

Public Art Policy

Policy owner	Arts, Advocacy and Economy		
Adopted by	Council		
Adoption date	18/05/2026	Scheduled review date:	15/05/2030
Revision/version number	1.1		
Council Plan reference	1.1 Community culture and identity - We enrich local identity and foster opportunities for the community to make meaningful connections through creative arts, events and cultural expression.		

1 Purpose

The purpose of the Public Art Policy is to provide direction for Council's investment in public art and a framework and guidance for the ongoing provision and maintenance of public art and Collections within Cardinia Shire Council.

2 Scope

This policy applies to all public art assets commissioned, owned, or managed by Council, including both the existing Public Art Collection and the Civic Art Collection. It covers sculptures, murals, projections, installations, and other artistic works, whether temporary or permanent, located in the public realm, as well as the Civic Art Collection at Cardinia Shire Civic Centre. Standalone projects that solely involve memorials, interpretive signage and wayfinding, civic decorations, general streetscaping, lighting, or advertising assets are excluded; however, these elements not excluded when they form part of a broader public art project. This policy does not apply to public art on private land.

3 Definitions

Use this section to identify and define any key terms that may need explanation to understand this policy.

Term	Definition
Acquisition	The purchase of an existing artwork, or receipt of an artwork as a donation or gift
Accession	Works of art acquired through a variety of means, including gift, donation, bequest, purchase, acquisition, or commission, added to the asset register and Public Art Collection
Arts and Culture Reference Group	The Group participates as independent assessment panellists for artist selection and receives ongoing updates throughout project development.

Artwork	A form or expression of the visual arts. It may include, but is not limited to, painting, sculpture, ceramics, photographs, printmaking, drawing, use of information technology, multimedia and mixed media.
Cardinia Civic Collection	The official collection of artworks owned by Council and displayed in Council buildings as listed within the Collection database.
Commission	The purchase of a new artwork created specifically for a site or purpose
Community Based Public Art	Public art projects funded and managed by community organisations, community members, or private investors, located in public spaces but not on Council land
Council	Cardinia Shire Council, being a body corporate constituted as a municipal Council under the Local Government Act 2020
Council managed land	Land which is owned by another party, with an agreement/ lease in place for Council to manage the land on behalf of the landowner.
Council owned land	Land that is currently owned by Council
Councillors	The persons holding the office of a member of Cardinia Shire Council
Council Officer	The Chief Executive Officer and staff of Council appointed by the Chief Executive Officer.
De-accessioning	The permanent removal of a work of a Public Art asset.
Disposal	The physical removal of a work of art or public art from the Collection, following de-accessioning.
Independent Assessment Panel	The Council nominated assessors responsible for evaluating and selecting the commissioned artists. Panel members, made up of a combination of Council Officers and independent experts, are required to declare any conflicts of interest before participating in the assessment process.
Moral Rights	The rights of creators of copyrighted works which includes the right of attribution, the right to have a work published anonymously or pseudonymously, and the right to the integrity of the work such as the display of the work in the way the artist intends.
Permanent Works	Public artworks that have an expected lifespan of more than 25 years. Permanent works can be site specific or site responsive and may be integrated into a landscape or civic development.
Proposed Council owned Land	Land which is intended for transfer to Council ownership, in particular land that is part of a new estate or development which will be handed over to Council when development is complete.
Public Art Collection	The official collection of public artworks owned by Council as listed within the Collection database.
Public Art Program	The services involved with Council's public art activities including collection management, new projects and initiatives, community programs, promotions and events presented in relation to public art.
Site-Specific Art	Public artwork designed and created for a specific site

Temporary Works	The installations, performances or actions that activate or exist in a location for a specific period of time. They tend to be exploratory and experimental and can have an expected lifespan of a single day up to five years. They enable a dynamic and responsive environment that allows people to encounter the unexpected, challenge perceptions and offer new experiences. They also provide opportunities to test and trial ideas, produce topical and responsive work and support young and emerging artists to build their capability in the public realm. Temporary works may sometimes be further developed into permanent commissions.
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4 Policy

4.1 The Role of Public Art

Council recognises the importance and value of public art in enhancing the vibrancy, liveability, visitation, safety, and the unique identity of our community, and is committed to maintain and grow the Public Art Collection for the benefit of all residents. Council prides itself in high-quality civic planning and design, including architecture, landscape architecture, public spaces, and green building practices. Council understands and values the unique role that public art can play in vibrant thriving communities - it can create a strong sense of identity to new developments; create meaningful connections to people and place; it can serve as a memorial or historical reference; it can be used to create gathering points or landmarks; can be a feature of celebration, and it can be a key factor in regeneration projects. Council also understands and values the wider role that arts and creativity play in good physical and mental health for our communities. Council understands its role as leader, investor, manager, and advocate for the inclusion of public art within public spaces, and major infrastructure and open space projects.

