

# Public Art & Collections Policy

March 2019

wyndhamcity



Michael Peck - Migration  
Image by Matthew Slocum



Celebrating our diversity of place, culture and environment through the commission and acquisition of contemporary art in the public realm



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Katjarra Butler - Ngamurru-Katjarra

# 1. Public Art & Collections

## 1.1 Vision

Wyndham's Public Art & Collections Policy delivers dynamic contemporary public art to its diverse communities in a creative celebration of place, culture and environment.

## 1.2 Purpose and Scope

This policy provides a strategic and sustainable framework for Public Art & Collections in Wyndham City. Some key principles that inform the policy are:

- It enables best practice in acquiring, commissioning and managing contemporary public art programs and public collections.
- It is benchmarked against public art policies and programs that speak to Wyndham City's future state.
- It considers emerging trends in contemporary art which signal that the boundaries between artforms and what is public will continue to shift and converge.

This policy will be implemented through innovative and thought-provoking programs and projects with outcomes across three key areas:

- Public Collections (including Public Art) that are acquired, commissioned and maintained by Council
- Public Art activity and commissions that are permanent, temporary and ephemeral
- Public Art Commissions & Acquisitions by developers and the private sector for public spaces.

## 1.3 Definition of Public Art & Collections

Public Art & Collections refer to all forms of permanent, temporary and ephemeral artworks located in a space which has public visibility, use and access. This includes open spaces, urban places, public and civic buildings where communities can view and access art of many forms.

Traditionally it has encompassed diverse artforms from two-dimensional works such as paintings, mosaic and murals to sculpture. Contemporary public art practice and activity now includes digital artworks, interactive new media artworks, performance and sound art. There are many works in public spaces that have a high degree of interactivity and movement such as those employing light, sound and water. Public art activity can also occur at events, festivals and celebrations in public spaces.

## 1.4 Purpose of Public Art & Collections

Contemporary public art can transform our streets, buildings, parklands and the fabric of our city. It can enhance a city's identity and contribute to the cultural life and the liveability of a city. Public access to art is increasingly important in place making, an approach of creating public spaces that brings people together, reflects communities and builds a strong sense of local place and identity. The best form of contemporary and public art is artistically excellent, is created for the people and space in which it is located and encourages discussion and new perspectives.

Public art can be engaging, captivating, challenging and thought provoking. As the most readily accessible of artforms, it will always generate public debate and comment. The capacity of public art to reflect contemporary issues, question our assumptions and spark debate is one of the indicators of a socially progressive and cultivated society.

The strategies in this policy place public art central to the ongoing development of the City of Wyndham as a vibrant, creative and engaged city.



## 1.5 Strategic Context

Wyndham 2040 and the City Plan are key strategic documents that inform and guide all areas of Council's work, its priorities and objectives.

### Wyndham 2040

The Wyndham Community Plan, Wyndham 2040, articulates the City's vision for the future. A number of statements relate specifically to the importance of public art and collections:

- Wyndham will celebrate culture and art. We will share stories that challenge and inspire.
- We will acknowledge the Aboriginal heritage of the land. The country beginnings of our towns and shire will be remembered.
- Our parks and open spaces will connect people with the outdoors and each other. They will be activated and inviting destinations for residents and visitors.
- Local events and attractions will build Wyndham's reputation as a place to visit and be a source of community pride.

### Wyndham City Plan 2017-21

Council's commitment to Arts & Culture is articulated in the City Plan:

Council will celebrate a strong arts and culture sector, by actively promoting and attracting creative and cinematic industries; examining the feasibility of new arts initiatives; and providing a platform for visual and performing arts drawing from and celebrating a diversity of backgrounds.

Contemporary Public Art and Collections activity can also help strengthen the following City Plan commitments:

- Invigorate local commerce and visitation by activating retail precincts, to increase local economic development and support local business;
- Build civic pride and social connection amongst residents and businesses through activation, improving and adding to the special physical character of Wyndham;
- Create open and active outdoor and public spaces in both new and existing communities;
- Create a safer, more cohesive community by effective planning, design and regulation of public spaces;
- Celebrate the cultural diversity of our City;
- Embrace new technologies and promote the development of a local knowledge economy;
- Support sound growth and cohesiveness as a sustainable city by modernising our physical, environmental and cultural infrastructure;
- Balance social sustainability with urban development; and
- Actively engage the community in decision-making.



