**NUIT BLANCHE TORONTO**

**Independent Projects
2021 Application
Guidelines**

## Introduction

This document provides a general overview of the event as well as a step-by-step guide for completing an application to the Independent Project program of Nuit Blanche Toronto.

Please read these guidelines carefully before starting your application. Applications that do not follow the criteria of the guidelines will not be accepted.

Applications must be submitted online by **Monday, December 7, 2020** at 11:59 p.m. EST.

## Contents

## About Nuit Blanche (Toronto)

Nuit Blanche was originally conceived in Paris, France in 2002, with a mandate to bring contemporary art to large, diverse audiences in public spaces. In 2006, the City of Paris invited the City of Toronto to join an assembly of European cities producing similar art and cultural events, and Toronto became the first North American city to develop a similar program.

Nuit Blanche Toronto is a free, 12-hour contemporary art event, produced by the City of Toronto. Its mandate is to connect contemporary art to the broadest possible publics and to create opportunities for audiences to explore and engage with contemporary art in public space.

2021 marks the 16th edition of the Nuit Blanche and includes a major shift in the curatorial vision of the event. For the first time Nuit Blanche will have an Artistic Director who will provide a complete curatorial overview of all programming elements and one cohesive theme that encompasses the entire event. Programming will once again take place in neighbourhoods across the city, including Scarborough, Don Mills, Bloor-Yorkville, Downtown, West Queen West, Sterling Road, with new exhibition hubs in North York, South-Etobicoke, and a virtual space.

## 2020 / 2021 Theme: *The Space Between Us*

People are the heart of their communities and this year's curatorial theme will focus on the connections across urban, polar and pacific landscapes revealing the space between us as a potential site for sharing knowledges. The global crisis of displacing people brings communities together to stand up for humanity and support each other. Connecting with different communities and nations – to build new spaces and families, shifting their relationships to each other and to place. It reminds us of our willingness to share knowledges when our future is grounded in building bridges between cultures, communities, and the environment. To transform the city by telling stories about our connection to place.

All Independent Project applicants are encouraged to address and integrate the 2020 / 2021 theme in their project descriptions in their application. The City of Toronto and the Selection Committees will adjudicate all applications through the lens of this vision.

# Project Categories

The artistic program of Nuit Blanche Toronto consists of 3 categories of contemporary art projects, two of which accept applications from artists - Open Call Projects and Independent Projects.

**Exhibition Projects:**

Exhibition Projects are **invitation-only**, selected by the Nuit Blanche Toronto Artistic Director, in consultation with the City of Toronto. These artworks are commissioned or remounted specifically for Nuit Blanche Toronto as part of the curatorial theme.

**Open Call Projects:**

Open Call Projects are **selected by the Nuit Blanche Artistic Director through an open call application process**. These projects are funded and produced by the City of Toronto for up to $11,000. Proposals should respond to the curatorial theme. The Open Call application is available closed December 7, 2020.

**Independent Projects:**

Independent Projects are **self-produced** partners of the event, and can be proposed by Toronto-based artists, collectives, galleries, cultural and educational institutions, neighbourhood organizations, among others, and can be mounted throughout the city.

There are **two** streams of Independent Projects:

**Independent Projects: General** - self-produced projects sited in neighbourhoods all over the city in traditional and non-traditional spaces - public realm, parks, galleries, storefronts, office towers, streets, sidewalks, etc.

The application for the general stream is available here.

**Independent Projects: *Animating Toronto Streets* granting program** - self-produced projects exclusively located in right of way - streets closures, sidewalks, bridges, etc. These projects are funded by the Toronto Arts Council. The application deadline has passed. Program details are available through the TAC website and online portal.

# Benefits of Participation

Independent Projects are partners of Nuit Blanche Toronto, contributing programming that transforms the city overnight through contemporary art. As such, all Independent Projects will receive:

**Engagement with Audiences:** Participation in Nuit Blanche Toronto is an opportunity to reach an exceptionally wide range of audiences for contemporary art. Depending on your project location, foot traffic can range from several hundred to tens of thousands of people.