4.2 The Guiding Principles

Council is committed to commissioning and presenting public art that is bold, inclusive, place-based, and transformative. These guiding principles are aligned with the Council Plan and inform the planning, commissioning, acquisition, management, conservation and presentation of public art throughout the municipality.

Design Excellence:

- *Equity, Inclusion and Access:* Reflecting community diversity through equitable opportunities, inclusive commissioning, and practices that prioritise cultural safety and remove systemic barriers.
- *Artistic Excellence and Innovation:* Driving public art with bold, research-informed, and innovative practices that express distinct cultural ideas, engage audiences, and achieve artistic excellence.
- *Creative Placemaking:* Public art will support creative placemaking principles of enriching public spaces through offering unique, engaging, and meaningful artworks that help transform and activate space, foster community identity, pride, and connection to place, and support improved safety and site revitalisation.
- *Structural Integrity and Safety:* Public art will meet structural integrity standards, meet durability, maintenance, and asset lifespan measures, and comply with relevant industry safety regulations.
- *Cultural Tourism and Creative Economies:* Public art will drive local economic development by engaging artists, commissioning local and industry suppliers where possible, and attracting visitors to Cardinia’s cultural precincts, venues, and activity centres.

- *Environmental Sustainability:* Developing public art using environmentally sustainable materials and practices, with a commitment to ongoing care and conservation that upholds the principles of long-term environmental stewardship and aligns with Council's sustainability goals.

Alignment with Cardinia Values

- *First Peoples Engagement:* Ensuring First Peoples voices, knowledge systems, and cultural protocols inform and lead public art outcomes, and feature works and practices that meaningfully engage with and celebrate First People and their artwork, culture, storytelling, and connection to Country.
- *Equitable Geographic Access:* Work towards increasing opportunities for public art across a wider range of council areas and communities.
- *Community Engagement and Partnerships:* Council will facilitate opportunities for engagement, participation, and collaboration between public artists, residents, businesses, and stakeholders through the public art program to promote local connections between people and place.
- *Artists as Cultural Workers:* Recognising artists as essential contributors to cultural life and providing paid opportunities alongside professional development with consideration of alignment of the artist's values with Council's and the community.
- *Diverse Forms and Flexible Practices:* Supporting a broad range of creative expressions and encouraging experimental, temporary works that engage communities and provide opportunities for emerging artists.
- *Sustained Resourcing and Asset Management:* Public art assets and collection will be managed using a sustained hybrid resourcing model for the investment in new work and the effective lifecycle management of existing artworks.
- *Best Practice Governance and Equitable Processes:* Managing public art with transparency, fairness, and respect for artists' rights and equity throughout all stages.
- *Good Governance:* Decision-making regarding public art will be transparent, collaborative, and informed by industry best practice, using a systemic and responsible methodology for accession maintenance, and deaccession of works.

4.3 Funding

Future public artwork is to be funded through a range of options, such as:

- Council's capital works program
- Partnership, sponsorship and donations - With artists, community groups, developers, philanthropic organisations and government agencies
- Developer-led commissions - Council will encourage private developers to incorporate public art in new residential and commercial developments
- State and Federal government funding - Council will actively seek funding, either whole or part project costs, from other tiers of government.
- Council's grants program- Council will encourage the creation of small-scale permanent and temporary public artworks initiated by the community and local artists.

Acquisitions to the Civic Collection have historically been funded through the Mayor's discretionary funds. Future acquisitions will be considered alongside the existing collection to ensure it remains within the capacity of Cardinia Shire's resources, as recommended by the Arts and Creative Industries team.

4.4 Public Art Initiatives

Community Based Public Art Initiatives

Council encourages and supports community based public art initiatives where possible. However, public art outcomes from community-based projects will not be added to the Council's asset register, nor will they be repaired or replaced should they fall into disrepair. Any public artwork that has fallen into disrepair can be removed at the Council's discretion.

Public Art Commissioning by External Parties

Council will continue to collaborate and work with developers, business owners and other organisations in the shire to foster private development partnerships and voluntary contributions towards public art that align with the principles of this policy. All Public Art commissioned by external parties, including developers, businesses, and any other organisations, which intend to locate artwork on Council owned land, proposed Council owned, Council managed land, or require Council endorsement, must adhere to and align to the Council's Public Art & Collections Guidelines.

Council Investment in Public Art on Private Land

Council funds will only support public art projects on private land if:

- The intended site is facing public land
- The proposed artwork improves public amenity
- The proposed artwork increases potential for broad economic uplift and enhancement of Council's city strategy
- The proposed artwork complies with the objectives, principles and assessment criteria outlined in this policy

4.5 Public Art Maintenance and Insurance

Council commits to cleaning, maintaining and managing the public art collection to industry standards, preserving the artworks and ensuring safety, through the provision of an annual maintenance fund that will be reviewed annually to reflect the identified needs of the collection's effective management. All Council's public art will be appropriately insured. Council will seek to commission public artworks that are low to no maintenance wherever possible.

