

## **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 for 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 17<sup>th</sup> 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. Exhibition Areas include Etobicoke, Downtown and Scarborough. Independent Project artists can propose for specific locations including but not limited to the exhibition areas as well as Bloor-Yorkville, Danforth-East, Downtown, Don Mills, North York, Scarborough, Etobicoke (Lakeshore & Kipling), Sterling Road, West Queen West and Online (for a virtual project that takes place in the virtual realm).

On Saturday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 7 p.m. to Sunday, September 24<sup>th</sup>, 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. Artist-led proposals should respond to the theme of the event and will be added in one of the key neighbourhoods outlined in the guidelines. This year, up to six projects may be selected. International and Canadian artists are invited to apply. These projects are funded and produced by the City of Toronto with a budget of up to \$11,000.

### **Independent Projects:**

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

## **Applying to Nuit Blanche Toronto**

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

Separate applications must be submitted for each category. Open Call Project applications and Independent Project applications 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 Independent Project application has been accepted or declined by **Friday, March 17, 2023**. 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.

## **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 another as well as 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.

## **Benefits of Participation**

Independent Projects are partners in 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:** All selected Independent Projects receive an honorarium of \$1,500.

## **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, non-profit 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:

**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 do not fulfil the "all-night" mandate of the event.

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

**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.

**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.

**Be accessible:** Venues and projects 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](#). Venues limited to patrons over the age of 19 are not accessible to all audiences and will not be considered.

**Be produced** by practicing artist(s) based in Toronto: All projects must have at least one lead artist/curator who is based in Toronto, and at least one professional/practicing artist or arts organization associated with the project.

- A practicing 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 within the public realm 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.

**The following are not eligible to apply to this program:**

- Undergraduate students without commensurate experience.
- Commercial businesses and for-profit organizations.

## **Assessment Criteria**

Projects will be assessed by Nuit Blanche Toronto Curators as well as a committee comprised of City of Toronto staff and representatives of the local visual arts community based 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 visual 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 creatively address the 2023 theme *Breaking Ground* will be given priority.

## **Selection and Notification Process**

All Independent Project applicants will receive an automated email confirming receipt of their application within 1 hour of submission. If you do not receive this email, your application has **not** been received. Please follow up with the Independent Projects Coordinator.

**Accepted projects** will receive an email from the City of Toronto.

All applicants to the Independent Project program will be notified of the results by email no later than **6:00 p.m. EST on March 17, 2023**.

Certain projects may be accepted contingent on the resolution of minor factors. In this case, the artists/producers will be notified of this conditional 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.

**\*\***Please note that all accepted Independent Project applicants are expected to participate in a mandatory orientation session which will take place virtually the week of **March 27-31, 2023**.

## **Project Considerations and Scope for Self-Produced Projects**

Independent Project artists / organizations 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 31, 2023**, at the very latest.

## **Completing Your Application**

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

You can pause and return to the online application as many times 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 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**

### **APPLICATION TERMS**

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

### **ELIGIBILITY**

Please refer to the criteria in this document 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 issued, 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 Breaking Ground?

**\*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 6 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 an important 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 is encouraged to be sited in one of the nine key neighbourhoods outlined below. Projects will be considered regardless of location.

Projects that require the use of public space, such as a park or road, are responsible for securing their own permits. 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 Broadview 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 and the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre
- **North York:** Mel Lastman Square and surrounding area

- **Bloor-Yorkville:** areas running north, south and along Bloor Street, between Ossington Ave 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 organizations, such 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.

### 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 5 MB, 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

**\*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

**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.

**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.

**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 Gabrielle Johnson at the email address below.

**Independent Projects Contact**

Gabrielle Johnson  
Independent Projects Coordinator  
City Cultural Events, City of Toronto  
[Gabrielle.Johnson@toronto.ca](mailto:Gabrielle.Johnson@toronto.ca) | 647-459-6844