**Marketing:** Independent Projects benefit from an umbrella marketing campaign to promote the overall event, which includes media partnerships and an integrated advertising campaign (outdoor, print, online, radio, and television). Independent Projects are included on the event's official website and printed map, and receive official Nuit Blanche Toronto project signage for the event.

**Production Consultation:** Independent Projects receive guidance on logistics, permits and processes related to executing their project for the event.

**Insurance:** All participating partners are covered by the City of Toronto's general liability insurance and many of the permit costs associated with producing an event on City of Toronto property are often waived.

**Venue Support:** Independent Projects receive assistance with locating an appropriate venue for their project (as needed).

**Funding Opportunities:** All selected Independent Projects receive an honorarium of $1,500; and Independent Projects sited in the public Right of Way are eligible for up to $20,000 through the TAC - *Animating Toronto Streets* granting program (granting information can be found on the TAC website [here](#)).

# Applying to Nuit Blanche Toronto

Applications for Exhibition Projects are not accepted.

Artists may apply as both an Independent Project and an Open Call Project (with the same project OR with a different project), but separate applications must be submitted for each category, and are reviewed through different selection processes. However, only one project from each artist can be accepted. If a project is chosen as an Open Call Project, it will be removed from consideration as an Independent Project upon confirmation with the artist.

Open Call Project applicants will be notified of the results of their application by **Tuesday, January 8, 2021**. Applicants are encouraged to consider submitting an Independent Project application at the same time they submit their Open Call Project application so they may be considered if not selected for an Open Call Project.

# Independent Projects Eligibility Requirements

**Please read the following guidelines carefully to determine both applicant and project eligibility before submitting an application to this program.**

Nuit Blanche Toronto invites proposals from Toronto-based artists, collectives, galleries, organizations, educational institutions, neighbourhood groups, and BIAs to partner with the event as part of the Independent Projects program.

To be considered for inclusion in the program, all proposed projects must:

1. **Be able to stay open all night:** Projects *MUST* be open for the entire 12-hour period (from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m.). Projects that close early undermine the "all-night" mandate of the event and will not be eligible to participate in future events.

2. **Be free:** Projects must be free of charge to the public. Cover charge and entry fees to project premises are not permitted.

3. **Be self-funded:** *All funding related to the project must be secured by the applicant in advance of the event.* Successful applicants will receive a $1,500 honorarium to offset costs related to producing their project, such as artist fees, equipment rentals, and staffing.

4. **Take place in Toronto:** All projects must be located within the city of Toronto. It is advisable that when seeking and selecting a venue you take into account neighbourhood context, resident and business communities, traffic and navigation, and how your project will fit into, engage with, or activate your venue and its surroundings.

5. **Be accessible.** This means that venues limited to patrons over the age of 19 are NOT acceptable, and that venues should be AODA compliant. Information on the AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act) can be found [here](#), and further resources on accessibility in arts and culture spaces can be found [here](#).

6. Be produced by a Toronto-based professional artist: All projects must have at least one lead artist/curator who is based in Toronto, and at least one professional artist or arts organization associated with the project.
    - A professional artist is defined as someone who has developed their skills through training and/or practice; is recognized as such by artists working in the same field; actively practices their art; seeks payment for their work; is not currently enrolled in an undergraduate program; and has a history of two or more years of public presentation or exhibition of their work.
    - Priority consideration will be given to artists who have presented public art programs previously and/or those who demonstrate proven ability to plan and execute a project of this scope.
    - A collective is defined as a group of two or more artists working together under a group name, either on a single project (ad hoc) or on an ongoing basis. For collectives of two artists, both must be City of Toronto residents. For collectives of more than two artists, the majority of members must be City of Toronto residents.
    - Grant recipients must have a Social Insurance Number, or if an organization, an HST #

**The following are <u>not</u> eligible to apply to this program:**
- Undergraduate students.
- Commercial businesses and for-profit organizations.

