

5 ways to make your life easier when undertaking a public art project

1. Plan Ahead

You will need sufficient time to plan the logistics of your project. For example, in most cases you should allow 6 months or more to obtain the various permits you need to use city-owned property. Also create contingency plans for unexpected challenges, such as last-minute changes to the site or project, new rules or guidelines for a site, technology failures, or inclement weather.

2. Insure your project

Most public art projects need to be insured with general liability insurance, which protects artists and presenting organizations in the event of any damage done to a project site or individual (e.g., if someone is injured during the installation of a project). LMCC will be posting a list of public art and event insurance providers. Insurance coverage is necessary to obtain most permits licensed by the City of New York, and should be accounted for in both your timeline and budget.

3. Find a sponsor or collaborator

If you are an individual artist, it will be much easier to meet a project's insurance needs, obtain funding, and network with community members if you collaborate with a local nonprofit organization, or get local public officials or community boards behind your project.

4. Talk to the people who use the project site

Make sure the surrounding community knows about the public art project and is comfortable with what you are doing. Attend community meetings and events, e.g., at the local community board, and arrange viewing sessions for your preliminary designs. Think about whether or not you are willing to modify your project at the suggestions of others.

5. Promote your project

Send press releases to local newspapers and websites about any new developments in your project. Flyer local businesses, schools, and community centers. Organize events, such as talks and information sessions, about your project or event. Think about whether signage, programs, or curatorial materials would be appropriate for your project.