THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

DRAFT

Art in public space for

The University of Sydney

March 2018

Campus Infrastructure and Services

"Art frees the artist who makes it and the viewer who looks at it. Art enables being visionary. Thus, this strategy starts with aspirations that are big and sometimes preposterous. Originality is important."

– Barbara Flynn, 2017

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Introduction

The University of Sydney has championed and supported a great range and diversity of art since its inception, as reflected in its collection of significant artworks in buildings and public space across the campus.

Across Sydney, significant artworks are being installed in the public domain. This provides the perfect opportunity for the University to make a renewed contribution to art and culture and at the same time demonstrate its commitment to leadership, excellence and innovation. If artists work with the University's own trusted experts and personnel, the campus will be further enlivened, attracting an audience beyond the University community and enhancing the experience for everyone.

Both permanent artworks and temporary art and cultural initiatives can be implemented on campus to great effect. The "Art in Public Space Strategy" recommends both.

Art in Sydney

Art in Sydney is developing rapidly, with many new works underway as part of the large infrastructure projects of City of Sydney and the New South Wales Government. Initiatives like the Eora Journey (2010–30) will encompass multiple new works, while private developments around the city's CBD are incorporating new commissioned works to draw fresh audiences to their revitalised spaces.

The timing could not be better for Australia's greatest university to demonstrate its creative leadership and to do something exceptional in art, connecting it with Sydney's artistic blossoming and at the same time producing something unique, respectful, exciting and long-lasting. It can be the University that provides the finest facilities to accommodate ideas that have not been trialled elsewhere in Australia.

Art in the University's vision and values

The University of Sydney has a commitment to excellence across all its activities, as expressed in the Strategic Plan 2016–20: 'to create and sustain a university in which, for the benefit of Australia and the wider world, the brightest researchers and the most promising students, whatever their social or cultural background, can thrive and realise their potential'.

To deliver this excellence, the University must attract the finest and most innovative global talent; recent research indicates that the best way to do this is to create a rich and diverse campus. Forging meaningful relationships with artists will make an important contribution to such a campus. The University's core values of courage and creativity, respect and integrity, inclusion and diversity, and openness and engagement will underpin these relationships.

The Art in Public Space Strategy

The University of Sydney's "Art in Public Space Strategy is "unashamedly aspirational". As highlighted by the Chancellor and Vice Chancellor in the foreword to the University of Sydney 2016-20 Strategic Plan, the Strategy seeks to deliver excellence by working with Australian and international artists to bring the University to the attention of the world.

The strategy represents a new and innovative approach to art. It is strategic, considered and not reactive.

It is a commitment to:
- Excellence
- Uniqueness
- Relevance and excitement
- Collegial, inclusiveness and respectful processes
- Large and diverse artist pool

In July 2017, the University commissioned Barbara Flynn (see Appendix A) to advise on the development of art strategy for the campus. This Strategy document is based on the detailed report prepared by Barbara Flynn, *Public Art Strategy for the University of Sydney: A look at the possibilities for art in the public domain campus wide* (March 2018). The formulation of the strategy was informed by extensive stakeholder consultation (detailed in Appendix B) and by The University of Sydney Strategic Plan 2016–20.

Art in Public Space Strategy – Key Principles

The "Art in Public Space Strategy" principles are informed by:
- The campus context and proximity of the campus to Redfern and its rich history of engagement with Aboriginal community
- Wingara Mura Bunga Barrabugu Strategy
- University values, aspirations and goals as set out in University of Sydney Strategic Plan 2016-20
- Gehl Architects Public Realm Strategy and Campus Design Guidelines, March 2017 (Other key reference documents are set out in Appendix C.)

Ten permanent works by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists

A key recommendation of the University's Strategy is to commission ten permanent works by ten Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists in ten primary locations on campus.

These will provide the backbone of the University's art projects, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curators maybe drawn in to guide those works. Placing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists at the centre of the strategy will:
- create permanent legacy artworks for the campus
- engage with local and national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists
- support the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curators in partnership with the broader University community
- encourage and nurture the development of female Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and curators.

