

# Rufa Portfolio Guidelines

**At the centre of your projects.**

**RU  
FA**

**Rome**  
University  
of Fine Arts

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*"Today more than ever, the artist, in addition to devoting his/her time to the **creative process**, has a duty to believe in the value of culture overall, and he/she is called to the task of developing a certain **cultural sensitivity**. The keys to success in this business are invention, intuition, effort, perseverance and **ideas**. These are the same strengths I have always considered fundamental in life and I feel they can be equally applied to a successful artistic education"*

*Alfio Mongelli  
President of Rome University of Fine Arts*

# This portfolio **Guide** is for you

Welcome to RUFA portfolio guidelines. If you are thinking about joining the creative workforce you are on the right track! RUFA is the Fine Art Academy where you can fulfil your passions and your dreams. This is an Academy where students are taught to think as professionals from the very first steps. A fundamental task to stand out from the crowd is to create, organize and constantly update a professional and eye catching portfolio.

Creating a portfolio is not a simple task and this is the reason why we have created this guide for the prospective students that will join our enthusiastic community. This guide will help you through the challenging process of building up your first portfolio, even if we know that there is no right way to do it, like there is no right path to follow in the design process. Being yourself is the most important thing as well as having fun during the process.

Keep in mind that a portfolio is like your personal business card and for this reason it should showcase your ability to get the message across. The big thing here is to demonstrate through various and personal methods what kind of work you want to do in the future and what you excel at.

**And Rufa is here to walk you through this journey.**

# What is a **Portfolio**?

A portfolio is a collection of works and ideas developed over a period of time that can demonstrate your talent and abilities. It is first and foremost a powerful job tool designed to showcase your potential and what you aim to become in the future. Creating a portfolio is a challenging step in your career because it requires a deep understanding of yourself as well as a deep analysis of your aspirations.

It is not only about collecting your best works and expressing your creativity; a portfolio should express your personality and it should act as a mirror of what you are today and what you choose to be tomorrow. Express in your portfolio your passion for the creative arts by collecting together seven to ten works created using your favorite media.

**You can include examples of works like :**



**New Media**



**Traditional**



**Photographs**



**Alternative**



# Tips and tricks

## » HOW TO START



### **Get a folder**

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Organizational skill.



### **Get a camera**

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Capture everything.



### **Go to the library**

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Even if you got Google.



### **Get a sketchbook**

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So useful and so cool too.



### **Use a calendar**

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Work like a real professional.



### **Stay in the loop**

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Now it is Google turn.



### **A lot of pencils**

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I mean, a lot.

