

# WRITING COVER LETTERS

## a guide to writing great cover letters

### THE BASIC FORMAT

Your Name  
Address  
Phone  
Email  
Website

or use the same  
header from your  
resume

Date  
Contact Person (Mr., Mrs., or Ms.)  
Title  
Company Name

Address  
City, State, Zip (Country if applicable)

Dear (Mr., Mrs., or Ms.) Contact Person,

The cover letter works together with your resume to introduce 'you' to potential employers. Always include a cover letter with your resume. It may not be requested, but it is implied. Maintain a consistent look with your resume and cover letter. The letter should be written in business format, no longer than one page, and should serve as the starting point for a phone conversation or in-person interview.

Whenever possible, the cover letter should be directed to a specific person. This improves the chances of your materials being reviewed by the proper person or committee. Avoid using "To Whom it May Concern," and use "Hiring Manager" or "Selection Committee" instead.

### Paragraph 1—the introduction:

#### Who you are | What position you are applying to | Your relationship to them

Introduce yourself and identify why you are contacting them. If you have been referred to this contact by another individual, identify him or her in this paragraph. Most importantly, let them know what position you are applying for.

### Paragraph 2—why them:

#### Why you like them | What's relevant about them to you

An employer will be impressed that you have done your homework on them. Research the company using their website and take notes of projects or ideals that you are impressed with. Mention a few examples of and share why you see yourself fitting in at their company, and specifically in this role. Of all of the jobs out there, why do you want to work for them?

### Paragraph 3—why you:

#### What will you contribute | What's relevant about you to them

Highlight the relevant parts of your resume that most qualify you for the position. Site specific experiences and skills that demonstrate what you will be bringing to the employer. What unique strengths do you have and how can they be utilized in this role? Choose skills that match or closely relate to those in the job description.

### Paragraph 4—the closing:

#### Thanks | Enclosures | Contact | Website | Next Step

Close by thanking the prospective employer for their time and consideration. Let them know the best way to get in touch with you. Mention enclosures such as your resume or portfolio samples, and/or direct them to your website or online portfolio. If you plan to relocate or if you are best reached at certain days/times, this is the place to say so. Remember, do whatever you say you are going to do here, mark it on your calendar and follow up!

Sincerely,



Your name (typed)

## Sending materials electronically

Most cover letters and resumes are submitted electronically either through an online application or as attachments to an email. If sending your materials through an online application process, always make sure to follow the instructions to upload your materials provided by the employer, including file type, size, etc.

