

**COUNIHAN  
GALLERY  
IN BRUNSWICK**



**Merri-bek**  
City Council

# Counihan Gallery

## 2027 Exhibition Application Pack



# Contents

Call for 2027 exhibition applications .....	3
Acknowledgement of Country .....	3
Key information .....	3
About the Counihan Gallery.....	3
Exhibition information .....	4
Who can apply?.....	4
Exhibition dates.....	4
Exhibition spaces .....	4
Exhibition honorariums .....	5
Selection criteria.....	5
Selection process .....	5
Exhibition support.....	5
Exhibitors' responsibilities .....	6
Exhibition installation and deinstallation .....	7
Artwork sales .....	7
Artwork insurance and Counihan Gallery security.....	7
Copyright and Intellectual Property .....	7
Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property .....	7
Merri-bek grants and external funding .....	7
How to apply.....	8
Application deadline.....	8
Accessibility information.....	8
Information session .....	8
Contact information .....	8
Exhibition application checklist .....	9
Privacy and Information Statement .....	9
Floorplans .....	10
Counihan Virtual Gallery .....	10
Front Gallery.....	10
Middle Gallery .....	10
Rear Gallery .....	11

# Call for 2027 exhibition applications

The Counihan Gallery is now accepting applications for its 2027 exhibition program. Applications are welcome from solo artists, collaborators, groups of artists, and curators. Applications close at 5pm, Friday 12 June 2026.

## Acknowledgement of Country

The Counihan Gallery acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways in the area known as Merri-bek. We recognise their continuous connection to culture, community and Country and embrace their traditional and contemporary creative expression. We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present, and to all First Nations people who are part of the community today.

## Key information

Applications open:	12pm, Friday 24 April 2026
Applications close:	5pm, Friday 12 June 2026
Exhibition dates:	February – May 2027 (Season 1) May – August 2027 (Season 2)
Exhibition duration:	Approximately 12 weeks
Exhibition spaces:	Front, Middle and Rear Galleries
Exhibition honorarium:	\$1,500 per exhibition space
Who can apply:	Solo artists, collaborators, groups of artists, and curators
Application cost:	Free
Submissions:	Submit your application via the <a href="#">Exhibition Application Form</a>
Applicants notified:	Early August 2026

## About the Counihan Gallery

The Counihan Gallery is Merri-bek City Council's public art gallery, located on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country at the heart of Sydney Road's thriving arts and culture precinct in Brunswick. The Gallery presents a free program of contemporary art exhibitions that is guided by the [2023-2030 Merri-bek Arts and Culture Strategy](#).

Opened in 1999 and named in honour of the Australian artist and activist Noel Counihan (1913–1986), the Gallery reflects his legacy as a champion of social justice and free speech through its commitment to activism, sustainability, and creative expression.

The Gallery also presents a free public program of talks, forums, workshops and events that foster discussion around new ideas in contemporary art and culture.

Visit our [What's on at the Counihan Gallery page](#) and social media channels to see what kind of exhibitions and programs we present. The Gallery is free to visit.

Front cover credit:

Installation view of *heavy body history*, curated by Maya Hodge, 2025. Photo: Yaseera Moosa

## Exhibition information

### Who can apply?

Exhibition applications can be submitted for solo, collaborative, group or curated exhibitions.

In line with Merri-bek City Council's Human Rights Policy priority groups, the Gallery strongly encourages applications from artists who identify as culturally and linguistically diverse, LGBTQIA+, d/Deaf and/or Disabled, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Please see [Merri-bek's Human Rights Policy](#) for more information.

### Exhibition dates

In 2027, the Exhibition Program will move from four seasons to three as a one-off adjustment to support an exciting transition of the Merri-bek Summer Show. The program will return to a four-season structure in 2028.

The Gallery is currently calling for exhibition proposals for Season 1 and Season 2 of the 2027 Program. Season 3 has been programmed by invitation.

The Merri-bek Summer Show – previously presented in Season 4 from November to December – will now run from January to March 2028. This new timing places the exhibition at the height of summer, aligns it with festival season, and allows for a longer display period.

