

*Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown
County Council*

Art Collection Policy 2016–2022

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Context

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council Art Collection

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council is the custodian of a significant collection of art, spanning a period of one hundred years or so, which comprises works created by twentieth and twenty-first century Irish-based artists, many of them enjoying a connection with the locality. These works were acquired by the Council over a number of decades and encompass a range of media and styles. The collection includes pieces by both emerging and established local artists, as well as a large number of works by historically significant and nationally renowned figures.

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council endeavours to care for artworks in the collection to the highest standard and has a policy of purchasing artworks by artists with a connection to Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown. This policy ensures that Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council provides artists with support and recognition of their work.

A clear policy for loaning works of art, accepting donations, borrowing works, purchasing, caring for and deaccessioning of artworks is contained in this policy document.

The rationale for developing a policy with regard to the collection is to provide maximum opportunity for the public to witness, experience and appreciate the artworks owned by the local authority while simultaneously caring for artworks in its possession. Increasing access to and furthering the knowledge of the collection forms part of our public service obligation.

This policy was adopted by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council at the Council meeting of 17th November 2016.

Loaning artworks

Artworks from Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council's collection are available for loan where there is an appropriate opportunity to exhibit them for public benefit and where the loan agreement will have no negative impact upon the collection or the artworks themselves.

- A written application must be submitted to the County Council. All applications must be assessed and agreed by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council.
- Application details must include
 - rationale for the request
 - location for presenting the work
 - benefit to the public good
 - intended duration of the loan agreement
 - nominated contact/department charged with responsibility for safeguarding loaned work – acknowledgement that insurance cover will be the responsibility of the applicant organisation.

Having assessed the application, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council will submit a response detailing (if approved) the terms and conditions including insurance requirements and length of the loan agreement. Having communicated its decision to the applicant institution, they must submit documentation detailing insurance cover and a written confirmation on behalf of the institution accepting the loaned artwork, agreeing to the proposed terms and conditions, signed by the nominated contact.

- All loans must be sanctioned and agreed by the County Council.
- No adjustments to frames or other parts of the structure can be made to the loaned item.
- Loaned work must include a written acknowledgement to Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council on display. This requirement extends to all publications, published material, and digital content concerning the loaned item(s).

- Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council reserves the right to call in items of art in advance of the completion of the agreed loan period. Notice of one month will be provided by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council
- Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council reserves the right to assess the display location of and its suitability to the presentation of loaned art.
- Adequate provision of building and pest control measures must be satisfied.
- Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council must be assured that adequate security measures are in place to safeguard all artwork.
- Matters of transport must satisfy all security and safety concerns upon request by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council. The amount of personnel tasked with the safe transit of artwork from 'nail to nail' should be dependent on the size of the work being loaned and agreed in advance between Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council and borrower.
- Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council does not lend any part of its collection to individuals, commercial enterprises or organisations seeking to profit financially from such agreements.
- Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council will provide the borrower, in writing, all available and relevant information about the loaned item - its value, dimensions (width, height, depth) framed or unframed, any relevant mountings (in the case of three-dimensional works) - that will be relevant to the safekeeping, preservation and enhancement of its access to the public.
- Loaned items should not be subjected to direct sunlight or in close proximity to sources of heat and/or strong air currents.
- Adequate temperature control must satisfy the requirements as set by the County Council. As a general guideline, temperature should be maintained within a range of 16-26 degree Celsius. Temperatures should not vary significantly in any twenty-four hour period. Relative humidity should be maintained between 40% and 65%.
- Compensation for the loss or damage of a loaned item will extend to the current value of the item.
- Permission for the reproduction of images, broadcasting, video recording, of loaned items must be sought and agreed with Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council.

Accepting the donation of artworks

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council does not actively seek donations to its collection however, from time to time, donations of artwork to the collection may occur as a result of a benevolent gift and all such offers are considered by dlr Arts Office. Donations may be refused if an artwork is not deemed to be appropriate for the collection either for reasons of quality or suitability or requirements such as security, care or restoration. All offers of donations will be responded to promptly in writing.

- Costs involved in transportation, insurance, security and other related costs will be borne by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council where a donation to the County Collection has been approved.
- Once a donation has been approved, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council assumes legal ownership of the items donated to the Collection, providing appropriate insurance cover and ensuring that the donated items are added to the Council's asset register (where appropriate).
- All donated artwork, in whatever form, must comply with legal ownership laws of the land and must be free from any contested ownership claims or issues of illegality.
- Acceptance of donations will pay due regard to its provenance and value.

Borrowing artworks

From time to time Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council may make a request to another institution, in order to receive borrowed works to enhance a temporary or permanent exhibition.

