



**WOODSTOCK
ART GALLERY**

Public Art Application Guide

Note: This document has heavily borrowed from the Winnipeg Arts Council's *Public Art Demystified: A Guide to Applying to Public Art Opportunities*.

Creating artwork in public space is a rewarding experience that brings your artwork to a wide audience and reflects Woodstock back to citizens and visitors in unique ways. Public art offers the opportunity to explore and express the culture, nature and history of Woodstock in contemporary ways.

There are many details to consider when creating an artwork for the public realm. The artwork must be robust enough to stand up to Woodstock's climate and interaction with many people. It must not pose any safety issues and must be as resistant to vandalism as possible. For this reason, it takes a bit of a village to create a public artwork. In addition to the artist — whose vision and concept is the prime element from which the artwork develops — there are engineers, architects, landscape architects, fabricators, contractors, maintenance workers and many others whose expertise is essential to the development of a public artwork. The artist works with this multidisciplinary group to achieve the best results. Although at times the process of creating public artwork can be challenging, the rewards of engaging the community through art are great. The Woodstock Art Gallery (WAG) is here to assist you through the process of developing, fabricating and installing the artwork.

This guide, although not exhaustive, is intended to help you understand the process of applying for a public art opportunity and some of the considerations you will need to be aware of if you are awarded a commission for the City of Woodstock through the Woodstock Art Gallery.

Call to Artists

A call to artists is a document that describes the public art opportunity and invites artists to apply for the project. In most cases, this is a request for expressions of interest and qualifications, meaning that no proposal is required or accepted at this stage. The WAG is committed to the respectful treatment of artists, so asking for a proposal without compensation is not something we practice or encourage. Creating a proposal without deep knowledge of the site is also counterproductive, as the details cannot be developed enough to really understand if the artwork is possible.



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A request for expressions of interest and qualifications enables you to write a short narrative about why the site or project is important or of interest to you. It also provides the Selection Committee with descriptions of your previous work, so they can understand your practice and experience. A major component of the application is photos of artwork you have created in the past. We highly recommend that you hire a professional photographer to document your work, as the Selection Committee will be looking at many images and must understand your practice through the materials you provide.

Two-Stage Selection Process

After all applications have been received by the deadline, the materials are prepared for the Selection Committee. The committee is comprised of artists, designers and representatives of the site and/or community. The Selection Committee reviews the applications and selects a shortlist of artists. The WAG contacts the shortlisted artists, who are provided with detailed instructions on what is required for the second stage review, an honorarium for proposal development, and an invitation to a detailed site visit where more information is provided.

Artists are then given 1.5 to 3 months to develop a proposal, which usually consists of detailed drawings, a maquette (physical or digital scale model), information on suggested materials and processes, a timeline and a budget. The Selection Committee meets again to review the detailed proposals and to select a finalist. In some cases, artists are invited to present their proposals to the committee and/or public.

Budget

The budget is an essential tool for artists to illustrate that they have researched engineering requirements, permits, materials, fabrication and installation details. The budget must also contain an artist fee (12–20% of the total budget is a suggested range) and a contingency (10% of the total budget is recommended). The budget must contain all applicable taxes; the total commission amount is the total amount available for the project. Budgets that exceed the advertised commission amount will not be considered. There will be surprises that you will not be able to predict. It is best to prepare your budget and plans as well as you possibly can and remember to be flexible.



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Currently, the City of Woodstock will waive any permit fees and will assist with the engineering and design of the foundation (up to \$1000) as well as modest landscaping (i.e., re-sodding) around the site.

The cost of construction materials may vary due to inflation and other external factors. Ensure you have properly budgeted for the most current cost of materials you intend to utilize.

Taxes

We can advise you on the scope of the project but when it comes to taxes, you are responsible to collect and remit all government assessments, applicable taxes, Employment Insurance, Workers' Compensation, and Canadian Pension Plan for yourself and any persons you may be employing for the project. Remember to include taxes in all portions of your budget to accurately reflect all amounts. There are websites that can aid your understanding of how these processes work, such as the [Canada Revenue Agency](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca). If you do not feel confident about your knowledge of the subject and are not comfortable allocating such numbers on a budget, consider making room in your budget for consultation with accounting professionals who can help make your numbers work.

Design Development and Award of Commission

Once the Selection Committee has reviewed the final proposals and made a recommendation as to which artist will be offered the commission, a technical review takes place. A committee of City staff and other design and engineering professionals review the proposals to determine feasibility. If the recommended proposal raises any concerns, the WAG will contact the artist for more details. The Technical Review Committee looks at feasibility, maintenance and other logistical details and does not make any final decisions nor do they review the work on an aesthetic basis.

