

POLICY PURPOSE

To achieve a standard of professional excellence in the planning and execution of all public art projects.

Develop a relevant, diverse and exciting collection of public art which celebrates local identity and essence of place and is of a recognised high standard within Australia and abroad.

POLICY STATEMENT

Council will ensure a dynamic and professional approach to Public Art, supporting the goals and strategies outlined in the Alice Springs Strategic Plan.

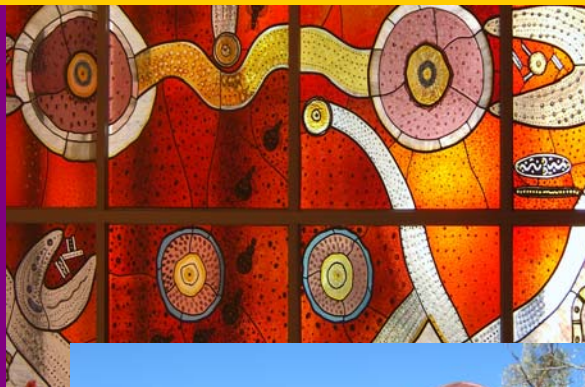
Council will:

- Identify sources of funding for the creation of new works of public art.
- Identify opportunities for including Public Art and employing artists.
- Consult the community appropriately.
- Engage the best artists to create the best works, ensuring that their vision is fully realised and maintained.
- Create and install the work in timely, efficient and safe manner, within an identified set budget.
- Maintain and conserve the Public Art collection in professional manner.
- Ensure that Public Art works are attributed, promoted and recorded correctly.
- Provide education and information regarding public art in the region.
- Identify when and how a work should be dealt with when it is considered to be no longer appropriate to its location.

Refer to attached document "Public Art Procedure" that supports this policy via background information, definitions and procedures.

Public Art

Policy and Procedure



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Preamble

Arrente people have inhabited this land since long before the written word. The Traditional Owners have been defining themselves, their culture and homeland through art which has endured across time from the rock walls to the canvas and into the diverse and multi-discipline contemporary art practices of today. The land and people are inseparable.

As this place has become home to many diverse peoples, the purpose of this policy is to define an approach to public art which honours this heritage by promoting harmony, respect and a sharing of knowledge across cultures and communities.

The permanent or temporary placement of any work of art or monument in this country must always be done in consultation and with consideration for the sacred and secret wisdom of traditional owners.



The Grand Circle Yeperenye Sculpture, Alice Springs Cultural Precinct

Introduction

HOW IS THIS POLICY UNIQUE?

Alice Springs is unlike any other place in:

- The geography and geographical distance.
- Climate and desert environment
- Cultural diversity
- Indigenous culture and relationship to the land
- Pioneering history

BACKGROUND

Public Art in Alice Springs until this time has not been covered by an official Public Art Policy. There have previously been a number of permanent and temporary works commissioned either as part of public buildings or installed in public space, but until this time there has been no official policy for the creation or inclusion of works of public art. Council owns, on behalf of the community a substantial art collection, housed at the Araluen Galleries. There is potential for the display of works from these collections in public space to be included in a program of public art.

THE INDIGENOUS ARTS INDUSTRY AND ALICE SPRINGS

Tourism is a major Industry in Alice Springs. The Australian Bureau of statistics quotes that 90% of all overseas tourists express an interest in engagement with Indigenous culture.

Indigenous Art from Central Australia generates substantial income, creates jobs and improves lives.

Central Australian Indigenous Art turns over a gross income of approximately 12 million dollars per year. Nationally that figure is argued to be somewhere between 50 – 100 million dollars.

Through Desert, which operates out of Alice Springs, there are 36 Aboriginal Art Centres in operation at this time. Desert employs 70 staff and handles work for hundreds of gainfully employed artists. Papunya Tula alone generates approximately \$4 million dollars gross turnover per year, employing approximately 200 artists.

Alice Springs is the central point for most staff and visitors to remote Art Centres. Major art dealers, tourists and collectors regularly pass through Alice Springs adding to local economy.

Several commercial galleries also generate comparable turnover and employment.

Many of the residents of Town Camps in Alice Springs deal in artwork.

The majority of the local resident non-indigenous arts community engage in some way with the indigenous arts industry. They teach, run workshops, introduce new methods and materials, coordinate exhibitions and directly collaborate with Indigenous artists. They not only influence the art directly but generate a sense of professionalism for arts practitioners.

