research the roles to see how well they align with your self-reflection results. Remember to remain open and explore related types of work. Consult online career exploration tools and search job boards using keywords that match your skills and areas of practice.

- Conduct informational interviews with people working in roles and industries of interest. Start with alumni from your program.
- Take a related course in your field of interest to develop required skills.
- Participate in an internship, summer or part-time job, or freelance while you're a student. You will gain first-hand experience and these entry-level roles will become the gateway to your wider creative community.



### IN PRACTICE

1. Identify your “*dream job*” and write it down.
2. Moving outward, draw concentric circles around that occupation, and write down related roles and adjacent industries.
3. For each occupation on your map, research and record the information on the left. Then, ask yourself the questions on the right:

#### Job duties and responsibilities

Qualifications (experience, skills, education, certification, etc.)

Work environment

Positive and negative aspects of the work

Salary and benefits

Present demand and future outlook

Prospective employers

**Tip:**

Use the **Career Cruising** tool to connect your interests to occupations and explore a variety of careers: [You can access it through the OCAD U Library here.](#)

**Tip:**

Use virtual learning platforms — such as the [free LinkedIn Learning access](#) for current OCAD U students or YouTube tutorials — to close a skill gap that you think might exist.



### DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN

After gathering this information, identify one or more early-stage goals and a timeline. This action plan may focus on your job search, informational interviews, additional training/certification, gaining experience, and

developing your application materials. Your action plan will ideally provide you with a basis for identifying and pursuing longer-term, more substantial roles.

**Tip:**

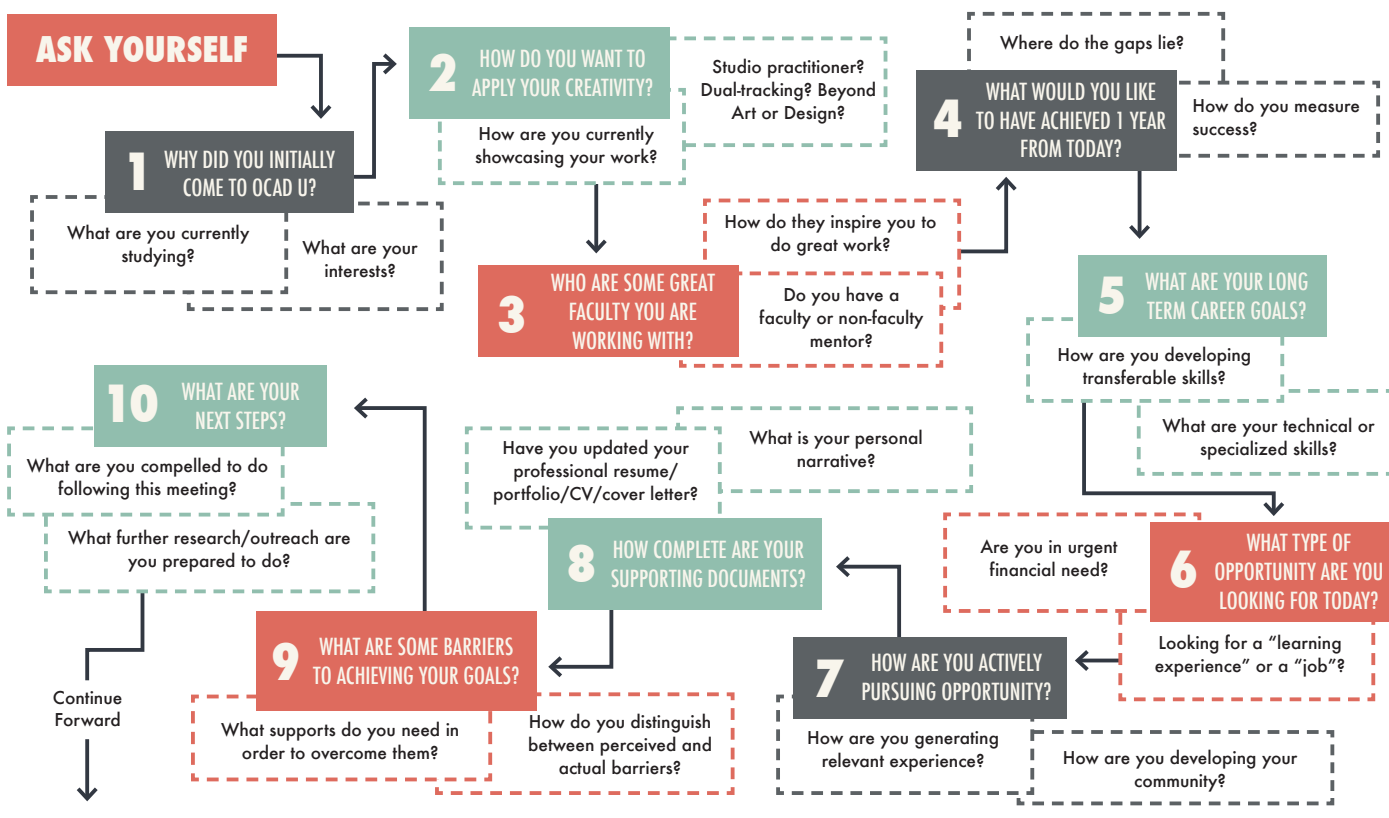
You don't have to accomplish everything on your action plan all at once! Take it slowly and do small things that will make you feel productive such as committing to just 1 hour of career exploration a week, or conducting 1 information interview a month.