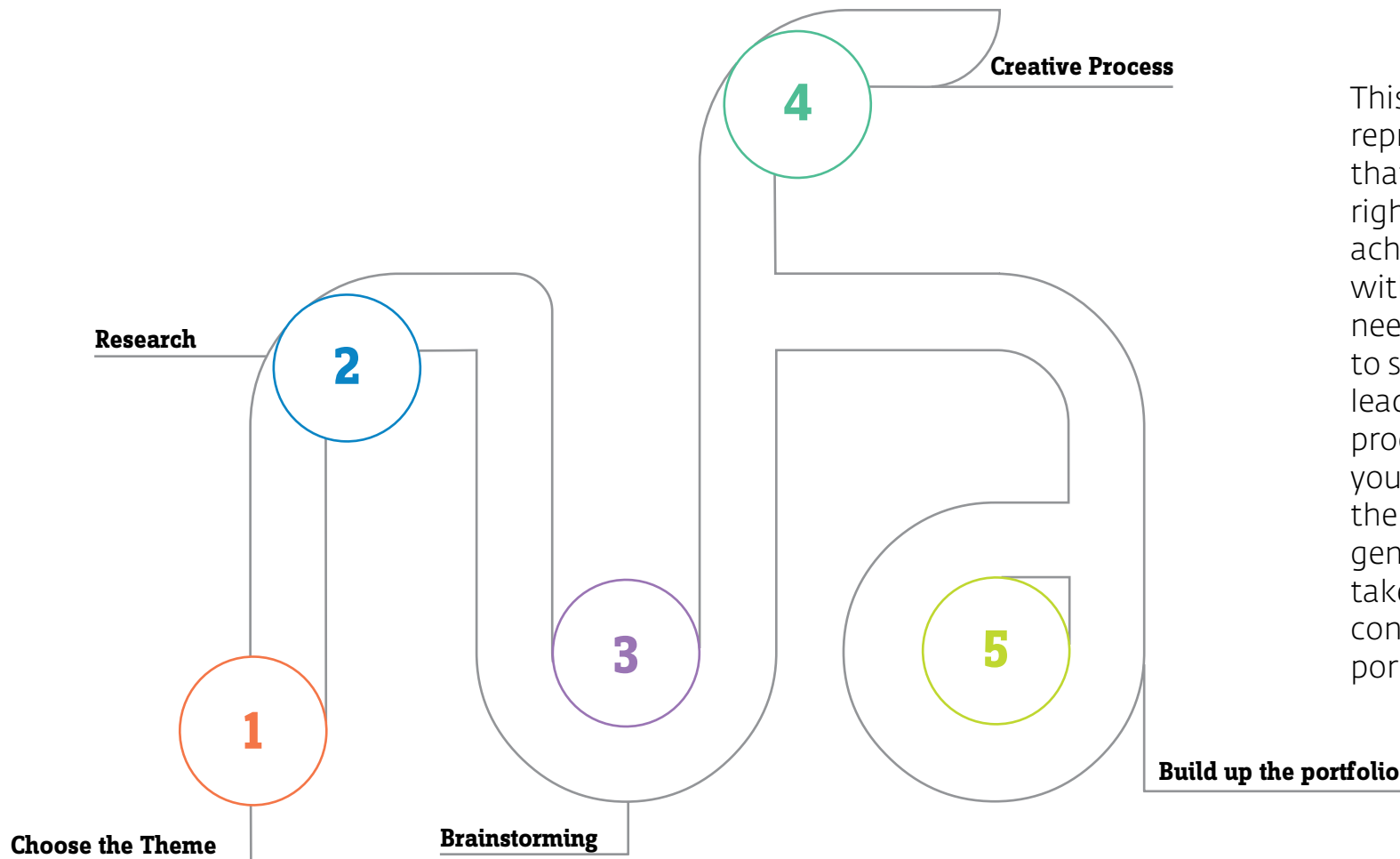


### **Have some fun!**

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And express it in your work.

# The 5 steps to get a **Knockout** portfolio



This is a schematic infographic representing the five simple steps that will help you develop the right asset for your portfolio and achieve your goal. Get started with a theme that suits your needs best. The second step is to start a wide research that will lead you to the brainstorming process in order to organize your ideas. The fourth step is the creative process that will generate your project and will take you to the final task and the concrete realization of your first portfolio.

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# Choose a Theme

» THE MOOD OF YOUR WORK

The process of building up a portfolio begins with choosing a theme to tell a story or express yourself about a subject. In this first step try to disengage the mind, allowing your curiosity to find interesting ideas, concepts, social problems, asking yourself fresh questions about the world around you. Here begins your journey. Look at everyday life experiences as well as social issue, contemporary subjects, nature, art, music, poetry, writing, art movements and your personal daydreams as well.



## Go somewhere new

And take inspiration. Creativity is the fuel of any design process. Go to a park, drop into a café, watch new movies, visit exciting exhibitions. Take notes of what you see or some reflections in a notebook.



## Make a list

Make a list of 10 things that interest you, disengaging the mind and allowing yourself to think without boundaries. For example, choose inspiring people that have changed the world, or a song that helps you move on when you need it.



## Get the right mind-set

Develop a sharp mind to boost your imagination with some creative exercises. Cross-over two or more ideas, items, words, themes, everyday objects and play with the significance, the meaning. Use visualisation exercises and hypothetical thinking.



Start ***strong***,  
choose a theme  
that can tell  
something  
about you,  
something fresh  
and ***innovative***.



LACK OF IDEAS?  
CHECK THESE  
WEBSITES

wallpapermagazine.com  
artnews.com  
artreview.com  
deviantart.com  
creativebloq.com  
designarchives.aiga.org  
booooooom.com.



# Research

» CAPTURING IDEAS

Even if you have found the right theme or you are stumble across a creative block, the research step is a fundamental part of your portfolio creation. Research is the stage that will guide you to the design concept and it can help to extend the key concepts of your work as well as the way you think. Collect ideas and explore the chosen theme. Research is often an open-ended process and it is also about observation. Libraries are old fashioned but a great place to deepen an idea. Internet is also a perfect playground to explore and get inspired.