Their input is vital in keeping the industry abreast of current trends. Exposure to current trends in contemporary arts practices is vital to the entire Arts sector.

A Public Art Policy should provide employment opportunities for local artists, as well as opportunity for local Indigenous and non Indigenous artists to collaborate with each other and with artists from outside of the region.

WHAT IS PUBLIC ART?

Public art is essentially art for everybody and may be a part of any publicly accessible space. The objective for public art is to express something and/or to stimulate a response. That response may be emotional, intellectual or sensory such as pleasure, empathy, humour, fascination, excitement, appreciation, understanding etc. It can be:

- Temporary or permanent.
- Inside or Outside.
- 3 Dimensional or 2 Dimensional
- Engage one or more of the senses.
- Incorporate elements from any or all of the arts, crafts and design.
- Integrated as part of an environment or structure such as buildings, paving, street furniture, hand rails, fencing, lighting or other feature.
- Stand alone.
- Created by a single artist, a group of artists or in collaboration with members of the community.
- Site specific.
- Purchased
- Ephemeral

WHY PUBLIC ART?

Public art can add to an environment, making it welcoming and inclusive, creating an aesthetically pleasing and cultural experience. It can:

- Increase cultural awareness.
- Provide a sense of pride, ownership and belonging
- Enhance the Environment
- Provide opportunities and employment for artists.
- Decrease vandalism
- Add value by making the site more desirable to live in or visit
- Attract tourists
- Promote inclusiveness and harmony

WHY A POLICY?

The aims and intention of the policy are to:

- Achieve a standard of professional excellence in the planning and execution of all public art projects.
- Develop a relevant, diverse and exciting collection of public art which celebrates local identity and essence of place and is of a recognised high standard within Australia and abroad.

The purpose for developing a policy for Public Art is to:

Provide a guiding framework for making decisions and creating opportunities which will ensure a dynamic and professional approach to Public Art, supporting and implementing the goals and strategies outlined in the Alice Springs Strategic Plan 2004 – 2009.

These guidelines should ensure that procedures are in place to:

- Identify sources of funding for the creation of new works of public art.
- Identify opportunities for including Public Art and employing artists.
- Consult the community appropriately
- Engage the best artists to create the best works, ensuring that their vision is fully realised and maintained.
- Create and install the work in a timely, efficient and safe manner, within an identified set budget
- Maintain and conserve the Public Art collection in a professional manner
- Ensure that Public Art works are attributed, promoted and recorded correctly.
- Provide education and information regarding public art in the region.
- Identify when and how a work should be dealt with when it is considered to be no longer appropriate to its location.



Araluen for Arts and Entertainment



Coles Complex

Policy

RELATIONSHIP TO COUNCIL'S GOALS

The Public Arts Policy for Alice Springs is directly aligned with the Alice Springs Town Council Strategic Plan 2004 – 2009. It specifically relates to:

Goal 1: Economic

'A growing and dynamic economic base underpinning strong employment'

The desired outcomes:

- A vibrant tourism industry
- Increased participation of the Indigenous people in the economy
- Alice Springs is seen as an attractive place for career development

Goal 2: Community

'A united, supportive and healthy community'

The desired outcomes:

- Reduced anti social behaviour
- A strategic and collaborative approach to community service provision
- Youth development and well being
- Recreational, sporting and leisure facilities and programs that improve the community's quality of life
- Enhanced public safety

Goal 3: Environment

'To lead Australia in the management of its arid land natural resources'

The desired outcomes:

- Open spaces developed and maintained for the use and benefit of the community
- Improved appearance and cleanliness of the town

Goal 4: Culture and Heritage

'A Community proud of its developing indigenous and non-indigenous history, heritage, arts and culture'

The desired outcomes:

- Cultural preservation and harmony
- Retention of our unique character
- Improved community understanding and respect for our developing heritage

PRINCIPLES AND BENEFITS – ARTISTIC CULTURAL / ECONOMIC / SOCIAL

More than just art in public space, public art can serve to enhance an environment towards a defined purpose. By setting in place a policy by which public art can be measured and managed, it can:

- Educate
- Develop understanding and appreciation for contemporary art in an equitable and inclusive way
- Add value, both economic and social
- Foster pride and ownership
- Alter public perceptions of a particular environment
- Attract an audience into an environment
- Change the nature and use of a place, slow traffic flow and stimulate interaction and exploration within a specific environment
- Promote inclusiveness and interaction

Although Public Art can provide opportunities for community involvement, it should not be confused with Community Art. Community Art, where members of the community work with guidance from or in collaboration with an arts practitioner has recognised benefits in Community Development in that the process is as important as the finished product. Public art is the seamless integration of high quality art in an urban environment, and should not serve as a bandaid or afterthought.