The dates you can apply for through the 2027 Expression of Interest process are:

Season	Dates	Gallery
Season 1	February – May 2027	Front Gallery
		Middle Gallery
		Rear Gallery
Season 2	May – August 2027	Front Gallery
		Middle Gallery
		Rear Gallery

In the [Exhibition Application Form](#), you can also register your interest to present your proposed exhibition in 2028.

A separate Expression of Interest process will open in 2027 for the Winter Night Screen.

### Exhibition spaces

Applicants can request the Front, Middle or Rear Galleries. Exhibitions spanning more than one gallery space are typically limited to group exhibitions.

Exhibitions have a display period of approximately 12 weeks. The Gallery is closed on some public holidays, which may affect the number of days an exhibition is open to the public.

Gallery	Location	Honorarium	Exhibition duration
Front Gallery	Front exhibition space with street-facing windows	\$1,500	Approximately 12 weeks

Middle Gallery	Middle/entry exhibition space, including a large glass vitrine	\$1,500	
Rear Gallery	Rear exhibition space	\$1,500	

A [floor plan](#) for each Gallery is available at the end of this application pack.

## Exhibition honorariums

Successful applicants receive an honorarium of \$1,500 for an exhibition. The honorarium is paid per exhibition space, not per individual artist or curator.

## Selection criteria

We are looking for exhibition proposals that:

- Demonstrate innovation and quality in visual arts practice.
- Focus on social, political, environmental or cultural commentary.
- Present a coherent body of work.
- Engage with the Merri-bek community.
- Include high-quality artwork images that support the application (these can be indicative or representative and do not need to be the final exhibited works)

Applicants are encouraged to think creatively about how their work might be displayed and experienced by visitors. All final display decisions will be made in consultation with gallery staff.

## Selection process

Exhibition proposals are assessed by a selection panel that includes Merri-bek Council Officers, members of the Merri-bek Arts Advisory Committee and independent arts professionals. The decision of the selection panel is final.

All applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application in early August 2026.

## Exhibition support

Gallery staff work collaboratively with successful applicants across exhibition planning, installation, promotion and daily operations.

What we do – a summary	
Planning & Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional support from gallery staff in the development and coordination of the exhibition.</li> <li>• An exhibition honorarium and funding towards associated public programming.</li> <li>• Resourcing to support accessibility needs.</li> </ul>
Design & Installation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistance with exhibition design, installation of artwork, and lighting.</li> <li>• Access to Gallery tools and audio-visual equipment, including media players, sound system, digital projectors and televisions.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to display furniture, including plinths and shelves.</li> </ul>
Marketing & Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Production and installation of exhibition labels and wall texts.</li> <li>• Production and installation of exhibition signage.</li> <li>• Promotion of the exhibition through e-newsletters, social media engagement and exhibition listings.</li> <li>• Distribution of media release.</li> </ul>
Opening Event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catering for exhibition opening events.</li> <li>• Gallery staff assistance during opening events.</li> <li>• Facilitate a Merri-bek City Council representative to speak at the opening and any other activities associated with the exhibition.</li> </ul>
Daily Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staffing of the Gallery during opening hours.</li> <li>• After-hours security and alarm protection</li> </ul>

## Exhibitors' responsibilities

Successful applicants are responsible for the following:

What you do – a summary	
Exhibition Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver the exhibition as outlined in your application.</li> <li>• Attend a briefing session with gallery staff prior to the installation period to discuss all installation requirements.</li> <li>• Organise the packaging of artworks and transportation to and from the Gallery (costs to be met by exhibitors)</li> <li>• Assist with the installation and deinstallation of the exhibition.</li> <li>• Cover costs associated with any non-standard display equipment or additional expenses associated with the display of the work.</li> </ul>
Promotional Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide gallery staff with a written exhibition summary, high-quality digital images and artwork details for promotional purposes.</li> <li>• Submit any additional advertising or publicity materials to gallery staff for approval before distribution</li> <li>• Acknowledge Merri-bek City Council on all publicity material including Gallery and Merri-bek City Council logos</li> <li>• Maximise audience engagement by sharing your project with your networks and participating in publicity opportunities.</li> </ul>
Public Programs & Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with gallery staff to develop public programs and audience engagement opportunities, such as artist talks or workshops.</li> <li>• Ensure the accessibility of your exhibition (with support from gallery staff).</li> </ul>

## **Exhibition installation and deinstallation**

If your application is successful, installation and deinstallation timelines will be established by gallery staff in consultation with exhibitors. Once agreed, these timelines are fixed to minimise disruption to other exhibitors.

