



**TEST**



**SITES**

The main title 'TEST SITES' is presented in a large, bold, black, sans-serif font. The word 'TEST' is positioned at the top left, and 'SITES' is at the bottom right. A large, thick black L-shaped graphic frames the text, starting from the top right of 'TEST' and ending at the bottom left of 'SITES'. A small green downward-pointing arrow is located above the 'T' in 'TEST'.

Test Sites Online 2020

Guidelines

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## About Test Sites Online

City of Melbourne's *Test Sites* program provides opportunities for artists to explore and experiment with temporary creative ideas in the public realm.

With our current circumstances radically changed as a result of the spread of COVID-19, we are all spending a lot of time inside thinking about what is outside.

Test Sites Online is a creative development program, delivered in collaboration with [Testing Grounds](#)<sup>1</sup>.

The program intends to:

- challenge and interrogate artists' understanding of publics and the built environment,
- provide resources for navigating councils and the logistics of creating work in the public realm; and
- generate future ideas for temporary and permanent public artworks.

## Workshops

Test Sites Online workshops are run in partnership with [Testing Grounds](#)<sup>2</sup>.

The program will be delivered in two phases:

### Research phase

Artists will participate in a series of online workshops, webinars, readings and group discussions, considering public space through a series of practical, creative and theoretical exercises.

### Creative development phase

Artists will work with Testing Grounds to get their project 'pitch ready' using a proposal template.

Places are limited and decided through an application process.

Successful applicants will receive funding of up to \$5000 towards costs associated with participating in the program. This artist's fee is for participating in the program as well as the opportunity to test materials, work with collaborators and consultants, create online support material and get professional designs and plans made, all of which will be used to get the project 'pitch ready'.

### Research phase objectives

- Expand emerging and experimental artists' understanding of public art and notions of "publics"
- Provide practical resources for navigating councils and logistics of creating work in the public realm, including cultural protocol
- Make a clear distinction between creating temporary and permanent works, with an emphasis on the level of experience and relationships they need to build to start being a contender for permanent public art commissions
- Form a supportive community among the participants that promotes collaborative peer-to-peer support and feedback
- Help artists develop initial ideas for a future public art project and provide a template document for pitching

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.testing-grounds.com.au/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.testing-grounds.com.au/>

## Research phase outcomes

- 4 x 1.5 hour group video conferences, scheduled over one month
- A database of readings, videos and other research materials, participants can access
- A webinar with a member of the Public Art Advisory Panel or public art expert
- A document that includes practical resources for download
- A pitching template for download
- A chat forum where the group can share ideas or questions
- One-to-one communication, providing individual support as needed

## Creative Development phase outcomes

- The pitch template submitted to Testing Grounds and the Creative Urban Places team for feedback
- A database of potential presentation partners, commissioners, curators etc.
- Advice on how to approach people and form relationships.

## Who can apply

Test Sites Online 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.

Applications are only open to artists and creatives who reside in Victoria.

## What kinds of ideas are suitable?

- Test Sites Online 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.
- The program does not commission street art – see below for further information about street art.

## Test Sites Online eligibility

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

- Test Sites Online 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.
- A maximum of one application per artist or arts organisation can be submitted.

- Applicants must submit relevant support material.
- Applicants must have acquitted previous grants and have no outstanding debts to the City of Melbourne.

## **Test Sites Online funding and support schedule**

### **Stage 1 – Applications open**

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

### **Stage 2 – Assessment**

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

### **Stage 3 – Project development**

- We work with successful applicants to help them research and develop initial ideas for a future public art project
- 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 pitch ready project.

### **Stage 4 – Presentation**

- At the end participants will be invited to present to an expert panel.

### **Stage 5 – Project acquittal**

- Once your pitch ready project is completed and the Test Sites Report submitted, the retainer will be paid.

## **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

## **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](#)<sup>3</sup> 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](#).<sup>4</sup>

## 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.

## Funds management

The financial support component of Test Sites Online 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.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/AboutCouncil/grantssponsorship/ArtsGrants/Pages/ArtsFunding.aspx>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/AboutCouncil/PlansandPublications/strategies/Pages/GraffitiManagementPlan.aspx>

## Program dates

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

## Insurance

Test Sites Online 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.

## 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](#)<sup>5</sup>.

## References

[Public Art Melbourne](#).<sup>6</sup>

[Public Art Framework 2014-2017](#)<sup>7</sup>

[Graffiti Management Plan 2014-2018](#).<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.ato.gov.au/>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/aboutmelbourne/artsandevents/publicart/Pages/PublicArt.aspx>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/AboutMelbourne/ArtsandEvents/PublicArt/Pages/PublicArtFramework.aspx>

<sup>8</sup> <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.