



Dublin City Council

Comhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath

Policies and Strategies for Managing Public Art

Dublin City Council

Public Art Advisory Group

Public art excludes no media, materials, or process. It can require years of planning, consultation and approval to develop, or it can occur spontaneously and unsanctioned. It can be momentary or lasting. It can at once excavate the past and envision the future. With a broadening of the conception of public, it can happen at almost any time, with anyone, and virtually anywhere...public art can even occur in galleries museums and other private settings.

While the best permanent work stimulates discourse about the past and present of cities, temporary work encourages and empowers us to imagine how the future can develop, our roles in its formation, and the kind of partnership it will have with the past.

Public Art is always Art

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Paper sets out proposals for the strategic management and programming of public art for Dublin City Council. It is intended to provide a clear framework which will formalise systems and structures for public art while giving scope for public art programming and commissions which will give established and emerging artists exciting and challenging opportunities to work while having an impact on the City and its public(s).

2. BACKGROUND

Public art has long been dominated by an emphasis on the visual and tangible, mostly because of the origins of the Per Cent for Art scheme in Ireland and because of a desire to commission 'artistic features' and permanent public sculpture to adorn buildings and infrastructural schemes. Since 1997 under direction from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and in particular since the publication of the National Guidelines for the Per Cent for Art Scheme in 2004, the understanding of public art has broadened to include all artforms and artistic disciplines.¹ The development of interdisciplinary practices, working across artforms as well as with other fields of knowledge, including, science, planning, philosophy, geography, sociology, archaeology, etc, has given artists greater scope to draw on their enquiries and research, broadening the potential for public art to impact on the city.

Dublin City Council has since the inception of the Per Cent for Art Scheme in 1986, undertaken numerous commission under the scheme including permanent and temporary artworks. These include: *Mother and Child*, Maurice Hannon, (Finglas, 1990); *Woodkey Walk*, Rachel Joynt, (*Wood Quay*, 1992); *The Café in the Sky*, Tatsuroo Bashi (Temporary Project, 2004); *Tidings from Here to There*, Christine Mackey (Process Based Commission and Publication); and *Richard Crosbie*, Laurent Mellet, (*Ranelagh*, 2008). In addition, the City Council has commissioned works with its own funding such as *The Spire* (Ian Richie Architects) and in the past has accepted gifts or donations for permanent artworks, *Ana Livia*, *Philip Lynnott*, *James Joyce*, *Molly Malone* and *An Cailín Bán*.²

3. VISION

Dublin City Council will develop a Public Art Programme which will offer opportunities for artists to engage with the city, making new work that responds to the context of Dublin as capital of Ireland, international city, and city of communities and localities. The Programme intends to create connections and collaboration between different areas of the city council's work and interconnection between art, city and the public.

4. STATEMENT

The Public Art Programme will support artists working in all artforms, and all forms of expression, permanent, temporary and time based.

4.1 Value and Nature of Public Art

Dublin City Council believes that Public Art has the capacity to add greatly to the 'creative city' breathing life and energy into different situations and contexts, sparking new ways of thinking for artists that in turn effect the making and practice of art. The City Council recognises the value and relevance of public art and invests in this area of work, as part of its arts and cultural agenda and because of its potential to link to other fields of living. Public Art practice offers opportunities to work across city departments and institutional boundaries, combining and exchanging

¹ Public Art: The Per Cent for Art Scheme, National Guidelines, Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism, Dublin, 2004

² Artworks funded by: *Ana Livia*, Michael Smurfit; *Philip Lynnott*, Róisín Dubh Trust; *James Joyce*, North Earl Street Business Association; *Molly Malone*, City Centre Business Association; *An Cailín Bán*, Mexican Ambassador to Ireland.

knowledge, thereby enabling artists to create work that reflects on and responds to the city as a context.

Public Art Policy will include a strategic approach to public art programming within the city and will include per cent for art, donations, commemoration and memorials. The Public Art Programme will support an ambitious and thought-provoking programme of commissions across artistic disciplines based on curatorial policy and directions. The programme will include commissions that are not bound by specific constructions schemes but can be situated within the broader context of the city. This approach will offer opportunities for artists to engage with the city, making new work that responds to the context of Dublin as capital of Ireland, international city and city of communities and localities. The programme will include critical debate, education, mediation, documentation and publications. There will be openness to ideas that come from all sources including, artists, curators, and arts agencies and from local communities.

5. STRATEGY TOWARDS A PUBLIC ART POLICY

Dublin City Council will adopt a strategy and structures for the efficient delivery of the public art programme, in order to maximise its potential while encouraging creativity and interaction with the public.

5.1 Principles

- The Public Art Advisory Group will act as the City Council's specialist group overseeing the public art programme.
- The Public Art Programme will reflect and maintain connectivity with the objectives set out in the Arts Service Plan, Arts and Culture Strategy and City Development Plan
- City Council Departments will be encouraged to apply for Per Cent for Art Funding for all capital developments.
- A single Finance Code will be established to allow for the pooling of funds from the Per Cent for Art Scheme and from other revenue funding for public art, and to enable a coherent public art policy to be devised and implemented.
- Clear guidelines will be established to adequately assess proposals for donations, civic contributions and commemorations.
- Private Developers will be supported to consider public art through the publication of guidelines and/or through contributory levies.
- There will be support for connection to and dialogue with external expertise, including artists, curators, organisations, international agencies, and third level institutions that have an interest in public art practice and its potential.

