



How to write an artist biography



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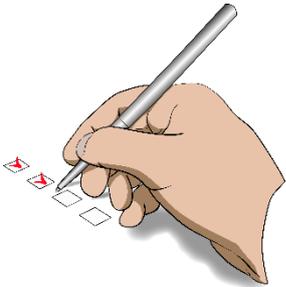
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About this document



This Easy Read is about how to write an artist **biography**.



A **biography** is a short bit of writing that has information about:

- your life
- your art.



A biography is called a **bio** for short.



This information has been written by Taha Hotu.

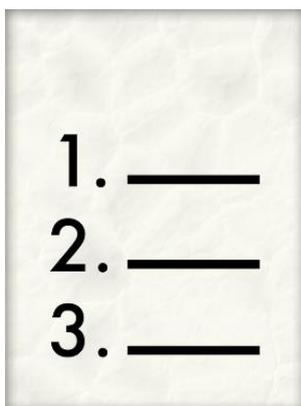


Taha Hotu is:

- led by disabled people
- part of Arts Access Aotearoa.



Taha Hotu works to support Deaf and disabled artists.



This Easy Read uses **examples** to show how to write a bio.

The **examples** are in a yellow box like this.



The examples are not in Easy Read.

What is an artist bio used for?



An artist bio is useful because it:

- quickly tells people about:
 - you
 - your art
- makes people interested in your art
- **promotes** your art.



Promote means to let people know about something like through an advertisement in a:

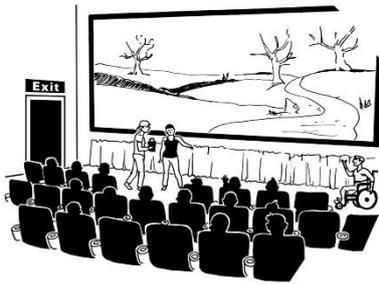
- newspaper
- poster.

You can put a bio:



- on your website
- on your Taha Hotu artist profile.

You might need to have a bio if you:



- are having an exhibition / display of your art

- have applied for:

- an award
- a **fellowship**



- have written a book

- are giving a speech / talk.





A **fellowship** is when you are given things to support you do your art like:

- a place like a studio
- time
- money.

Things to think about for your bio



It is a good idea to use easy to understand words in your bio.



Put in your bio:

- what your art is
- the best things you have done
- why your art is important to you.



Make sure you know how many words must be in the bio.



If your bio has too many words people might not finish reading it.

150 words



A good number of words for your bio is about 1 hundred and 50.

Decide if you want to write your bio as if:

- it is you talking

or

- someone else is talking about you.



Here is an example of how to write as if you are talking about yourself:



My name is Jane. I am an actor. I have been performing since the age of 4.



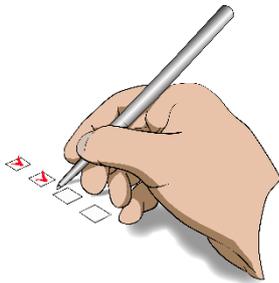
Here is an example of how to write if someone else is talking about you:

Jane is an actor. She has been performing since the age of 4.



Read back over your bio when you have finished writing it to check:

- your spelling
- if the sentences are easy to read
- if the information is correct.



You might want someone to check your bio for you.

How much information should go in a bio?



It is important to think about what information you want to share in your bio.



An artist bio is **public information**.

Public information means people can share your information with others.



It can make you feel good / in control to choose the information you want to share.



You might want to put what your disability is in your bio.



This is so people know how your disability connects you:

- to your art
- to other people.



It is important to know that when your bio is public:

- you cannot control who shares it
- it is hard to take the information back.



Is it okay if you want to keep some information private.

What to put in an artist bio

Name

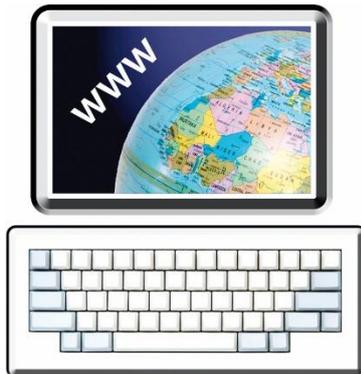
You can put:

- your name
- and
- any other pseudonym / different name you might use when you make your art.



Pronouns

You can put the **pronouns** you want people to use for you.



Pronouns are words we use instead of names like:

- she / her
- he / him
- they / them.

You can read the Easy Read **An Introduction to Pronouns** at this **website**:

**[www.peoplefirst.org.nz/
easy-read-library/
resource/introduction-to-pronouns](http://www.peoplefirst.org.nz/easy-read-library/resource/introduction-to-pronouns)**

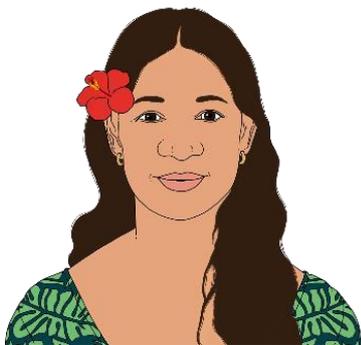


Iwi or ethnicity

If you are Māori you might want to put what iwi / tribe you are part of.