# CAREER EXPLORATION

## Further Resources

### REFLECTION AND GOAL SETTING

“How do I start to evaluate my priorities and determine specific career objectives?”



The CEAD Online:

[www.ocadu.ca/careerdevelopment](http://www.ocadu.ca/careerdevelopment)  
[www.ocadu.ca/explearning](http://www.ocadu.ca/explearning)

Online References for Students:

[www.cead.format.com](http://www.cead.format.com)

Contact:

416 977 6000  
 careerdevelopment@ocadu.ca

### REFLECTION AND GOAL SETTING

“What do you want to do?” can be a daunting question. Use this series of guided prompts to break it down into smaller questions that are easier to answer. From there you will start to gain an understanding of how you want to apply your creativity and be able to identify incremental steps to get you closer to your goals.

### CREATIVE JOB BOARDS

Spend some time on the job boards below to explore various job functions and the organizations that are currently hiring. You will quickly get a sense of what skills you have and what skills you need to develop to get the kind of opportunities you want.



#### OCAD U

The **Talent Network** is a job board exclusive to students and alumni of OCAD University. Here you can find contract/commission work, part-time and full-time opportunities in art and design:  
[www.ocadu.ca/talentnetwork](http://www.ocadu.ca/talentnetwork)

Search employment opportunities at **OCAD University**: [www.ocadu.ca/services/human-resources/employment-opportunities](http://www.ocadu.ca/services/human-resources/employment-opportunities)

**Career Launchers** are unique, high-profile opportunities developed in partnership with industry, in order to help new OCAD U graduates start their professional practice after school:  
[www.careerlaunchers.format.com](http://www.careerlaunchers.format.com)



#### GOVERNMENT

**Young Canada Works** offers a variety of summer job and internship programs in the culture and heritage sector. Students can apply to summer job programs, while recent graduates can apply to internship programs:  
<https://young-canada-works.canada.ca/Opportunity/PublicApprovedOpportunities>

**Summer Student Jobs with the Ontario Public Service** helps Ontario students with limited work experience develop transferable skills to support their career goals: [www.gojobs.gov.on.ca/Pages/SEP.aspx](http://www.gojobs.gov.on.ca/Pages/SEP.aspx)



#### NON-PROFIT

One of the largest and most popular websites in the world devoted exclusively to the **nonprofit** and **charitable sector**:  
[www.charityvillage.com/app](http://www.charityvillage.com/app)



#### ART

Search for opportunities in the **Arts and Culture** sector: [www.workinculture.ca/The-Job-Board](http://www.workinculture.ca/The-Job-Board)

**Ontario Association of Art Galleries** job board:  
[www.oaag.org/jobline](http://www.oaag.org/jobline)

**CultureWorks** is a job board for the cultural sector administered by The Cultural Human Resources Council: [www.cultureworks.ca](http://www.cultureworks.ca)

Search for **calls-for-submissions, art and education** jobs: [www.akimbo.ca/listings](http://www.akimbo.ca/listings)



#### DESIGN

The **Association of Registered Graphic Designers** job board: [www.rgd.ca/find-a-designer/jobs/index](http://www.rgd.ca/find-a-designer/jobs/index)

A job board for **Toronto-based creative roles**. TDD also has a comprehensive directory of design studios and agencies:  
[www.torontodesigndirectory.com/jobs](http://www.torontodesigndirectory.com/jobs)

Curated job board from **DesignX**'s Slack community across Canada, USA & Europe. Shared directly by design leaders hiring for their teams:  
[designx.community/jobs/](http://designx.community/jobs/)

Job board for **cast, crew and creative professionals**:  
[www.mandy.com](http://www.mandy.com)

Search for **media jobs** in Canada:  
[www.mediajobsearchcanada.com](http://www.mediajobsearchcanada.com)