5.2 Public Art Advisory Group

The Public Art Advisory Group is the City Council's specialist committee established to oversee the policy and implementation of the public art programme.

5.3 Specific Role of Public Art Advisory Group

- To approve a strategic approach to the delivery of public art programmes within the City, including Per Cent for Art Commissions, donations, commemorative works and monuments
- Maintaining an overview of public art procurement and commissioning, management and funding
- Consideration (twice yearly) of external proposals for permanent artworks (donations, commemorations and monuments) within the framework of public art policy
- Provide support and feedback to the Public Art Manager
- To agree a Five Year Public Art Programme

5.4 Composition of Public Art Advisory Group

- Two Assistant City Managers – Culture, Recreation and Amenity + Planning
- Four City Councillors – Arts, Culture, Leisure & Youth Affairs SPC
- The City Arts Officer
- Public Art Manager
- Director of the Dublin City Gallery, The Hugh Lane
- Three external artistic advisors from different artistic fields

5.5 Public Art Expertise

The development and implementation of a vision, policy and strategy requires the involvement of public art expertise. The role of public art expertise (Public Art Advisory Group, artists, curators, public art officers, public art consultants, art organisations) is recognised by Dublin City Council as an essential part of the provision of public art.

5.6 Partnerships

Opportunities for partnership exist with key city and national organisations including; National Road Authority, Railway Procurement Agency, CIE, Dublin Port Authority, Office of Public Works, Dublin Docklands Development Authority, and Ballymun Regeneration.

Arts organisations including artists' representative organisations (Dance Ireland, Poetry Ireland, Theatre Forum, Temple Bar Cultural Trust, Contemporary Music Centre, FMC, Create, Visual Artists Ireland, etc) are considered as potential partners. Universities and Third Level Institutions with a commitment or relevance to public art (theory and practice) will be considered as potential partners in terms of research and development. This could include colleges engaged in practice and research in the areas of the arts (all artforms) architecture, planning, sociology, etc.

6. PUBLIC ART PROGRAMME

The Public Art Programme will include commissioning artists under the Per Cent for Art Scheme as well as other public art projects. It will also include implementation of policies regarding applications for commemorations, monuments and donations. The programme will include research and development, public engagement, and documentation and evaluation. Two strands will govern the overall public art programme. These are to respond to Dublin as:

- Capital of Ireland and international city
- City of communities and localities

6.1 Per Cent for Art

The Per Cent for Art Scheme will be used to commission artists to make work in all artforms, which includes temporary and time based work as well as exploring the potential of process based commissions, residencies and research projects. Permanent work will only be commissioned if of the highest artistic quality that enhances the city's art collection.

Funding awarded under the Per Cent for Art Scheme ranges from very small amounts (e.g. €1,500) to the maximum of €64,000. At present work on a database is being developed which will list all capital projects for which funding has been awarded but commissions have not yet commenced. To commission artworks relating to each individual capital development would not be feasible and would not give scope for the development of a coherent Public Art Programme. Therefore, the pooling of funds will be encouraged so that more significant public art programmes and commissions can be undertaken. Funding (*in line with other precedents e.g. Breaking Ground, Ballymun Regeneration, In Context 3, South Dublin County Council, Place and Identity, Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council*) will also be used for wider programming such as mediation, public engagement, etc.

6.2 Public Art Projects

The Public Art Programme will also give scope for supporting initiatives of the Arts Office relating to public art as well as independent / artist initiated public art projects.

6.3 Commemorations and Memorials

Is permanent art the best way to remember? The Public Art Advisory Group recognises the sensitivities regarding communities who wish to permanently mark individuals' contributions to society, the city or an area. However, there is need to respect and understand the nature of Dublin as a city. The impact of placing permanent statues and memorials on the city's streetscape and in parks has to be considered, as do questions such as who and what should be commemorated? The need to remember and note the contribution or circumstances regarding a person or group of people can be addressed in many ways and permanent art is not necessarily the best way to do this. Therefore, it is recommended that no sculptural commemoration or monument should be accepted or commissioned until twenty years after the death of the individual/s or event.

Consideration will be given to selecting a dedicated site to commemorate people who have made significant contributions to the cultural, economic or social life of the city. Nominations for inclusion in this commemorative site will be considered every three years. The Public Art Manager will advise on other temporary forms of commemoration such as bursaries, which are considered more appropriate to the memory of deceased people, providing inspiration and active encouragement to those still living.

6.4 Donations

Donations of artworks or proposals to commission and site work on City Council space will only be considered twice yearly. Proposals for donations will be assessed on their artistic merit, site suitability, appropriateness to the city context, and on implications regarding cost and maintenance. The Public Art Advisory Group will designate a selection panel as defined in Section 7.2 – Page 9 to assess proposals. Potential donors will be advised that the City Council must have a curatorial role in the selection of artists.