- Requests to institutions and details must include
 - rationale for the request
 - location for presenting the work
 - benefit to the public good
 - intended duration of the loan agreement
 - nominated contact/department charged with responsibility for safeguarding loaned work – sufficient insurance/indemnity cover.
- All applications will be submitted in written form to the lending institution/individual with due consideration to the costs incurred for transportation, security, insurance and all other related costs deemed necessary to provide for the safe transit and care of the borrowed item(s).
- All borrowed works, when received by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, should be accompanied by relevant valuations, dimension details, composition and media description.
- Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council will pay due regard to the requested terms and conditions of the borrowed items from the lending institution/individual.
- Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council agrees to cover the cost of damage to the value of the borrowed item, incurred as a result of damage from transit or accident.
- Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council will provide insurance for borrowed items on a nail to nail basis against all risks.
- Arrangements for the safe transit of borrowed items will be the responsibility of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council.

Purchasing Policy

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council has developed an art purchasing policy which reflects and supports the development of visual arts activity in the County. This policy intends to provide a framework for the annual purchase of works of art from artists who are living in, working in, have trained in or are originally from the county. All purchasing decisions will be made by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council.

Works of art selected for purchase must be selected on artistic merit and add value to the collection. Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council will endeavour to purchase works that will improve the collection as a whole and strive to maintain a variety of works within the collection. Where gaps in the collection have been identified, efforts to address this need will form the basis of a purchasing plan.

- Artwork must have been created by artists who are originally from, live in, work in or have trained in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown.
- Artwork should be technically competent, reflect the development and style of the artist and be of sufficient quality to be considered for purchase.
- Works of Art in a variety of media, both traditional and contemporary, will be considered by the County Council.
- The annual fund for purchasing works of art may vary. This will influence the amount, size, media and type of works purchased.
- Works of art intended to be purchased by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, should comply with safe transit expectations and be 'gallery ready' upon delivery.
- Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council will take into consideration issues that may impact on the condition, care and preservation of works of art, including costs relating to storage, security and documentation.

Care Procedure

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council has a policy of auditing its collection every five years to ensure that all items are properly catalogued, in good condition, placed in a safe location, with appropriate environmental requirements, and in receipt of up to date valuation for insurance purposes. The Arts Office is responsible for the Collection's continuing maintenance, care and catalogue.

The location of Council departments and the use of office space change over time. Collection records will be manually checked and all changes to artwork locations will be updated and documented.

Auditing the collection will involve an assessment of need to ensure that artworks are

- Being maintained in the location that is recorded on file
- Framed appropriately
- Situated in an appropriate environmental condition
- Placed in a location that is not subject to direct sunlight
- Placed in a location that is not subject to pest or contaminant damage.

Documentation and Records

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council will endeavour to maintain accurate records with regard to the

- Identification
- Storage
- Display
- Valuation
- Location
- Condition
- Catalogue number or ID and
- Name of the artists

on its internal filing system for reference. Information should include whether the item was bought, loaned or bequeathed to the local authority, the date on which the transaction was agreed and the terms (if any) upon which the transaction was based.

Deaccession Procedure

Deaccessioning is defined as the process by which a work of art or other object (collectively, a “work”), wholly or in part, is permanently removed from a museum’s collection (AAMD, 2010). From time to time, works of art may be deaccessioned from the collection as a result of irreparable damage or impractical costs associated with restoration. Deaccessioning decisions are made with care and thoughtfulness and in the interest of financial feasibility. Deaccessioning forms part of the County Council’s overall policy of care and maintenance of the collection’s quality.

There may be various reasons why it is necessary to deaccession work of art. The following is a list of examples whereby the process is appropriate; however, it does not represent an absolute rationale for deaccessioning.

- Specific works may be deemed to be of poor quality and it may be not be feasible for the local authority to invest in their restoration.
- Recent information may call into question the legal provenance of works in the collection and it may be in the public interests to remove, return or re-site such works.
- The authenticity or attribution of work is found to be false and retaining a presumed forgery would not be in the best interest of public confidence.
- Works may be deaccessioned as part of a general policy of upgrading and improving the collection of art held by the County Council.
- Works requiring special needs and storage provision may need to have their requirements reassessed.
- The care and conservation of a piece of work in a responsible manner may become difficult for the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council to maintain.
- The artwork represents an unacceptable hazard to personnel safety.

Decisions to deaccession artworks in the collection will be made by the Art Office only, further to the advice of external experts. Prior to a decision being made, due regard should consider the value of the work(s) in question and where possible the wishes of the artist.

A number of options can assist in the deaccession process including sale, auction or exchanges with the artist if he/she is still living. Any funds derived from the sale or exchange of artwork must be used to reinvest in the collection.

Items requiring special consideration include works that have been donated by an individual, works by a living artist, and works that may hold a particular emotional or regional importance to the local community. Written notification where possible will be communicated to all living artists or the benefactors of donated works of art where possible.

Works of art in excess of €10,000 value must not be deaccessioned without the written consent of the Council's Executive Management Team.