Installation Technician support is provided. All installations must comply with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*. A risk assessment is conducted prior to installation, and exhibitors must notify gallery staff of any potential health and safety issues connected to the exhibition.

The number of works displayed is at the discretion of gallery staff. In rare circumstances, works may be deemed unsuitable for display. This will be discussed with exhibitors.

The Gallery cannot provide storage facilities. Artworks, packaging and tools cannot remain onsite outside the exhibition period. Artworks not collected by an agreed date may be disposed of at the Gallery's discretion.

## **Artwork sales**

The Counihan Gallery is a public gallery and does not operate as a commercial space. However, artwork sales can be facilitated.

Buyer details are provided directly to exhibitors, who are responsible for contacting the buyer to arrange the sale, payment and collection of the artwork. Gallery staff do not process payments or deposits. No commission fees are taken on sales, and all proceeds go directly to the exhibitors.

Collection of sold artworks must be arranged by the exhibitor and take place outside the Gallery premises after the exhibition concludes.

## **Artwork insurance and Counihan Gallery security**

Exhibitors are advised to take out personal accident cover and insurance to cover loss or damage to artworks during transportation, storage, installation and the exhibition display period. Merri-bek City Council will not be held responsible for any loss or damage to artworks (during transportation, display or storage) or personal injury to Gallery exhibitors.

The Gallery is located within Brunswick Town Hall and is equipped with an intruder detection system, ceiling mounted sensors and CCTV. The Gallery is always staffed during opening hours.

## **Copyright and Intellectual Property**

If your exhibition will use copyright material, or another entity's intellectual property, it is the applicant's responsibility to seek and obtain all the necessary permissions. All intellectual property rights within the application and delivery of the exhibition will be held exclusively by the applicants.

## **Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property**

Any exhibition applications that involve First Peoples must comply with cultural protocol, including [Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property](#) principles. These protocols affirm the self-determined ability of First Peoples to maintain control over their artistic work and heritages. You must provide evidence of your proposed consultation or engagement with First Peoples, such as support letters or engagement plans.

## **Merri-bek grants and external funding**

Applications for Merri-bek City Council grants are separate to applications for exhibitions at the Counihan Gallery, and the success of one does not guarantee the success of the other.

When applying for exhibitions at the Gallery it is expected that the proposed exhibition will be undertaken whether funding is approved or not. The Gallery can provide a letter of support for funding applications for external funding agencies where required. The name Counihan Gallery must not be used in any grant or sponsorship application without the written approval of the Team Leader Gallery and Arts Programs.

## How to apply

Submit your application online using our [Exhibition Application Form](#). Applications are submitted via SnapForms. There is no application fee.

For a PDF version of this form, please contact the Gallery using the contact details below.

## Application deadline

Applications can be submitted at any time during the proposals period but will only be assessed after the application deadline. The application deadline is **5pm, Friday 12 June 2026**. Applicants will be notified on the outcome of their application in August 2026.

## Accessibility information

The Counihan Gallery is committed to accessibility. We encourage applications from d/Deaf and Disabled artists and will work with successful applicants to support access needs.

If you would like to submit a hardcopy application, video application or an application in an alternative format, please contact the Gallery using the contact details below.

If you have specific access or translation requirements to apply, please email [counihangallery@merri-bek.vic.gov.au](mailto:counihangallery@merri-bek.vic.gov.au). Access and translation support is available upon request. For more information about the accessibility of the Counihan Gallery venue, please visit [Access and Inclusion at the Counihan Gallery](#).

## Information session

An online Information Session about the Counihan Gallery exhibition application process will be held on **Wed 20 May from 6pm to 7.30pm**. Bookings are required and can be made [here](#). This session will be recorded and made available on the Gallery website.

You can also contact the Gallery if you have questions about the application process.

