

Art in Public Places – Guidelines

Wellington's public art works are an integral part of the city's urban fabric, enriching our sense of place and the physical beauty of our environment. Art works in public are part of our history, part of our evolving culture and collective memory.

What is Public Art?

Public art is broadly defined as artistic works created for or located in part of a public space or facility that is accessible to members of the public.

The phrase 'public art', or more recently 'art in public places', is used to describe art work that exists beyond the traditional exhibition spaces of a gallery or a museum. Art in public places refers to works of art in any media that have been planned and executed with the specific intention of being sited or staged in the public domain, usually outside and accessible to all.

Examples of art in public places include sculptures, murals, mosaics, glass or water features, landscaping, uniquely designed paving, furniture and parts of buildings, sound and light works, site specific installations, work that may decompose or melt, temporary exhibitions/events/performances, art work produced through community involvement or interdisciplinary collaboration, and memorials and monuments relating to civic and ceremonial roles of local and national and government.

Background to the Public Art Fund

Public Art Policy (2003):

The policy aims to ensure that public art continues to make Wellington's urban environment visually dynamic and aesthetically pleasing, reflecting the city's heritage and contemporary cultural diversity.

Wellington City Council's Public Art Policy (2003) recognises that public art is an essential resource for Wellington's future as a creative city. The policy encapsulates the spirit of the city's vision – Creative Wellington – Innovation Capital. To access the Public Art Policy visit the following link: <http://www.wellington.govt.nz/about/overview/index.html>

Public Art Panel:

In 2005 Wellington City Council appointed a panel of professional contemporary arts advocates to support the production and presentation of art in public places. The panel ensures that the aims of the Public Art Policy are achieved and that Wellington retains and extends its leading position as a vital creative and cultural centre.

Wellington City Council allocates \$300,000 per annum for the research, development, commissioning and implementation of art in public places in Wellington. The public art panel distributes this fund.

The panel are:

- Mark Amery, Art Critic and Director, Playmarket
- Alison Bartley, Visual Arts Promoter and Director, Bartley and Company Art
- Tina Barton, Senior Lecturer Art History, Victoria University
- Heather Galbraith, Senior Curator, City Gallery Wellington
- Rob Garrett, Director, Rob Garrett Contemporary Fine Art Ltd
- Karen Wallace, Chief Operating Officer, Wellington City Council, Chair Public Art Panel.

The Panel is directly responsible for:

- overseeing the strategic development of a Wellington Public Art Programme and Public Art Collection
- integrating art into Council projects
- developing temporary public art works
- selecting external public art proposals to be funded from the Public Art Fund
- reviewing and responding to offers of public art gifts
- liaising with the Wellington Sculpture Trust regarding annual grants and other planning matters.

Public Art Panel – Strategic Vision

In the same way a curator excites imagination and challenges viewers in a gallery setting, the work of the Public Art Panel reflects the role of art in our environment.

The Public Art Panel acknowledges the important work of the Wellington Sculpture Trust and the Council's Community Arts Programme, and sees their role as complementary to the panel's efforts.

The Panel supports art in the public realm by:

- Enabling artists to experiment with a range of media to:
 - explore their possibilities, implications and affects in the public arena
 - generate debate about their impact on the life of the city
 - reinforce Wellington's reputation as a centre for innovation.
- Encouraging interaction between artists, architects, urban and landscape designers and other creative people to extend the scope of creative work in the public arena.
- Enabling interaction between artists and the public to create opportunities for creative exchange, discussion and debate, and to enhance awareness and understanding of art in the public realm.
- Encouraging central government and private sector involvement in public art.

The Public Art Panel seeks proposals from artists and organisations that further these aims. In particular, the Panel is looking for:

- Temporary projects utilising exterior sites for the exploration and presentation of new artistic practices that engage in various ways with the physical character, history and social meaning of public space.
- Projects that seek to engage with specific cultures and communities and their histories to encourage deeper understanding of Wellington's rich and diverse cultural heritage and contemporary makeup.
- Projects that involve partnerships with organisations and industries which will enable creative work to enter into an extended range of environments.
- Lectures, conferences, symposia and forums that generate debate about art and the built environment.
- Projects which extend public art practice and urban design by bringing international practitioners to Wellington by situating Wellington as a cultural leader on an international stage.

Funding Criteria:

In order for the Public Art Panel to agree to fund a public art work, aesthetic and technical criteria should be addressed. Please note that the Panel realises that art in public places can take many forms, therefore not all criteria will be relevant. The following items exist as a guide only.

- **Artistic excellence and quality**
Art works will and should be the subject of debate as to their artistic merits; the primary objective being to achieve quality and diverse public art.
- **Uniqueness to Wellington**
The proposed project will be unlike any existing concept in Wellington.
- **Contemporary use of technology**
Demonstration of new artistic practices, for example digital and moving image, that will reinforce Wellington's reputation as a centre for innovation.
- **Reflective of environment**
Suitable and/or appropriate to the site, or a public venue in the case where a site/venue has been identified. Art work will consider the physical character, history and social meaning of the public space.
- **Accessibility**
The work will be accessible and/or visible to the general public.
- **Education and development**
Project may offer the opportunity for education, discussion and debate, and will enhance understanding of art in the public arena.
- **Partnerships/collaboration/networking**
Project presents multi-disciplinary collaborative opportunities, for example between artists/designers, architects, landscape designers, and/or international practitioners.
- **Cultural implications**
The project will engage with communities and their histories to achieve a deeper understanding of Wellington's diverse cultural heritage and contemporary makeup.
- **Treaty Relations**
Artist/organisation has consulted with local iwi about the position and impact their work will have on the natural and/or built environment.
- **Maintenance**
The proposed work will consider environmental conditions of public display with ease of maintenance and repair.
- **Impact**
The project will benefit Wellingtonians – through visibility, education or other means, and enhance their experience of living/working in the city.
- **Safety**
Art works need to be physically robust to ensure public safety.

What types of projects are eligible?

Eligible projects must:

- take place within the Wellington rate paying area
- meet some of the funding criteria
- benefit Wellington residents
- not have started before an application for funding is assessed
- not be funded by other Wellington City Council grants for the same purpose.

Eligible projects include:

- Site specific art works in public places for example:
 - performance and/or event
 - temporary sculpture/installation
 - permanent sculpture/installation
 - lighting, moving image (film), digital technology
 - landscape
 - urban design
- Conference/symposium/lecture series.