

<h2>PUBLIC ART POLICY</h2>	Date Adopted:	12 May 2026
	Adopted By:	Council
	Review Due:	12 May 2029
	Responsible Officer:	Gallery Director
	Directorate:	Chief Executive Office
	SharePoint Ref:	

PURPOSE

This policy provides a framework for the implementation of public art within the public domain and applies to all applications to undertake public artworks, whether initiated internally or externally, including those arising through commissions, grants, and major capital works projects.

DEFINITIONS

Public art can include:

- permanent and temporary projects
- cultural and historical interpretation
- creative design incorporated into functional infrastructure
- street art and graffiti art.

APPLICATION AND SCOPE

Public art contributes to the urban environment, enhances local identity and increases the municipality's attractiveness as a place to live, work and visit. As one of the most visible and accessible art forms, public art plays an essential role in creating a vibrant, stimulating and memorable community spaces within Southern Grampians Shire.

Public art enriches public spaces by offering opportunities for interpretation, reflection and dialogue. It provides a means for individuals and communities to express identity, celebrate shared stories and challenge or explore social ideas. In this way, public art makes a meaningful contribution to community life.

Public art can improve the liveability of a community, strengthen civic pride, reduce anti-social behaviour and support economic development, including increased housing values. Public art initiatives will be coordinated with other Council strategies and major projects.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Public art does not include signage or works that promote a business, organisation, individual or enterprise. Public art is not considered part of a formal collection but will be included in Council's asset register. Public art is not civic monuments, plaques or memorials. Public Art will adhere to Australian Standards Playgrounds AS 4685:2021.

PRINCIPLES

The Southern Grampians Shire Council:

1. Supports community understanding and enjoyment of public art by integrating artworks into the built environment and public open spaces in a planned and strategic way.
2. Encourages public art through collaboration with artists, arts organisations and communities, supporting innovative projects that add value to public spaces.
3. Will consider all proposals for public art, including acquisitions, donations and commissions by panel review (as defined in the developing Governance Framework)
4. Will incorporate visual art components in major construction and refurbishments of Council-managed facilities, as appropriate, including integration with design features such as furniture or architectural elements.
5. Encourages public art on privately developed sites to increase the overall presence of art across the region.
6. Will ensure transparent, industry-standard selection processes. Artworks will not be excluded or included solely on the basis of personal opinion or aesthetic preference. This supports the development of a municipality, recognised nationally for creativity, vibrancy and cultural sophistication.
7. Will develop a detailed Public Art Strategy to guide decision-making across the Shire and establish clear vision and criteria for commissioning, acquiring and managing public art.

OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of the policy is to promote and facilitate quality, diverse public art initiatives in Southern Grampians.

1. First Nations Art is First Nations Led
First nation projects will be developed in respectful partnership with Traditional Owners, honouring the cultural authority, knowledge and creative leadership of First Peoples. First Nations artists, stories and cultural expressions will be central to the region's identity.
2. Access and Participation for All
Everyone in the Southern Grampians community, regardless of age, background, gender identity, income, ability or location has the right to access, create and experience public art.
Public art will be visible, inclusive and designed to engage both residents and visitors. Opportunities for participation and creative contribution will be embedded across communities, from Hamilton to our rural townships.
3. Place, Storytelling and Civic Identity
Public art will reflect the unique environments, histories and narratives of the region.
Artworks will respond to place and strengthen civic identity. Local stories past, present and future will be celebrated through public art.
4. Sustainability and Environmental Responsibility

Public art will demonstrate leadership in environmental sustainability. Sustainable materials, processes and life-cycle design will be encouraged. Environmental impact, maintenance needs and climate resilience will be considered in all projects.

5. Cultural Diversity, Inclusion and Representation

Public art will reflect the diversity of the Southern Grampians community. Commissioning, programming and selection processes will support broad representation. Inclusive leadership and equitable opportunities will be embedded across public art practice.

6. Creative and Professional Sustainability

Artists and creative practitioners are essential to the vitality of public art. Projects will support fair remuneration and professional development. Partnerships with education and industry will strengthen pathways for artists.

7. Health, Wellbeing and Community Connection

Public art enhances community wellbeing and social cohesion. Artworks will promote reflection, joy, connection and dialogue. Council will encourage practices that support both mental and social wellbeing. To ensure that Public Art does not have potential to harm either natural environment or people.

8. Innovation, Collaboration and Future Readiness

Public art will embrace innovation, technology and cross-sector collaboration. Both traditional and experimental practices will be supported. Partnerships across government, business and community sectors will build creative capacity and ensure the region remains connected to national and global networks.

IMPLEMENTATION

This Policy will be implemented through supporting Procedures and strategies, including the development of a Public Art Strategy to guide delivery and the development of a public art committee will be developed to assess and adhere to all relevant guidelines.

This policy should also be read in conjunction with:

- Australian Standards Playgrounds AS 4685:2021
- Southern Grampians Community Engagement Policy
- Southern Grampians Shire Project Management Framework
- Southern Grampians Plaques and Memorials Policy December 2025
- Southern Grampians Asset Management Framework

Public art will be decommissioned and disposed of through the procedures within the asset management framework and asset register procedure.

CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS COMPLIANCE

It is considered that this policy is compatible with the relevant human rights identified in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)*.

GENDER EQUALITY COMPLIANCE

It is considered that this policy is compatible with the relevant gender equality principles identified in the *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

Is a Gender Impact Assessment required?

Yes

No

REVIEW

This Policy must be reviewed a minimum of every three years.

AUTHORISED

Adopted at Council Meeting on 12 May 2026.

END