

City of Kelowna Artist in Residence Program Guidelines



1. Artist in Residence Program

1.1 Program Outline

The Artist in Residence Program is meant to broaden Kelowna's experience with arts and culture and stimulate thoughtful conversations on local topics. This program aligns with the [2020-2025 Cultural Plan](#)'s Goal #8 "Share our Story" and Goal #9 "Broaden the Reach".

The City of Kelowna requests expressions of interest from artists to apply to be the City of Kelowna's Resident Artist. This program would involve the artist:

- engaging with the community in the context of arts and culture;
- creating a temporary work(s) of art for the City;
- Engage the audience through the theme of 'Arts on Prescription'. Explore the ways that art promotes mental health through creativity and artistic expression.

For the purposes of this program, "the Artist" may be an individual artist or collective of artists working in interdisciplinary art, social practice art, digital or electronic art, installation, visual art (photography, film and video, painting, print-making, drawing, sculpture, crafting), performance arts (theatre, dance, etc.), music (creation, production, performance) or writing. The work(s) of art created and the community engagement may fall into any of these categories or multiple categories.

The Artist will be expected to commit to an average of 20 hours a week for 10 weeks or a similar commitment. The Artist will be an independent contractor of the City and will invoice the City for an all-inclusive fee of \$12,000, in a timely manner as laid out in a Memorandum of Understanding. This is not a live-in residency. This fee will be inclusive of housing, workspace, insurance, supplies, installation and removal fees (if necessary), and artist fees. A recommended amount of \$8,000 of the project budget should be attributed to artist fees.

The Artist will be selected based on review of their Expression of Interest Form and Project Proposal as they relate to the selection criteria. The selection process will occur in 2 phases, with a limited number of artists chosen to advance to Phase 2. Those advancing to Phase 2 will receive a \$500 honorarium for the additional work to prepare a detailed project proposal and budget.

After Phase 2, the Artist chosen as the City's Artist in Residence will be required to enter a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City of Kelowna that will further outline the payment schedule, details of ownership of the work(s) of art if applicable, time the work(s) will be on display, additional support provided by Cultural Services staff, and all other relevant details that are beyond the scope of this document when not knowing the nature of the project.

The Artist will be expected to dedicate a portion of their hours to setting up the logistical aspects of the project and working with relevant stakeholders, as well as committing time to the community engagement portion of their project.

Cultural Services staff will be available to assist the selected Artist in Residence in connecting to other City departments, with some marketing and promotion of the program, and will be able to provide some basic support, but the expectation will be that the artist is leading the project. The details of support provided will be further outlined in a MOU.

1.2 2026 Program Timeline

Expression of Interest Form Deadline	Aug 3
Notification of Advancement to Phase 2	Aug 10
Project Proposal Deadline (Phase 2 artists only)	Aug 31
Interviews with Phase 2 Artists	Sep 10
Notification of Final Selection	Sep 11
Artist in Residence Contract Begins	Oct '26 (project dependent)
Artist in Residence Contract Ends	Oct '27

2. Objectives and Outcomes

2.1 Artist in Residence Program Goals

This program will provide impactful, quality work and services, and contribute to the realization of the City's cultural vision. The objectives for this program are to support an artist whose project is committed to the advancement of the [2020-2025 Cultural Plan](#) goals and strategies. The strategies this program is advancing are:

- *Strategy 1.3:* Promote fair wages for arts professionals and support strategies aimed at attracting skilled creative workers and enterprises to Kelowna
- *Strategy 3.3:* Animate community spaces with quality and accessible public art
- *Strategy 6.5:* Increase the number of new and innovative artistic experiences offered in Kelowna
- *Strategy 8.2:* Build broader and deeper relationships with audiences

2.2 Artist's Outcomes and Deliverables

The Artist will be expected to:

- Develop and showcase one or more works of art (of any discipline);
- Incorporate the topic of Arts on Prescription in both the community engagement and the work(s) of art; and
- Clearly identify project outcomes including a defined start and end.
- Incorporate the community in the program through a unique and creative way. The community engagement can be part of any aspect of the project and may be done in a variety of different ways, it is at the artist's discretion at which stage(s) it occurs.

For example;

- through assisting in the creative process,
- production of the art the project and the artistic discipline(s) they are working in,
- inclusion of social commentary in the work(s) of art,
- engaging in a dialogue with the art, or

- another way that the artist feels is fitting.

**Simply creating a piece to be viewed by the public or allowing the public to view the creation of the piece is not sufficient community engagement for this program.

3. Program Eligibility

3.1 Eligible Individuals

To be eligible, the artist must:

- be legally entitled to live and work in Canada for the duration of the residency;
- be an individual emerging or professional artist or a group or collective of emerging or professional practicing artists, who are Canadian citizens or permanent residents;
- have their primary residence in the Regional District of the Central Okanagan for at least 1 full year before applying and for the duration of the contract (Lake Country, Kelowna, West Kelowna and Peachland).

