

Introduction

This document is a general overview of the event and the application process, as well as a step-by-step guide for completing an application to the Open Call 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 **Sunday, March 5, 2023 at 11:59 p.m. EST.**

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About Nuit Blanche Toronto

Nuit Blanche Toronto is a free, 12-hour event; a celebration of contemporary art, produced by the City of Toronto in collaboration with Toronto's arts community. Its mandate is to connect contemporary art to the broadest possible audience; to inspire dialogue, transform public space and to create opportunities for the public to explore and engage with contemporary art.

With its inaugural event held in 2006, Nuit Blanche Toronto has a 16-year history of welcoming audiences to the streets of Toronto to experience an all-night, ephemeral, contemporary art event. From sunset to sunrise, city spaces and neighbourhoods are transformed into temporary exhibition areas populated by compelling new and remounted artworks. Often utilizing unusual or hidden spaces, the city proper becomes a site of contemporary art and facilitates a journey of delight, connection and discovery. The everyday is suspended as the city's landscape is transformed through a variety of artistic experiences. Cultural institutions, museums, galleries and artist-run centres participating open their doors and offer free access to their spaces.

2023 marks the 17th edition of the event and includes multiple exhibitions curated by local curators responding to the event-wide theme Breaking Ground. Selected curators will create their own unique curatorial statements and exhibition titles. We are also inviting our Open Call, Independent Project and Major Institutional partners to respond to the theme in their projects in order to create a connective thread of experience for audiences throughout the event.

Programming will once again take place in neighbourhoods across the city. Open Call artists can propose for specific locations within Exhibition Areas. For 2023 this includes Etobicoke, Downtown, Scarborough areas.

On Saturday, September 23rd, 7 p.m. to Sunday, September 24, 7 a.m. the city will be transformed through contemporary art. This is an exciting opportunity to celebrate and showcase Toronto's arts community and the City's commitment to contemporary art, and create installations geared at engaging both uninitiated and devoted art lovers from Toronto and beyond.

Project Categories

Nuit Blanche Toronto is made up of three categories of projects, two of which accept applications from artists: Open Call Projects and Independent Projects.

Exhibition Projects:

Exhibition Projects are selected by exhibition Curators, by invitation only, in consultation with the City of Toronto. These artworks are new commissions or remounted projects selected specifically for Nuit Blanche.

Open Call Projects:

Open Call Projects are selected by Nuit Blanche's Curators from submissions through an open call application. These projects are funded and produced by the City of Toronto with a budget of up to \$11,000. Artist-led proposals should respond to the theme of the event and will be added in one of the exhibition areas outlined in the guidelines. This year, up to six projects may be selected. International and Canadian artists are invited to apply.

Independent Projects:

Independent Projects are self-produced partners of the event, and can include Toronto-based artists, collectives, educational institutions, neighbourhood groups and more. Applications are reviewed by the Curators in consultation with City Cultural Events representatives of City of Toronto. Projects can be located throughout the City of Toronto.

Applying to Nuit Blanche Toronto

Artists may apply as both an Open Call and an Independent Project (with the same project OR with a different project).

Separate applications must be submitted for each category. Open Call applications and Independent Projects are reviewed by a different selection process, which will not be influenced by the other. However, only one project from an artist can be accepted.

If a project is chosen as an Open Call Project, it will be removed from consideration as an Independent Project.

You will be informed if your Open Call application has been accepted or declined by **Friday, March 17, 2023**. If your Open Call application is unsuccessful you can still be considered as an Independent Project. However, to be considered you must apply to both programs separately within their application window.

Applicant Eligibility

Projects selected through the Open Call process should adhere and respond to the Nuit Blanche event mandate: **to create a contemporary artwork in public space that engages the broadest audience through artistic excellence.** All concept proposals must meet the criteria outlined below and will be reviewed and assessed by the Curator/s and representatives of the City of Toronto with final selections made by the Curator/s.

