

**City of Kitchener
Arts/Culture Unit**

JURY PROCEDURES

1. Purpose of Juries

Juries are primarily used to assess applications submitted by individual artists or artist teams to a specific competition deadline. The City of Kitchener requires juries for: 1) annual Rotunda Gallery exhibitions; 2) public art; and 3) annual Artist-in-Residence program.

2. Selection of Jurors

Jurors are selected from a pool of local qualified visual artists and arts professionals such as curators and educators. Program consultants/staff consult with the community to develop a list of potential jurors.

While the composition of juries varies from project to project, a general guideline is that the following representatives be included according to the character of the program/project:

- A member of the Public Art Working Group (PAWG)
- The Ward Councillor
- Two visual arts professionals
- One representative of each project partner
- Project architect
- Citizen-at-large

3. Selection Process

Complete applications are received and jury is selected.

Applications are distributed to jury members for their review (confidential documents).

Jury meets to review supporting material and select and/or rank the applicants who in its opinion best meet the goals of the competition.

Strict confidentiality is a crucial part of the jury process and is observed by jurors, staff, and Council members with regard to applicants' names, the information they provide, and the jury's decisions.

In the case of public art competitions and the Artist-in-Residence program, Council receives the decisions of a jury, supported by the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee and Public Art Working Group, and approves the selection.

Applicants are advised of the results.

4. Responsibilities of the Jury

The jury is responsible for selecting those applications of highest artistic merit in the current competition for awards. This process includes the following requirements:

- Jurors will have the ability to evaluate the work of others, articulate opinions and debate in a group decision-making environment.
- Jurors will read and consider in advance all material received (photocopies of applications and written support materials) so they can arrive at the meeting

prepared to fully consider each individual application. This includes reviewing and understanding the program guidelines.

- Jury members are expected to be open, articulate, and committed to making consensual decisions while considering each application individually. If consensus cannot be reached in particular cases, a majority opinion is reached. A jury may or may not choose to appoint a chair from its members to direct the proceedings. Alternatively, staff may facilitate the proceedings.
- Jurors are governed by Council's Code of Ethics and are expected to declare any conflict of interest and take appropriate action.

5. Role of Staff

During the peer assessment process staff serves as a resource for the jury or panel and is responsible for the following activities:

1. Circulating all information and support documents and materials to jurors before the meeting. If the jury requests additional material or information, staff will provide it, if it is available.
2. Providing the jurors with whatever guidance they need for the proper completion of the assessment process, and for ensuring that the purpose of the program is clearly understood by jury members.
3. Facilitating the assessment process. Staff assists in discussions and direction, but abstains from expressing personal opinions and voting. If there is some reason staff cannot maintain neutrality with respect to an application, he or she leaves the room during discussion.
4. Advising the jury of budgetary considerations following the ranking of applications so that award decisions are based on available funds.
5. Recording the decisions of the jury; distributing the results to applicants and advisory committees. The letters advising the applicants of the decision include the number of applications and the total dollar amount awarded. Names of jurors will be released by staff at the request of the applicant.

6. Declined Applications

The jury can decline an application because it does not meet the artistic merit or other advertised program criteria. The applications are ranked by the jury. Applicants sometimes ask for feedback on their applications. However, the peer assessment process is not designed as a source of feedback and critique to individual artists. Instead, the jury process exists to make fair awards to professional artists.

Notes are generally not taken during a jury meeting and are not required to substantiate a jury's recommendations. Juries are asked to prepare a statement to support their selection. The jury statement is provided to other advisory committees involved in the process for their review and consideration.

If a jury elects to make comments on a case-by-case basis, these comments must be provided as representative of the entire jury. Specific comments typically may involve problems with the application, such as weak or unclear proposals, insufficient information, or the low quality of supporting materials. The jury may also recommend that unsuccessful applicants seek assistance from their peers, and staff may offer consultation on future applications.