

Mural toolkit

What does it take to paint a mural in Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington?



Kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua Te Aro (detail) by Keri Mei Zagrobelna (Te Ati Āwa, Te Whānau ā Apanui) and Tina Rae Carter, St James Theatre

Aho Tini
2030

Absolutely Positively
Wellington City Council
Me Heke Ki Pōneke



Journeying (detail) by
Theo Arraj, Watertank on
Montgomery Ave, Karori.



Wellington has many murals across its city and suburbs. They are diverse in style and purpose and contribute to the identity of our city as a creative capital.

Murals are usually large, two-dimensional artworks painted on a wall, floor or ceiling.

The Council funds, facilitates and advocates for murals as they contribute to the cultural wellbeing of this city.

Murals acknowledge people and place, revitalise and activate public spaces, reduce graffiti and increase perceptions of safety. They provide a way to bring people together, to tell stories, and they allow artists to develop their practice and hone skills outside of usual arts spaces.

This Toolkit provides best practice guidelines about how to create a mural – from finding a site, considering its cultural heritage and seeking permission, to sourcing funding.

Murals in Wellington are informed and guided by the following strategic documents:

- **Aho Tini**, Arts, culture and creativity strategy
- **Public Art Policy**
- **Tākai Here** Partnership agreement between mana whenua and Council
- **Tūpiki Ora**, Māori strategy



Gina Kiel, toilet block mural (detail) on Medway Street, Island Bay.

Step-by-step guide to developing a mural

This is a high-level guide only (the process is not always this linear).

Step 1: Find a Site

Identify a mural site, assess its condition and if suitable to install a mural find out who owns it and ask for permission.

The site may have significance to mana whenua and/or it might be listed on Pouhere Taonga Heritage New Zealand as having heritage value. The District Plan identifies sites of significance to Māori, and buildings and objects that are heritage listed. You can access the current District Plan [here](#), noting that it's being reviewed; and the proposed District Plan [here](#). Council's City Arts team can provide more guidance if needed.

Step 2: Select an Artist

Commission an artist/group of artists to design the mural. Ensure the reason for creating a mural is clear, and those involved know what their roles and responsibilities are.

The project manager may require the mural artist to engage with a community to discuss themes of significance or the concerns and values of a particular community. Council's City Arts team can help to identify an artist.

Step 3: Seek Approval

Ensure approval for the mural design.

This will be from a project's key stakeholders (for eg mana whenua, site owners, mural sponsors, a community, etc.). Allow time and budget for any recommended changes to the mural design.

Step 4: Plan and Prepare

Complete administrative and regulatory requirements for mural painting and prepare the site.

For example, the project manager and/or artist may need to:

- compile a project budget and apply for **funding** [\[add hyperlink to funding section below\]](#)
- draft a **Health and Safety** plan (Council can provide further advice if needed).
- apply for **Corridor Access Request** (if working on the footpath/near a road)
- apply for a **Traffic Management Plan** (if traffic is impacted by mural painting)
- apply for **Public Liability Insurance** (insurance that covers an artist for any unintended personal injury or property damage they may cause. Experienced mural artists should carry a small amount of public liability insurance).
- **clean, repair and undercoat** the wall so it can accommodate a mural.

Note that murals are considered temporary public artworks and are exempt from the Resource Consent process in Wellington City.

Step 5: Install the Mural

Paint the mural or affix the artwork (on boards/banner) on site.

When the mural is being installed ensure that key stakeholders, including the surrounding community, know what's happening and when, and undertake to film or photograph the development of the mural. When install is complete, an anti-graffiti-coating can be applied to protect the artwork from graffiti.

Step 6: Celebrate the Project

Organise a blessing or an event to mark the completion of the mural.

Celebrating the completion of a mural is an important step for those involved and provides a chance to say thank you, acknowledge the artist, stakeholders, community and the achievement.

Step 7: Monitor and evaluate the mural

The project manager or assigned project owner (for example, the property owner) should monitor the mural throughout its agreed lifespan (usually up to ten years) – assess its condition once a year/every couple of years, and at the end of its agreed lifespan decide what happens to it. For example, refresh it, paint it out or extend its lifespan.

Council considers murals temporary public artworks and does not have budget to maintain them. They are subject to their environment and will weather over time. Murals typically last up to ten years, sometimes longer, sometimes not as long, depending on the site and their relevance.

The success of a mural could be evaluated and measured according to whether its purpose or objectives have been met. Mural participants and the surrounding community could be surveyed, or anecdotal information collated.



Kaiota (in progress) by Ariki Brightwell (Rongowhakaata, Raukawa, Te Arawa, Ngati Toa), Bowen Street.

Further information

Funding

Murals might be eligible for support from a Council grant. Council administers two arts-related grants:

- **Arts and Culture Fund**
- **Creative Communities Scheme**

For more information about Council funding, please see the Council funding **webpages** on our website.

We recommend seeking funding from a variety of sources, for example sponsorship from aligned businesses, crowdsourcing from an arts platform like **Boosted** and applying to other funders for support, for example local Trusts and Foundations.

Intellectual Property and Copyright

The Intellectual Property created by designing and painting a mural should remain the exclusive property of the artist. The artist as the author of the artwork can therefore assert their rights under the Copyright Act (1994). For more information about Copyright in respect of murals please see the website, **Bad Exposure**.

Note that Intellectual Property is the general term for any invention or creation that can be protected by national and international law. Copyright (and trademarking) protect some types of intellectual property.

Council Contact

Please contact the Council's City Arts team for more information about developing a mural in Wellington:

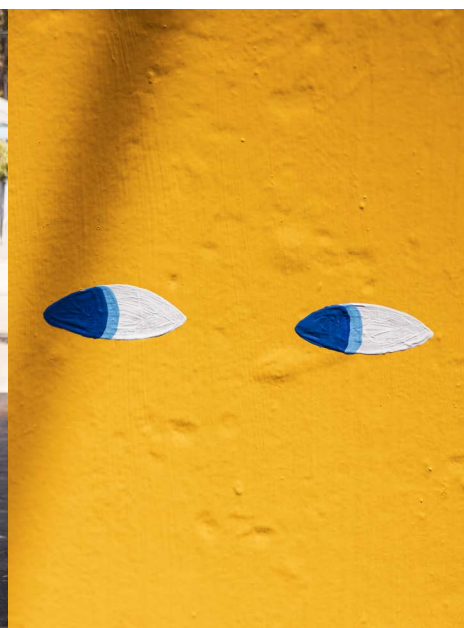
Email: arts@wcc.govt.nz

Resources

- **Artist Brief**
- **Agreement**
- **Mural Budget**
- **Guidelines - Art on Traffic Signal Boxes**



Greta Menzies, Island Bay Laneway mural, Clyde St to The Parade.



Detail from Island Bay Laneway mural.

Aho Tini
2030

Absolutely Positively
Wellington City Council
Me Heke Ki Pōneke