



Ken Lum, Monument for East Vancouver, 2010

Please refer to page 6 of this document for the Q&A from the June 7th Information Session for Artists

Open Call – Artist-Initiated Opportunity
INVITATION TO ARTISTS TO PROPOSE PUBLIC ARTWORKS

Submission deadline: Wednesday, July 5, 3 p.m.

The City of Vancouver invites artists to expand their art practice into the public realm and propose new artworks, envisioned for sites in Vancouver, that contemplate the city, its defining features, spaces and neighbourhoods.

This open call to artists requests approaches to artworks of any scale for public spaces in Vancouver. Emerging or established artists may propose works in a range of media including, but not limited to, built form, two-dimensional works, socially engaged practices, short-term and permanent sculptural installations. All commissions are for new work; existing works will not be considered.

Background

For twenty-five years, the City of Vancouver Public Art Program has been commissioning artists to create artworks unique to Vancouver. Artists' ideas, skills, and visions of the city are key to the success of the program. In 2009, prior to the 2010 Olympics, the first "artist-initiated" opportunity was launched as an open call to artists to propose artworks for the city outside of development or other civic initiatives. This call resulted in [Monument for East Vancouver](#) by Ken Lum and [Kingsway Luminaires](#) by David MacWilliam, as well as a number of innovative temporary projects, including Vanessa Kwan's Olympic hosting project [Vancouver Vancouver Vancouver](#). The second open call, timed to celebrate the City's 125th anniversary in 2011, resulted in [Kingsway Trail](#) by Sonny Assu, Wepler and Mahovsky's [A False Creek](#), Cameron Kerr's [marble sculpture](#) on Queen Elizabeth Plaza, and temporary works such as [Digital Natives](#), produced by Other Sights for Artists' Projects, and Bitter and Weber's [A Sign for the City](#).

Eligibility

This call is open to artists/artist teams with a regular art practice who can demonstrate substantial familiarity with Vancouver and its neighbourhoods. You do not have to be a resident in Vancouver but you must have some experience in this place and be available to manage the project locally. Experience with public art is not required.

For the purposes of this call, the definition of an artist is a professional practitioner who

- has completed basic training in visual art – an undergraduate degree or equivalent apprenticeship with an accomplished practitioner in the field,
- maintains a practice as an artist and has exhibited an independent body of work for at least two years,
- is recognized by peers in the field.

Information Session for Artists:

Staff will review the call, the application requirements and procedures and be available to discuss the opportunity and answer questions.

Date: Wednesday, June 7, 2017

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: nəc'a?mat ct Strathcona Branch Library, 730 East Hastings Street

Anticipated Schedule (subject to change)

Release Call for Artists: week of May 29

Artist information session: Wednesday, June 7, 7 p.m.

Submission deadline: Wednesday, July 5, 3 p.m.

Shortlist selected: week of July 31

Orientation of shortlisted artists: week of August 7

Concept proposals due: Week of October 2

Finalists selected: Week of October 9

Artworks commissioned: Week of October 16

Mentoring

Shortlisted artists new to public art will have access to consulting artists, art consultants, and staff experienced in public art who can act as advisors and mentors to assist in developing the concepts. Consulting artists will meet with shortlisted artists and will be available for guidance and technical expertise in the course of concept and design development.

Goals for Artist-Initiated Projects:

- Provide an opportunity for artists to propose public artworks not tied to development
- Contribute to a stimulating public realm and enrich the experience of the city for residents and visitors
- Support high caliber public artworks in the context of international art practices
- Mentor artists in producing public art

Sites

Artists should propose sites of interest for their work. Sites cannot be guaranteed and proposals should identify the nature and requirements of the site(s) in which the public artwork is envisioned. Ideas are encouraged for long-term, permanent and temporary projects for the public realm.

This is an opportunity to think about the city as a whole, its geographies, gateways, routes and public spaces, including unique crannies. Artists are encouraged to consider neighbourhoods outside the downtown core. Potential locations for site-specific works on city-owned properties could include plazas, greenways, community centres, libraries, and civic infrastructure. Privately owned sites may be considered if they are publicly accessible and an agreement with the owner can be reached. Projects proposed for parks must be approved by Park Board.

No proposals will be considered for Stanley Park, Locarno Beach, or Jericho Beach at this time. Sites of significance to the local First Nations, including shoreline areas, will only be pursued with Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh support.

Short-listed artists must be willing to work to confirm a site during the Concept Development and Detailed Design stages. Please note that projects must not be associated with third party advertising. All locations must be in the City of Vancouver.

If the proposal is selected, artists will need to consider how their proposed project will accommodate site use, pedestrian flow, safety, heritage designations, and official uses. Public or site stakeholder consultation may be required.

Environmental sensitivity is encouraged in the materials and processes of the artwork. Maintenance feasibility will be a consideration in awarding a commission.

