

Goal 1: Public Art Ecosystem

Nurture Artists, Arts Professionals and Organizations

Raleigh’s “public art ecosystem” encompasses everyone who creates, produces and supports public art: artists, curators, project managers, organizations, businesses, developers, planners, fabricators, craftspeople, critics, scholars, conservators, educators and others. While Raleigh has its own networks to nurture, its ecosystem also overlaps with that of other cities in the Research Triangle, as well as the rest of North Carolina and the Mid-Atlantic seaboard.

By supporting this ecosystem, Raleigh Arts can leverage a wide range of individual and organizational resources that can help advance the City’s broader goals for public art. This ecosystem can also support public art approaches that may not be priorities for the City’s public art resources but are important to the cultural health of the city and its communities.

Raleigh Arts can strengthen the city’s public art ecosystem by investing the resources it already has into projects, partnerships and programming that not only help achieve a particular goal but also strengthen and grow the public art ecosystem by providing access to its resources to non-traditional public art practitioners.

Strategies to Nurture Artists, Arts Professionals and Organizations

Public Art Project Approaches

The public art program strives to work with artists who come from different backgrounds, have different levels of experience in public art, and who work in a variety of styles, scales, media and artistic genres. The program should engage this broad range of artists by following a diverse range of public art project approaches. Strategies for accomplishing this include:

- 1.1 Include a diverse range of projects in the Public Art Operating Plan and Five-Year Outlook.
- 1.2 Prioritize programs, such as SEEK Raleigh, that provide opportunities for artists to create temporary, performance and ephemeral projects.
- 1.3 Consider using Per Capita funds to supplement Targeted Support that is offered by other City departments, offices and programs, if doing so would ensure broader artist participation and/or better artistic outcomes.
- 1.4 Adopt this plan’s recommended definition of “Signature Project” and a framework for identifying and resourcing signature project opportunities.
- 1.5 Create a more streamlined process for small-scale, temporary Community-Initiated projects, especially those sited on City-owned bus shelters, signal boxes, sewer ups, sidewalks and storm drains. Develop toolkits to help guide artists and community partners interested in initiating these types of projects.

Public Art Resources and Support

The public art process, from project conception to execution, can be daunting. The program should provide artists working on projects with access to resources and direct support, helping to open the door to artists with different skill levels and non-traditional public art practices. The program can also provide opportunities for the broader community of artists and arts professionals to strengthen their public art skills. Strategies for accomplishing this include:

- 1.6 Facilitate artists' access to design professionals, fabricators, contractors, and other resources they may need to successfully implement public art projects commissioned by the public art program.
- 1.7 Provide opportunities for artists new to public art by organizing projects in which Raleigh Arts coordinates or plays a stronger role in production, fabrication and installation.
- 1.8 Evaluate the design and impact of the initial Public Art Mentorship Program. Continue the program, updated as necessary based on the outcomes of the evaluation.
- 1.9 Create a Public Art Fellowship Program that places artists, curators and arts administrators as fellows within Raleigh Arts to work on public art administration, exhibits, research and planning projects.
- 1.10 Create an easily accessible online portal that provides access to public art and exhibition resources, processes, and opportunities for projects and funding.
- 1.11 Support the development of, and provide access to, resources such as grant- and proposal-writing workshops, portfolio reviews, fabricator tours and networking.

Partnerships and Networks

The public art program should work with local and regional partners to strengthen the public art ecosystem, leveraging resources and taking advantage of the knowledge and expertise that other individuals and organizations offer. Strategies for accomplishing this include:

- 1.12 Leverage partnerships to produce innovative public art projects and exhibitions, support the growth of regional public artists, and develop residencies for visiting public artists.
- 1.13 Explore partnerships and external funding for supporting capacity-building activities.
- 1.14 Support networking opportunities for regional public art administrators, artists, curators, organizations and developers.

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