

International Women's Day 2026

Ephemeral Public Art Project

International Women's Day

Rye Community Grow and Play Garden

Mornington Peninsula Shire invites expressions of interest from artists or collectives to create a temporary, site-responsive public artwork to mark International Women's Day 2026.

Overview

The Mornington Peninsula Shire is a promontory separating the Port Phillip Bay and Western Port, just over 40 kms southeast of Melbourne.

Characterised by unique townships, highly valued green wedge land, areas of national and international conservation significance and covering 723 Km² of land, the Mornington Peninsula encompasses 10% of Victoria's coastlines, spanning 192 kilometres.

The Mornington Peninsula forms part of Bunurong Country, with Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation being the Registered Aboriginal Party. The Bunurong people have occupied this land for at least 60,000 years, and their continued custodianship of Country plays a vital role in the life of the region. The Mornington Peninsula includes several significant sites of tradition and ceremony, including Munmurr (Point Nepean), Wanggu (Arthurs Seat) and Darrmgurrk (Cape Schanck).

The project aligns with the Public Art Policy and Public Art Framework which aims to commit to building a culturally aware and engaged community through the arts and to provide an environment in which artistic and cultural expression in the public domain is encouraged and valued.

The Commission

This proposal seeks to deliver an ephemeral public artwork in celebration of International Women's Day 2026, aligned with the global theme Balance the Scales. The work will be installed in the Community Grow and Play Garden in Rye, a site with strong symbolic resonance as the former location of a women's refuge, now home to a thriving community garden.

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The project will commission one artist (or collective) to produce a temporary, site-responsive artwork exploring gender equity, balance, care, resilience, and the gendered impacts of climate change. The artwork will form the centrepiece of a Shire-delivered public program of talks, workshops, and activations.

Project Rationale

The setting—once a place of protection and now a place of growth—offers a compelling platform to explore the 2026 theme Balance the Scales. The project will highlight ongoing conversations about gender equity while grounding these themes in local heritage and contemporary environmental concerns. The ephemeral nature of the work reinforces ideas of change, renewal, and collective responsibility.

The Site

Lyons Street Community Grow and Play Garden in Rye, is a site with strong symbolic resonance as the former location of a women's refuge, now home to a thriving community garden.



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Themes

- Gender equity, justice and the call to “balance the scales”
- Strength, resilience and collective care within communities
- The transformation of the site from refuge to community garden – protection, renewal and growth
- Women’s lived experiences and local histories connected to the Rye refuge
- The gendered impacts of climate change and environmental vulnerability
- Cycles of change, impermanence and regeneration reflected through ephemeral art
- Nurturing, repair and community wellbeing
- Intergenerational empowerment and future-focused equity
- Place-based storytelling that responds directly to the physical and social context of the site

Artistic Approach

Artists are invited to create an ephemeral public artwork that responds to the site’s narrative and the global theme. Creative approaches may include:

- Sculptural or installation–e.g., land art, works based using natural or biodegradable materials
- Works that physically explore “balance” through form, weight, movement, or arrangement
- Sensory experiences incorporating sound, light, shadow, or performative elements



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- Interpretive gestures referencing safety, nourishment, community care, or environmental stewardship
- The artwork should be visually engaging, environmentally sensitive, and conceptually strong, with the flexibility to support a short program of public events.

Sustainability Considerations

The artist must use biodegradable, recyclable, or repurposed materials wherever possible. The project will avoid permanent fixtures and ensure minimal environmental impact on the park and community garden.

Artist Fee and Responsibilities

The commissioned artist fee is \$10 000 (excl GST)

The fee includes:

Artist Responsibilities

- Develop a site-responsive ephemeral artwork that aligns with the 2026 International Women's Day theme *Balance the Scales*.
- Engage with the site's history as the former women's refuge and its present role as a community garden.
- Attend an initial project briefing with Mornington Peninsula Shire staff.
- Participate in concept development discussions and respond to feedback within agreed timelines.
- Provide a detailed concept proposal including sketches, materials, installation methodology, risk management considerations, and maintenance requirements.
- Ensure all materials and methods are suitable for a temporary outdoor installation and comply with Shire safety and environmental standards.
- Work collaboratively with Shire teams to secure permits, site access, and any required approvals.
- Deliver the artwork within the agreed project timeframe (March–April 2026).
- Be available for installation, de-installation, and any required site visits.
- Participate in public program elements as requested (e.g., artist talk, workshop, Q&A).
- Maintain professional communication with Shire staff and meet all reporting, invoicing, and documentation requirements.
- Supply high-quality images and text for promotional and archival purposes.