Budget Estimates

Submitting artists or artist teams are asked to estimate a preliminary budget range necessary to realize their proposed ideas: up to \$25,000; \$25,000 to \$50,000; \$50,000 to \$100,000; and \$100,000+. It is understood that this is a very rough estimate, but bear in mind that public art budgets must cover all costs, including artist and design fees, supplies, insurance, engineering, fabrication, delivery, installation and taxes. Please refer to the info sheet [Considerations for Artists Submitting to Public Art Competitions](#) found online for more details on the range of costs that may be incurred. This is strictly for information; it is not necessary to submit a budget sheet at this stage. Short-listed artists will be asked to submit more detailed project budgets in Stage Two in order to establish feasibility of the project.

The number of projects realized will depend on the scale and quality of the submissions and the total program budget available. The City reserves the right not to fund any of the proposals.

Selection

Proposals will be evaluated by a panel of artists, curators, and others knowledgeable about art and the city in a two-stage process. The Selection Panel will shortlist artists who will be paid an honorarium to develop Concept Proposals. Concept Proposals will be reviewed by staff to determine feasibility and then presented to the Selection Panel. The panel will select the final projects to be commissioned.

Artist selection will be based on:

- High quality, innovation, and creativity of past work
- Approach to the opportunity and relevance to Vancouver
- Demonstrated ability to produce and present work
- Clarity of vision in relation to art in public space
- Understanding of materials and techniques
- Availability and ability to meet deadlines
- Ability to work collaboratively with others

Shortlisted artists will be provided with an honorarium of \$500 to \$5000, depending on the nature and complexity of the proposed work. Opportunities to present aspects of the work to the public during the concept development phase are encouraged.

Commissioned artists will need to enter into a contract with the City. The contract will identify insurance requirements, copyright, detailed design requirements, and a schedule of payments.

How to Apply

All proposals must be submitted via the online application form. It is wise to apply well in advance of the deadline. Only one submission will be accepted per artist, though works may be proposed for more than one site.

Completed proposals are not requested or required at the application stage. Reference contacts are requested but letters are not required.

The following will be required:

Submission Requirements:

1. A statement (up to 250 words) about your approach to this opportunity, your interest in public space, how you see the work situated, relevant experience and skills, and how this opportunity relates to your practice.
2. Up to eight JPG or PDF images, one per page. A maximum of two videos (up to 15 seconds each) may be included in place of four images. Images and videos should be titled with a number and the artist's name.

Optimum image resolution is 72 DPI, maximum 768 PX high. Images should be no more than 2MB.

Video segments should be in QuickTime or preferably Windows Media Player, compressed to a maximum of 2MB.

3. An image list that corresponds to numbered JPGs or videos submitted. Include artist's name, title of the work, date, media, dimensions, location (if public), commissioning body. If necessary, as in the case of interactive work, you may include up to a fifteen-word description.
4. A CV of up to two pages.
5. A brief (<30 words) summary of the approach to this opportunity.

[Apply now](#)

Deadline for submissions: 3:00 p.m., Wednesday, 5 July 2017

Questions: publicart@vancouver.ca

Commissions are supported by the City of Vancouver through the Public Art Program, Cultural Services. The Public Art Program provides art opportunities of many kinds, from single commissions to collaborations with design professionals and diverse communities. The program aims to foster artworks that define and express the spirit of place that is Vancouver.

For a list of current artist opportunities in Vancouver and elsewhere, go to <http://vancouver.ca/publicart>. Please join the list serve to be notified of future artist calls.

Fine Print:

Interested artists are advised that neither the City nor the selection panel is obliged to select any artist or accept any of the artists' proposals and may reject all proposals. Each artist is advised, and by the submission of a proposal, agrees that the City will not be responsible for any costs, expenses, losses, damages (including damages for loss of anticipated profit) or liabilities incurred by the artist as a result of or arising out of submitting a proposal, or due to the City's acceptance or non-acceptance of their proposal, or arising out of any contract award not made in accordance with the expressed or implied terms of the artist call. Until a written contract in a form satisfactory to the City is executed by both the City and artist, no legal rights or responsibility shall be created between the artist and the City.

Confidentiality: All documents submitted by Applicants to the City of Vancouver become the property of the City. The City will make every effort to maintain the confidentiality of each application and the information contained therein except to the extent necessary to communicate information to staff and selection panel members for the purposes of evaluation and analysis. The City will not release any of this information to the public except as required under the Province of British Columbia Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act or other legal disclosure process. Questions may be directed to Director, Access to Information, via 3-1-1 in Vancouver or 604.873.7000.

Note: A 15% non-resident withholding tax applies to artists from outside the country who provide services in Canada. City has the responsibility to withhold tax and remit to Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). The tax is refundable on application to CRA.