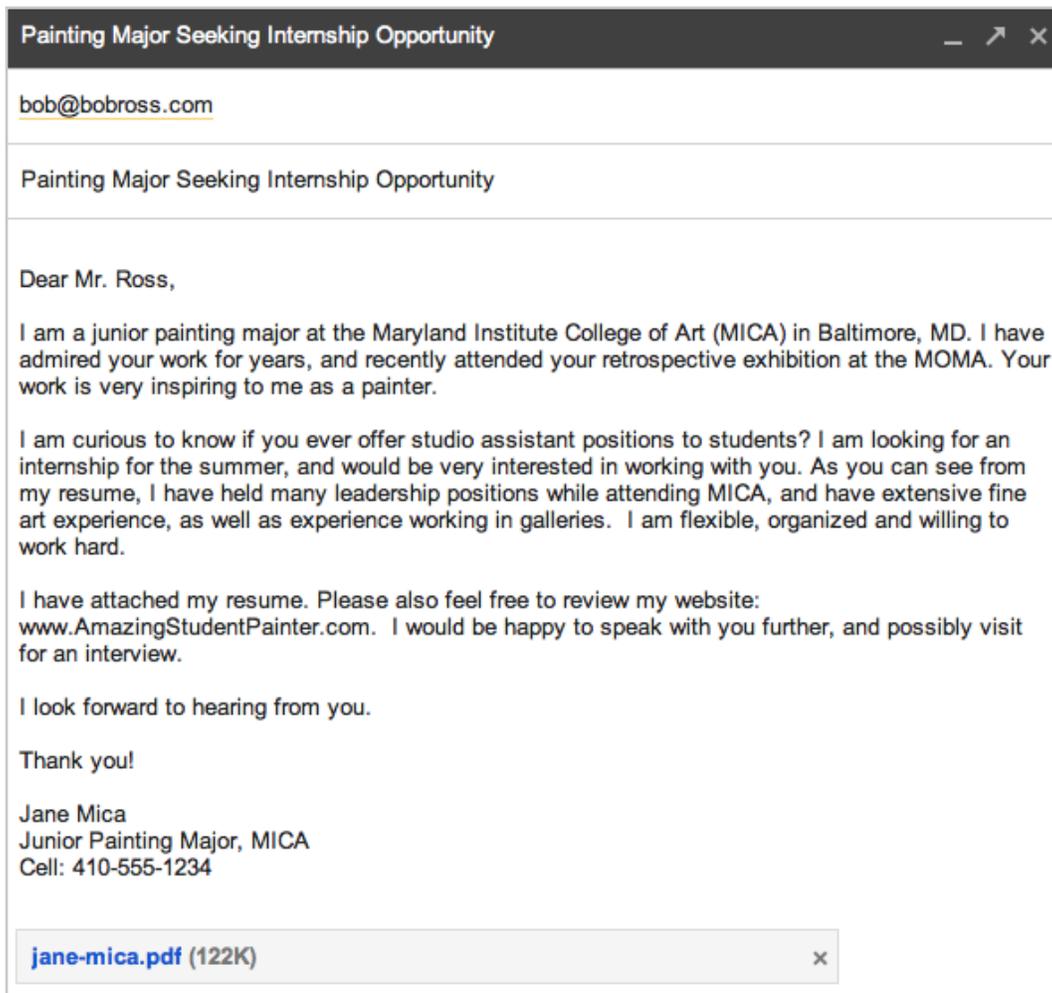
### File types for materials

When instructions are not provided, save your files as PDFs rather than Word or InDesign documents. This retains and secures your intended text formatting when viewed from different computers and operating systems.

## Submitting materials via email

### Letter of inquiry or interest

For un-posted opportunities, you can use the email itself as your “cover letter.” This method is accepted when inquiring if an organization is open to hosting an intern without a position posted on their website. See the following example:

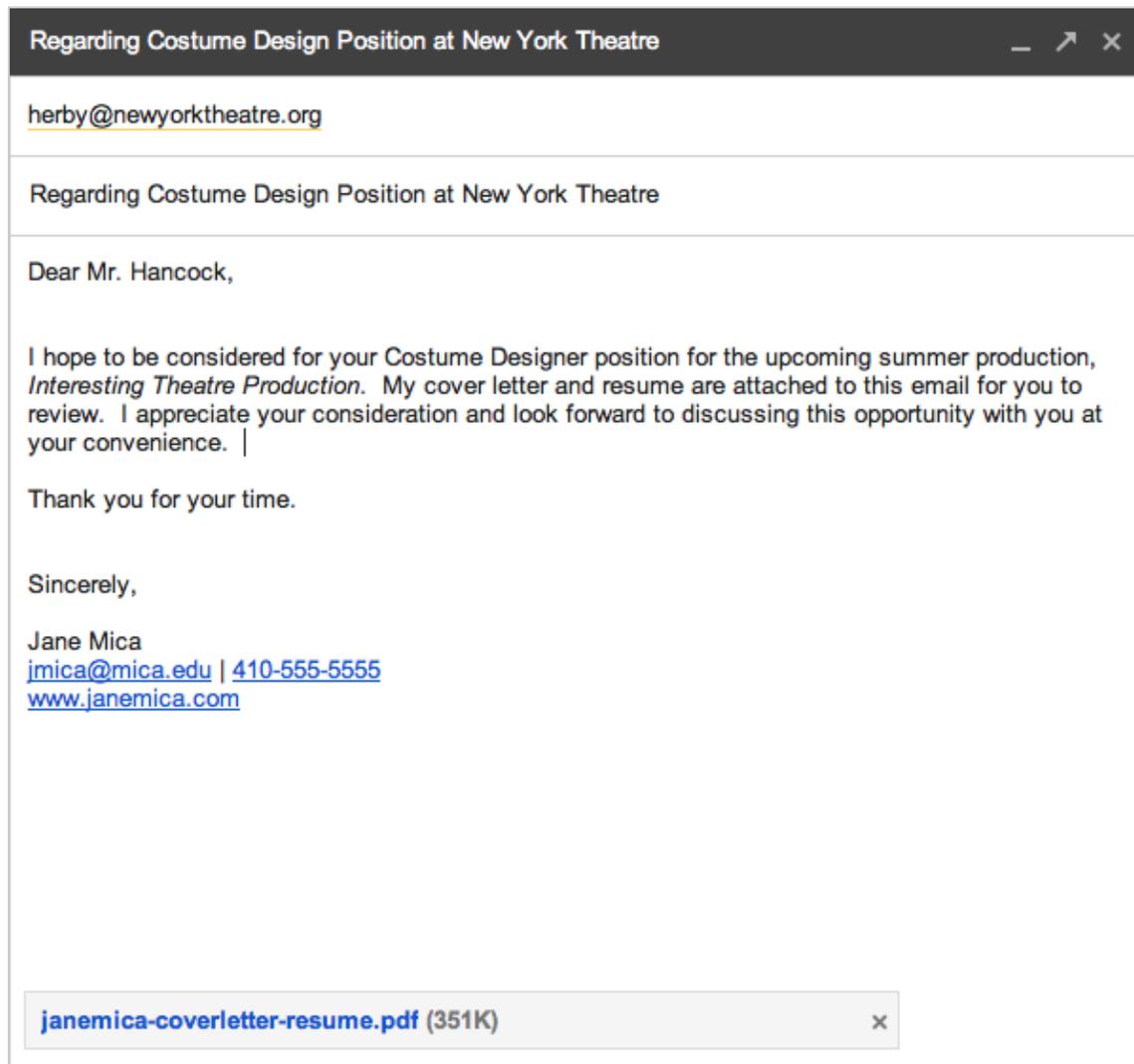


## Submitting materials via email (continued)

### In response to a posted opportunity

If an application specifically requests you submit a resume and cover letter, it is advised to send these documents as attached files. The email itself should be written as formally as your cover letter, but is not a direct copy of your cover letter's content. It should be brief, expresses interest in the position, and state that your cover letter and resume are attached for consideration. Include your website or online portfolio when necessary for creative opportunities. You may also want to include a one to two sentence "hook," if you have very relevant work experience, or were referred to this position by a contact within the company/organization, etc.

See the example below as it relates to the cover letter on the following page.



# JANE MICA

123 Main Street, Any City, Any State 12345 • 410-555-5555 • [jmica@mica.edu](mailto:jmica@mica.edu) • [www.janenmica.com](http://www.janenmica.com)

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January 23, 2015

Mr. Herby Hancock  
Producing Artistic Director  
New York Theatre  
P.O. Box 123  
321 N. Street Avenue  
New York, NY 12345

Dear Mr. Hancock,

I hope to be considered for your Costume Designer position for the upcoming summer production, Interesting Theatre Production. In May, I will graduate from Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) with a BFA in Fiber and a concentration in Experimental Fashion.

My decision to apply to this theatre is driven by the amazing spectrum of shows it produces, and the impressive quality of the costume work shown on the theatre's website. Each costume is so compelling, showing an overall vision I admire and connect with. New York Theatre has chosen some very exciting and compelling shows in the past, and I am sure that Interesting Theatre Production will be no exception. I would relish the chance to participate in the creation of the aesthetic of the show to represent Cash's depth of character and powerful presence in a fun and original way.

