

CALL TO ARTISTS

Commercial Alley Art Gallery 2024



Images: "Daydreamers", Ella Chay, 2023 Commercial Alley installation.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The City of Victoria is inviting artists residing in the [Capital Regional District \(CRD\)](#), including the Gulf Islands, to submit new site-specific proposals for the 2024 Commercial Alley Art Gallery. This opportunity is open to emerging and mid-career artists, to apply either individually or collectively as a team. A Selection Panel will choose the approved artist/s for this competition. The selected artwork(s) will be on public display from October 2024 until October 2025, in Commercial Alley between Bastion Square and the 500 block of Yates Street.

The selected artwork will be presented as a series of four, 4 x 8 feet plywood panels. Artists can either choose to submit a proposal using the entire surface area of the plywood panels or proposals that would cut and reshape the panels within structural limitations. To help inform your proposal, please see the attached diagram of the hanging system used for this project.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

In June 2013, an outdoor art gallery was established in Commercial Alley. Located in the 500 Block of Yates and Bastion Square, Commercial Alley is part of a network of alleyways that cross the downtown core. Commercial Alley is a working space, providing vehicle access to businesses and organizations including the Victoria Youth Empowerment Society. It also provides a walkway between Yates Street and Bastion Square. An annual Call to Artists invites local artists to reimagine the alley as a site for artistic and creative expression.

EQUITABLE APPROACH

The City of Victoria's Cultural Policy guides decision-making on how we do our work. The City is strengthening its commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion by embedding these

considerations into City's policies, programs and practices through the mandate of the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and the Equity Framework.

The City defines equity as treating everyone fairly by acknowledging their unique situation and addressing systemic barriers. In keeping with our Cultural Policy Statement, the City is working to ensure that everyone has fair access to equal benefits and outcomes by being able to participate fully in the creative life of the city, which is essential to an equitable, inclusive and human rights-oriented society.

Opportunities to participate and be accepted for public art commissions are not evenly distributed as many people face significant and complex barriers. These barriers are often cultural, physical, systematic, or a combination of multiple factors. The City is undertaking work to have an equitable approach by having a diverse representation of artists and administrators on the Selection Panel and through intentional distribution of the call to equity-seeking and underrepresented artists. City staff are available to support equity-seeking artists or individuals from underrepresented and/or marginalized backgrounds in preparing submission materials for their application. City staff will continue to learn, respond, examine and adapt our practices as we move forward in doing this important work.

COMPENSATION

The selected artist or artist team (group or collective) will receive an artist fee of \$4,000 (excluding GST if applicable), which includes consideration for transporting panels. Payment will be provided in two installments of \$2,000 each. **Note for Teams:** If applying as a group or collective, the fee is set and should be divided among all participating artists.

ARTWORK MEDIA & DIMENSIONS

- Four plywood panels with mounting hardware on back
- Each panel is 4 x 8 ft (w x h)

PRODUCTION AND INSTALLATION RESPONSIBILITIES

The City of Victoria will:

- Supply four ready-to-hang plywood panels
- Apply a weatherproof coating on the finished artwork
- Install the artwork in October 2024
- Maintain the artwork during the exhibition
- Deinstall the artwork in October 2025

The selected Artist(s) will:

- Pick up the plywood panels from the City in August 2024
- Deliver the finished artwork panels to the City by October 18, 2024
- Pick up the artwork panels at the end of the exhibition period (October 2025), if they choose to keep them

SITE CONSIDERATIONS

The outdoor gallery allows for four plywood panels to be displayed year-round on the west wall of the Victoria Youth Empowerment Society building.

The artwork must be contained within the maximum panel size of each of the four panels (4 x 8 feet) at the designated location in Commercial Alley. Artists should consider the sensitivities of at-risk youth, due to the proximity of the Youth Empowerment Society.

Proposed content must be suitable for the general public. Designs **must not** include:

- Any language or imagery that includes profanity, incites, or is motivated by hatred against any identifiable group*
- Any language or imagery that convey or portray drug and/or alcohol use
- Acronyms, explicit and/or encrypted signatures

*Identifiable group means any section of the public distinguished by race, religion, national or ethnic origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or mental or physical ability.

Who can apply? (ARTIST ELIGIBILITY)

This competition is open to emerging and mid-career artists who currently reside within the boundaries of the [Capital Regional District](#) (including the Gulf Islands). Artists can either apply individually or as a team (group or collective). We encourage a diversity of applicants, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, socio-economic status, class and religion.

