



# INKubator

A guide to the Vanilla Ink  
Programme 2024

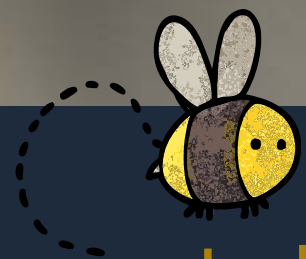


educate / inspire / empower

# INKubator



*"Vanilla Ink has built my confidence up so much that my practice has grown in ways I never thought were possible"*



**Lyndsay  
Alumni INKer**



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# Synopsis

So, what's this INKubator malarkey all about then? Well, stick with us and we'll show you.



## An Epic Journey

A ten month, part-time jewellery initiative to inspire you, transform your creative practice and kick-start your business. Maker-led and maker-designed with creativity at its core, it is a carefully interwoven set of activities, opportunities and a hive of support to generate maximum impact. With skills training at the forefront, you will leave our Programme a far better jeweller, with your bench skills, business mind and creativity improved beyond all recognition.



*The Vanilla Ink Programme allowed me to flourish and changed me in so many amazing ways! I cannot put into words how grateful I am to have been part of it!"*

**Lorna - Alumni INKer**



# About

The INKubator is Scotland's unique Jewellery Skills and Business Growth Programme, with the aim of developing emerging and established talent by providing a supportive and educational environment. The INKubator enables the best jewellers and makers to develop and grow their business, with monthly skills and professional development workshops, networking opportunities and exciting events throughout the ten month Programme. In-House INKers will thrive in a fully equipped workshop, with each given tailored 1-2-1 mentoring. It's the perfect package to ensure each INKer develops confidence, business and practical skills to last a lifetime. Working with key members within the creative and business sectors, the INKubator will give ample insight into what it takes to become a jeweller in today's landscape.



*"Classes, workshops, peer support and mentoring that covers all aspects of your creative practice and sets you up with the tools to establish enhance your business. Plus a creative, supportive environment with a network of jewellers to share the journey with"*

**Iona  
Alumni INKer**





# Core Benefits

Hive  
Mind

1-2-1  
Mentoring

Bench Skills  
Development

Your  
Creative  
Practice

Professional  
Development

Events  
and  
Networking

Critical  
Response

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## Breakdown

How do these things work and what do they mean?



*"I highly recommend the course to anyone who needs a little guidance when making the leap from jeweller to jewellery brand, and wants to make some good friends along the way!"*

**Hannah - Alumni INKer**

## Skills Development

We curate the Programme with Skills Development at the forefront. We are led by a Master Goldsmith & Setter with nearly 30 years experience in the industry who has a natural talent for connecting with his students and is responsible for designing class content here at Vanilla Ink. The improvement of jewellery methods and techniques is why we build our Programme around the upskilling of already talented jewellers and unlocking their potential. We offer the tools, knowledge and experience to invest in your practice and put it into motion, improving your confidence and allowing you reach a future you have always dreamed of!

## Critical Feedback

All INKers are expected to participate in a couple of 'Critical Response' sessions, facilitated by our highly experienced CEO, Ellie Smith-Barratt. Despite what you may think, these are positive exercises and not daunting! When taking part in these productive sessions, you and your fellow INKers are encouraged to support one another within the Programme

## Professional Development

In the areas where we are not experts, we partner with industry leaders to provide the Professional Development that will allow you to grow your business and flourish as a jewellery maker. Think marketing, branding, financials etc. All of these are essential to boosting your business brain and allowing your practice to flow, which will increase your efficiency and mean more time at the bench for you! These sessions are not there to terrify you, more to help you understand the obstacles you face when doing the dreaded admin side of your business. Yes, we all want to play around at our benches all the damn time, but we know this isn't possible. Let us help you grow your business mind to allow your practice to thrive.

## Hive Mind

Our Programme becomes a place for teamwork, collaboration and sharing. We will create a place where you can communicate, share ideas, encourage and support one another. Our team chatrooms will become a safe space for all INKers to work things out, discuss relevant issues and discover new techniques. You can also join us with our fortnightly 'Vanilla Pod', a place where we can discuss selected relevant podcasts, ranging from the inspirational and motivational to the informative and educational.