Through this commitment, the University of Sydney can build on established foundations to create vibrant new creative partnerships with the local Redfern Aboriginal community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander communities Australia-wide. It is a true response to the Wingara Mura aspirations for the University, as it recognises:
- the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities who originally inhabited and nurtured the land on which the campus stands
- the importance of Redfern as the heart of urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and its ongoing contribution to the evolution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights
- the role of the campus and Aboriginal activists in the fight for recognition and rights.

Optimise the University's existing collection, facilities and institutions

The "Art in Public Space Strategy" highlights opportunities to build on the University's existing collections and partnerships including:
- siting works from the University's existing art collection
- engaging with new buildings including the Chau Chak Wing Museum
- working with the Power Institute, Sydney College of the Arts, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, School of Architecture and others
- loans from other galleries
- temporary exhibitions, studios and cultural initiatives in and on buildings awaiting demolition
- making use of interstitial spaces across the campus
- engaging with the University's other campus at western Sydney and beyond.

Range of permanent programs

The "Art in Public Space Strategy" also recommends establishing a range of other permanent artistic and cultural programs, such as:
- artist mentors as residents on campus, e.g. international artists as mentors to SCA and School of Architecture students in digital placemaking programs
- artist residencies, (including social activist artists) such as an international artist such as Theaster Gates (USA) or an Australian artist such as Jonathan Jones.

Temporary works and programs

A further recommendation is for temporary programs to be implemented campus-wide, including commissions of new temporary works of art by Australian and international artists.

Key guiding principles

Five key principles guide the art program at the University. These are as follows.

Principles	Implementing the principles
1. **Excellent** 2. **Authentic and Original** 3. **Collaborative** 4. **Connected** 5. **Placemaking focus**	- Local and international artists - Emerging, mid-career and senior artists - Permanent and temporary works - Diverse artwork types and genres - New and existing spaces and art locations

Excellent

The University's commitment to excellence and its core business of pursuing depth and meaning, should be reflected in its "Art in Public Space Strategy" delivering excellence across its partnerships and artworks.

Authentic and original

The University seeks to capitalise on the opportunity to create a new kind of offering. It aims to foster and accommodate ideas that have not been trialled elsewhere.

In that regard, a key tenet of the Strategy: 'Ten key works by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists in ten key campus locations', reflects the campus' rich heritage and context, and an emerging artist practice, in which the University can be truly innovative.

Collaborative

One significant opportunity for collaboration is between artists and researchers, reflecting the talent and vision across the University. Artists can also collaborate with one another (e.g. mentors with emerging artists) and engage in dialogue about diversity and equality.

Opportunities for collaboration within and between Faculties, including Sydney College of the Arts, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, School of Architecture, Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies, will be encouraged and facilitated.

Connected

The entire University campus can be viewed as a gallery for art and, beyond that, as part of a wider cultural precinct. This could lead to:
- creative partnerships (eg. Carriageworks - jointly commissioned works, residencies)
- collaborative works created with local educational and health partners
- a connected art "walk" between the campus and the heart of Sydney.

Focused on placemaking

Artists and art can play a role in enticing people outdoors, in groups and in collaborative settings. They also contribute to making places safe and inspiring. Recent work by Gehl Architects on the Campus Public Realm Strategy (March 2017) noted the opportunity for outdoor study areas and other activities on campus.

Seating areas and study areas can form part of an artwork, bringing people outdoors and enlivening the campus beyond its normal operating hours. An outdoor cinema could activate the campus at night and help create a safer, more diverse campus.

Artwork types and locations

Types of art

A diverse range of artists working across different genres can deliver a range of experiences, such as:
- art in architecturemarkers commemorating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history (eg. on the model of the Holocaust memorials in the City of Berlin)
- narrative works of art to bring histories alive, expressed discreetly and accessible by the public on personal devices
- relocation of existing University art collection sculptures combined with commissions of new art to give them new life
- tapestry commissions building on the University's embrace of the tradition of tapestry
- artist designed seating
- painted walls
- street art
- sound art
- performance art and busking
- digital art
- integrated with landscape design.

Other cultural programs and temporary works might include:
- a cultural tour of newly positioned artworks
- exhibitions, studios and cultural initiatives housed in and on buildings awaiting demolition
- partnerships with other public galleries and project sharing with overseas museums
- a meeting place on campus for talks and discussions related to particular artworks
- a centre for the revival of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, bringing together artists and researchers.