## THE OBSERVATION PROCESS

**Every professional has always a handy notebook in the bag. Make notes of everything that comes into your mind. Create a diary of your thoughts.**

# Brainstorming

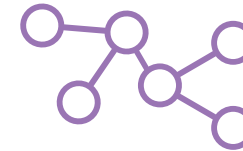
» BECAUSE IDEAS CAUSE IDEAS

Brainstorming is a powerful tool to generate creative ideas and also a fundamental part of the design process because even if you don't like it, it is highly useful. It can help creating new patterns of thinking and develop problem solving skills. A brainstorming process starts with ideas and thoughts that can seem a bit crazy at first but will generate unconventional creative solutions for sure. The best technique and the most common way to do it is using a mind map in order to create free association ideas.



## Post-it techniques

The most creative and popular creative technique. State the problem or the chosen theme, then use post-it or images in order to generate linked ideas and concepts. Pair words, organize and re-organize thematic groups, use different coloured pieces of paper to immediately identify different groups of information.



## Mind map

Unleash your mind's creativity with mindmapping technique. It is basically a diagram that connects information around a central subject. Put at the centre of a page your main idea connecting it with related topics and subtopics. In a once you can have a great overview of the subject gaining a huge amount of additional information.

Start ***strong***,  
Link ideas and  
isolate words.  
***Organize*** groups  
of words that  
belong to  
similar groups.



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# The Creative process

## » DEVELOP YOUR IDEAS

The creative process is a cognitive process that produces, transforms and generates your work experimenting new formal combinations and solutions about an idea or a concept. Creativity is individual, and creation is the hardest part. But it is something that can be developed, that you can have if you want. There is not a right way to make ideas happen. Choose two or more items from your mind map and experiment in an inventive way. Start drawing and try to use different and alternative media such as textiles, paint, collages, paper, photographs but also sand, food such as coffee, wood, ceramics, video and so on.

## EXPLORE YOUR IDEA

Include paintings, graphic designs, illustrations, storyboards, photographs videos, textiles, animations, sculptures, product design works, ceramics, poetry pieces.



5

# Build up your portfolio

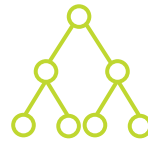
» LET'S GET PRACTICAL

Now that you have your content you need to organize it. Storytelling is a good strategy and is based on the chronological order of the design process. Think of your portfolio as a conversation through which talk about your set of skills and highlight your interests. Contextualize your work using a clean and simple layout. Respect the key principles of composition as tone, perspective, colour, balance, contrast, space. Do not use small details and remember the K.I.S.S. rule: KEEP IT SUPER SIMPLE.



## Collect the material

Study your material keeping always in mind that a portfolio should reflect your personality as well as get the attention of your public. So don't forget your AUDIENCE.



## Hierarchy

Any visual work needs a clear hierarchy. Organize and prioritize the information in a meaningful way. Remember the importance of the storytelling. Each chapter of your portfolio must focus on a single idea.