Bill Perrin - Conundrum 2005



### Positioning Wyndham

From an economic investment and liveability perspective, Public Art & Collections activity strengthens Wyndham City's positioning as a City that is contemporary and cosmopolitan, key features of cities with an international profile. Specifically, Public Art & Collections contribute to:

- Strengthening Wyndham City's reputation and brand as a regional, national and international visitor destination
- Enhancing urban amenity and making the most of Wyndham's natural assets and unique selling points
- Supporting emerging creative industries and development of a creative city
- Supporting innovation, entrepreneurial energy and capacity
- Contributing to the culture, vibrancy and lifestyle opportunity to attract and maintain the workforce for the emerging technologies and smart city agendas

## 1.6 Public Art & Collections - Assets & Service Strategy

Public Art & Collections are an integral part of Wyndham's rich and diverse cultural program and are identified as key service deliverables for the City. The approach to Public Art & Collections described by the Policy works across Council's four priority areas:

### People & Community

A public art and collecting program that celebrates the unique cultural character of Wyndham, creating and acquiring works that express community connection to place, with a focus on Indigenous connections to place. This is complemented by public participation opportunities which build creative dialogue between artists and community.

### Places & Spaces

A public art and collecting program that brings vibrancy and vitality to public spaces, building local identity and sense of place, including the integration of artworks into buildings, streetscapes and civic infrastructure.

### Earning & Learning

A public art and collecting program that supports the creative industry of Wyndham and principles of creativity and innovation, including the provision exciting creative programs and commissions that nurture the professional development of local artists.

### Leadership & Participation

A public art and collecting program that demonstrates best practice for working with artists, communities and other stakeholders to energize and transform the very fabric of the city's buildings, streets and open spaces through temporary and permanent public art activities and acquisitions.



## 2. Public Art & Collections Framework



Jonathan Mendez Baute - Still

### 2.1 Goals

The Public Art & Collections Policy demonstrates Council's leadership in public art and as a collecting institution. It outlines a dynamic new vision and an integrated approach for how public art and collections are conceptualized, experienced and delivered.

Six key principles guide the policy.

#### **Creative Commissions, Acquisitions and Programs**

Public art and collections in Wyndham will be highly creative, contribute to innovative contemporary artistic expression and cultivate a distinctive cityscape and public realm.

#### **Place Activation and Urban Design**

The quality, character and experience of open spaces, the natural and built environment and public buildings will be enriched through urban design collaborations, integrated artworks, acquisitions and a program of place activation.

#### **Community Engagement and Connections**

Public art and public collections will enrich the cultural life of residents through artistic engagement, a public education program and the creation of meaningful artworks which celebrate Wyndham's diverse communities and natural environment.

#### **Leadership with Developers**

Council will demonstrate strong leadership in promoting the cultural and economic benefits of public art and acquisitions to developers and in advocating for it as an integral part of private development.

#### **Best Practice Management**

The public art program and all public collections will be managed to best practice principles and collection management standards; drawing on industry expertise and a whole of Council approach.

#### **Partnerships**

Council will seek and work in partnership with industry and community to build capacity of the program and the artists that create it.



## 2.2 Public Art Program

The Public Art Program offers a flexible, responsive and cross-disciplinary framework to showcase a diverse range of contemporary public art. The expanded and interactive program will focus on public art of quality, which is site-specific and innovative in form and content.

Curated themes as well as public art briefs developed through consultation accommodate a diversity of artforms including digital artworks and interactive new media. The combination of large open public spaces, parkland, the Werribee River and residential and commercial areas, offers multiple possibilities for public art in a variety of locations.

To enable progress on the intention of the Public Art & Collections Policy, the Arts & Culture Team will continue its work in developing public art and collecting activity that responds to the cultural character of the community which incorporates:

- Outline a broad Curatorial Framework for Public Art Commissioning that encourages new conceptual enquiry, connection to place and reflection of Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultural character;
- Outline a Public Art & Collections Operating Guideline which supports temporary and ephemeral artworks alongside permanent commissions and integration into urban design and new buildings;
- Identify through an Annual Public Art & Collections Program Plan opportunities for public art across the municipality - at gateway sites, town and city centres, suburbs, agricultural, industrial, coastal and country areas;
- Prioritize the delivery of public art programs and projects in line with Council's broader strategic and place activation objectives;
- Specify the resources required to deliver the Plan and the timeframe in which it will be delivered.

Supporting activity and programs will be developed to support community understanding of public art, together with opportunities for local participation in the creation of public art including:

- Public art education to enable broad understanding of the purpose of public art in the community;
- Opportunities for engagement between commissioned artists and the community, ensuring that public art is relevant and meaningful to the site and audience;
- Cultural development and training programs that support local artists to build skills and experience in creating public art.