A formal agreement / contract will be drawn up setting out the conditions for the acceptance of donations including the responsibilities of each party (the City, sponsor, artist, outside contractors, etc). The agreement will address project funding, project supervision, fabrication, transport, installation, transfer of title, maintenance, mediation, education, intellectual rights/ copyright, decommissioning and other issues as necessary.

6.5 Research and Development

Research is considered to play a vital role in developing public art policy and programmes which are of national and international relevance. A Five Year Public Art Programme will be developed through engagement across City departments and with expertise outside the City Council. Research will include taking stock of present policies and commissions / acquisitions including the development of a Public Art Register (See Section 8.1 – Page 10).

6.6 Public Engagement

Public engagement is a key element of any public art programme. This will include advocacy within the City Council as well as promotion to the wider public. It will include promoting awareness of the programme as well as individual commissions, artworks and artists. Elements of public engagement will include:

- Public relations through the press, radio, television and internet
- Mediation - engaging with artists and the public
- Presentations and seminars
- Public consultation
- Distribution of documentation

6.7 Website

It is intended to use dublincity.ie to feature current and past public art policies, programmes and commissions.

6.8 Documentation and Evaluation

The documentation of public art is important for care of the collection, in house knowledge, education and public awareness. This includes permanent as well as temporary artworks. Documentation can include photography, DVD, recordings, publications, etc. Evaluation of the public art programme and its policies will take place during the Five Year Programme.

7. PROCEDURE

Procedure for the management of the public art programme will reflect the National Guidelines for the Per Cent for Art Scheme. This will include the development of briefs, selection of artists, contracts and management of commissions.

7.1 Selection of artists

The Public Art Manager will oversee the Selection Panel terms of reference and guidelines. The method of selection will depend on the scale and nature of the public art commission and will be made on the basis of the most appropriate procurement procedure.

7.2 Selection Panels

Selection panels will be appointed to undertake the short-listing and selection of artists for commissions. Selection panels will consist of no less than three people and no more than nine. Panels will have a majority of art experts including independent practitioners and curators. If issues regarding critical interpretation, site choice, structural requirements or other matters arise, the panel may at its discretion, meet with the artists before making a final decision. Panels will typically be composed from the following (depending on the nature of the commission):

- Arts Officer and or Area Arts Officer/s
- Public Art Manager
- Member of Public Art Advisory Group
- Artists
- Independent curators and other public art professionals
- Technical expert, architect, engineer, planner, etc
- Representative of the community, neighbourhood or area

7.3 Submissions for Permanent Work

Applicants proposing to donate or commission a permanent artwork (whether proposed internally or externally through sponsors) will be required to present a formal submission for consideration by the selection panel established by the Public Art Advisory Group. Applicants will be informed of the criteria, conditions and procedures governing long-term gifts. Completed and installed works will be registered on the Public Art Register.

Submissions must include:

- A statement of intentions as to why the work is being proposed / offered.
- Details of artist, including C.V. and images of past work
- Visualisations of proposed work, drawings, maquette, digital images,
- Technical information, including materials, fabrication, maintenance, etc
- Proposed siting, including plans, diagrams, visualisations of proposed work in relation to the proposed site
- Detailed budget including artist's fees, fabrication, transport, installation and maintenance
- Details of funding and source of funds

7.4 Planning Permission

Applicants should note that most permanent/ long-term works are subject to granting of Part 8 permission for City Council commissions, and planning permission for external proposals.

7.5 Appeals

Appeals will only be considered where a claim is made that the panel's consideration of a proposal was procedurally unfair, unreasonable or inadequate. The City Council will then re-check procedural matters. No appeals will be entertained on the grounds of the panel's aesthetic evaluation of an existing or proposed work.

8. CARE AND CONSERVATION

The City Council already has an extensive collection of permanent artworks in public space. At present the Conservation and Heritage Officer has a small budget for repairs of historic sculptures and monuments. The City Council has an obligation to itself, artists and the public to maintain works in its care. Therefore, it will be important to establish the extent and nature of the collection and make adequate provision for its maintenance.

8.1 Maintenance and Decommissioning

A programme of maintenance will be established based on the information gathered through the development of a Public Art Register. A policy of maintenance and decommissioning will be applicable to all new permanent works commissioned or received by the City Council. Procedures for re-siting and if necessary the decommissioning of permanent artworks will be developed.

In order to support the maintenance and decommissioning programme, it is intended that a deduction will be made from budgets for all new commissions. This follows the example of the OPW which has put a similar policy in place.

8.2 Public Art Register

A Public Art Register will be developed. This will include permanent work in the ownership or care of the City Council and will also include temporary art projects undertaken under the Public Art Programme. The Public Art Register will include if applicable:

- Title of work
- Name of artist/s
- Artist's statement / short description / intention of work /
- Technical issues: date, medium, dimensions,
- Location
- Budget
- Image/s
- Maintenance notes

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