## Contact information

Counihan Gallery contact information	
<b>In person</b>	Counihan Gallery, inside the Brunswick Town Hall 233 Sydney Road, Brunswick, VIC 3056 Wed to Sat, 11am to 5pm; Sun, 1pm to 5pm
<b>Phone</b>	03 9389 8622
<b>Email</b>	CounihanGallery@Merri-bek.vic.gov.au
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.merri-bek.vic.gov.au/counihan-gallery">www.merri-bek.vic.gov.au/counihan-gallery</a>
<b>Instagram</b>	@CounihanGallery
<b>Facebook</b>	<a href="http://www.facebook.com/counihangallery">www.facebook.com/counihangallery</a>

## Exhibition application checklist

Ensure your application is submitted before the closing date: **5pm, Friday 12 June 2026.**

The [Exhibition Application Form](#) will ask for the below information:

- Your current contact details
  - If applying for a group show, please choose one person to be the main contact and group coordinator for the exhibition.
- Full names of all contributing and confirmed artists and/or curators.
- An exhibition title.
- 10 images:
  - Please upload images as JPEGs or PNGs. We do not accept HEIC files.
  - We understand that you may not have completed the work you are proposing to exhibit. If this is the case, please include a selection of images that best represent your practice. You may also wish to include diagrams of proposed works or works-in-progress.
- Video files must be MP4 or MOV files and no longer than 5 minutes.
- Preferred Gallery space for your exhibition.
- Preferred time of year for your exhibition.
- A one-sentence summary of your project.
- A 250-word project description outlining the ideas and themes of your project, and how it would be suited to the Counihan Gallery and the Merri-bek community.
- A 150-word description of your exhibition design, explaining how the work will look when installed. Please outline any technical requirements and any substantial changes you are proposing to the gallery setup (e.g. walls painted a different colour).
- Public program or audience engagement ideas for your exhibition, such as workshops, artist talks, performances and discussion panels, or interactive artwork elements that encourage visitor participation.
- A current one-page CV or links to artist websites or social media handles.
- Additional material in the form of plans or drawings to support your written proposal (optional).

## Privacy and Information Statement

Merri-bek City Council is committed to protecting your privacy in accordance with the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) and the Health Records Act 2001 (Vic).

The personal information requested in the Exhibition Application Form is being collected by Merri-bek City Council for the 2027 Counihan Gallery exhibition application process and may also be used to update your personal information otherwise held by Council (for example, contact details including email address, phone number).

The personal information will be disclosed with any auspicing body or project funders and may also be used by Council for related purposes (e.g. to contact you about the application or use of your images). It will not be disclosed to any other external party without your consent, unless required or authorised by law. If the personal information is not provided, then your application will be deemed ineligible.

You can gain access to your personal information you have provided to Merri-bek City Council, and/or alter it, by contacting Council's Privacy Officer via telephone on 9240 1111 or e-mail at [Privacyofficer@merri-bek.vic.gov.au](mailto:Privacyofficer@merri-bek.vic.gov.au).

# Floorplans

## Counihan Virtual Gallery

You can explore all galleries in 3D [on the Counihan Virtual Gallery online platform](#).

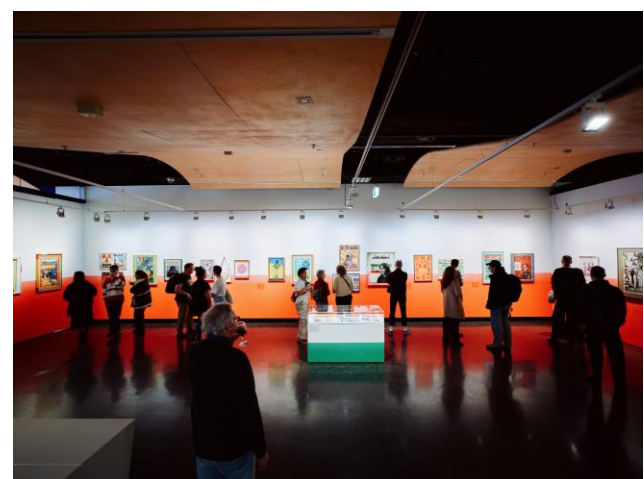
You can also add your artworks to the space to see how they will look using online modelling platform SketchUp. You can access this online modelling platform [on the SketchUp website](#). You will need to create a free SketchUp account to get started and download [our SketchUp file \(SKP 12.6MB\)](#) from the [DropBox website](#).