Design Life Expectancy and Deaccessioning

Council led public art commissions will seek to deliver artworks which have a minimum expected design life of at least 10 years and 5 years for mural projects. When the work poses a risk to the public, is no longer able to be maintained or the context for the work has changed, it will be necessary for Council to relocate, remove or dispose of it – this is known as deaccessioning. Periodically, Cardinia Shire will review the collection and identify works of art that need to be deaccessioned. A report will be prepared that outlines why the work needs to be deaccessioned and will reference:

- Whether the conservation and/or storage requirements are beyond the reasonable means of Council.
- Whether the item is irreparably damaged or destroyed or is missing, or stolen without hope of return.
- How the item no longer meets the current acquisition criteria for Cardinia Shire Council Public Art Collection.
- Whether a substantiated request has been received by Council or the return of the item to its owner/donor.
- Whether the item continues to have artistic merit as determined by the Council's Arts and Creative Industries team or equivalent nominated industry expert.

Council reserves the right to deaccession works through the appropriate Manager. Executive Leadership Team (ELT) approval may be required where community influence is present. The ELT is the approval authority and may escalate matters to Council if warranted by the level of community influence.

A deaccessioned item must be disposed of by the following methods listed in priority order:

- Returned to the artist or their family.
- Destroyed or recycled.

4.6 Governance

Decision-making regarding public art and collections will be transparent, collaborative, and informed by industry best practice, using a systemic and responsible methodology for collection management, implemented through the following practices:

- For Council-led projects, a Public Art Project Working Group will be established for each commission, comprising of representatives from the Arts and Culture Reference Group along with relevant cross-disciplinary expertise from across Council.
- The Public Art Working Group will be responsible for the following:
 - Inform decisions about the selection of projects in which there will be a public art component or artist involvement.
 - Allocate appropriate budgets to support public art opportunities identified.
 - Inform the development of the project brief.
 - Provide feedback and support on commissioning, installing and completing the Public Art project in relation to their area of expertise
 - Ensuring that public art projects meet the aims of the Public Art Policy and other leading strategic documents of Council.
- Financial decisions and approvals regarding Public Art and collections will reflect the financial delegation authority levels as set out by Council's procurement policy.
 - Council will use the established procurement framework to contract artists and public art suppliers and will provide clear project briefs and consistent assessment criterion.
 - Council will seek a balance of quality and value for money through a competitive selection process using Council's established procurement and conflict of interest framework, using a consistent selection criterion to assess applications and inform decisions.
 - Regular evaluation and reporting to Council regarding the Public Art Program's impact and identify opportunities for improvement, new opportunities, and innovation.

4.7 Gender Impact Assessment

It is considered that this policy does not adversely impact community members or employees of different genders and has been developed in accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

5 Relevant documents

- Cardinia Shire Public Art Assessment Matrix

- Cardinia Shire Public Art Selection Matrix
- Victorian Local Government Act 2020
- Strategic Plan Framework – Creative Australia Act 2023
- National Association Visual Arts (NAVA) Code of Practice
- Creative Victoria – Creative State 2025
- Cardinia Shire Council Plan
- Cardinia Shire Liveability Plan
- Arts and Cultural Industries Strategy (draft)
- Arts & Culture reference Group Terms of Reference 2023
- Open Space Strategy 2023
- Gender Equity Action Plan (draft)
- Reconciliation Action Plan
- Cardinia’s Value Framework
- Access and Inclusion Strategy
- Finance Procurement Policy
- National Association of Visual Arts (NAVA) - Code of Practice
- Our Equal State: Victoria’s Gender Equality Strategy and Action Plan 2023–2027
- First Peoples: A Roadmap for enhancing Indigenous engagement in museums and galleries, by Terri Janke and Company, commissioned by Australian Museums and Galleries Association (AMaGA), 2019
- Creative Australia – Protocols for using First Nations Cultural and Intellectual Property in the Arts, 2007
- Engagement Summary Report
- Current Public Art Collection Database (audited)
- 2012 -2017 Public Art Policy
- Public Art policy benchmarking
- Cardinia Shire Crown Land Policy (Draft)

6 Review

Council will review this Policy every four years.

The next review of this policy is scheduled for completion by [Click or tap to enter a date..](#)

It is recognised that, from time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this document, such a change may be made administratively. Examples include a change to the name of a Council department, a change to the name of a Federal or State Government department, and a minor update to legislation which does not have a material impact. Administrative changes do not require Community Engagement.

7 Document history

Date approved	Change type	Version	Next review date
19/03/2026	Major Change	1.0	13/03/2026

18/05/2026	Administrative Change	1.1	15/05/2030
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