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- Ensure the artwork leaves no lasting environmental impact and that all materials are responsibly removed at project completion.
- Public Liability Insurance
- SWMS

What the Shire Will Provide

- Project management, coordination, and primary point-of-contact throughout the commission.
- Site access, permissions, and facilitation of any required permits or approvals.
- Artist fee
- Support with risk assessment, safety compliance, and environmental considerations.
- Liaison with relevant internal teams (e.g., Parks & Open Space, Risk, Events, Comms) to ensure smooth delivery.
- Access to historical context and relevant background information about the former women's refuge site.
- Promotion of the artwork through Shire communication channels, including media, social media, and event marketing.
- Coordination and delivery of the associated public program (talks, workshops, activations), in collaboration with the artist where relevant.
- Documentation support (photography and/or videography) for archival and promotional use.
- Assistance on-site during installation and de-installation as required.

Contractual Arrangements

The artist will be engaged by the Mornington Peninsula Shire and paid in two installments.

Transfer of title and intellectual property rights

The Artist grants the Mornington Peninsula Shire and Rye Community Group Alliance a Non-Exclusive Limited Copyright License to store and reproduce the artwork for the purposes record-keeping and promotion of Shire and Rye Community Group Alliance activities. This is including but not limited to: -



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- reproduction of the Artwork or subject matter on an electronic database, including on-line formats, for collection management and public research.
- reproduction in printed form as part of print publication or produced by the Mornington Peninsula Shire and the Rye Community Group Alliance.
- reproduction in on-line formats produced by the Mornington Peninsula Shire and the Rye Community Group Alliance for the purposes of promotion of public programs, access and interpretation.
- to be included in reports and information brochures in print, and on-line formats to promote the Rye Community Group Alliance and Mornington Peninsula Shire and for inclusion in essays and articles for magazines, newspapers, print, electronic and on-line journals.
- reproduction for the purpose of making the Artwork or subject matter available to third parties solely for the other purposes set out above on behalf of the Rye Community Group Alliance and the Mornington Peninsula Shire.

All Copyright and Intellectual Property rights will remain with the Artist.

The Rye Community Group Alliance and the Mornington Peninsula Shire will ensure that the Artist's preferred name and the name of the Artwork appear on any website or in any promotional material in which images of the Artwork appear.

Timeline

Key Milestone	Indicative Timeline	Payment
EOI opens	Monday 24 November 2025	
EOI closes	Sunday 21 December 2025	
Artist selected	Monday 22 December 2025	
Contract art	Tuesday 23 December 2025	
Site Visit	Early Jan 2026	
Concept	Friday 30 Jan 2026	
Feedback/Finalise Designs	Sunday 15 January	
Installation including coating	Monday 2 – 6 March	50%
Celebration	Sunday 8 March	
De-installation	Monday 20 – Sunday 26 April	



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How to Apply

Eligibility

Open to professional artists or collectives living or working in Australia. Artists from the Mornington Peninsula, and First Nations or culturally diverse women and trans artists, are strongly encouraged to apply.

Submission Requirements

Please include:

1. A brief statement outlining your interest in the project (max 200 words).
2. A short biography and CV (max 2 pages).
3. Examples of previous relevant public art projects (up to 6 images with descriptions).
4. An indication of your availability to deliver the project to deadline

Selection Criteria

- Artistic merit and creativity.
- Relevance to project themes and context.
- Demonstrated experience in delivering high-quality public art projects on time and within budget.
- Durability and suitability of materials.

PLEASE NOTE ARTISTS DO NOT REQUIRE TO SUBMIT A CONCEPT PROPOSAL.

Expression of Interest submissions will only be accepted as 1xPDF document and not exceeding 6 pages.

For more information and to email your 1xPDF document please contact
publicart@mornpen.vic.gov.au



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Sunday 21 December 2025 11.59pm.

Please note:

- **submissions will not be accepted after the deadline**
- **submission that have multiple attachments will not be accepted**