## Front Gallery



Installation view of heavy body history, curated by Maya Hodge, 2025. Photos: Yaseera Moosa

## Middle Gallery



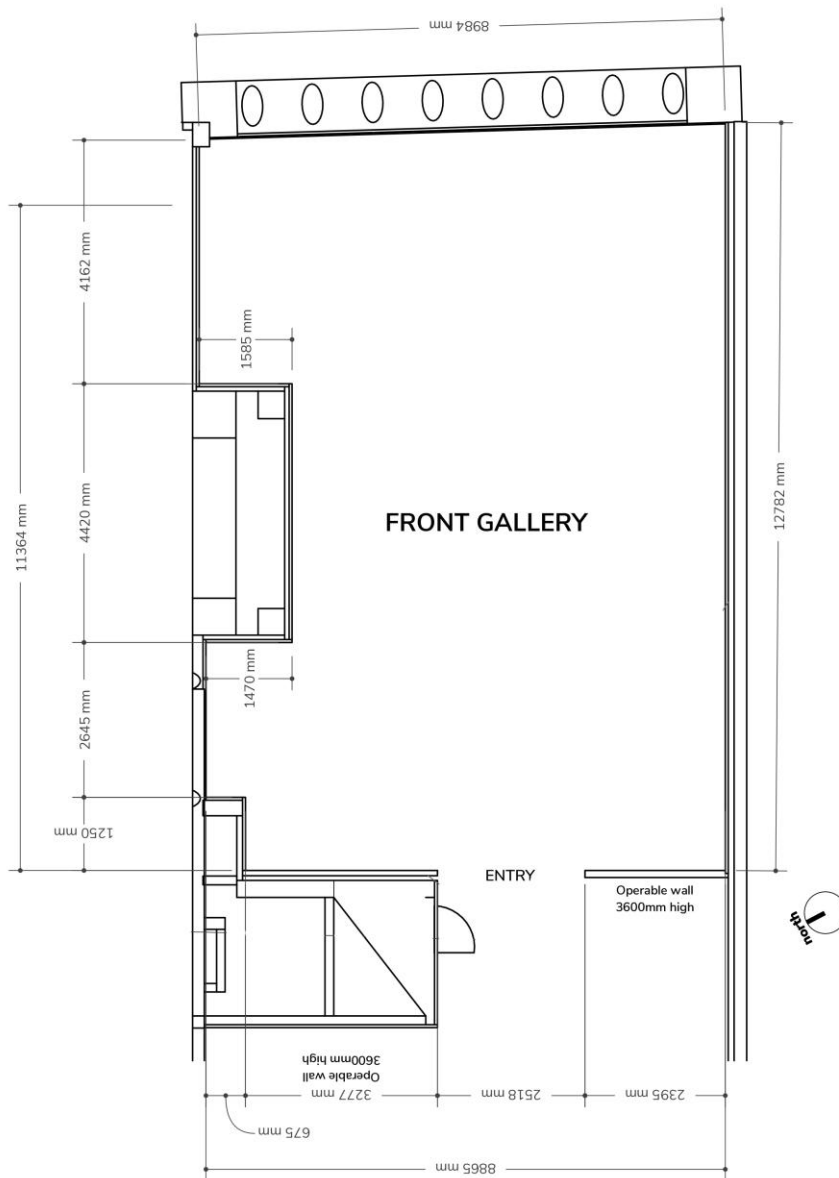
Left: Fairy Tales from the Celestial Garden, Jayanto Tan, 2025. Photo: Simon Fazio

Right: Future Foundations, curated by Troppo Print Studio, 2024. Photo: Simon Fazio

# Rear Gallery



After Epilogue, Judy Kong, 2026. Photo (left): Bobbi Gan. Photo (right): Simon Fazio



All measurements are in centimetres. 1:88