To apply to become an Open Call Project, you must meet all the following criteria:

- You are a practicing visual artist or collective. Artists and collectives can be based anywhere, however, we cannot assist visiting artists with their travel expenses. All costs must be accounted for in the project budget.
- You agree to create a site-specific project in public space, which responds to the 2023 theme.
- Your concept proposal and the resulting artwork must be a work of contemporary visual art.
- If your primary artistic discipline is not contemporary visual art, please contextualize and describe your practice and how the end resulting artwork would reflect the artistic discipline.
- You will offer all-night access to your project that is free of charge to the public during the event, from 7 p.m. on September 23 to 7 a.m. September 24, 2023.
- You are willing to make the commitment required (personnel, financial and otherwise) in order to achieve the project.
- Your project expenses should fall within the allocated inclusive budget of no more than \$10,000.00 CAD, including supplies, staffing, artistic and production-related expenses, plus a \$1,000.00 CAD artist honorarium. The City of Toronto may not be able to support projects exceeding the scale and scope of the allocated creation / production budget.
- Feel free to seek additional financial support through grants to enhance your project. However, your project cannot rely on this funding in order to be successful. A scaled plan to address reduced budget is recommended. While you may seek additional funding; approval of your potential funding partners is required from City of Toronto City Cultural Events staff no later than May 31, 2023.
- Your project must be installed in a safe manner, and abide by all City of Toronto by-laws, laws, and safety standards, which will be assessed and evaluated in consultation with the City of Toronto staff (for example: excessive noise can be a violation, all electrical devices must meet code, fabrics must be fire-proofed, etc.).
- All projects must be open for the entire 12-hour period (from sunset to sunrise). Please consider carefully if you are able to undertake this all-night commitment before submitting your application. Projects that close early do not meet the "all night" mandate of the event.
- If the project is virtual – it must be free to access, not age restricted and accessible to the majority of attendees i.e., not require use of uncommon technologies or platforms.

Areas of Assessment

Projects will be assessed by the Curator/s and City of Toronto based on the following criteria:

1. Artistic merit of your project proposal and supporting material.
2. Fulfillment of the mandate of Nuit Blanche Toronto: to create a contemporary artwork in public space that engages the broadest audience through artistic excellence.
3. Strong aesthetic, conceptual elements, demonstration of artistic innovation, interpretation and integration of contemporary art in the specific context of the curatorial thesis, and potential sites.
4. The creation, production and presentation history of the applicant.
5. Demonstration that the project responds to the overall event theme Breaking Ground.
6. The feasibility of the project, including a realistic budget and project delivery schedule.
7. A previously demonstrated ability, or appropriate project plan to execute a project of this scope and to work collaboratively with an existing project team including: City of Toronto staff; the Curator/s; project partners; venues; manufacturing, technical, and installation contractors engaged to realize a finished temporary public artwork. Not all applicants will have had this previous opportunity so please highlight any comparable experiences.
8. Durability and sustainability of the artwork, including its ability to withstand large audiences and inclement weather (rain, high winds, etc.).

Theme, Geography and Curators

Nuit Blanche 2023 Theme: Breaking Ground

Breaking Ground speaks to a multiplicity of themes and ideas centred around the natural world as well as being on the vanguard of change and innovation. Defined as the preparation for building or planting, implications of climate change, construction and development of the city's urban landscape, the impacts on communities, our collective responsibilities around land and stewardship comes to mind.

These all begs us to pause and question:

- How do we respond to calls-to-action to centre care and community above all?
- How do we navigate our relationships to one and other and our natural and built environments in an ever-changing city?
- How do we unite to innovate upon the systems of progression and dismantle those of oppression?

For Nuit Blanche Toronto 2023, at its core, we seek to uncover and highlight artists, creatives and curators whose ground-breaking practices challenge the status quo through media, form or content, transform public spaces, and inspire us to see and experience Toronto in new and meaningful ways.

Geography: These exhibitions will bring together the three areas of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) by connecting communities. Artists are also encouraged to consider use of the virtual realm.

Curators: We are currently in the process of selecting the 2023 curators and exhibition proposals.

Benefits of Participation

Open Call Projects receive:

1. An artist honorarium of \$1,000.00 CAD.
2. Financial production support from \$8,000.00 - \$10,000.00 CAD based on needs and assessment to produce and exhibit the work. Please note: the project budget and expenditures must be pre-approved by City of Toronto.
3. Programming and Production support from the City of Toronto including, but not limited to:
 - a) Artistic consultation and curatorial guidance on all elements of project design, budgets and execution from the Curator(s) and the City of Toronto.
 - b) Securing access to venues when possible.
 - c) Technical consultation including assistance with city permits and other permissions (e.g. access to public space, health & safety, when possible).
 - d) Assistance with sourcing technical equipment where required.
 - e) Access to power, where possible during the event. Please note that power is limited at venue locations – usually one or two, 15 Amp, 120-volt circuits maximum.
 - f) Based on your project's needs, staff and volunteer support will be included in the facilitation of your project during the night of the event.

Open Call Projects will be integrated into the geographic exhibition areas for which they are selected. The Open Call projects are included in all major umbrella marketing campaigns to promote the overall event, driving attention to the event's print materials and website. The campaign will include media partnerships, print collateral, an integrated advertising campaign (outdoor, print, online, radio and television), and a thorough media relations and social media plan intended to garner local and international attention.