Working closely with developers to help shape the visual landscape features of new development is also key to enabling the intention of the Public Art & Collections Policy. A mechanism to support this is outlined below through collaborative resourcing and partnerships, with the intention of encouraging projects that are integrated with Council's strategic and activation objectives where possible.

## 2.3 Public Collections

Council is responsible for managing, maintaining and activating multiple public collections, each of which have a curatorial intention and cultural purpose. An integrated approach to collection development ensures that each of these collections are considered in relationship to each other and with an overarching approach and understanding.



Performance Windows at Red Arcade 2018



## 3. Governance

The success of the Public Art Program is based on teamwork, collaboration and partnerships both within Council and externally. A flexible and responsive framework will ensure that decisions are informed by staff and industry expertise and can be made in a timely and effective manner, whilst still maintaining accountability to Council.

### 3.1 Arts & Culture Team

The Public Art Program and Public Collections are managed by the Arts & Culture Team. A Public Art & Collections Operational Guideline will be developed to support this policy by incorporating new goals, processes and procedures. The Arts & Culture Team will draw on expertise through the advisory groups described below and prepare an Annual Public Art & Collections Program Plan that outlines key public art program and commissioning activity.

### 3.2 Public Art & Collections Management Working Group (PACMWG)

Strong internal working processes at Wyndham are critical to the success of the Public Art Program. An interdepartmental group comprised of key representatives from public art related departments will be established under this Policy. Led by the Director of City Life, the Group will facilitate the integration of public art into the forward planning for capital works development, forecast budgets and planning across Council

overall on public art matters. This group will work to ensure that that public art acquisitions, commissions and programs meet cultural development, procurement, public safety, urban planning and maintenance requirements. This group will provide expertise across the operational and technical aspects of public art and support project management. Working as a team will deepen staff's understanding and investment in public art and create 'champions' to advocate for it within Council.

### 3.3 Arts, Culture & Heritage Portfolio Committee

The Wyndham City Arts, Culture & Heritage Portfolio Committee provides advice on arts and cultural development in Wyndham. The Committee includes representatives from the community, local artists and cultural industries. It will provide input into the delivery of the Public Art & Collections Policy in the context of the broader arts and culture program and assist where appropriate with formal and informal communication and consultation processes with local community, cultural industries, arts and cultural practitioners, and arts organizations.



Carla Gottgens - Babushkas  
Image by Indie Lane





### 3.4 Public Art & Collections Expert Advisory Panel (PACEAP)

A Public Art & Collections Expert Advisory Panel (PACEAP) will be established as a sub-committee of the Arts, Culture and Heritage Portfolio Committee. It will be Chaired by the Arts, Culture & Heritage Portfolio Councillor and include community representation from the Portfolio Committee, external arts industry experts and the Director of City Life. The Panel will provide advice to Council and Council Officers on the commission, acquisition and deaccession of public and contemporary art in accordance with its Terms of Reference. The PACEAP will also have input into the Annual Public Art & Collections Program Plan.

### 3.5 Decision-Making and Authorization

Council will authorise the commissioning and delivery of Permanent Public Art works, informed by advice from the Public Art & Collections Expert Advisory Panel.

Council will delegate authority to Council Officers for public art program activity and commissioning of temporary and ephemeral public artworks, dependent on the scale and scope of works.

Temporary and ephemeral public artworks may be referred to the Public Art & Collections Expert Advisory Panel for advice.

Regular communication will be provided to Councillors on the public art program during the process of development commissioning and delivery.

## 4. Resourcing & Partnerships

### 4.1 Public Art & Collections Funding Pool

Council's commitment to public art and collections will see the establishment of a funding pool into which Council makes an annual contribution with the funding amount confirmed during the budget process. This fund provides for the resourcing of Council-led public art commissions and acquisitions, collections management, public art programs and collection maintenance. Funds will be allocated to specific projects, at Council's discretion, based on the annual plan and advice from the PACMWG and the PACEAP, for commissioning permanent, temporary and ephemeral public art, as well as funding acquisitions for Council's Collections.

This annual income allocation to the Public Art & Collections Funding Pool will not need to be expended in the one financial year and unspent funds can be accrued for major art works of a significant nature. Funds can be used in a strategic way for priority public art projects and art acquisitions across the municipality and will not need to be directly associated with a particular capital works project.

