

Women in Street Art 'WiSA' Call for Expressions of Interest



Context

Street art and public art more broadly has historically been visibly male dominated. The City of Greater Geelong (the City) is working to redress this imbalance through a program devised for women street artists. The current program builds on the success of the program we ran in 2022. The WISA Program aims to foster, support and build a collection of purposeful street art by women from a diversity of backgrounds and focuses on public art commissions by women artists and also representing women in the subject of the artworks. This program aligns with our public art program which aims to reflect the stories of diverse and under-represented groups within our City. The program will raise the profile of women artists and give voice to gendered discourse in a high profile accessible public space.

The City is the second-largest city in Victoria. Located 75 kilometres south-west of Melbourne, the municipality covers an area of 1,252 square kilometres, comprising suburban, coastal and country areas. Outside of metropolitan Melbourne, the greater Geelong municipality is the most populated region in Victoria, with an estimated resident population of 282,809. Over the past decade, the population of the municipality has experienced significant growth in the western and eastern corridors. Population is forecast to grow to 396,388 by 2041. Our Vision is that by 2047, Greater Geelong will be internationally recognised as a clever and creative city-region that is forward looking, enterprising and adaptive and cares for its people and environment. Public art plays a part in the creative recognition of this vision.

Our proximity and connection to metropolitan Melbourne, our unique CBD, townships and suburbs, our natural assets including rural and coastal areas, and our diverse economy makes us a destination location and one of the fastest growing regions in Australia. Thriving neighbourhoods, suburbs and cities need spaces for residents to engage creatively and support a lifestyle that they want. Public art has a role to play in developing cohesive communities and enhancing cultural identity.

The WISA program

This commission program is designed to provide opportunities for and advance the profile of women artists who wish to create new works within the Geelong CBD. Similarly, the program will facilitate dialogue about societal values through the lens of gendered representation. The WiSA program will build a locally, nationally and internationally significant body of works that supports women artists.

The representational imbalance of gender is also being addressed by the Victorian State government. This includes a range of initiatives designed to make places equal including the recent Victorian Women in Public Art program, gender equality targets, workshops and tools to make women and gender diverse people more visible. Our Equal State, the Victorian Government's refreshed gender equality strategy released in 2023, acknowledges that it can be hard to be what you can't see. Tellingly in Melbourne, there are more statues of animals than of women. This lack of acknowledgement of Victorian women in public life can perpetuate gendered stereotypes that the contributions of women are not worth celebrating.

We are a member of the Victorian Creative Cities Network working together to progress local, regional, and international opportunities, which provide economic, social, environmental, and cultural benefit to the Creative Cities of Victoria. With nearly a decade of recognition as Australia's only UNESCO City of Design, we stand as a beacon of creativity and innovation in Victoria and beyond. UNESCO Design Cities share several similar characteristics including cultural landscape maintained by design and the built environment.

The WISA program will build on this work and Geelong will be a city that supports women street artists with a commission announced biennially. **Geelong will be known as a place that supports women in public art.**
The expression of interest is open to all Victorian women artists.

Indicative Timeline

Stage One: Expression of Interest

The City is committed to working to redress gender imbalance and asks women artists working across a diverse range of *wall-based media* to apply through an Expression of Interest process. Artists from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, First Nations artists, LGBTQIA+ artists, artists with disability and artists from diverse backgrounds are actively encouraged to apply.

EOI Released: Friday 30 May

EOI Closes: 5.00 PM on Monday June 23

Contact awarded: June 30 2025

Stage Two: Concept Development

The site for the work will be confirmed on awarding of the contract. Concept development and design development should take place during July and August. The final design will need to be approved by the City prior to installation.

Design development: July-August 2025

Design submitted for approval: Late August 2025

Artwork Installation: September 2025

Budget

Artwork: \$30,000 (ex GST) including design and installation.

Stage One payment: \$15,000

Stage Two payment: \$15,000

Key Selection Criteria (Stage One)

- Compliant application submitted prior to the EOI deadline
- Artwork examples submitted must represent the artist's own original work and reflect artistic excellence, innovation and originality, as evidenced by:
 - Professional quality of output and mastery of skills
 - Professional methodology and techniques
 - Communicates a unique vision or perspective
- Artwork examples are judged by a Public Art panel to be appropriate to the goals of the project
- Demonstrated professional experience is adequate to meet the demands of the project
- Demonstrated ability to work productively with your client and project stakeholders

Contact

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