FUNDING

To ensure funding for the creation and ongoing maintenance of a Public Art program there will need to be an amount allocated from the Council's annual budget, as well as a program in place to actively seek and secure funding from other sources.

PERCENTAGE OF CAPITAL WORKS

A minimum amount of 2% of the Council's total expenditure in the capital works program should go directly towards the commissioning works of public art work to be included in each project where that project is over \$250 000. If the project is under that amount, it is recommended that the percentage is pooled towards an integrated design solution towards a number of projects where the combined total is above that figure.

In some instances, where is it deemed more practical, that amount may also be used towards purchasing existing works. This is the less preferred option in that it excludes artists, designers and craftworkers from involvement in the project from its inception.

SCOPE

The 2% will cover:

- Project management
- Artist fees
- Materials
- Creation costs
- Transport and Installation
- Risk management and liability insurance

Included in this policy:

- Council initiated projects
- Community projects on land/space owned/managed by Council
- Construction of new buildings
- Extensions and major refurbishments to existing buildings
- Street furniture or other major constructed public space amenities
- Fixtures and fittings such as bike racks, rubbish bins etc
- Playgrounds
- Landscape works

DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTION PLANS

Private or commercial businesses should also be encouraged to apply the 2% policy, although not mandatory. Council should provide practical advice and assistance where a commercial or private project does apply the 2% policy. The project should be included in the records of public art where it is deemed to meet the standards required for works included in the Council collection.

Recommend to Department of Planning and Infrastructure:

In some instances, however, private developers may be encouraged to contribute funds towards public art as part of the planning permit condition where major private development projects contribute to the enhancement of public amenities such as:

- Playgrounds
- Residential subdivisions
- Activity centres
- Streetscape schemes
- Landscape works

STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDING

Funding can be applied for through Annual grants programs provided by Arts NT, Australia Council, or any other source connected to the arts or urban design. This includes the \$300 000 grants fund for Public Arts projects in the Northern Territory, recently announced by the Northern Territory Government as part of their Public Arts Strategy.

COUNCIL GRANT SCHEME

Support for the creation of small scale works of Public Art may be provided through the Council Community Grants Scheme, specifically the Community Assistance Grants and Community Development Grants where the project meets the eligibility and selection criteria.

GIFTS

From time to time Council may be offered works of art as gifts. It is strongly suggested that, where possible, donors are discouraged from donating finished works as gifts to the Public Art Collection, and that instead a cash donation be made towards the program, to ensure that the collection maintains a high standard.

Where a gift of Artwork is offered, the work should be submitted for assessment as to its suitability for inclusion in the Public Art Collection.

There may, from time to time, be exceptions to this rule. For example: sculptural works donated by the Alice Springs Art Foundation for the Alice Prize. In this instance, the preselection is made by a panel of arts professionals, and the final selection made by a judge of high standing. Their judgement is to be considered sufficiently astute and discerning to ensure that the donated artwork be a valuable addition to the Public Art collection.

MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC ART

An amount will be allocated from the annual Technical Services - Buildings and Maintenance budget to provide maintenance to installed works. The amount required will be determined by the Public Art Coordination Team, and will be calculated according to the requirements for the Public Art Collection. This figure will be adjusted as the collection grows. Part of the responsibility of the Public Art Coordination Team will be to determine the equity of distribution of the maintenance budget towards the upkeep of the Collection. Where the expenditure on maintenance of any one work is seen to be excessive, the work may then be considered for de-acquisition.

POLICY MANAGEMENT

Who does the policy affect?

- The Indigenous and non Indigenous local community
- The Business Sector
- NT Government
- Private Developers and Planners
- Artists and arts workers
- Council

Planning for Public Art

Works must be acquired slowly over time and with careful consideration in each instance. Corporate and Community Services - Community Projects Officer will liaise with all Council departments to identify an appropriate core team of representatives from each Council department and a local arts professional (ie: Arts NT officer, Araluen Galleries Curator, local practising artist of high standing) to form the

Public Art Co-ordination team.

