CITY OF MELBOURNE

TEST SITES

Test Sites Guidelines

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About Test Sites

Test Sites gives artists the opportunity to research and develop bold public art ideas, within the municipality of Melbourne.

Inspired by Melbourne's robust public domain, Test Sites encourages artists to explore their creative visions on site and contribute to a civic conversation with support from the City of Melbourne.

The purpose of Test Sites is to provide an avenue to test and trial ideas with an emphasis on the iterative development and delivery of ideas rather than the presentation of finished works.

Test Sites offers artists the opportunity to either respond to a project brief or apply to attend a Public Art workshop.

Projects

Each year the City of Melbourne will make a call for proposals which respond to a project brief for a nominated area within the municipality.

Successful projects will be developed and delivered over the course of the following calendar year with support from the City of Melbourne. Artists will work in situ, within the public realm, taking inspiration from one of the identified areas within the municipality.

Applications are made through SmartyGrants.

Workshops

Test Sites workshops are run in partnership with Testing Grounds[1] throughout the year. The workshops assist artists new to working in the public realm understand how to translate their creative ideas successfully.

Workshops are held on two half days over the course of a week and provide an opportunity for you to explore a project idea in situ at Testing Grounds and learn about the key steps involved in public projects, including navigating council requirements.

You will also get direct feedback on your idea at the end of the week in the form of a group critique reflecting on your experience and those of the other workshop attendees.

Places are limited and decided through an application process. Applications need to include a rough outline of an idea to explore through the workshop and are completed through SmartyGrants. Successful applicants will receive support of $300 towards costs associated with attending the workshop.

Who can apply

Test Sites is open to artists and creatives working across all disciplines who want to try out their ideas in the public realm.

The program also supports artists with a studio based practice who wish to work in the public domain.

Depending on the nature of the project successful applicants may need to reside in Melbourne during their Test Site obligations.

While the organisation welcomes applications from artists across Australia and around the world, project funding is unable to support travel and accommodation costs.

[1] http://www.testing-grounds.com.au/

What kinds of ideas are suitable?

- Test Sites can assist with the research and development phase of new work for the public realm, and the development and adaptation of works not originally developed for public space, however the role of iterative and experimental engagement should be seen as its own means.
- Projects in a diverse range of art forms including film and sound works, performance, sculpture, collaborative and interactive work, installation, architecture and other hybrid forms or emerging practices are welcomed.
- All projects should be temporary and special measures may need to be taken to adapt project ideas to ensure they can be completely removed from sites without trace.
- Due to the temporary nature of Test Sites all sites need to be left in the condition they were found.
- The program does not commission street art – see below for further information about street art.

Test Sites eligibility

To be eligible to apply, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Idea testing must take place within the Test Sites nominated sites.
- Test Sites must not form part of any assessment for an accredited course of study.
- Applications must be submitted online by the published closing date and time. Late submissions will not be accepted.
- Applications must be for research and development of an idea and not for presentation of a project or for a work already intended for public presentation, for example pre-production support for a festival.
- Test Sites must be temporary and not cause any permanent changes or damage to sites.
- A maximum of two applications per artist or arts organisation can be submitted per funding round.
- Applicants must submit relevant support material.
- Applicants must have acquitted previous grants and have no outstanding debts to the City of Melbourne.

Test Sites funding and support schedule

Stage 1 – Applications open

- Tell us your idea! Applications are completed through SmartyGrants. You'll need to outline the concept and other related details.

Stage 2 – Assessment

- Applications are assessed by a selection panel within two weeks of the closing date and applicants are advised of the outcome.

Stage 3 – Project development

- We work with successful applicants to refine the budget and provide a delivery plan. At this stage we are ensuring that the project can be delivered successfully.
- Once the budget and delivery plan are agreed and signed off artists will then be offered a contract via Auspicious Arts on behalf of the City of Melbourne.
- Once the contract is signed you will be paid what is agreed, less a $500 retainer which will be paid to you when you complete your project and provide your funding report.

Stage 4 – Project delivery

- Testing and trialling on site can commence.

Stage 5 – Project acquittal

- Project delivery is completed and Test Sites Report submitted. The retainer will be paid on submission of report.

Reporting on project delivery

After project delivery has been completed a short report will need to be provided. This should capture the experience of working in the public realm. We will provide the form for you to complete.

The report should include:

- A written response summing up the experience of testing your idea in the public realm
- A biography of the lead artist or artists
- 5-8 high quality images (minimum 300dpi)
- Video, max 2 minutes (optional).

Information provided may be used to promote Test Sites, the public art program and the activities of Arts Melbourne. Approved quotes or comments may be published on the City of Melbourne website, or in printed publications.

It is vital that successful applicants work with us to coordinate any personal promotion, using the agreed method established in the project delivery plan, to coincide with our communications. A professional photographer will be available to take photos of your project during its delivery which we will share with you for your own use.

Selection criteria

Applications will be assessed by a panel and scored on the following criteria:

Artistic integrity

- Ideas that are compelling and clearly articulated
- Ideas that aim to activate the city in interesting and engaging ways
- Ideas that contain a consideration of the intended site and the public realm

Feasibility

- Testing the idea is achievable on the intended site or an otherwise agreed site, and within the budget and timeframe
- Testing the idea is safe for artists and the general public
- The artist, collaborative or group has the capacity and skills to deliver the project.