Q&A from the June 7th Information Session for Artists

For the initial application, we are to include a statement that describes our approach to this opportunity. How well developed a concept do we need to provide at this stage? Can we talk about our methodology or should we write about specific ideas we have for public artworks?

You should present a specific idea if you know what you want to do. You should talk about your approach to working in public space, and you need to convey enough of an idea of how you work and what you want to work with for the panel to get a sense of what you might do. You need an inspiration and direction, but it doesn't have to be fully fleshed out.

Is this call open to international artists to apply?

Artists who are from outside Vancouver may apply, but they must have some association to Vancouver and be familiar with the city.

Do all of the images submitted need to be of work the submitting artist has created, or can some of the images be from other artists the submitting artist admires or feels is appropriate to this competition and his/her submission?

Images should be of your work that a panel can use in considering your qualifications.

One of the criteria for defining an artist is " ... a professional practitioner who has completed basic training in visual art - an undergraduate degree or equivalent apprenticeship with an accomplished practitioner in the field." I am a self-taught artist with no formal training who has maintained a professional artistic practice for over 15 years, am I qualified to apply for this opportunity?

Most important is to have a professional practice recognized by peers in the field. If you have this, training will not be a key issue.

Can I apply to the Public Art Open Call twice – once as an individual and once as a part of an artist team?

You can apply once as an individual and also be part of a team, but not as the lead artist on the team.

Are site-specific theatre/performance art pieces eligible for the Public Art Works for Vancouver proposals?

The Public Art Program commissions artworks in the public realm, including performance art and socially engaged practices, but does not commission theatre productions. The practice of the creator, as well as the proposed artwork, will affect the success in this context.

Each artist is allowed to send in one submission. In the submission, can we propose more than one artwork?

You should focus on the project you are most interested in doing. You may note that you are also interested in pursuing other possibilities.

Can we find the links to City planning information on the website?

Major planning projects: <http://vancouver.ca/home-property-development/major-planning-projects.aspx>

Completed Plans: <http://vancouver.ca/home-property-development/neighbourhood-planning-projects.aspx>

You mentioned murals should have no advertising or political content, what do you mean by political?

- Can't put any signs or branding, often get subtle advertising submitted, associations with businesses that doesn't reflect the neighbourhood
- Sometimes difficult to say specifically what is political and religious—obvious associations to a political party, person or group, but of course you can talk about values.
- Could be the difference between social relevance, as opposed to political activism

Two questions first, practical: artist team, will the system accept 2-page CVs from more than one member of the team?

- Yes the system will accept that. We will only need CVs from those on the creative team; put them in one pdf.

And review of shortlist by the jury, is that an independent jury?

- Independent panel, all art professionals, artist, educators, curators; our panels don't have representation from the public art committee. The committee looks at policy and overview, but the panelists are specific to the call; same panel will shortlist and make final selections so that the work is discussed in depth over time.

How will decisions be made if the proposals are vague? How specific do you want it? How are you going to decide if there are no specifics?

- You need to talk about your skills and an idea of what you are interested in doing; and give the panel an idea of your vision and approach to public space

- Past work enters into it—the creativity and what you’ve been able to accomplish
- You are not required to go to the extent of sending a drawing in the first stage

If you already have a specific idea, can you include an image of it?

- It’s up to you if you feel that’s the best way to convey your idea.

Would that work against you to have those illustrations? Or show your work in a specific site?

- If the panelists are interested in the idea that you are proposing it won’t work against you;
- The success of the proposal is not tied to that one site; we can’t guarantee a site at this stage; if one site doesn’t work it is understood that we may have move to another
- It’s how you can articulate your work and what excites you and how you envision the piece—you need to inspire the panel with either text or image

You said, in the past, 8-9 projects were shortlisted; if all 9 are viable, will you fund all of them?

- We don’t know until we know the cost of all 9; if they are all recommended, we will fund the ones from the current budget, and the others will stay as recommended.
- There’s always a limit to the overall budget

Can we propose work for privately owned buildings?

- The owner would have to be willing to take liability and enter into an agreement with the City.
- Won’t likely commission permanent work, but could consider a temporary project.

For the team, if the lead is an artist, do the other members have to be artists?

- No, not as long as the lead on the team is a recognized practicing artist; only need CVs of artist members who have creative control

Can you talk more about the mentorship program?

- It’s not a program, but we are committed to help support artists who haven’t worked in the public realm in the past, through guidance from another artist, public art consultant, or City staff.

I feel the need of mentorship for navigating the bureaucracy!

- It's usually city staff who negotiate those relationships, since we are part of the bureaucracy.

How many ideas would you entertain from an individual?

- only one submission per person—one main idea, you need to decide
- It's possible the idea will adapt, but should focus on one thing

Does each idea have to have a location?

- It doesn't have to be specific, but you should speak about the kind of place in which you see your work located.