## Design

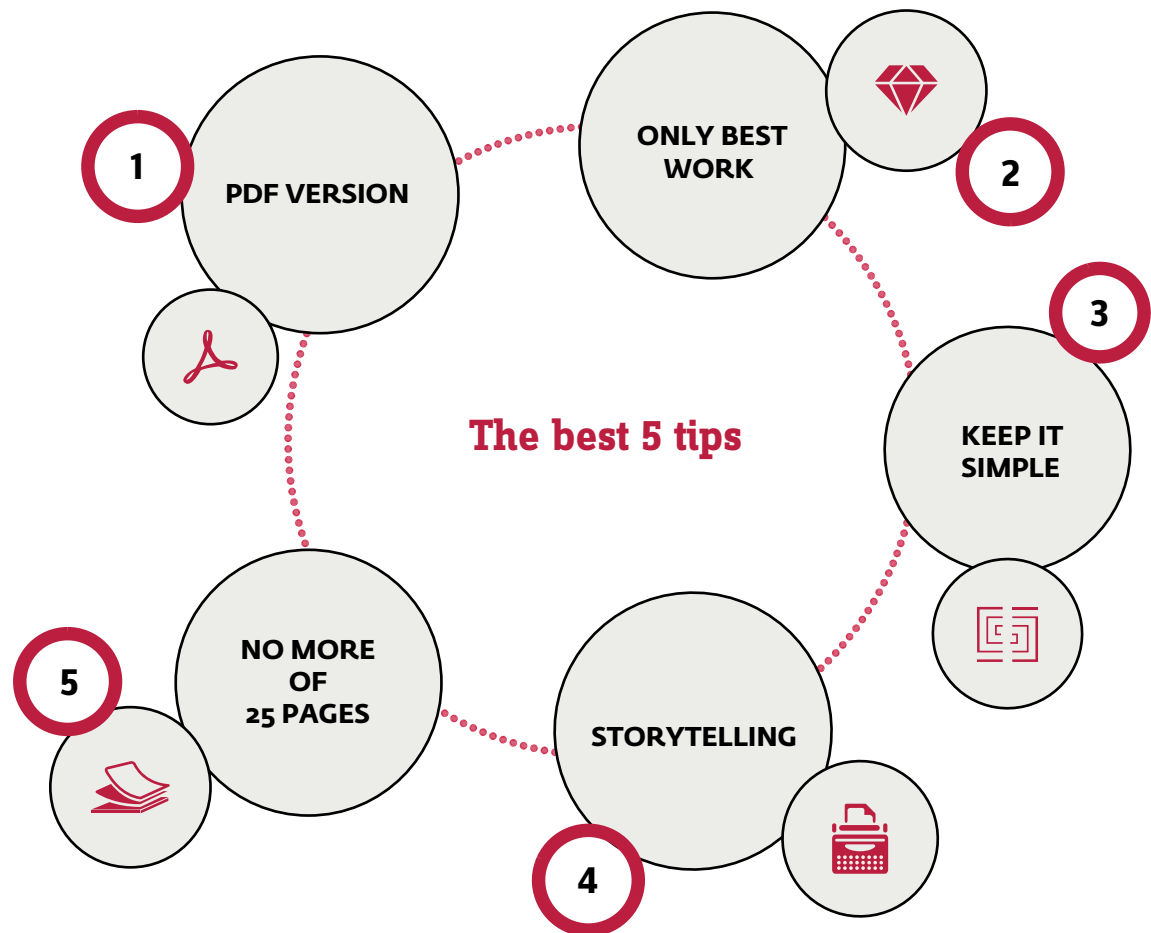
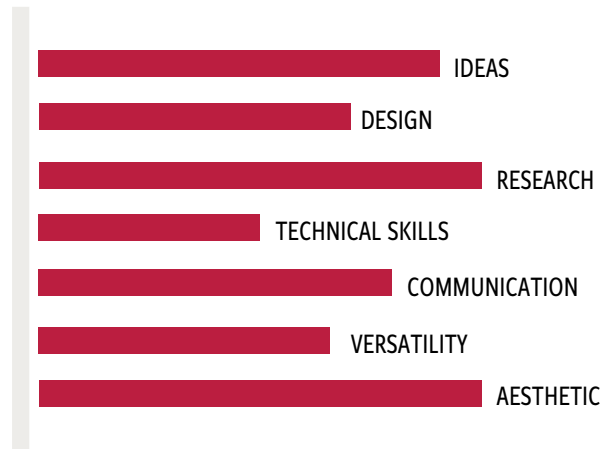
Adobe Indesign is still the right tool to create a layout even if your portfolio is a traditional one. In this case a good choice would be to scan it in order to create the layout in Adobe Indesign or Microsoft publisher. Scribus is the best choice as a free alternative.



# Keep in Mind

» FINAL SUGGESTIONS

## What really matters in a portfolio



# Academy Submission

You will submit your portfolio to RUFA sending a digital document to **orientamento@unirufa.it**.

Please do not send original copy of your work because it cannot be returned. We encourage early application as there are limited places available. Acceptance in our programme is based on a skype interview and portfolio examination. Please include in your portfolio a cover letter, introducing yourself explaining past and present studies.

For further details about requirements and admission procedures please contact the local agency or our orientation office at the following number:

## **Guidance Office and orientation.**

Tel +39 06. 85.86.59.17  
orientamento@unirufa.it

**Thank you and enjoy.**

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