**Consideration for the Independent Projects Program**

Applicants who are unsuccessful in receiving funding through the TAC Animating Toronto Streets grant program may be considered for the Independent Projects stream. A separate application must be submitted to be considered for this program.

# Assessment Criteria

The Nuit Blanche Artistic Director and a committee comprised of City of Toronto staff and advisors will base their selections on the following criteria:

**Relation to Contemporary Visual Art Practice:** Nuit Blanche Toronto is unique because it is a large-scale, public event rooted in contemporary art. While artists' concepts can be executed in any discipline, proposals should have a strong visual component. For our purposes contemporary visual art practice is generally considered that of artists currently practicing in our globally influenced, culturally diverse, and technologically advancing world. No topic, medium, process, intention, or aesthetic principles are off limits; contemporary art as a whole is often distinguished by the lack of a uniform, organizing principle, ideology, or 'ism.' It is informed by and part of cultural dialogue that concerns larger contextual frameworks such as personal and cultural identity, family, community, and nationality.

**Artistic Merit, Production quality, and Originality:** All applications must present a professional, high-quality, original proposal that reflects the scale and spirit of Nuit Blanche Toronto. Repeat projects from previous years are not eligible.

**Audience Engagement:** Applications should show consideration for how audiences will experience the proposed work. How might large audiences access the work during peak times? How will you ensure consistency of audience experience across the full 12 hours of the event? If audience or visitor interaction is integral to your project, how will you facilitate this?

**Feasibility:** Applications should demonstrate the ability of the applicant to carry out the project as outlined including the financial viability of the project (which accommodates payment of artist fees); and a plan that addresses security and staffing/volunteer needs, production and technical requirements, and any other logistical details related to developing and presenting your project.

**Project Contributors:** The CV, biography and/or history of participating artists, curators and arts organizations will be considered. The history of applicants who have presented works at Nuit Blanche Toronto in previous years will be taken into consideration.

**Relevance to Theme:** Proposals that most effectively, critically, and originally address the 2020 / 2021 theme *The Space Between Us* will be given priority*.*

# Selection and Notification Process

All Independent Project applicants will receive an email confirming receipt of their application within an hour of submission. If you do not receive this email, your application has **not** been received. Please follow up with the Independent Projects Coordinator.

All applications for the Independent Project Program **are reviewed by a committee** composed of the Artistic Director, in consultation with the City Cultural Events staff. Final selection is made by the Artistic Director.

**Accepted projects** will receive a notification from the City of Toronto.

Certain projects may be accepted contingent on the resolution of minor factors. In this case, the artists/producers will be notified of this contingent acceptance, and will be engaged to resolve these factors.

Projects that have not been accepted will be notified formally by email. Given the large number of applications received each year, staff capacity for feedback on unsuccessful applications may be limited.

All applicants to the Independent Project program will be notified of the results by email **by 5:00 p.m. EST on March 1, 2021.**

# Project Considerations and Scope for Self-Produced Projects

Independent Project producers are responsible for all costs associated with their project including, but not limited to, artist and curator fees, event staff, production/technical equipment, materials for creation, and logistical concerns such as security, barricades and/or power distribution.

All projects must be created and executed in strict compliance with the requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety Act and all other applicable legislation.

In the assessment of your project, the City of Toronto may identify City departments or external regulating agencies that require further approval for the safe and legal execution of your project. These departments and agencies may include, but are not limited to, Toronto Police Services, Toronto Fire Services, Public Health and/or the Electrical Safety Authority.

In all cases, it is the sole responsibility of the Independent Project producer to ensure they have the appropriate permissions and/or permits in place for the build and execution of their project. City Cultural Events staff will provide guidance through required permit processes as needed.

# Additional Funding, Donations and Grants

Participants in Nuit Blanche Toronto who wish to solicit their own funding support or corporate donations must obtain approval from the City of Toronto before securing funds. The City of Toronto secures overall corporate sponsorships to fund Nuit Blanche Toronto and it is necessary for us to ensure that there are no conflicts with our sponsors. Please note, Nuit Blanche Toronto is not able to credit additional project donors or funding partners on the official event collateral.