Completing Your Application

Applications must be submitted [online](#) on **Sunday, March 5, 2023 by 11:59 p.m. EST.**

IMPORTANT:

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.

Please read thoroughly through the details below, and prepare any section marked with a **red asterisk (*)** in advance of starting the online application process.

Application Form Details

1. APPLICATION TERMS

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

2. PROJECT INFORMATION

You must complete each field to proceed:

Name of Artist, Collective, or Organization:

Title of Project:

*** Brief Project Summary (~ 25 words including spaces and punctuation)**

Use this section to provide a short, functional description of your project, adhering to strict 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.*

3. 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)

- what ideas are motivating this project?
- what are the aesthetic and/or conceptual details of the proposal?
- how does the project reflect the theme Breaking Ground?

***Logistical / Technical** (approx. 150 words / max 1000 characters)

- are there elements that require fabrication or building?
- do you need a venue, building permit, park permit?
- are there video, audio or lighting equipment exposed to the elements and require

***Workplan** (approx. 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** (~ approx. 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

We strongly recommend you review the *Areas of Assessment* section on page 5 of this document before creating your description.

4. 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 (or short CV) that highlights your professional achievements and history of contemporary art practice.

Name of Artist, Collective, or Organization:

Currently based/lives/works in:

Website (if applicable):

***Biography or Condensed CV** (~ approx. 250 words / max 1,500 characters including spaces/punctuation words)

5. GEOGRAPHY AND LOCATION DETAILS

Nuit Blanche 2023 will bring together the neighbourhoods of the GTA. Artists are encouraged to consider the use of virtual realm as venue and how this connects to the theme.

A confirmed venue is not required to apply but site specificity is important. Please describe the type of location you are seeking (for example: a park, alleyway, courtyard, storefront, etc.) as well as the reason behind your site/venue choice. Information on the choice of neighbourhood should also be included if important to the project.

6. *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, permits, staffing, and venue rental. We do not ask you for specifics on revenue but if you anticipate additional funding either through public grants or sponsorship, please outline those details.

Please note that artists participating in Nuit Blanche Toronto who wish to solicit their own funding and/or donations must obtain approval from the City of Toronto before securing funds by May 31, 2023. Participating artists are encouraged to apply for other grants but are advised not to rely on receiving them to fulfill their project.

7. SUPPORT MATERIALS

Audio-visual support material is essential to the assessment process. 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. The maximum file size is 5 MB per file and files are accepted in the following formats:

- Still Images – jpeg, jpg
- 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.

Printed support material can be uploaded in PDF format.

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 six (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 5 MB, we recommend hosting the materials on a website where we can review directly rather than download, such as YouTube, Vimeo or Soundcloud.

***Support Materials File Name & Short Description:**

Name your files by artist last name or collective / organization name along with a number and the file extension name. We will ask you to fill in a short description (max 200 characters including spaces and punctuation – approximately 30 words). See sample chart below:

	Audio, Video or Image File Name	Description (max. 200 characters)	Link (if applicable)
1	Kusama_01.jpg	Installation view of “Obliteration Room” (2018) at beginning of exhibition	N/A
2	Kusama_02.jpg	Installation view of “Obliteration Room” (2018) at end of exhibition	N/A
3	Kusama_03.mp4	Time-lapse video of “Obliteration Room” (2018) during exhibition; 4 minutes	N/A
4	Kusama_04.m4a	Audio clip of audience member in “Obliteration Room” (2018); 1.5 minutes	N/A
5	Kusama_05.pdf	Rendering of proposed project for Nuit Blanche Toronto	N/A

8. PRIMARY CONTACT INFORMATION

Please list who will be the primary point of contact between the City of Toronto and you as the artist, collective, or organization. This contact will be notified of receipt of this application, as well as application results.

9. EMAIL UPDATES

In this section, you can opt in to receive future email communications regarding Nuit Blanche Toronto. We would also like to know how you found out about this call for submissions.

10. 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.

Once you click this, hit ‘Finish’ to submit your application.

You can expect an automated confirmation email of receipt within 1 hour of submission. Check your email inbox (or junk folder), and if you have not received this email within the timeframe, please contact Rachel Fender at the email address below.

Application Deadline

Applications must be submitted [online](#) on **Sunday, March 5, 2023 by 11:59 p.m. EST.**

If you have questions about the Open Call Program, please call or email:

Rachel Fender
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City Cultural Events, City of Toronto
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