This team, headed by the Director Corporate and Community Services should meet at regular intervals in order to:

- Formulate an effective workable **Public Art Master Plan** to identify and nominate a five year program for commissioning minor and major works of Public Art.
- Identify various sources of funding
- Identify the different types of opportunities for Public Art and the levels at which artists may be integrated into projects
- Establish a hierarchy based on an equitable geographic distribution.

- Identify appropriate themes and aesthetic approaches for various locations. This will be done in consultation with a representative from the Traditional Owners. On approval, suggestions will then go to Council for consideration/ratification.
- Create a **Public Art Operations Manual** which will define the set criteria and procedure for selection/commissioning of works of Public Art. The Manual will outline how Council will implement all aspects of the Public Art Master Plan and be available as a handbook for developers to assist in the incorporation of Public Art into Development Plans.
- Establish a register of artists and arts workers and their expertise/experience.
- Establish a register of artworks in order to promote Public Art to the public (as a hard copy publication/online/tourist map etc)
- Appoint a reference group for each identified Public Art project. Members are to include a representative from the Public Art Co-ordination team, the community directly affected by the intended work, a representative of the Traditional Owners, a member of the local artist community and an Alderman.
- Provide advice and consult with all stakeholders and assist in facilitation of the communication between architects, builders, town planners, artists etc.
- Identify an appropriate budget for ongoing maintenance
- Manage ongoing maintenance, de acquisitioning and disposal of artworks



Definitions

Art:

An object or experience of significant and/or aesthetic value which is created or presented as art by an arts practitioner. Although it may be decorative, entertaining and functional, art may also transcend these to convey a sense of purpose, meaning and intent.

Artist:

A person with refined skills in creative interpretation and conceptualisation. A person who is recognised by their professional peers as an artist and/or who has professional training in fine art or contemporary craft. A person who is involved in the creation of art at their primary profession. An artist may or may not draw their primary income from the sale/production of works of art. The artist may be defined as someone other than the architect or professional design team, who contributes design ideas, creative problem solving or works of art to a project.

Good Art/Bad Art:

For anything to be judged as either 'good' or 'bad', it must be measured against a set of pre-determined criteria. Therefore good art does well what it was intended to do. In the instance of Commissioned Public Art, a base set of criteria should be drawn up covering all projects, which may then be extended in each instance to fit the particular and specific circumstance. Public Art should be 'Good Art'.

Some suggested criteria are that it be:

- Original work
- Relevant,
- Appropriate to the climate, culture and location.
- Present no hazard to health and safety of the artist, the audience or the environment.

Public Art:

Art created, exhibited, performed or installed in a public space or space which is freely accessed by the public whether inside or outside. It may be temporary, ephemeral, durational or permanent and may be created from numerous and diverse mediums.

Culture:

Social, collective or artistic pursuit or practise. An alignment with tradition, religion, language, ideas, beliefs, customs, codes, institutions, rituals, ceremonies, sports or political beliefs.

Heritage:

Legacy, tradition, birthright, custom...implies an obligation or responsibility to learn or maintain.

Procedure

PRE-PROJECT

When a project is identified the Public Art Coordination Team will:

- Notify all relevant departments and organisations and obtain all necessary approvals.
- Initiate the collection/collation of background Historical/Cultural/Geographic information
- Prepare a budget
- Appoint a Project Reference Group
- Provide support information and feedback to the Reference Group in regards to their decision as to which method by which the works should be commissioned or acquired.
- Develop a project Brief to include a full description of the location (including maps or diagrams as required), intended audience, concept aims - outlining benefits, community participation requirements, schedule (including payment schedule) and budget. Although this should be thorough, it should endeavour not to limit creative scope.
- Initiate a process of community consultation

ACQUIRING WORKS

Works may be acquired by various methods

- Commission
- Call for proposals/expressions of interest
- Sponsored competition
- Purchase
- Donation (to be discouraged)
- Integrated (in collaboration with other design professionals - architects/town planners/engineers)
- Community art projects

A high priority is to be placed on creating employment and professional development opportunities for local artists.

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST - Permanent works

When the decision has been made to make a call for expressions of interest from artists, the Council will advertise either locally, State-wide, Nationwide or internationally depending on the scope of the project and the project brief.

The advertisement should include a brief project overview outlining the aims and selection criteria as well as, where appropriate, a budget figure. A more detailed project brief should be made available from Council by request.