## 1-2-1 Mentoring

We take the time to pair In-House INKers with a mentor that will be most beneficial to you and your practice. The mentor may not be industry-specific but is tailored to your needs, offering a range of experience and skills. You'll receive a minimum of ten hours of bespoke mentoring to support your place on the Programme. Meetings can be in-person or online and are used to provide you with an opportunity to reflect on your learnings and your own practice with the support of someone in the creative world with relatable experiences and who will act as a sounding board.

## Events and Networking

Over the course of the ten months Vanilla Ink will invite designers, creatives and entrepreneurs to share their experiences in our Meet the Maker sessions to encourage further learning. Introductions will be made to key organisations and individuals to expand your network. Vanilla Ink also curates networking events where the INKers will have a chance to showcase their work to a collection of audiences, ending the INKubator Programme with an exhibition and sales event.

## Breakdown

How do these things work and what do they mean?



*"Getting the chance to take part in the INKubator has been an amazing experience. It helped me gain knowledge which I didn't know about before starting. Having this type of support and also access to a fully functioning workshop has allowed me to continue making and practice my skills."*

**Natasha - Alumni INKer**



# INKubator



## Course Contents

# INKubator

Our Programme is self-funded and available on two different tiers.

## In-House INKers

Being an In-House INKer is without doubt the best way to experience the Programme. This all comes with lots of benefits, so let's look at what's involved.

You will receive your very own bench space for the ENTIRE YEAR [Jan - Dec], situated within our designated INKers Studio here at VIHQ in Glasgow. You'll be treated as one of our Residents, getting 24-hour access to our superbly equipped studios and workshops.

You will become part of a close-knit community of over thirty jewellers, ranging from the company directors, Jewellers in Residence, fellow INKers and Vanilla Ink staff, Tutors and Residents. The benefits of all this are pretty huge! By becoming an In-House INKer, you'll create bonds that will last a lifetime and pick up hints, tips and skills simply by being here and building your practice.

All Skills and Professional Development sessions will be delivered in-person from our team of industry leaders and experts. There's no substitute for hands on learning, you'll be taught by top class creatives at the very top of their games.

You'll also benefit from in-person Meet the Maker sessions, getting the chance to listen, chat and question creative industry leaders face to face.

Finally, the in-person advantages end with holding our various Critical Response sessions around our table in Vanilla Ink. While these sessions can seem daunting, they always end up being a cathartic experience, shared in a peer to peer way.



*“Vanilla Ink have encouraged us to do things we might not necessarily have tried before.”*



**Sasanqua - Alumni INKer**





# Costs

While these seem like random figures, we've actually sat down and done our homework! For example, the In-House INKer Programme is costed to reflect the accumulative price of each of the sessions alongside the cost of a year's rent in our Shared Studio. We work extremely hard to keep our costs low and within reach. Remember, we're a 'beyond profit' company who reinvest their profits back into the social enterprise part of our business.

## In-House INKers

Full Programme Fee - **£5531**

Monthly Breakdown - **£461** [Payments over 12 months]

## Further Information

A discount of 10% will be given to those who either

A] apply for the INKubator before midnight on **Friday 27th October** [and are successful]

OR

B] wish to pay for the INKubator Programme in full up front [payment in January 2024]

Those requiring a payment plan will be offered the chance to pay monthly over the 12 months of 2024 [bespoke plans on request]

**SUGGESTION** - The INKubator is the ideal kind of thing to seek out funding opportunities for. There are plenty of pots available for those in the know or who shop around!

## Programme Leaders

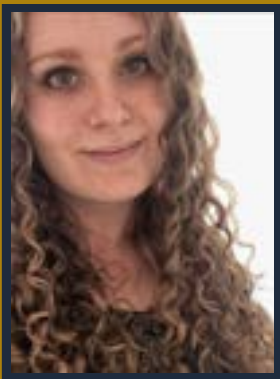
The INKubator Programme will be taken mainly by our team here at Vanilla Ink HQ in Glasgow. While we will invite outside experts to deliver certain Skills and Professional Development, these are the guys who you will be learning from and relying on for the duration of the INKubator.



