

Creative Director brief, Hobart Current 2025

1. Exhibition introduction and background

Hobart Current is a contemporary biennial series which launched in March 2021 with Liberty, directed by Rosie Dennis. The second program Epoch, directed by Chris Twite, ran from November 2023 to February 2024. We are now excited to be working towards the third program in the Hobart Current series which will open in November 2025 and close in April 2026.

Contemporaneity and innovation are at the heart of the project which aims to establish greater professional development and opportunities for Tasmanian artists, a priority for the collaborating organisations the City of Hobart (COH) and the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG).

Hobart Current presents the best of Tasmanian creative practice in a national context with at least 6 of the 10 chosen artists identifying as Tasmanian. Each exhibition is led by an independent Creative Director whose role is underpinned by the identified need to provide an objective, interpretive voice for local artists.

The exhibition model for Hobart Current was developed in response to extensive consultation prompted by a review of the 28 year-old City of Hobart Art Prize. The COH has reallocated the annual Art Prize funds to create Hobart Current. It is anticipated that the relationship between the Creative Director and the artists, as well as the high-profile exhibition platform, will create valuable, longer-term outcomes for Tasmanian artists.

2. Key Aims

- i) **Contemporaneity:** to embrace innovative creative practice and present new ideas in an exciting exhibition environment.
- ii) **Multiple disciplines:** the combination of Visual Art, Performance, Film, Design, and Literature are absolutely central to the new exhibition model.
- iii) **Accessibility:** the exhibition must be engaging for general museum goers as well as creative practitioners and audiences with cultural awareness. TMAG Public Program and Learning staff will work with the Creative Director to develop an engagement program for the duration of the exhibition.
- iv) **Legacy:** the model has been designed to nurture and promote the participating artists by creating greater awareness of their work.
- v) **Tasmanian talent:** the Creative Director will be asked to delve into the different regions and art forms in Tasmania to unearth local talent and position it in a national context.

3. Theme

The Creative Director will propose a theme that resonates on both a global and local scale. This might be a simple idea or something more complex, however the purpose of the theme is to bring coherence to the exhibition while also establishing a point for reflection. The theme must be accessible to a broad audience and will be a significant aspect of the Creative Director EOI process.

4. Title

The Creative Director will be asked to come up with a one word thematic title that will follow the prefix 'Hobart Current'. For example, in 2023, the title read Hobart Current: Epoch.

5. Payment

The Creative Director will be paid \$35,000 to develop and deliver the exhibition. The payment includes all costs incurred by the Creative Director during the development of the exhibition including travel, accommodation, and per diems.

6. Artists

The Creative Director will select 10 artists in consultation with the COH and TMAG. The 10 artists must be different to those who participated in previous Hobart Current programs.

Each artist will be granted \$15,000 to develop new work for the exhibition which includes the artist fee and all travel, accommodation, per diems, materials, and freight costs.

7. Tasmanian artists

A critical component of the exhibition model is to establish greater support, professional development and promotional opportunities for Tasmanian artists. To achieve this, a minimum of 6 selected artists must live in Tasmania. On the other hand, we understand the significance of exhibiting Tasmanian practice in a national context and support the inclusion of artists from around Australia and possibly from overseas.

8. Artist Expressions of Interest

Once the Creative Director and the theme for Hobart Current are confirmed, we'll seek expressions of interest from artists nationally. While this process provides all artists with the opportunity to be considered for the program, it doesn't prevent the Creative Director from selecting artists who don't submit an EOI.

9. Multiple disciplines

One of the unique aspects of the exhibition model is the inclusion of multiple disciplines. This decision was made in response to community feedback during the COH Art Prize review and a shared desire by the COH and TMAG to provide support and opportunities to the broad cultural sector. Given this, the Creative Director will have the freedom to select artists working in the fields of Visual Art, Design, Performance, Film, Music and Literature.

While there is no rigid expectation that each discipline is represented in every exhibition, the representation of several art forms is at the heart of the new exhibition model and is a required outcome. One of the challenges the Creative Director may face is working out how to exhibit non-visual works in an exciting way in the setting of the gallery or public spaces.

10. Advisory Group

The Hobart Current Advisory Group comprises senior representatives from Tasmania’s cultural institutions Contemporary Art Tasmania, Music Tasmania, Tasmania Performs, Island Magazine, Screen Tasmania, and Design Tasmania.

The role of the Advisory Group is to assist the Creative Director navigate the very best of Tasmania’s different art forms and to suggest high-calibre artists whose work may connect with the chosen theme.

11. Sites

While seven artists will exhibit in TMAG’s four Argyle Galleries (total 600 sqm, 200 linear metres), three artists will exhibit in Hobart’s public spaces. The Creative Director will select a series of relevant sites that may be influenced by the exhibition theme, in collaboration with the COH and TMAG. These sites may include open spaces such as alleyways, courtyards, parks, streets, or underground passages. The three public works will be site responsive to achieve the greatest impact and to create an immersive audience experience.

Artists can also propose alternate sites if they fit within the parameters established by COH, TMAG, and the Creative Director.

It is important that the Creative Director select artists with either previous experience working in public space or significant previous experience/interest in translating existing practice into the public realm.

12. Engagement

The Creative Director will participate in at least 5 public engagement events to promote and advocate for the exhibition throughout the course of its development and launch. Audiences might include university students, COH Elected Members and supporter groups, TMAG Foundation and supporter groups, media, artists, and creative communities.

13. Mentoring and promotion

One of the keystones of the new exhibition model is to provide a platform for Tasmanian artists to exhibit their work in a national context and to leverage further opportunities in the process. We ask that the Creative Director to help us achieve this aim by mentoring the Tasmanian artists throughout the development of the exhibition, providing advice that is not only about the development of their work and practice but also about future directions that will help the artist strengthen their profile and exposure nationally.

The Creative Director will be an ambassador for the artists and the new program, using their professional networks to promote it throughout the inaugural exhibition and beyond.

15. Budget

Creative Director fee including all costs associated with travel, accommodation, food and per diems	\$35,000
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Artist fees including materials, installation, freight and travel costs	\$150,000
Publicity	\$15,000
Opening	\$5,000
Audience engagement and education programs	\$10,000
TMAG installation	\$20,000
TOTAL	\$240,000

14. Insurance

The Creative Director will need to provide evidence of Professional Indemnity insurance.

15. Timeline

- August 2024: appoint Creative Director
- September 2024: Artist EOI's open.
- October 2024: 10 artists confirmed and contracted
- November 2024: Artists announced
- December 2024—October 2025: artists develop works in consultation with Creative Director and TMAG/COH
- October 2025: exhibition installation
- **November 2025: exhibition opens**
- April 2026: exhibition closes

16. Expression of Interest

Those interested in submitting an Expression of Interest for the Creative Director role are asked to respond to the following:

- Pitch (curatorial idea, title and description of the exhibition and program): <200 words
- Statement of relevant experience: <200 words
- Statement of availability and other commitments between August 2024 and April 2026: <100 words
- CV: 1 A4 page
- 10 supporting images (optional)
- Contact details for applicant
- Contact details for 2 referees

Further enquiries contact either:

- Jane Stewart, Principal Curator (Art), Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery
Jane.stewart@tmag.tas.gov.au or 03 6165 7019

- Jane Castle, Program Lead, Creative City, City of Hobart
castlej@hobartcity.com.au or 03 6238 2767

Expressions of Interest can be submitted by email to jane.stewart@tmag.tas.gov.au by **5pm Friday 26 July 2024**.