What is basic training? What if I never went to art school?

- Training isn't limited to art school; mentoring or even self-taught, as long as you understand your influences and have a recognized exhibiting practice—as long as you can explain your training; there is no solid line.

Projects that use consumables, i.e. battery packs, will they be considered and maintained?

- If you are shortlisted, you would have to identify a time frame for the work and how long you could maintain it; maintenance costs would be part of the budget.

What is the limit for the site?

- The boundaries of the city of Vancouver

What if the art doesn't belong to certain site, but can be flexible, adjust, relate to a number of sites in the city? Do we still have to mention a specific site?

- You can say you are open to a lot of different sites, but the panel needs to see how you see your work positioned, if you could choose your ideal site.

Image list: if I want to include 1 video and 6 images is that ok?

- Yes, the maximum is two videos.

Is there any place where we can see budgets for past funded projects?

Here are a few sample budget ranges for reference only – much depends on the specific needs of the proposal:

- Series of public performances with built props, printing, team of actors: \$50-75,000
- Major mural + maintenance: \$25-50,000
- Series of curated media works: \$75-100,000
- Large print works and installation: \$25,000
- Medium size light works: \$100-150,000
- Substantial built form: \$250,000 plus

I noticed a lot of works you showed reference history. Do you have a preference for historically based work?

- No, it's about the vision for your artwork.

Is this program going to be continued in the future? Is it ongoing?

- We hope so—doesn't have a specific dedicated funding source, so it's when we have the money and staff resources
- It's a program we are very excited about.

Any guidelines for budgets, worksheets we could use? Artist fees, how much should that be?

- You are allowed to think big.
- At this stage, this is a conceptualization of a broad figure
- There is no standard for artist fee, a guideline we have used for built works is 20% of a budget, but depends on the nature of what you are proposing, sometimes working with communities or performative works take time, cost of the project is your time (not materials), so hard to identify precise percentage.
- At the point of developing the budget you have to be able to justify the artist fee.

If you want to work with suppliers, etc. do you want those names? Will the city help navigate preferred businesses?

- You would not have to identify the suppliers at this point
- If you are developing the proposal, at that point you would research and identify fabricators

Is it possible that jury would look at proposal and think they could scale down your price?

- In general panel does not try to interfere with the proposal.
- They might want to have a conversation with you, if they have questions about the scale.

Eligibility: if you are already doing a public art commission for city can you apply for another one?

- Yes, you can apply.

Would proposals eventually be presented to Council to be approved? Is there political input, and what kind of work would they like to see in the city? Is the panel independent or part of the Public Art Committee?

- The selection panel is independent; it's best for the art and for the politicians to keep it out of the political realm; Council doesn't approve artworks; they approve a budget.
- The public art committee reviews process not artworks.

Does the artwork have to be executed in a specific time period or initiated right away?

- It's the capital budget so want to develop the works before end of 2018, but understand that not everything will be finished; interested in some quick starts to show results
- There may be opportunities to do tangential works as part of developing the shortlist proposals

Does anyone have access to guidelines for engineers and how they approve artworks? I have had problems with this in the past.

- no specific handbook; each artwork is unique and has different requirements
- don't need to worry about it at this stage; at second stage negotiate technical parameters and will work with the engineering department on specific proposal

Are you looking for anything specific in the CV? What if you have not been an artist your whole life?

- experience is of interest to the panel; the cv shows if you have been exhibiting, where you went to school, works, etc.

University campuses, possibility for negotiating sites in those locations?

- UBC not considered city of Vancouver.

- SFU does have sites in the city of Vancouver, and Emily Carr and the colleges; would have to work in partnership with them.

Can people from collectives include one page summary about the collective and members instead of a CV?

- Yes, you don't need to include 2 pages on everyone, as long as it includes key information about each artist.

In the past calls, how many proposals did you get?

- Over 115, but we had 2 different aspects, some platforms, this time open.

So around 10% are shortlisted?

- It's been around 10% in the past, but it will depend on the number that apply; we want to shortlist enough to encourage artists, but don't want to disappoint people by developing a number of things we can't produce.

So what I am hearing is that being too specific or too broad about site may be limiting?

- You should say where you would like to see your work but recognize that you may not be able to get it there
- Articulate the nature of the site; the site is not going to be what makes or breaks the submission.

Can you submit to do something with Translink?

- This is outside of city jurisdiction; not impossible to consider partnership, but the partnerships in the past have been projects that have more than one aspect and there was a portion on the city street.

What about projects that have components in other cities? Or is it Vancouver only?

- Our funding is Vancouver only
- Wouldn't discourage you from doing aspects elsewhere if you have the funding.

For the religious question, is cultural context ok, such as indigenous art in a spiritual context that could be considered religious by some?

- We tend to have a fair amount of latitude for indigenous cultural material.