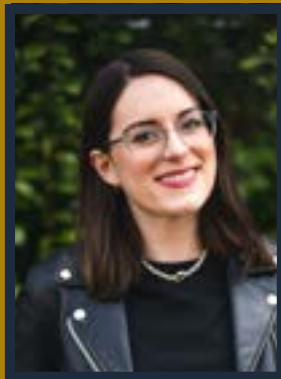
ELLIE SMITH-BARRATT  
CEO



SCOTT MCINTYRE  
CREATIVE DIRECTOR



NOR CLIFFORD  
DESIGN, DRAW & RENDER



LAURA MCHARD  
BRANDING & MARKETING



STEPHEN BARNETT  
CAD DESIGN



RACHAEL BROWN  
MONEY MATTERS



# What We Need From You

The INKubator Programme is open to jewellers who are committed to their craft and are actively pursuing a livelihood within the industry. We want to work alongside passionate makers who are looking to develop a career within the jewellery world and for designers that execute a high level of contemporary craft.

Let's get one thing out the way immediately though: it really does not matter what stage of your career you are at - the INKubator is for you!

It is not simply aimed at recent graduates or jewellers at the beginning of their career, this Programme is 100% aimed at all jewellers, no matter what level they are at or how long they have been doing it.

You may well have been running your practice for several years but are looking to enhance your skills and take your business to the next level.

## To be eligible, you must:

- Have completed your education/training i.e. be at a competent level [formal education or training IS NOT necessary]
- Have the desire to develop your practice into your sole occupation
- Have a portfolio of recent/current work
- Commit to the 10 month Programme
- Provide an up to date creative C.V.
- Commit to at least 8 hours per week developing your own practice

# Eligibility



# Criteria



## What do we look for in our **INKers**?

Want to apply to be an INKer? First, we will need you to fit the eligibility criteria - but how will you go about grabbing our attention so that you stand out from the crowd? If last year is anything to go by, we will receive far more applications than there are available places!

Remember, positions are limited to only **TEN INKers** per year. You'll be based in our purpose built INKubator Studio here at VIHQ, with the studio having ten benches. It's up to you to appear professional, clear with your aims and eager to begin! After submitting your application, we will thoroughly review each one then invite a select few who impress us most for interviews.

## Criteria for application

- Quality of work
- Originality
- Strong ideas
- Passion and dedication
- Quality of images
- Open to new ideas and development





# Expectations

*You'll only get out  
what you put in*

**As INKers, you'll be expected to fully commit to The Programme. It will be intense but ultimately rewarding!**

**Here's what we expect from you should you decide to join us:**

## Expectations

- To fully commit to the Programme [Sessions will run from Feb - Oct]
- Be entirely prepared for and follow up on each session
- Take part in a feedback session at the end of the Programme which offers some vital reflection
- Be an advocate for Vanilla Ink and our partners during and after
- Spend at least 8 hours per week developing your skills
- Commit to the residential in Jan '23
- Base yourself at VI for the whole year
- Engage with the 10 hour Mentoring Programme [1 hour session per month] and manage the relationship



## INTERVIEWS

Interviews for In-House INKers will take place on **11th / 12th December 2023**, so please make sure you would be free on that date. While we would love for all interviews to be conducted in person, we understand that not everyone can arrange to be in Glasgow for then.

With that in mind, we can always conduct interviews via Zoom. If you do end up being selected, please note they will last no longer than 30 minutes. We'll ask you to present your work for 10 minutes then answer a series of questions for 20 minutes. This will be a relaxed, informal chat where we will get to know you, view your work and hear why you want to immerse yourself in our world! This may seem intimidating but please don't be nervous, we don't bite!