Depending on the nature of the community engagement activities, the selected artist may be required to provide a Criminal Record Check including a Vulnerable Sector Screening at the artist's expense. The results of the check must be acceptable to the City of Kelowna at its sole discretion.

This program welcomes submissions from under-represented artists of all backgrounds including, but not limited to, Indigenous, Black and racialized persons; refugee, newcomer and immigrant persons, two-spirit, LGBTQ+ and gender non-binary persons, persons with Disabilities and those on low-incomes or living in poverty.

3.2 Project Eligibility

3.2.1 *Eligible projects:*

To be eligible, the project must:

- Be definable with clear objectives and deliverables;
- Have the community engagement occur in Kelowna;
- Have a distinct start and end to the project;
- Have the work(s) of art accessible by citizens of Kelowna (the means of accessibility can be based on artistic discipline chosen, i.e. in person, online, print, etc.); and
- Address the topic of the environment and/or climate change

3.2.2 *Ineligible projects:*

The following projects and expenses are not eligible:

- A project that is ongoing and/or considered part of the artist's normal course of employment;
- Expenses for capital purchases, such as buildings or property, or for capital development such as studio renovations;
- Activities or projects undertaken to fulfill credit or thesis requirements;
- Fundraising activities; or
- Expenses incurred prior to the contract start date.

4. Selection

4.1 Selection Process

The selection process will work in two phases.

In Phase 1, artists will submit their Expression of Interest Form and supporting documents through the City of Kelowna online platform for review.

The artists selected to advance to Phase 2 will prepare a full project proposal and budget, as well as an interview with the selection panel. Artists selected to advance to Phase 2 will receive an honorarium of \$500 for the project proposal.

From Phase 2 Project Proposals and interviews, the Selection Panel will make their recommendation to the Divisional Director of Active Living and Culture for final approval.

4.2 Selection Panel

The Selection Panel will be chosen by the City of Kelowna's Cultural Services staff. It will be composed of members of the creative sector in Kelowna, relevant stakeholders and City of Kelowna Staff. The priority for the selection panel will be the inclusion of local creative youth.

5. Phase 1: Expression of Interest

Phase 1 is the evaluation of the artist, their suitability for the program and the likelihood the project will be able to be executed as it is described.

Expressions of Interest Forms are assessed based on the information submitted by the artist. Applicants should include information that demonstrates their ability to meet the assessment criteria.

5.1 Phase 1 Assessment Criteria

The following criteria will be used to evaluate the Expression of Interests:

- Demonstrated artistic experience, excellence, quality of work and innovation
- Demonstrated ability to work independently and to engage creatively and collaboratively with a variety of different populations, the public, and other stakeholders.
- Interested in and informed about the topic of Arts on Prescription.
- Demonstration of strong communication skills and evidence of appropriate sensitivity to social topics.
- Demonstrated evidence of responsibly completing projects on time and on budget.
- Demonstrated suitability for a project of this scope and size.
- The project is clearly defined with distinct objectives and deliverables.

5.2 Phase 1 Submission Components

5.2.1 *Required components:*

Expression of Interests will be received through the City of Kelowna online application platform and the applicant will be required to submit:

- An Expression of Interest
A form outlining the artists experience, the project, including the artistic outcomes, community engagement and incorporation of environmental and climate change topics. Ensure that the project is definable with clear objectives and deliverables. If applying as a collective of artists, please outline the respective roles of each artist in the project.
- Artist Resume
Maximum of 3 pages, include artistic and community engagement activities from the past 12-24 months.
- Samples of work
Maximum of 10 images, audio files, video files or samples of writing that demonstrate your qualifications for this project. If applying as a collective of artists, submit documents that are from previous collaborative works, if possible.

5.2.2 *Optional components:*

In addition to the required materials above, applicants will be provided the opportunity to include:

- Published support material
Materials such as critical reviews, news clippings or website articles on yourself or your previous work that is relevant to your proposed project.
- Other supporting materials
Any other materials that you believe would support your case to be selected as the City of Kelowna's Artist in Residence, to a maximum of 3 pages (additional pages will be removed).

5.3 Phase 1 Submission

The deadline for submission of the Expression of Interest and supporting documents is **Aug 3, 2026 3:00 p.m. PST**. The Expression of Interest is available on the City's online application platform. Please visit the [online application platform](#) for more details.

Incomplete applications will be ineligible for consideration.

5.4 Phase 1 Notification

Artists selected to advance to Phase 2 will receive email confirmation by **Aug 10, 2026**. Those who have not been selected to advance will not be contacted.

6. Phase 2: Project Proposal

Phase 2 is only open to Artists selected to advance from Phase 1. This stage will be an evaluation of the project and demonstration of a feasible plan to complete the project. The interview during this phase will serve as an additional assessment of the proposed project and allow the artist to articulate how they will execute the plan.

All artists or artist collectives invited into Phase 2 will receive an honorarium of \$500. If applying as an artist collective, the collective will receive an honorarium of \$500 in total.