Activities not funded

- The presentation of fully developed artworks
- Artworks that have been fully realised or previously presented in the public realm
- Artworks that are in pre-production for public presentation
- Travel and accommodation
- Test Site ideas that are part of an accredited course of study
- Activities taking place outside the designated sites within the municipality
- Activities, projects, programs and events on behalf of a political organisation
- Applications made by political organisations
- Proposals from City of Melbourne employees
- Capital works, facility maintenance and improvements
- Course fees
- Parking or other infringement fines
- Street Art projects that leave a residual trace on site
- Illegal graffiti
- Ideas taking place without permission of land or building owners
- Ideas funded through other City of Melbourne programs or grants

Street art

Street art, including stencils, paste-ups and murals, are not supported by the Test Sites program, although ideas that open up a dialogue with existing street art is encouraged. Artists working in this field can plan and produce projects independently with the permission of building owners. Street artists may be eligible to apply for our Arts Grants Program[2] for project specific funding. Further information about the City of Melbourne's approach to Street Art can be found in our Graffiti Management Plan 2014-18.[3]

Controversial content

Art works in the public realm must take into consideration the experience of a wide range of people who may encounter the work without warning. While patrons may choose to view explicit or controversial art works in theatres, galleries and other indoor spaces, artists must be sensitive to the experience of people who encounter the work unexpectedly in the public realm.

In deciding if work is appropriate for public space, the City of Melbourne will make a decision about the suitability of each work for the public realm using Australia's Advertising Standards Code 12 as a guide. The standards state, 'communications must not portray images or events in a way that is unduly frightening or distressing to children…and must not demean any person or group on the basis of ethnicity, nationality, race, gender, age, sexual preference, religion or mental or physical disability'.

Applicants must discuss any idea containing potentially controversial content with the organisation.

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[2] http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/AboutCouncil/grantssponsorship/ArtsGrants/Pages/ArtsFunding.aspx
[3] https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/AboutCouncil/PlansandPublications/strategies/Pages/Graffitimanagementplan.aspx

Funding support

Successful applicants will be asked to submit a refined budget and project delivery plan for their idea. This will be a more detailed approach to the requirements of delivery and costs including artist fees, materials, consultant fees, technical expenses, site cleaning costs and other relevant expenses backed up with quotes or other support information where appropriate.

The draft budget and project delivery plan will be submitted for approval, and successful applicants may be asked to make changes to the project delivery plan and budget before it is finalised. For example, applicants could be asked to budget for an engineer's certification in order to meet permit requirements.

Artists are encouraged to include an artist's fee in their project budget. One way to determine a daily rate is to refer to the NAVA Fees Schedule[4] for the minimum daily rate for a self-employed public artist on a short-term contract.

Levels of financial support

Funding, of up to $10,000, requested through this program can be used to cover costs such as artist fee, infrastructure and equipment, collaborator or consultant fees, and support for securing permits.

Other support both financial, grants or cash sponsorship, and in-kind materials or labour can make up your total budget, however no other funding or grants from the City of Melbourne can be applied to this project.

In-kind support is defined as a donation of services or materials, e.g. labour and volunteer support, paint etc.

Sponsorship could be cash, labour or materials provided under a sponsorship agreement which usually requires some level of recognition for the sponsor, for example a logo on signage or printed material and other forms of recognition within the project. Any sponsorship agreements will need to be negotiated in discussion with City of Melbourne.

Funds management

The financial support component of Test Sites will be managed by Auspicious Arts. Successful applicants will enter into an agreement with Auspicious Arts, on behalf of City of Melbourne, who will provide further information about the management of funds.

Program dates

The City of Melbourne reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any component of Test Sites, including application deadlines and the frequency of application rounds. We also reserve the right to invite artists to participate in Test Sites or other programs.

Insurance

Test Sites projects will be covered under Auspicious Arts Public Liability Insurance. Auspicious Arts hold public liability cover to the value of $20 million. Further information about insurances will be provided to successful applicants.

[4] https://visualarts.net.au/media/uploads/files/CHAPTER_7_-_2017_4.pdf

Tax advice

The Australian Taxation Office may consider payments received through Test Sites as taxable income. The tax office can help with information on tax, including GST. Call 13 28 66 or visit Australian Taxation Office[5].

References

Public Art Melbourne.[6]

Public Art Framework 2014-2017[7]

Graffiti Management Plan 2014-2018.[8]

[5] https://www.ato.gov.au/
[6] http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/aboutmelbourne/artsandevents/publicart/Pages/PublicArt.aspx
[7] http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/AboutMelbourne/ArtsandEvents/PublicArt/Pages/PublicArtFramework.aspx
[8] http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/AboutCouncil/PlansandPublications/strategies/Pages/Graffitimanagementplan.aspx

Appendix A

Definitions of Artist's experience

Emerging or early career artist

1. Has received recognition for the public presentation of at least one work in an area of arts practice.

2. Is recognised by peers or experts in the artist's area of arts practice, which can include Elders or other people of standing within the artist's community.

3. Has specialised training or practical experience in their area of arts practice – training need not have been at an academic institution.

Professional artist

1. Has acquired advanced knowledge or training in their chosen art form. This includes artists from diverse cultural backgrounds whose artistic or cultural knowledge has been developed through oral traditions; professional artists who are self-taught; and artists of professional calibre who must work outside the arts to generate income.

2. Has received the recognition of their peers through the public presentation of their work in a professional context, this includes publishing, performing and exhibiting.

3. Has a serious commitment to their arts practice and considers it a major part of their working life, rather than a pastime.

4. Has maintained this level of professional practice for at least three years.

Established artist, group or organisation

1. Has recently achieved the successful public presentation of at least three high-quality artworks, events or programmes in an area of arts practice.

2. Has endorsement and support for their work from at least two peers or experts in their area of arts practice.

3. Is acknowledged as established in their area of arts practice.