As a motivated, young designer, there are many skills I can bring to New York Theatre's design team. Over the last four years, I have taken many costume-related courses where I have built the skills and artistic vocabulary that will make me an asset to your team. I am comfortable draping, drafting, styling, and altering garments as well as putting together costume sketches and talking about my ideas. My interest in collaboration and the performing arts has helped me gain experience with several Baltimore theatres, including Bmore Theatre and MIDDLESTAGE, both as the Lead Designer and Assistant/Buyer. I have experience organizing and directing a large group of people and am confident in my time management skills. I work efficiently and am capable of managing a team. For all of these reasons, I feel I am an excellent candidate for this position.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss the position further and would be open to scheduling a phone interview at your convenience. I am easy to reach by email, [jmica@mica.edu](mailto:jmica@mica.edu), or by phone, 410-555-5555. My resume is attached and you may find my work at [www.janenmica.com](http://www.janenmica.com). I appreciate your consideration and look forward to discussing this opportunity with you at your convenience. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Jane Mica

# JOHN MICA

1300 W. Mount Royal Avenue Baltimore, Maryland 21217

[johnmica@mica.edu](mailto:johnmica@mica.edu) / (410) 555-1234

[portfolios.mica.edu/johnmica](http://portfolios.mica.edu/johnmica)

Laura Lowenstein  
Photographer  
L/L Photography  
123 Street Road  
City, NJ 55555

April 18, 2015

Dear Ms. Lowenstein,

I am writing to inquire about working with you this summer as a photography intern. I am currently studying Photography at Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA). I have professional, educational, and personal experience with photography, film, and video, and I know working alongside someone with an invaluable wealth of expertise like yourself would be an exciting opportunity for me both as a photographer and an aspiring businessperson.

After exploring your website and seeing your work I was immediately drawn not only to your photographic style, but also the wide variety of subjects with whom you work. I am interested to learn more about your artistic approach, and your process on capturing that perfect image. I would be fascinated to see how you scout locations and choose the environments in which to depict the artists and musicians you are photographing would also be fascinating to witness.

Let me share some of my experience I feel would be most relevant to this internship. Through previous internships with Working-Photos and Lazarus Studios, I have had experience assisting in professional photo shoots. There I assisted with location scouting, setting up lighting, social media marketing, researching, and archiving images. I am very comfortable using Adobe Photoshop and Lightroom to process and retouch images.

I look forward to discussing a potential internship experience with you at your earliest convenience. My resume is attached for your consideration, and my portfolio can be viewed online by visiting [portfolios.mica.edu/johnmica](http://portfolios.mica.edu/johnmica). Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



John Mica



JOHN MICA

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1300 W. Mount Royal Avenue | Baltimore, MD 21217  
jmica@mica.edu | 410-999-2345

Regina Falange  
Curator of Education  
The Famous Art Museum  
600 North Main Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201

June 27, 2015

Dear Ms. Falange,

I am writing in response to The Famous Art Museum's listing for an Education Intern posted on your website. I am currently a junior at Maryland Institute College of Art, studying Art History, Theory & Criticism with a Concentration Curatorial Studies. As you will see in my attached resume, I have a range of curatorial, exhibition, volunteer and event management experience.

I am currently an intern at Sample Art Space, a large-scale, alternative non-profit exhibition space that is located in Baltimore's Station North Arts and Entertainment District. I have been working at Sample Art Space since September. Working with Wally Watson, the gallery's director, I have become familiar with the Baltimore art scene and have gained both public relations and exhibition development experience through Sample Art Space's multitude of public events. I have acquired skills in managing visitors, ticketing, event planning, media promotion, advertising, and working with other arts organizations in the surrounding Station North community. I would be so happy to apply these skills, combined with my curatorial experience and strong interpersonal skills, to the Education Assistant position.