### 4.2 Funding for Capital Projects

Funding for public art associated with community infrastructure and capital projects should be considered and included in the business case for these projects. The scale of investment into public art components will depend on the context and objectives of the project. These funds may be expended on integrated, stand alone, temporary and permanent artwork (or a combination of these), as determined by Council informed by advice from the PACMWG and PACEAP.



Maree Clarke, Vicki Couzens & Jeph Neale - Frog Dreaming



Ziggy Pawlikowski - Cypress



Anne Ross - Dance of the Platypus





Darryl Cowie - Sensitive Chaos (Elements 1 to 6)



Elizabeth Presa - Oasis

### 4.3 Public Art by Developers

Council's proactive leadership approach with developers will enable and facilitate meaningful and conceptually appropriate public artworks. Council views public art as an integral part of any development and advocates that it be integrated into private development proposals from a developments inception.

Private developers can play a significant role in enhancing the quality of their residential and commercial development and the identity and character of the areas they develop.

Developers can work with Council on public art projects in the following ways:

- **Option A** - Developers can make a contribution to Council's Public Art & Collections Funding Pool to support the commissioning of an artwork within their development
- **Option B** - Developers and Council can work in partnership to commission public art
- **Option C** - Developers can propose donation of public artworks to Council, though acceptance is not guaranteed.

As part of a long-term vision Council requires that all works of public art, including those commissioned in partnership with developers, enhance the overall breadth of its public art collection and meet the high standards outlined in this policy. Developer initiated public art proposals must comply with objectives outlined in the Wyndham Open Space Strategy.

A Developers Guideline for Public Art will be created which outlines requirements and processes to encourage, facilitate and guide developer-led public art initiatives.

## 5. Asset Management

### 5.1 Public Art Collection

Wyndham City Council's Public Art Collection is made up of three key components; permanent public artworks located in public spaces; its pop-up (inflatable) artworks; and documentation of its temporary projects. There are currently over 44 permanent public artworks valued at over \$2,000,000 in its public art collection. This policy aims to support the development of a public art collection of quality and regional significance.

### 5.2 Contemporary Art Collection

Wyndham City Council is acquiring a growing collection of contemporary art that includes paintings, drawings, photographic prints, sculptural works, digital works and contemporary craft works. An integrated approach to Council's public and contemporary art collections ensures that these collections are relevant, considered in relationship to each other and meet the aims and aspirations of commissioning and acquiring art on behalf of the communities of Wyndham.

### 5.3 Civic and Community Collections

Council's Civic and Community Collections contain items that retain civic, community or historical significance. They are managed alongside the public and contemporary art collections to ensure that they are appropriately contextualized as part of the City's broader cultural collection.

### 5.4 Collection Management

Council is committed to the care and maintenance of its collections. It recognizes that all forms of publicly accessible cultural items and artwork require maintenance and conservation to preserve and appreciate their value. Council also recognises its responsibility to artists to maintain and present their work at an appropriate standard for public presentation. Council's Public Collections will be managed according to professional industry standards.



# 6. Implementation

## Action Plan - Goals and Strategies

### Goal 1. Creative Commissions, Acquisitions and Programs

Public art and collections in Wyndham will be highly creative, contribute to contemporary artistic expression and cultivate a distinctive cityscape and public realm for Wyndham

#### Strategies

##### Public Art Program

Creation and curation of an annual public art program that includes public art experiences, ephemeral public artworks and public art participation.

##### Temporary Artworks

Expand opportunities for artist initiated place activation proposals, support innovative arts practice and present new artforms such as digital, new media and large-scale projections.

##### Permanent Artworks

Establish new commissioning and acquisition models which support artistic excellence and engagement with site, curatorial framework and context.

##### Integrated Art

Commission artists to create permanent and integrated artworks and design features as part of public and private infrastructure and capital works development.

### Goal 2. Place Activation and Urban Design

The quality, character and experience of open spaces and the built environment will be enriched through urban design collaborations, outstanding integrated artworks and a program of place 'activation'.

#### Strategies

Annual Plan - Establish an annual plan which will identify potential sites for public art and timelines for actioning these.

Open Space Activation - Identify and utilise public open spaces to present public art in new and challenging ways.

City Place Activation - Expand place activation through temporary artwork installations in neighbourhood hubs, cultural precincts and city centres

Urban Design - Foster collaborations between artist and urban design specialists and maximise opportunities to integrate art into the built and natural environment.

