

Artery Cooperative Limited was registered in 2001 by the registrar of Co-operatives as a non-trading cooperative. It operates within a set of rules based on the model rules for co-operatives by the Victorian Department of Justice, Office of Fair Trading.

Artery has 15 members/shareholders. We have a five-member board of directors consisting of a chairperson, treasurer, secretary and two non-executive directors. Directors are legally responsible for the operation of the cooperative. Half of the board retire annually.

Artery was started by a group of artists wanting greater professionalism, greater control over their careers as working artists. There remains a strong desire to build a sustainable working and social environment; to avoid the trap of rent/debt cycle so common within the art world. The main objective is to have control of our future. In concrete terms, that means purchasing a building that will house our studios and workshop. This will provide a stable environment for the investment in the infrastructure required to provide an OH&S compliant working environment. Safe working environments are sadly not the norm in artists studios as they are usually temporary spaces not subject to the regulations of employee work places administered by Worksafe.

Whilst trying to work out a way to purchase a building the need for a place in which to continue working was a pressing issue. So after a trial start in the then derelict PANCH (Preston And Northcote Community Hospital) we leased two Helen Street factories in which we could set up a workshop and fit-out 23 variously-sized and appointed studio spaces. The studios have freshly plastered and painted walls, new doors, power outlets, locks and light fittings.

Co-operative members contribute a regular payments for the purchase of their share in the Co-operative. We have also set aside contributions towards a workshop/equipment fund, which we use on occasion to purchase the necessary safety and working equipment.