6.1 Phase 2 Assessment Criteria

The following criteria will be used to evaluate projects:

- The potential quality and the impact on the community of the work(s) of art;

- The incorporation of the engagement with the work(s) of art. The depth and quality of the community engagement.
- The respectful and ethical practices used in community engagement;
- The project is clearly defined with distinct objectives and deliverables;
- The innovation of the project;
- The degree to which the project expands Kelowna's understanding of artistic practices;
- The incorporation of the topic of Arts on Prescription in the work(s) of art and the community engagement;
- The responsible use of the project budget, including adequate allocation of artist fees; and
- The feasibility of the project and the likelihood it can be completed as described in the proposal.

The applicant should consider how their proposed project meets the project assessment criteria. Include as much information as needed in the project proposal and budget to explain the project and how it meets those criteria.

6.2 Phase 2 Submission Components

Those projects advanced to Phase 2 will be required to submit, through the online application platform, a detailed project proposal, a complete project budget and presentation materials that will be delivered to the panel during the interview.

6.3 Phase 2 Interviews

The interviews with the selection panel will serve as an additional evaluation component of the project. The applicant will be expected to answer questions regarding their Expression of Interest Form and their Project Proposal. The interviews will take place in August. The exact time and date of the interview will be determined closer to the date of the interviews.

6.4 Phase 2 Submission

The deadline for submission of the detailed project proposal and budget is **Aug 31, 2026 3:00 p.m. PST**. Further details will be provided to artists who are selected to advance to Phase 2.

6.5 Phase 2 Notification

Applicants selected to advance to Phase 2 will receive notice of the final decision by **Sept 11, 2026**.

If your project was not selected, Cultural Services staff may connect with you for the opportunity to share your project with other relevant City initiatives.

7. Funding

7.1 Use of Funds

The artist agrees to undertake the project and use project funds as described in the project proposal, project budget and in a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Kelowna.

The Artist in Residence must submit written notification to Cultural Services staff of a fundamental change in the project and/or use of funds and the new proposal – including the usage of funds unexpectedly remaining – prior to spending any of the funds on a new or revised purpose.

If the project cannot be completed as proposed, and a suitable alternative cannot be reached between the artist and the Cultural Services staff, the remaining funds must be returned.

7.2 Reporting

The Artist in Residence will be required to provide a progress report and Final Report.

The Artist in Residence will be required to provide a minimum of 3 high-quality images with the final report. These images must be accompanied by photo release waivers from both the photographer and people in the photographs, giving the photo rights to the City of Kelowna which allows the City to use them in future promotional materials.

8. Confidentiality

All documents submitted by applicants to the City become the property of the City. The City will make every effort to maintain the confidentiality of each application and the personal information contained therein except to the extent necessary to communicate information to staff and assessors for the purposes of evaluation, administration and analysis. General information about the project, including the funded amount and the artist, artist collective being funded under the program may also be released. The City will not release any additional information to the public except as required under the Province of British Columbia *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* or other legal disclosure process.

9. Submission Details

Eligible applicants will submit the Expression of Interest form using the online application platform by the program deadline, **3:00 p.m. PST, Monday, Aug 3, 2026.**

Only online applications will be accepted. If you are having problems with the online system, please contact sthirnbeck@kelowna.ca.

Please ensure you receive an email confirmation upon submission.

Incomplete or late applications will not be accepted. Submission of an application does not guarantee selection.

10. Contact Information

Sara Thirnbeck, Community Development Coordinator
Cultural Services Department

Address: 101-1360 Ellis Street
Kelowna, BC V1Y 2A2

Hours: Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Phone: (250) 469-8474
Email: sthirnbeck@kelowna.ca or culture@kelowna.ca

Appendix A: Scoring of Assessment Criteria

Phase 1 Assessment Criteria

Criteria	Marks Available
Demonstrated artistic experience, excellence, quality of work and innovation	20
Demonstrated ability to work independently and to engage creatively and collaboratively with a variety of different populations the public and other stakeholders.	25
Demonstrated suitability for a project of this scope and size. Demonstrated evidence of responsibly completing projects on time and on budget	25
The project is clearly defined with distinct objectives and deliverables	15
Interested in and informed about topics in Arts on Prescription. Demonstration of strong communication skills and evidence of appropriate sensitivity to social topics.	15

Phase 2 Assessment Criteria

Criteria	Marks Available
The potential quality and the impact on the community of the work(s) of art	10
The incorporation of the engagement with the work(s) of art. The depth and quality of the community engagement.	10
The respectful and ethical practices used in the community engagement	10
The project is clearly defined with distinct objectives, deliverables and start/end dates	10
The innovation of the project	10
The degree to which the project expands Kelowna's understanding of artistic practices	10
The incorporation of the topic of the environment and/or climate change in the work(s) of art and the community engagement	10
The responsible use of the project budget, including adequate allocation of artist fees	15
The feasibility of the project and the likelihood it can be completed as described in the proposal.	15

