Policy Statement and Purpose

Virginia Commonwealth University desires to enhance the campus environment by acquiring and displaying public artwork and commemorative elements that reflects VCU’s core values and enriches the campus experience for students, faculty and staff, alumni, and visitors.

This policy provides a framework for the acceptance, acquisition, installation, management and disposition of artwork displayed at or on property owned or controlled by VCU, with the exception of the art associated with the Institute for Contemporary Art and on the campus at VCU Qatar.

All installations, acquisitions, loans and removals of permanent and/or long-term public artwork at the university must be approved in writing by the president and as may be deemed necessary by the president, reviewed by the Board of Visitors. The president may delegate this authority to a designee.

Noncompliance with this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. VCU supports an environment free from retaliation. Retaliation against any employee who brings forth a good faith concern, asks a clarifying question, or participates in an investigation is prohibited.
Who Should Know This Policy

University faculty, alumni, students, and friends of the university who would like to propose the acceptance or disposition of public artwork or who are associated with the acquisition and placement of public artwork at the university are responsible for knowing this policy and familiarizing themselves with its contents and provisions.

Definitions

Acquisition
To obtain through purchase, gift, donation, or any other method by which ownership is transferred to the university. Does not include loans or other temporary pass-through arrangements.

Deaccession
Permanent removal of a work of art from the university.

Long Term
Longer than one month.

Public Artwork
Art, in any media and of any size that is displayed in a public space at the university and/or has been loaned to the university or acquired with the intention of being displayed in a public space.

Public Spaces
Exterior and interior spaces that are open to the public. This does not include office space designated for use by VCU employees.

Contacts

The Office of the Vice President for Administration officially interprets this policy. The Office of the Vice President for Administration is responsible for obtaining approval for any revisions as required by the policy Creating and Maintaining Policies and Procedures through the appropriate governance structures. Please direct policy questions to the university architect in the Office of the Vice President for Administration.

Policy Specifics and Procedures

Art on Campus Committee

Any individual or department desiring to propose the installation, acquisition, loan or removal of public artwork must submit a written proposal to the Art of Campus Committee (hereinafter, the “Committee”) in compliance with this policy.
The Committee is a standing committee appointed by the president to serve in an advisory role. The Committee is convened at the request of the president to consider written proposals regarding the acquisition, management, or deaccession of public artwork at the university.

The Committee’s composition may include representatives of the following university units:
- Office of the President
- Division of Development and Alumni Affairs
- VCU School of the Arts
- Institute for Contemporary Art
- University architect and/or other designee of the vice president for administration
- Any other individual as designated by the president

The representative from the Office of the President shall serve as the chairperson of the Committee.

Committee responsibilities are as follows. To:
- Evaluate all written proposals for public artwork, taking into account the Criteria for Acceptance of Public Artwork, as set forth below.
- Evaluate proposals for the maintenance or deaccession of public artwork.
- Consult with subject matter experts as appropriate when considering acquisition or loan of public artwork.
- Make recommendations to the president regarding acceptance and location of public artwork acquisitions, loans or installations, and deaccession of public artwork.

The responsibilities of the Committee do not include the following:
- Review of installations at the Markel Center and curatorial services performed by the Institute of Contemporary Art.
- Review of installations at VCU Qatar.
- Review of art located in public spaces not owned by the university (such as statues or commemorations) but are within close proximity of its facilities.
- Review of the design or construction of buildings or university facilities.
- Review of faculty or student exhibitions.
- Review of installations in spaces regulated by individual schools or departments, unless the school or department requests Committee review.

Criteria for Acceptance of Public Artwork

The Committee uses the following criteria as guidance for recommending the acceptance of public artwork (and additional criteria as it deems appropriate):
- Artistic excellence
- Appropriateness and availability of a university site
- Alignment with the mission of the university
Acceptance of Public Artwork

Proposals for the acquisition, donation or loan of public artwork must be submitted in writing to the Committee. Proposals shall be reviewed by the Committee, which will provide one of the following written recommendations to the president:

- Acceptance of the artwork,
- Recommendation that the proposal be declined, or
- Recommendation that acceptance of the artwork be subject to conditions or a further request for information (e.g., additional funding, a prescribed management plan for installation, or a plan for continued maintenance or conservation of the artwork).

