

Mayor's Arts Awards Program

Terms of Reference

The Mayor's Arts Awards is an annual recognition program that celebrates high artistic achievement and recognizes extraordinary contributions in and to the arts. By increasing the profile and appreciation of the arts, the Awards enhance the cultural vitality and civic identity of Kingston. Through this program, the City affirms the value of the arts in City life, and nurtures and inspires sustained development of the cultural sector to the benefit of all its citizens.

Purposes

- To recognize the achievements and contributions of individual artists and arts organizations to the cultural vitality of Kingston, and in doing so, inspire and encourage others.
- To recognize and nurture the outstanding and sustained contributions of members of the community as supporters and volunteers in the arts.
- To build the profile of the arts community across the City, increasing awareness of the arts among its citizens, and thus building audiences and other forms of participation.
- To Increase Kingston's profile as a place where creative life is valued and innovation is embraced, an attractive destination for visitors, residents and businesses.

Award Categories

The Mayor's Arts Awards recognizes three categories of contribution, as follows:

Creator Award (3): *cash prize, medallion and certificate of recognition*

The Creator Award recognizes living artists, artistic collectives, or arts organizations. Three Creator Awards will be given each year to honour artistic merit and/or innovation that advances the arts in the City, contributes to the development of the art form and expresses the cultural vitality of Kingston.

Arts Champion Award (1): *medallion and certificate of recognition*

The Arts Champion Award recognizes a living individual, organization or corporation who makes an extraordinary, leading contribution to the arts in Kingston as a volunteer, advocate, supporter, sponsor and/or philanthropist.

Limestone Arts Legacy Award (1): *medallion and certificate of recognition*

The Limestone Arts Legacy Award recognizes individuals of the past whose sustained and substantial contributions have built the artistic vitality of the City, nurturing and enabling forms of creation, participation, presentation and enjoyment, whose leadership has inspired others, and whose influence has been felt in the region and beyond.

Award Criteria

Creator Award

Creator Award recipients are living individual artists. Active creative collectives and arts organizations are also eligible. Recipients must reside and/or work in and be active in the City of Kingston at the time of the award. As Award program administrators, the City of Kingston's Cultural Services Department and Kingston Arts Council programs and employees are not eligible for consideration.

Creator Award recipients will:

- Create works of art of outstanding artistic merit and achievement
- Create art of a distinctive, powerful artistic voice or character
- Create art that offers vivid expression of the civic context
- Create art that enriches and inspires the Kingston art scene
- Be an active, contributing and respected member of the artistic community
- Bring a distinguished profile to Kingston's arts presence and influence beyond the region

Recognition may be for recent achievement, for a body of work produced over several years, or for lifetime achievement. Creator Awards must, over time, recognize high achievement in a range of art forms and reflect diverse cultures active in the City.

Arts Champion Award

Arts Champion Award recipients are living individuals, non-arts organizations or businesses that advance the arts in Kingston.

Arts Champion Award recipients will:

- Make an extraordinary contribution to the arts in Kingston through sustained volunteer efforts in arts advocacy, operations, education, philanthropy, sponsorship and/or creative leadership
- Through their actions, inspire others to contribute to and participate in the arts
- Have a strong record of increasing the health, profile and impact of the arts

To sustain the value of this award, the implementation of this category in any given year will be at the discretion of the Mayor's Arts Awards Nominations Working Group (NWG).

Limestone Arts Legacy Award

Limestone Arts Legacy Award recipients are individuals of Kingston's storied artistic past who have made a substantial, lasting contribution to advancing the arts in Kingston. This is a posthumous award.

Limestone Arts Legacy Award recipients have:

- Made a profound impact on the arts in Kingston through sustained contributions as artists and/or arts leaders

- Created new transformative initiatives in the arts
- Enlivened and inspired the cultural environment of the City, increasing participation, creation and/or appreciation of the arts

To sustain the value of this award, the implementation of this category in any given year will be at the discretion of the Mayor's Arts Awards Nominations Working Group (NWG).

Awards Administration

The City of Kingston, through the Cultural Services Department, provides administrative oversight and coordination related to the Mayor's Arts Awards program to ensure integrity, efficiency and alignment with City procedures in the delivery of the Mayor's Arts Awards program.

The Kingston Arts Council (KAC) leads and plans documentation, communication, promotion and celebration of award recipients, taking advantage of their specialist networks and capacities. This role is well aligned with the KAC mandate and Strategic Plan, and this relationship is formalized on an annual basis through the KAC's Service Level Agreement.

Selection of award recipients is made through the City of Kingston's Arts Advisory Committee (AAC), which is tasked with establishing a Nominations Working Group (NWG) each year for this purpose. The Mayor's Arts Awards Nominations Working Group (NWG) is responsible for identifying and selecting award recipients in accordance with the program criteria as defined. The NWG is also responsible for providing a short written statement (80 to 150 words) identifying and briefly describing the reason for each award.

The Mayor's Arts Awards Nominations Working Group

The Mayor's Arts Awards Nominations Working Group shall comprise five to seven members with a range of expertise and perspectives, who are respected, knowledgeable and representative of a spectrum of artistic practices. The NWG is chaired by an appointed member of the AAC and includes at least three members of the AAC - one of whom is a member of Council - and may include appointees who are not members of the AAC. The membership is reconstituted on an annual basis with Council's approval, and no member may serve more than two consecutive years. Each NWG may include up to two members who served in the previous year and NWG members are ineligible for award consideration during their tenure.

Mayor's Arts Awards Announcement and Reception

The announcement of the Mayor's Arts Awards takes place each fall. The awards are announced at a public reception, and the award recipients are then invited to be recognized officially as part of a presentation on a Council meeting agenda scheduled in close proximity to the award reception.

Implementation

Responsibility: The Cultural Services Department provides oversight and ensures the successful delivery of the Mayor's Arts Awards program that includes supporting the AAC and the NWG, communicating with the nominees/awards winners, coordinating the awards, supporting promotion/communication, and establishing the deliverables expected of the KAC through their Service Level Agreement on an annual basis.

Funding: Funding to support the Mayor's Art Awards is provided through the Cultural Services Department's operating budget on an annual basis, pending Council approval.

Annual Implementation Schedule:

| Month | Action |
|--------------------------------|--|
| February | Arts Advisory Committee establishes the Mayor's Arts Awards Nominations Working Group (NWG) |
| March | Council approves the appointment of the Mayor's Arts Awards NWG |
| March through May | NWG identifies and selects award recipients and Cultural Services confirms their willingness to accept and participate |
| May | Kingston Arts Council confirms event plans, develops promotional plan and begins advance communications |
| June through September | Event planning and marketing |
| September, October or November | Awards presented at a public reception as well as at a regularly scheduled Council meeting |
| October, November or December | Post-event marketing and press; evaluation and event post-mortem |
| October through May | Sustained recognition program to highlight the award winners |