I was drawn to this job posting because I have enjoyed working on various community arts and educational outreach programs since working at Sample Art Space. The wide range of events that I have overseen within the large exhibition space have allowed me to develop fast-paced, quick-thinking, organizational, and team-based skills. I also have several friends that have held positions at The Famous Art Museum: Jane Smith, David Davis and Mary Jones. Through their positive experiences with The Famous Art Museum's Education Department, I have learned about the amazing educational outreach the museum has been accomplishing. I would very much enjoy being a part of serving the museum's patrons by providing them with educational materials and facilitating educational events.

I welcome the opportunity to learn more about internships at The Famous Art Museum. I look forward to hearing back and I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

John Mica

JOHN  
MICA

johnmica.com  
jmica@mica.edu  
444-555-6666

123 Royal Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21217

March 18, 2015

Christopher Cromwell  
Associate Principal  
Blank Design | Washington DC Office  
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, DC 11111

Dear Mr. Cromwell

I am responding to your posting for an Environmental Graphics Intern at Blank Design's Washington DC office. I am a senior studying Graphic Design with a concentration in Book Arts at Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA). We met at MICA's Internship + Career Fair earlier this month, where I was pleased to have the opportunity to introduce myself in person. I am hoping we can continue discussing how my skills would benefit Blank Design's environmental graphics team.

My personal interests along with my MICA education have taught me to become a hybrid 2D and 3D designer. Through many Environmental Design courses, I was able to develop a strong analytical skills and a deeper understanding of how to develop a design idea based on programmatic needs. I learned the basic vocabulary and skills of 3D form making, and was introduced to concepts of place, space, hierarchy, spatial organization, site, and program. In early 2014, I joined the Society of Environmental Graphic Design (SEGD) as a student member, which continues to feed my passion for connecting my 2D graphic skills with a 3D application.

Growing up, I have lived in four countries including Taiwan, Germany, China, and the United States. I speak English and Chinese fluently, and I'm constantly learning more about different cultures and languages. Through my research, I noticed that Blank Design has fifteen locations throughout North America, China, and India. I believe that my international perspectives and language skills will be beneficial in this globalized era.

I am excited and optimistic about this internship position. With my design approach and my international background, I would make a unique contribution to Cannon's intern team. Examples of my work can be seen online at [www.johnmica.com](http://www.johnmica.com). I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



John Mica



JANEMICA.COM • JMICA@MICA.EDU • 444-555-6666  
123 ROYAL AVENUE BALTIMORE, MD 21217

Jessica Jones  
Communications Manager  
International Program for Women's Health  
1776 America Ave  
Washington, DC  
555.666.777

August 10, 2015

Dear Ms. Jones,

Please accept my application for the Communications Intern position at the International Program for Women's Health. I am a graduate student at Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) pursuing a Master of Arts in Social Design. I have always been very involved in programs addressing social issues, and would be thrilled for the opportunity to have my design work support a larger, global community.

I was drawn to the International Program internship as a result of the inspirational programs you have created surrounding global humanitarian and healthcare sector initiatives. I admire the education and training you are providing to your international constituents, in particular the focus on healthy births in developing countries. The success of programs like these directly correlates to the level and effectiveness of its communication, which is truly where my interest lies. I am passionate about using design to positively impact people and communities. Having worked on several interdisciplinary projects, I know that clear communication for complex data is key. In addition to being a local community program coordinator, I have the design know-how and interdisciplinary thinking skills to thrive in an innovative, fast-paced environment.

My multifaceted background would be of tremendous value to International Program's Communication Department. Recently, I interned for the International Rescue Committee, where my duties were to create presentations and print material to promote their Youth and Livelihoods Unit. Working on a team of three designers, I created data visualizations to aid in the understanding of the unit's programs and objectives. After thorough research, I also crafted a visual branding system to appropriately deliver their message. My undergraduate degree in Environmental Design with a concentration in Graphic Design has given me a strong design foundation and ability to understand and approach challenges in innovative ways. I am very comfortable using the Adobe Creative Suite, in addition to 3D programs such as AutoCAD and 3D Studio Max. For all of these reasons, I feel I am a great match for this position.

