

Inflatable Artwork Information Sheet

Parramatta Lanes 2026 – Visual Arts Program

This information sheet is intended to support artists who may be new to working with inflatable artworks or large-scale public installations. It outlines general considerations, possibilities, and constraints to help you develop a strong and feasible proposal. You do **not** need prior experience working with inflatables to apply.

What Is an Inflatable Artwork?

An inflatable artwork is a temporary, air-supported structure made from durable synthetic materials and often maintained using low-noise electric blowers. Inflatable artworks can range from playful sculptural forms to immersive or interactive environments and are commonly used in festivals due to their strong visual impact, portability, and adaptability to urban sites.

Inflatables are particularly effective at large-scale public events as they are:

- Highly visible from a distance
- Quick to install and remove
- Adaptable to varied site conditions
- Inviting and engaging for broad audiences.

Materials & Fabrication

Inflatable artworks are typically fabricated using:

- PVC-coated nylon or polyester
- Ripstop or reinforced vinyl
- Heat-sealed or stitched seams.

These materials are:

- Weather-resistant
- Lightweight when deflated
- Durable for repeated inflation.

Fabrication will be managed by Parramatta Lanes in collaboration with professional fabricators. Artists are not expected to fabricate the work themselves, but will be linked with fabricators to make connections and gain knowledge from the process.

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Scale & Form

Inflatables can vary significantly in size and form. Proposals may include:

- Freestanding sculptural inflatables
- Suspended or tethered inflatables
- Walk-through or immersive forms (subject to safety approval)
- Inflatable elements combined with light or sound.

Final dimensions will be confirmed during design development, considering:

- Site constraints
- Safety requirements
- Budget
- Wind loading and anchoring.

Artists are encouraged to think ambitiously while remaining flexible.

Power & Technical Requirements

Most inflatable artworks require:

- Continuous power to operate low-noise air blowers
- Access to standard 240V power
- One or more discreet blower units positioned near the work.

Additional power may be required for:

- Internal or external lighting
- Sound components.

Power access, cabling, and lighting solutions will be developed collaboratively with the Parramatta Lanes team and installation manager.

Installation, Operation & Maintenance

- Installation will typically occur during the week prior to the festival
- Inflatable artworks must be capable of operating for extended daily periods during festival hours
- Artists will not be responsible for daily operation or monitoring unless otherwise agreed
- Weather planning is essential: works must tolerate wind, rain, heat, and changing light conditions.

Deflation periods due to extreme weather may occasionally be required for safety.

Audience Experience & Safety

Inflatable artworks should:

- Be visually engaging and welcoming
- Consider audience movement and crowd flow
- Avoid sharp edges, tripping hazards, or climbable forms (unless specifically designed and approved).

All artworks will undergo safety checks and approvals prior to installation. Public liability, risk assessments, and compliance requirements will be supported by the festival team in collaboration with artists.

What We're Looking For

We encourage proposals that are:

- Bold, playful, or imaginative
- Responsive to site and audience
- Suitable for public display and interaction
- Thoughtful about scale, colour, and visibility day to night.

You do not need to resolve all technical details in your proposal i.e. clear ideas, thoughtful intent, and a willingness to collaborate are far more important.

Support & Development Process

Selected artists will receive:

- Curatorial and technical guidance from the Parramatta Lanes Visual Arts Producer
- Support refining concepts into feasible inflatable designs
- Professional fabrication and installation coordination
- Mentorship throughout the commissioning process.

This program is designed as a supportive entry point into large-scale public and festival-based artwork delivery.

Further Inspiration

Applicants are encouraged to review examples of previous Parramatta Lanes artworks and other festival-scale inflatable installations to better understand the medium's potential.

If you are unsure whether your idea is suitable, we encourage you to apply as strong concepts can be developed collaboratively.