How do I apply? (SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS)

Step 1: Read the Commercial Alley Guidelines (this document)

Step 2: Submit an [online application](#) and

Step 3: Email all required supporting documents listed below to culture@victoria.ca

Please organize your email submission as follows:

1. **Email Subject** – please include “Commercial Alley Art Gallery Application” in the subject of your email.
2. **Email Body** – please include your name as per the application form submission.
3. **Email Attachments** – please include the following attachments:
 - a. **Design Sketch – PDF file format**
 - Please use the template file provided and fill in your proposal for all four panels.
 - Artwork designs must be contained within the maximum panel size of each of the four panels at 4 x 8 feet.
 - If included, the artists’ signatures may be up to 1.5% of panel area (e.g. 70 square inches on one panel).
 - b. **Resume (Maximum TWO pages) – PDF file format**
 - Artist teams can include a two-page resume for each member of the artist team.
 - c. **Portfolio Images (Maximum of 5) – JPG file format**
 - Images of artworks created in the last three years (2022 or later).
 - High resolution and each individual file must be **under 4 MB** in size.
 - Please ensure your image files are titled correctly.
 - Title your images in the following order (01_LASTNAME_firstname, 02_LASTNAME_firstname, up to 05_LASTNAME_firstname).

What is the application deadline?

Complete applications, including the online application form and the email with all required supporting documents, must be received by **11:59 p.m. on Monday, July 15.**

ESTIMATED PROJECT TIMELINE

Call to Artists Launched	June 10, 2024
Online Info Session for Applicants	June 19, 2024, 6:30 p.m.
Application Submission Deadline	July 15, 2024, 11:59 p.m. (P.D.T)

Application Assessment & Notifications	August 9, 2024
Panels available for pick-up by Selected Artist	August 16, 2024
Artwork panels delivered by Artist to City for weatherproofing	October 18, 2024
Panels installed by City	Late October 2024
Panels removed by City and available for Artist pick up	Late October 2025

INFORMATION SESSION & QUESTIONS

Interested applicants are invited to learn more about this opportunity and ask questions at an online information session on **Wednesday, June 19, 2024, from 6:30–8 p.m.** To participate and learn more visit victoria.ca/artists.

If you require an accessibility accommodation to participate in the virtual information session meeting, please reach out in advance to:

Ammar Mahimwalla
Senior Cultural Planner
778.887.8786
amahimwalla@victoria.ca

What is the application review process? (SELECTION PROCESS)

1. **Review:** All applications will be reviewed by staff to ensure eligibility.
2. **Evaluation:** All eligible applications will be evaluated by a selection panel that will be comprised of qualified individuals with diverse backgrounds including artists, design professionals and community members based on the project objectives and selection criteria. City staff will organize and facilitate selection panel discussions and meetings, but the selection panel will be responsible for selecting the winning proposal.
3. **Notification:** All applicants will be informed after the evaluation is completed. The successful applicant(s) will receive a letter of understanding, outlining the terms and conditions of the award. Unsuccessful applicants can schedule a meeting with staff to receive feedback on their proposal.

How are applications evaluated? (SELECTION CRITERIA)

All eligible proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by the Selection Panel based on the following criteria:

- Proposed artwork is site-specific to Commercial Alley
- Content is suitable for the general public
- Work that is strong in concept and execution and appealing to a diverse audience
- Work that is high quality, dynamic and can utilize display space to its fullest potential
- Artists are at an emerging to mid-career stage of their practice
- Proper use of the design sketch template and site considerations

Artistic Merit: 40%

- The applicant(s) demonstrate technical talent and artistic skills through previous experience and/or training
- The proposed artwork is site-specific
- How this project will impact the applicant(s) art practice is clear
- The proposal demonstrates evidence of broad thinking and conceptual clarity
- The proposed artistic approach has a “wow” factor

Appropriateness to Site: 40%

- The proposal reflects considerations for current uses/users of the alley
- The proposal reflects engagement with community groups, architecture, history, or other aspects of the built environment around the site
- The proposal describes how the artwork will animate the site and attract and engage with diverse and/or new audiences

Feasibility: 20%

- The applicant(s) demonstrates relevant previous project experience to successfully complete the project on time and within budget

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- The Artist will create the Artwork as per the proposal submitted. Any changes must be approved by the City prior to the Artist(s) executing the Artwork.
- The successful Artist(s) will receive funding in two equal installments, the first upon signing of the Letter of Agreement, and the second, upon delivery of the Artwork to the City along with required project documentation.
- The selected Artwork will be the property of the City of Victoria.
- The successful Artist(s) will provide the City with a Waiver of Moral Rights and a Copyright License for non-commercial reproduction of the Artwork for educational and promotional purposes.
- The successful Artist(s) guarantee that the Artwork(s) is the original product of the Artist's own creative efforts and does not infringe upon or violate any right, including the copyright in any other artistic work or subject matter of any other person.
- The successful Artist(s) must agree to keep the City indemnified against any and all claims, actions or demands that may be brought, made or arise in respect of anything done or omitted to be done by them or their employees who shall be and remain at all times and for all purposes, the servants or employees of the successful applicant(s) or their sub-contractor(s), save and except to the extent that such claims action or demands arise from or relate to the negligence, wrongful act or omission of the City, or any of its officers or employees.
- The successful Artist(s) and/or any sub-contractor(s) they hire to complete the Artwork will act as independent contractor(s).

ARTWORK DESIGN TEMPLATE

Please download the artwork design template provided to prepare your design concept.