I would enjoy an opportunity to talk with you more to see where my skill set would be of the greatest benefit to your organization. Thank you for reviewing my resume and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Jane Mica

September 5, 2015

James Whiting  
Assistant Coordinator of International Admission  
Undergraduate Admission  
Maryland Institute College of Art  
1300 W. Mount Royal Avenue  
Baltimore, MD, 21217

Dear Mr. Whiting,

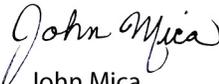
It is with much interest and excitement that I apply for the position of International Admission Assistant in the Office of Undergraduate Admission at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA). I am currently a full-time student at MICA receiving a BFA in Graphic Design with a concentration in Book Arts. As a current international student myself, I believe I am an ideal candidate for the position.

MICA was always at the top of my list of art schools. Every day brings opportunity for new and unique experiences. Students are encouraged to be themselves and explore new territories without boundaries. What drew me to MICA is the school's tremendous sense of community, and how welcoming it is of students from all backgrounds across the world. I would enjoy using my own personal experience to share the college's mission with prospective international students and their families who are currently applying to MICA.

If I were selected as an International Admission Assistant, my ability to closely relate and communicate with fellow international students would be a tremendous asset. I was born and raised in Taipei, Taiwan and came to the United States for education when I was sixteen. I travel between the United States and Taiwan each year, thus I have a continued familiarity with both Eastern and Western cultures. As an international student at MICA, I know I can effectively answer the questions and concerns prospective students from around the world will have; many of these concerns I had myself. When I applied to MICA, the Admission Office was extremely kind and helpful. Your assistance confirmed MICA was the perfect school for me.

I welcome the opportunity to meet with you in person and discuss my qualifications more in-depth in an interview. With my international background, ability to speak multiple languages, my organizational skills, and my developed attention to detail, I believe I would be a great match for the position of the International Admission Assistant. My resume is attached for your review and consideration. I thank you in advance for your time, and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

  
John Mica

January 10, 2015

Mr. Charles Smith  
Assistant Professor of Drawing and Painting  
Small Liberal Arts College  
444 University Avenue  
Baltimore, Maryland 21218

Dear Mr. Smith,

I am excited to learn of the current opening for the position of Assistant Professor of Drawing and Painting at Small Liberal Arts College as posted on the CAA website. As a practicing visual artist with substantial teaching experience and graduate degrees in both the Visual Arts and the Humanities, I believe I would make a substantial contribution to your academic community.

My understanding is that your undergraduate program emphasizes a strong foundation in material explorations while also challenging students to reflect critically on their own historical situation. In this vein, I am compelled by your program's stated directive to test students against the rigors of established artistic approaches as a way of developing a more creative and complex set of skills for responding to the present moment. At this stage in my artistic career, I am both qualified and deeply motivated to teach within this capacity.

My visual practice has developed in tandem with other academic pursuits. Through a Bachelor's degree, I received a strong foundation in the Liberal Arts – orienting myself, both directly and indirectly, towards various histories and philosophies of artistic production. After a first substantial attempt at my own studio practice, I then continued to a Masters of Philosophy degree, where I was able to do more advanced reading in the study of mid-twentieth century Modernism. These academic experiences have since enabled me to teach in various post-secondary environments - affording me a lasting set of examples for what kind of rigor and generosity is possible within higher education.

After completing my studies, I spent seven years actively working as an artist, while teaching, attending international residencies, and exhibiting work in Canada. I then enrolled as a relatively mature MFA student at MICA, where I have since apprenticed myself wholeheartedly to that community. Most notably, I recently co-organized for graduate students and faculty a series of five seminars by visiting scholars, entitled "Case Studies at North Eastern Galleries." The effectiveness of this series has only solidified my desire to work within an academic arts community.

Finally, as a faculty member within your department, I bring an experienced and developed criticality, but also an openness and eagerness for new ideas and approaches. Both inside and outside of the studio classroom, I welcome the opportunity to develop a critical yet spirited community at large. Enclosed is my resume and a portfolio of both my work and that of my students.

With thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely,

  
Jane Mica