Artwork locations

The placement of art on campus will take into consideration:
- the character, topography and physical memory of a site
- allowing people to engage with art in a variety of ways and settings
- placing works in both prominent and 'discoverable' locations
- commissioning some works as part of new buildings and infrastructure works, integrated with the projects but still functioning as art, and located either internally or externally to the building
- choosing locations that are viable at different times of the day and the night
- choosing locations aligned with placemaking and landscaping objectives.

Placing artworks in the best locations will:
- mark primary entrances and exits to the University and create the impression of a gateway

- transform open space into well-used public space, and establish gathering places
- improve the experience of moving across campus
- mark the footbridge and other bridges
- incorporate existing gallery facilities on campus
- enhance other University Museum programs and projects in development

Process and implementation

Art review process

The review and implementation of art can be fully integrated into the University's established internal design review and design excellence processes. These processes can be aligned with the Government Architect's design excellence review (applicable to State Significant Developments), and expanded to include the evaluation of art.

It is recommended that the University establish a Campus Art Excellence Panel to advise the University and Campus Infrastructure Services (CIS). The Panel will provide input to the CIS design excellence review process. It will be a small, focused group comprising an experienced art advisor, a CIS representative and a representative of the University's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. The appointment term would be two years.

Audience and stakeholders

The development of the campus art strategy has been informed by precinct scale thinking for the collaboration area and the emerging innovation district. The audience for art at the University is large and diverse, and includes:
- students and staff
- visitors and tourists
- neighbours (i.e. community and nearby institutions)
- collaborative partners
- event and festival attendees
- authorities and government agencies
- other universities
- artists.

The CIS team will provide advice to project teams about the "Art in Public Realm Strategy" generally, and about stakeholders and specific engagement.

Identifying, selecting and commissioning artists

Key artist selection criteria are:
- excellent, innovative and original
- unique to the University of Sydney
- exciting and relevant
- timeless in artistic content and durable

Artists will be considered who are:
- based locally, nationally and internationally
- representative of generations: emerging, mid-career, and senior artists
- comfortable with the values articulated by the University of Sydney
- interested in dialogue about diversity and equality

These artists:
- may belong to special interest groups such as:
  o Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists
  o Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists who are women
  o The 200 national groups that make up Sydney including refugee groups
  o Artists interested in sustainability and in working with University staff to 'green' the campus
- will work collaboratively with one another, the architects, the landscape architects and the larger project team

- will communicate effectively with precinct stakeholders
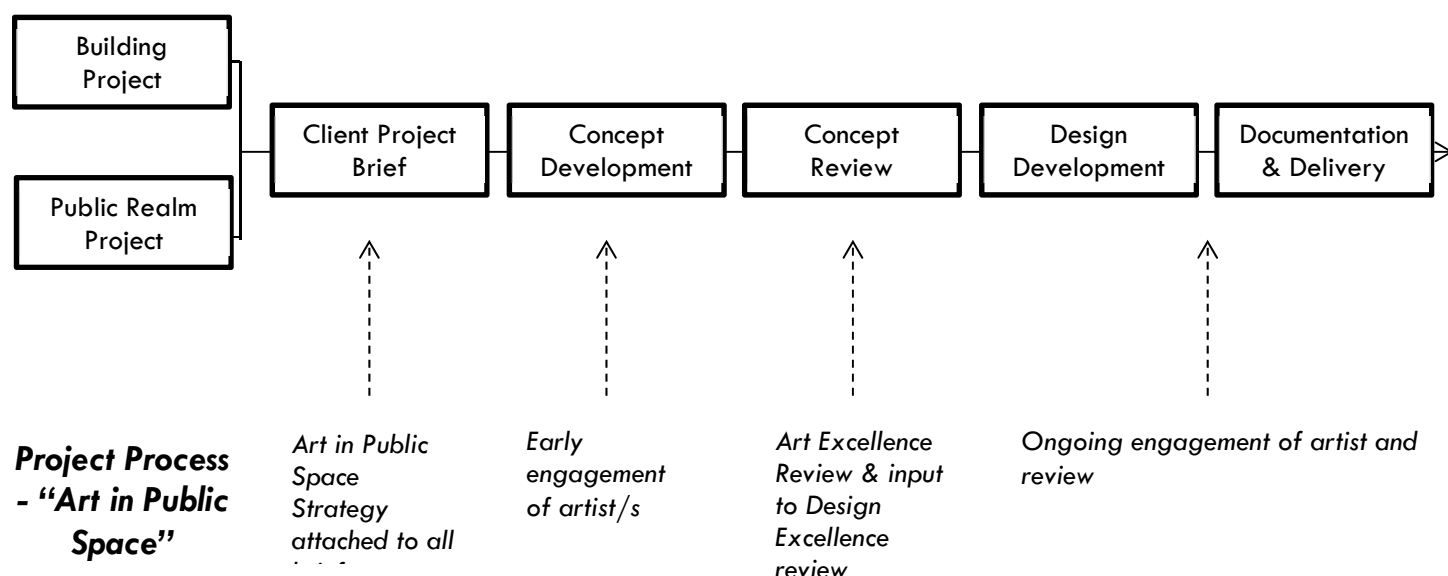- will be able to meet the allocated budget and delivery program