## THE APPLICATION FORM

The application is an online form and is in real time. We would suggest you use a separate word document to fill out your answers then copy and paste into the document. We ask for your relevant training [no formal education is required] and where you are based but what is really important to us are the following questions.

Please consider your answers carefully as they will help us understand your commitment, quality and aspirations. We use your answers and interview to determine your mentor so we can offer you the best and tailored support.

**[PLEASE CLICK HERE TO APPLY](#)**

### PERSONAL STATEMENT

Please tell us a little about you and your work. What techniques do you use, where do you get inspiration from, etc [300 words approx]

### GOALS & ASPIRATIONS

What are your aims for your business in the near and long-term future and what have you done so far in achieve them? [600 words approx]

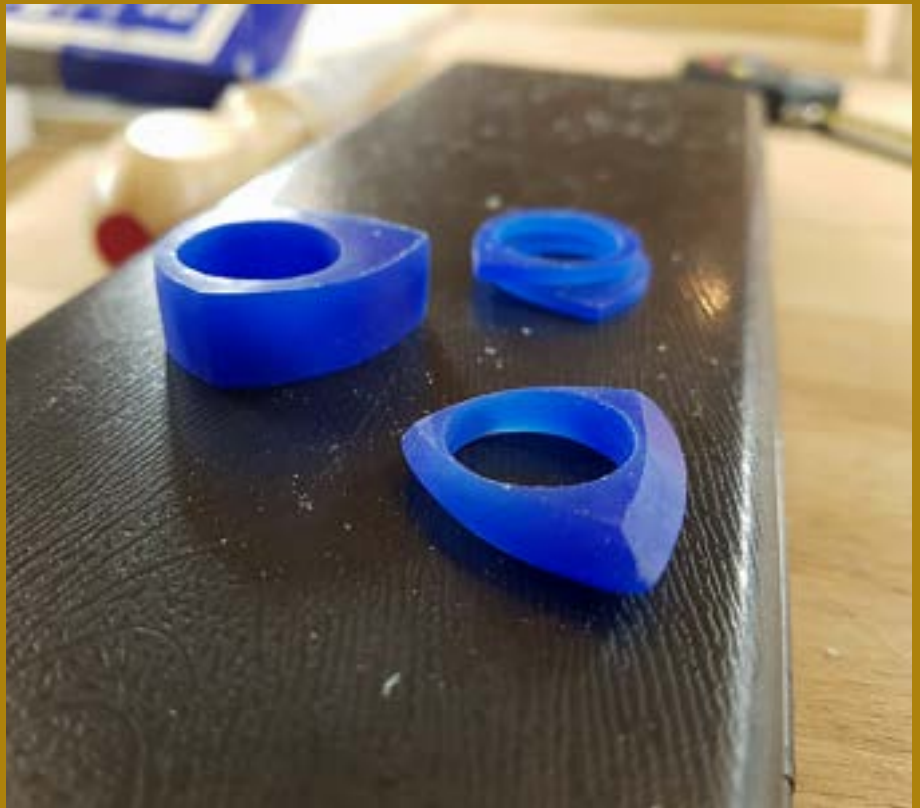
### YOU & VANILLA INK

What attracted you to VI? What do you hope to gain from being part of the Programme? What are your main struggles as a jeweller, maker and/or business? [600 words approx]

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Use this space to tell us anything you would like us to know in support of your application [300 words max]





## IMAGE GUIDELINES

- We require FIVE images with your digital application
- These must be sent in digitally where we will accept all images in either .jpeg .png format
- Must be at least 500 x 500 pixels and should be 72dpi
- Has to be less than 100 MB in size each

## WHAT WE EXPECT

- Images to reflect recent work [within 3 years]
- CAD rendered images are acceptable but must only make up two of the five images submitted
- Images must reflect different pieces of work
- A short description of the work [how, when, why the piece was made]
- Clear and in focus images
- Model images are acceptable but the work must be obvious, i.e. focus on the work, not the model
- Work is judged on quality, clarity and originality, please make sure your images reflect that

# VANILLA INK CIC

established Glasgow 2017



GOOD  
LUCK!

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