Presentation Platforms - Establish physical as well as digital 'platforms' in the form of light boxes, digital projectors and movable showcases to present ever-changing public artworks.

### Goal 3. Community Engagement and Connections

Public art will enrich the cultural life of residents through artistic engagement, a public education program and the creation of meaningful artworks which are celebrated by Wyndham's diverse communities.

#### Strategies

Community Dialogue - Increase opportunities for engagement between artists and the community and establish new artistic working processes as a means of strengthening community connections.

Diversity - Ensure public art commissions and new acquisitions engage with the diversity of Wyndham's community; its Indigenous history, its heritage and culture through the commissioning and acquisition process.

Public Art Program - Include an education program of talks and events in the Annual Program to increase the community's understanding and enjoyment of public and contemporary art.

Achievements Celebrated - Implement a communication and media strategy to share the benefits of the program within Council and to the wider community.

### Goal 4. Leadership with Developers

Council will demonstrate strong leadership in promoting the cultural and economic benefits of public art to developers and in advocating for it as an integral part of private development.

#### Strategies

Leadership - Establish a proactive leadership position by Council to champion and advocate for public art in private development.

Partnerships - Build strong relationships with the private sector and encourage partnership projects to incorporate public art in new residential and commercial development.

Resource - Establish a Developers Guideline for Public Art to encourage, facilitate and guide public art initiatives.

### Goal 5. Best Practice Management

The public art program and collection will be managed to best practice principles and collection management standards, drawing on industry expertise and a whole of Council approach.

#### Strategies

Process - Establish effective planning and management based on principles of best practice to be outlined in an updated Public Art & Collections Operational Guideline.

Interdepartmental Partnerships - Ensure public and contemporary art is fully integrated across all Council development via the establishment of an PACMWG.

Peer Assessment - Convene a PACEAP which includes provision for industry expertise and recommendations to guide public art and acquisitions.

Asset Management - Establish a management plan for the long-term development and conservation of Wyndham's art collections, with the establishment of a comprehensive collections register and conservation plan identified as a priority.

Protocol - Establish a protocol which outlines clear processes for all stakeholders to address and manage 'controversy' which may arise around public art and acquisitions.

Evaluation - Conduct an annual evaluation of the policy, associated programs, collection and management processes to ensure optimal outcomes.



## Goal 6. Resourcing and Partnerships

Council will provide funding and resources to realise the policy goals; whilst industry partnerships will build greater capacity for the program and artists.

### Strategies

**Funding pool** - Establish a pooled funding model with an annual allocation to be determined through the budget process.

**Partner with Industry** - Engage with industry and government sector, key cultural and education institutions, local businesses and community organisations to increase opportunities for public art.

**Up-skill artists** - Build capacity for local artists, in particular, young and emerging artists working in the public sphere through the provision of resources, mentorships and professional development opportunities.

**Note:** While Wyndham City supports public arts practice that challenges and inspires audiences to new ways of seeing and relating to its context and environment (physical, social and political) it does not support the production or commissioning of artwork that seeks to offend or exclude any individuals or communities.



## 7. Glossary

**Acquisition** - a process by which an existing or commissioned artwork is purchased for a collection or donated to a collection.

**Collection** - a set of artworks, objects or items that have artistic, historical or civic significance. Collections are curated according to a set of defining principles or priorities (a curatorial framework).

**Commission** - a process in which an artist is hired to create an artwork on a temporary or permanent basis and is paid for this service

**Conservation** - is the preservation of tangible cultural heritage for the future.

**Deaccession** - a formal process for the removal of an artwork from a collection through either selling or disposing of it and thereby eliminating it from the official collection

**Developer** - a person or company who builds and sells houses or buildings on land for new purpose

**Integrated Public Art** - Artworks which are an integrated as part of buildings, landscape and public spaces. It can include seating, paving, lighting, unique furniture, architecture detailing, interpretive signage and playground features.

**PACMWG** - Public Art & Collections Management Working Group

**PACEAP** - Public Art & Collections Expert Advisory Panel

**Permanent Public Art** - public artworks that are commissioned or acquired and remain in place for an extended lifespan (three or more years).

**Place making** - a multifaceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces to support community wellbeing through building a strong sense of local place and identity

**Public Art Program** - a series of public art activities encompassing public art experiences, ephemeral public artworks, public art education and public art participation.

**Temporary Public Art** - is public art that has a short or medium-term existence (up to three years) and then is gone.





TOM GERRARD  
2018

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LETTERS

Tom Gerrard  
Image by Mathew Slocum