This Strategy identifies the following curatorial principles to select artists who can undertake projects and initiatives that:
- underscore the importance of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and culture, architecture and curatorial practice
- demonstrate a connection to place through addressing the special character of the University, and the topography and physical memory of the specific site
- get people together out of doors as often as possible
- are inclusive and enhancing of the experience of all members of the University
- reflect the talent and vision of the various creative sectors of the University
- identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curators to deliver appropriate works

Proposals for art will be reviewed as part of the campus design excellence process, overseen by the Campus Art Excellence Panel. The aim is to identify the most singular artists working today - refer to the illustrations of indicative works included as Appendix E to this document - and to engage with them early in productive and respectful relationships. Artwork submissions will be assessed based on selection criteria promoting excellence, and with reference to budgets and timeframes for buildings.

Project briefs and major project team interface

Project briefs for the public realm and for new or refurbished buildings will address art and the principles of the art strategy, whether delivered by the University or through external partnerships, as shown in the diagram below.

Project Process - "Art in Public Space"

Building Project / Public Realm Project	Client Project Brief	Concept Development	Concept Review	Design Development	Documentation & Delivery
	Art in Public Space Strategy attached to all briefs	*Early engagement of artist/s*	*Art Excellence Review & input to Design Excellence review*	*Ongoing engagement of artist and review*	

"Art in Public Space Strategy" implementation

The Campus Planning team, in conjunction with the Art Excellence Panel, will prepare an implementation strategy and program which will be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect campus priorities and emerging opportunities.

In its initial stages, it is anticipated that the Strategy will seek to:
- deliver one integrated landscape and art project in the University public domain
- work with project teams through early contractor involvement (ECI) to deliver art as part of a campus building
- create one partnership with an external stakeholder as creative partner, to deliver an art project.

Appendices

A. Credentials - Barbara Flynn

B. "Public Art Strategy for The University of Sydney: A look at possibilities for art in the public domain campus-wide"

C. University Reference Studies Documents

D. Report on Stakeholder Consultation

E. Illustrations

- Wingara Mura – Bunga Barrabugu: The University of Sydney Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Integrated Strategy (2012); Wingara Mura Design Principles (2016); and Wingara Mura Storylines (2017).
- Campus Public Realm Strategy and Campus Design Guidelines (Gehl Architects, 2017).
- Aboriginal Heritage Due Diligence Report (Godden Mackay Logan, 2013).
- University of Sydney Public Realm Priority Works (Clouston Associates, 2017, internal working document).
- Campus Public Realm Pilot Projects: Catalyst for Change (Campus Infrastructure Services, undated internal working document).

Building Project		Client Project Brief	Concept Development	Concept Review	Design Development	Documentation & Delivery
Public Realm Project						

Project Process - "Art in Public Space"

Art in Public Space Strategy attached to all   *Early engagement of artist/s*   *Art Excellence Review & input to Design Excellence review*   *Ongoing engagement of artist and review*