Following the technical review process, the selected artist is offered the commission and asked to sign a contract which is an agreement between the artist and the Woodstock Art Gallery/City of Woodstock. Among other things the contract will outline requirements, expectations and a payment schedule based on the timeline of the project. You are encouraged to review the contract carefully. If there is any language that you are unsure about, we encourage you to engage with a lawyer who can review the contract on your behalf. While the WAG is happy to go over details with



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you, we are not lawyers and want to ensure that you are completely comfortable signing the contract.

The contract will list the artist as an “independent contractor.” This means that the selected artist is responsible for all aspects of the project. Neither the City of Woodstock nor the Woodstock Art Gallery will be responsible for any site or construction work. Having said that, the WAG is the liaison for the selected artists and is committed to walking you through the process of detailed design development, fabrication, and installation.

The design proposal will become part of the contract, but it is understood that it is still a work in progress at this early stage. As the project begins to take shape and based on specific information from engineers and fabricators, etc., it is inevitable that some details will have to be modified or revised. However, the proposal as approved by the Selection Committee should not veer far from the intended content and aesthetic intent of the artist.

Engaging with the Community

Public art projects are most successful when the uses of the public space are understood and considered. This may mean consulting directly with community members, researching the history of the site or imagining a new future. In most cases, it is all of the above. “Plop art,” where statues were deposited in public spaces with no relevance to their surroundings, has become a thing of the past. This does not mean public art is “art created by committee,” as artists sometimes fear. It is about coming to understand and respect the site and the people who use it to create artwork that not only reflects and explores the cultural, historical or natural attributes of a site, but also challenges people to see and interact with their city in new ways.

Materials and Fabrication

When considering materials for use in public artwork, it is very important to be aware of factors that will contribute to wear and tear. Consider the effect that things like temperature fluctuation, condensation, and human interaction will have on the piece.

Subcontracting

It is not expected that you will have intimate knowledge of all processes and materials you may need to work with to realize your public artwork, nor may it be feasible for you to spend the time learning about these things. You should be aware of your



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limitations of knowledge, skill, experience, and space when it comes to materials and fabrication. It is common practice to supplement any shortcomings by hiring a professional consultant to help create the work, which can be well worth the quality of the final product.

Be aware, however, that any work done for you by subcontractors will bear your name and stamp of approval. It is imperative that you thoroughly research the people and companies you intend to work with. You should also arrange regular visits to check that the work is being done to your specifications. As the person whose name goes on the artwork as well as the contract, you are responsible and liable for guaranteeing the quality of the finished product. Researching a company's track record, getting reliable recommendations, and keeping track of progress is key to ensuring a safe and high-quality artwork for the public to interact with for years to come. It is a good idea to maintain records of communications with subcontractors (i.e., meeting dates, signed contracts, cheques issued, etc.).

Permits

As this project is under the umbrella of the City of Woodstock, permits do not need to be obtained and fees will not be charged. However, all structures constructed, erected, or located on City of Woodstock property must comply with by-laws and provincial legislation.

Your project will also need to adhere to the City of Woodstock's [Accessibility Technical Guidelines: Standard for the Design of Public Spaces](#).

Insurance

An artist who is contracted by the WAG and the City will be required to provide evidence of insurance(s) for their own materials, studio, equipment and tools that will be used for or in connection with the creation and development of the artwork. The artist's contract will include an indemnification by the artist in favour of the City with regard to damages arising out of the artist's negligence or wrongdoing. Other insurances, depending on the public art project, may be necessary and will be outlined in the artist's contract. The City of Woodstock carries general liability insurance, but this does not extend coverage to the artist, which means that the artist must arrange or purchase this insurance on their own. The artist will be required to provide liability insurance that includes City of Woodstock as additional insured with regard to the project. The artist's insurance policy must cover the period of time in



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which the creation of the artwork occurs until the completion and formal acceptance of the artwork by the City. Once the artwork is formally accepted into the City of Woodstock upon completion, it is insured as an asset by the City.

Maintenance and Conservation

As part of the finished product, as specified in your contract, you will provide a maintenance manual so that material understanding and due care can be considered once you are no longer part of the process of care and repair. The manual will describe in detail the specifications of materials and finishes, method of cleaning, preserving and maintaining the final artwork, and drawings and instructions for its care.

Both the WAG and the City keep an eye on the artwork and when extensive repairs are needed, the artist is contacted first. For day-to-day maintenance, the City refers to details in the maintenance manual you provide. The WAG will provide you with a template outlining what the manual should contain.

Progress Updates

It is the responsibility of the Woodstock Art Gallery's Public Art Program to liaise between the artist and the City of Woodstock where necessary. You must meet regularly with the WAG's Project Manager to provide updates on the progress of the artwork.

Ask Questions

If anything is unclear in the document, the call to artists, or this process in general, please do not hesitate to ask questions. Asking questions ahead of time helps eliminate frustration and miscommunication down the road. It is the goal of the Woodstock Art Gallery for every public artwork to be a rewarding and successful experience for everyone involved.



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