Participating artists are encouraged to apply for grants and public funding, but are advised to secure all necessary funding by **May 21, 2021**, at the very latest.

# Completing Your Application

Applications must be submitted online **on Monday December 7, 2021 by 11:59 p.m.**

You can pause and return to the online application as many as you need to either by closing the browser window or by clicking on the Pause link at the bottom of each page. Answers are saved automatically when you click the Next button so it is best to pause immediately at the beginning of a new page. When you open the application link again, you are automatically brought back to the last page you were filling out. Applicants can also use the Pause link on the bottom of each the survey page.

We recommend that you prepare your answers in advance of starting the application process. There are strict character limits for some sections.

# Application Form Details

### Application Terms

Review the text and check the box to confirm you understand the terms.

### Eligibility

Please refer to the criteria on page 5 of this document t to ensure you are eligible for the program before proceeding.

### Project Information

All sections marked with an asterisk (*) are required.

### Name of Artist, Collective, or Organization:

If your artist or collective name is different from your legal name or the name to which payments and documents should be issues, please indicate both here.

**Brief Project Summary** (maximum 200 characters including spaces and punctuation – approx. 25 words)

Use this section to provide a short, functional description of your project, strictly adhering to the character counts listed above. Treat this description as an elevator pitch for your project, focusing on the critical details.

An example of a Brief Project Summary is:
> *"Infinity Mirrors" is an exhibition of paintings, sculptures, and immersive installations by Yayoi Kusama, in which audiences can explore endless landscapes that subvert time and space.*

## Project Description

Use this section to provide a detailed description of your project, focusing on four key areas:

**Concept** (~ approx. 300 words / max 2000 characters including spaces and punctuation)
This is the "what" of your proposal.
- what ideas are motivating this project?
- what are the aesthetic and/or conceptual details of the proposal?
- how does the project reflect the theme The Space Between Us?

**Logistical / Technical** (150 words / max 1000 characters)
This is the "how" of your proposal.
- are there elements that require fabrication or building
- do you need a venue contract, building permit, park permit?
- are there video, audio or lighting equipment exposed to the elements?

**Workplan** (~150 words / max 1000 characters)
- describe what you need to adequately install and execute the project for 12 hrs
- consider staffing, install and removal planning, breaks for performers

**Anticipated Audience Experience** (~ 100 words / max 750 characters)
- if you have goals for a specific type of audience engagement, list them here
- consider how audiences will access your piece

**Marketing / Interpretation / Community Engagement** (~ 150 words / max 1000 characters)
- describe your marketing and outreach plan (over and above the Nuit Blanche event campaign) and any partnerships that will help you draw an audience.
- describe the methods you will use to provide interpretation of the work to audiences (i.e.: artist talks or tours, didactic, audio interpretation, etc.).

We strongly recommend you review the section *Assessment Criteria* on page 7 of this document before creating your description.

Writing tips:
- Be clear, articulate and concise in your descriptions
- Have a friend or colleague who is unfamiliar with this work review the description to ensure readability, clarity, and completeness.

## Project Contributors

Please list **ALL** participating artists, collectives or organizations associated with your project. You will be asked to submit an artist or organizational biography that highlights your professional achievements and history of contemporary art practice.

**Biography or History of Collective/Organization** (~approx. 250 words / max 1500 characters)

## Geography and Location Details

**Applicants are responsible for securing their own venue**. You will be asked to describe your confirmed or prospective venue/location in more detail in this section.

While it is not necessary to have a confirmed venue in order to apply, site specificity is important. If you have a venue or location please include the reason you have selected it for your project. You **must** contact a venue before listing them on your application. If your project is accepted you will be required to supply us with a copy of your venue agreement, unless the venue is also the applicant.