The advertisement should request a 1 page CV, 5 images (either slides or jpegs on cd) and a proposal outline which should not exceed a specified number of words/pages. (3-4 weeks)

All applicants should be notified of receipt of their application.

ARTIST SELECTION

The applications will be short listed with reference to the selection criteria by an initial cull to be undertaken by members of the Public Art Co-ordination team identified as having the relevant and appropriate arts curatorial experience and knowledge (ie: arts NT rep, Curator, Council Community Projects Officer.) ***suggest this be a panel of 3.**

The short listed proposals are then to be presented to the Project Reference Group by the Community Projects Officer. After a Q & A session, the reference group will rank the short listed proposals individually, the results tallied and the selected artist notified.

The unsuccessful applicants are to be notified and their application material returned.

In the instance where an appropriate proposal is not identified, the call for expressions of Interest may be broadened to include proposals from further a field (ie: Interstate/overseas)

Where the project is very large, several artists may be short listed and commissioned to prepare a concept design for which they will be paid. The final selection will be made from these concept designs and the artist engaged.

A contract will be drawn up to specify the description of work to be created, timeframe, budget estimate, payment schedule, health and safety, any sponsorship requirements, acknowledgement and copyright issues.

CONCEPT STAGE

The artist should meet with the reference group to discuss the proposal and answer any/raise any questions.

The artist should then be provided with a full project brief and allowed 4 weeks (depending on the scope of the project) to develop a concept and design drawings. This should include a breakdown of material costs, wages, taxes, insurance and time frame as well as any issues in regards to installation and ongoing maintenance.

The concept should then be opened to the community for consultation.

Relevant Council departments should assist where required with advice as required.

PRODUCTION

Relevant Council department representatives should be available to liaise with the artist in regards to installation/production requirements (ie: cranes, on site security etc).

The artist should photographically document the production stage and provide this material for Council use and records. From time to time, the artist should allow the Council access to document the process, as long as this does not delay or interfere with the artists work.

INSTALLATION

The artist should remain in close consultation with the Council Community Projects Officer and Council Technical Services staff, to provide advice on the appropriate siting of the work. In some instances, curatorial advice should also be sought in regards to the appropriate handling of valuable works of art. Technical Services should provide appropriate manpower and safety equipment etc for the installation process.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In each instance, a suitable plaque should be provided to provide information regarding the work. This should include

- Artist Name/s
- Title of the Work
- Date
- Sponsors
- Traditional Owners
- An artist statement or other information (ie; 'please touch')

MAINTENANCE

Maintenance is to be on a project by project basis. Where possible, any damage should be repaired by the artist (for a fee) or with approval by the artist in order to retain the artistic integrity of the work. Ongoing maintenance is to be undertaken by Council Technical Services outdoor staff when the work is installed on Council owned property. When a work is deemed too difficult or costly to repair or maintain, it should be considered for de-acquisition and a recommendation made to the Community Projects Officer for presentation to the Public Art Coordination Team.

DE-ACQUISITION

For each meeting of the Public Art Co-ordination Team a report should be prepared by the Community Projects Officer in consultation with the Council Technical Services Team detailing the condition of all registered works. Any suggestions and requirements for repair, removal, relocation and de-acquisition should be made and discussed/decided upon and then presented to Council. The de-acquisitioning of works should be covered by the Technical Services budget.

MONITORING PROCESS

After the initial 5 year period, the success of the Public Art Master Plan will be measured in terms of:

- Number and variety of works of Public Art in Place throughout Alice Springs and surrounds
- Number of projects which have included artist in the initial design stage, and included artworks as part of the built project.
- Degree of acceptance/feedback from the public in regards to Public Art works installed/performed in Alice Springs
- Number of local artist employed either by Council or private developers to create Public Art works.
- Improvement to the ambience in targeted areas.

References

City of Adelaide – [Watch this Space: The City of Adelaide Public Art Policy 2001- 2006](#)

City of Blacktown – [Draft Public Art Policy 2005](#)

City of the Blue Mountains – [Public Art Policy 2001](#)

City of Casey – [Public Art Policy 2005](#)

City of Port Macquarie-Hastings – [Art In Public Places 2003](#)

City of Thuringowa – [Public Art policy and Procedure 2002](#)

Northern Territory Government – [Public Art Policy 2006](#)