If you are not Māori you might want to put your **ethnicity**.



Ethnicity means your:

- race like:
 - Pākehā / New Zealand European
 - Samoan
- background like whether you:
 - were born in Aotearoa New Zealand
 - moved to Aotearoa New Zealand from another country.



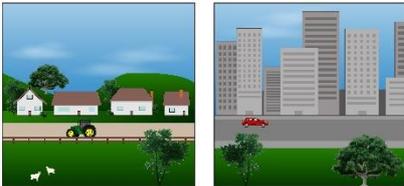
Location

Where you live in the country is something that is usually put in a bio.

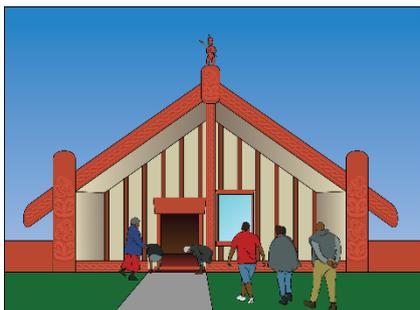


This is different to your address which you keep private.

You can put your:



- town
- city
- region.



You might want to put the:

- name of the Māori iwi / tribe where you live
- name of where you live in te reo Māori / Māori language.



Job title

If you have a job you might want to put the name of the job in your bio.



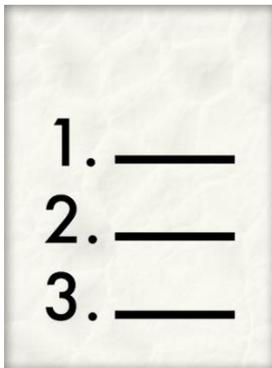
This is only important to include if the job has something to do with the art you do.

Experience



Here **experience** means things you have:

- done
- achieved.



Put the most important things you have done with your art in your bio.

This tells people:



- how good you are at your art
- where to find your art.

Personal information

Put in your bio something personal about you like:



- a hobby you like doing
- an important thing you did.



You might want to put something about why you do your art.

This will support people to understand:



- you
- your art.



Contact information

Put in your bio information about your:

- website if you have one
- Taha Hotu artist page
- social media like Instagram.



This lets people know:

- where to find your art
- how to get in contact with you.



You do not need to put private information like your:

- address
- phone number.



What does a bio look like?

Here is an example of a real bio:



Stace Robertson (he / they) is a disabled artist working in ceramics, painting and illustration.

Stace has a Bachelor of Media Arts (hons).



They are a proud, disabled person and explore ideas relating to identity, **representation** and community.



Here **representation** means doing things that show:

- who a person is
- what they do.



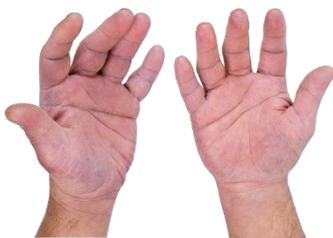
A Pākehā person of Scottish, Irish, English and French ancestry, Stace lives in Pae Tū Mōkai Featherston on the **whenua** of Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa and Rangitāne.



Here **whenua** means a place Māori have connections to in their history.



His ceramic work is **informed by** and reflects the tension of creating functional **ware** with a body that is not always very functional and he enjoys the **tensions** and **imperfections** that result from this **interplay**.



Here **informed by** means the art Stace does is guided by what their body can do.



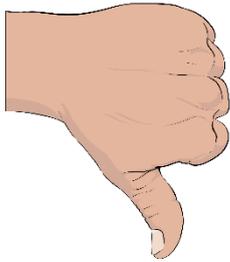
Here **ware** means things that can be used like:

- plates
- cups.

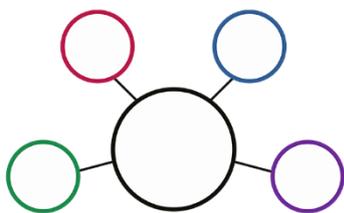


Here **tensions** means:

- stresses
- difficulties.



Imperfections means things that do not come out right.



Interplay means how things work together.



Here is an example of how to link to a website of your art work:

You can find his work on [Instagram](#).



Here is an example that does not have a website link to click on:

You can find his work on Instagram.

More information



You can find more information on the Taha Hotu **website** at:

<https://tahahotu.org.nz>



You can also get in touch with us by:

- **phone** on:

04 802 4349

- **email** at:

tahahotu@artsaccess.org.nz





This information has been written by Taha Hotu.

Make it Easy
Kia Māmā Mai



It has been translated into Easy Read by the Make it Easy Kia Māmā Mai service of People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.

People First NZ
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