If you do not have a venue, we can assist you in finding a suitable location for your project, pending availability, upon acceptance into the program. Site specificity is a primary consideration so please describe the kind of location you are seeking (for example: a park, alleyway, courtyard, storefront, etc.), as well as the reason you feel it best suits your project. Your project should be sited in one of the nine key neighbourhoods outlined below. Projects may also take place in other areas of the City. If your project site is in a neighbourhood other than those included here, please contact City staff for details on how to address in the application.

Projects that require the use of public space such as a park or road are responsible for securing their own permits. We will assist you with this process. The costs associated with permits when producing a project on City of Toronto property are often waived for Nuit Blanche, but this cannot be guaranteed.

    **Neighbourhood Descriptions:**

- **Downtown**: N/S boundaries are College St & Front St; E/W boundaries are Jarvis St & Bathurst St
- **Danforth East:** Danforth Ave between Greenwood and Coxwell.
- **Scarborough Centre**: areas surrounding and connecting Scarborough Town Centre and the Scarborough Civic Centre
- **Don Mills:** areas surrounding and connecting the Aga Khan Museum and Ismaili Centre Toronto with the Ontario Science Centre
- **North York**
- **Bloor-Yorkville:** areas running north, south and along Bloor Street, between Ossington Avenue and Sherbourne St
- **Sterling Road:** running N/S between Bloor St W and Dundas St W
- **West Queen West**: between Bathurst St and Dufferin St
- **South Etobicoke**: (Lakeshore & Kipling)
- **Online**: a web based project. This could include augmented reality, virtual reality, video, sound etc.
- **Other:** if you are proposing a project for a neighbourhood other than what is listed here, please check this box and describe the area(s)

**Budget**

Proposed budgets must reflect **all** potential artistic and production costs associated with producing the project, such as artist fees, staffing, equipment, fabrication, crowd control mechanisms, permits, and venue rental, along with **all** confirmed and projected sources of revenue.

Please list the $1,500 honorarium as confirmed revenue. While other sources of funding are not a requirement, the financial viability assessment criteria considers additional and confirmed revenues as an asset. Include all confirmed and projected sources of revenue. Total revenues **must** balance with total expenses.

If you list public sources of funding from such organizations as the Toronto Arts Council, Ontario Arts Council, or Canada Council for the Arts in your revenue budget, you will be asked to describe which specific funding programs you have or plan to apply to. Similarly, if you have listed funding partners, you will be asked to list all prospective and confirmed funders, and whether their contributions are cash or in-kind.

Note: please do not include revenue from the TAC *Animating Toronto Streets* granting program here. Recipients of an ATS grant will not be considered for this stream of the Independent Project program

**Support Materials**

Audio-visual support material is essential to the assessment process and is a requirement. The material submitted must demonstrate the applicant's ability to carry out the project and therefore must be representative of the work that will be presented.

Still images and audio recordings may be uploaded to the application. Up to 5 files may be submitted, with a maximum file size of 5 MB per file. Files are accepted in the following formats:

- Still Images – jpeg, jpg, pdf
- Audio – MP3, MP4, WAV, WMA

Video support material must be submitted by providing a link to an external website where your work has already been uploaded, such as Vimeo, YouTube, your personal website, etc.

**Important**: if you are linking to files through a file sharing program such as Dropbox, please ensure your link does not expire for at least 6 weeks after the application deadline, and that it does not require special permissions (i.e. a password) to access and download a file. For audio/video files that are larger than 5MB, we recommend hosting the materials on a website where we can review directly rather than download, such as YouTube, Vimeo or Soundcloud.

Complete this table with the information that corresponds to your support material files. This should include:

- title of work
- date of completion
- medium/ media
- dimensions,
- image credit line
- if the work has been shown previously

### Declaration

You will be asked to declare that the application is reflective of your original artistic vision and that all information is true and correct to the best of your knowledge.
Click 'Submit Application' to finish the application process. If you do not receive a confirmation email within an hour of submitting, please contact the Independent Projects Program Coordinator at the email address below.

# Contact

### Independent Projects

Rachel Fender
Programming Supervisor
City Cultural Events, City of Toronto
Rachel.Fender@toronto.ca
416-395-6891