Acquisitions or loans of public artwork must comply with applicable state or federal laws, and applicable university policies. As needed, the Committee may consult with appropriate subject matter experts, such as representatives in the Office of Procurement Services, Office of Development and Alumni Relations, and the Office of Facilities Management.

To the extent possible, gifts of artwork to the university shall be without restriction. Artwork that is acquired by the university shall become the property of Virginia Commonwealth University and shall be added to the university’s fixed asset system in accordance with university policy. The university does not guarantee the permanent display or retention of donated artwork.

The university welcomes proposals for the acceptance of public art from university departments, faculty, staff, and students. Individuals or organizations outside of the university wishing to propose artwork to be gifted to, loaned to, or purchased by the university must collaborate with a university department in order to submit a proposal to the Committee.

- Submit a completed VCU public artwork Acquisition Proposal to the university architect, office of Facilities Management.
- For proposed gifts, prospective donors and recipient university departments should coordinate with the Office of Development and Alumni Relations to submit a “VCU Public Artwork Acquisition Proposal.”
- The Committee shall review the proposal and may request additional supporting documentation to assist with its review.
- Proposals shall be reviewed promptly, but with sufficient time for careful review of proposal details.
- Upon completion of its review, the Committee shall provide a recommendation to the president (or president’s designee).
- Submit a completed VCU Public Artwork Acceptance Proposal to the university architect, office of Facilities Management.
• The Committee shall review the proposal and may request additional supporting documentation to assist with its review.
• Proposals shall be reviewed promptly, but with sufficient time for careful review of proposal details.
• Upon completion of its review, the Committee shall provide a recommendation to the president (or president’s designee).

Deaccession of Public Artwork

The deaccession of artwork requires careful consideration and shall be considered only to advance the university’s mission. Proposals to deaccession public artwork must be submitted in writing to the Committee as required by this policy. The Committee shall provide a recommendation to the president.

The following criteria will be considered in connection with a proposal to deaccession (in addition to other criteria, as the Committee deems to be appropriate):
• The artwork has been found to be inauthentic. Inauthentic work shall not be returned to the market.
• The artwork requires excessive maintenance or the cost of maintenance or security of the artwork presents an excessive burden on the university.
• The artwork is in poor condition and restoration is deemed to be impractical or impossible.
• The artwork endangers public safety, health or welfare.
• Ownership of the artwork is in question.
• The artwork was exported, imported or provided to the university in violation of existing federal, state or local law.
• There is a lack of historical or aesthetic value.
• The Artwork does not support the mission of the university.
• The site of the artwork will be or has been altered and the artwork cannot be relocated.
• The Board of Visitors has determined that the deaccession is necessary to protect the best interests of the university.

Once artwork is approved by the president for deaccession, the president will instruct the appropriate department to follow proper guidelines for deaccession. Appropriate supporting documentation must be retained by the Division of Vice President of Administration. Deaccessioned artwork may be:
• Donated to another public agency within the Commonwealth of Virginia,
• Disposed of in accordance with the university’s surplus property process,
• Destroyed if the work is beyond repair or hazardous. Destruction must be thoroughly documented and witnessed by a duly qualified unbiased third party,
• Placed in the custody of VCU Libraries for historic and research purposes, if appropriate, or
• Placed for sale at public auction.

Departments or schools wishing to propose deaccession of public artwork must submit a “VCU Public Artwork Deaccession Proposal”
• Submit a completed VCU Public Artwork Deaccession Proposal to the university architect, office of Facilities Management.
The Committee shall review the proposal and may request additional supporting documentation to assist with its review.

Proposals shall be reviewed promptly, but with sufficient time for careful review of proposal details.

Upon completion of its review, the Committee shall provide a recommendation to the president (or president’s designee).

**Installation of Public Artwork**

All installations shall be coordinated and supervised by VCU Facilities Management in accordance with any processes determined by the Committee.

**Management and Conservation of Public Artwork**

All public artwork must be managed in accordance with (1) any management plans required by the President (or applicable VCU Division or Unit) in consultation with the Committee and (2) the agreement or terms governing the acquisition of the artwork. Concerns about the condition of any Public Artwork must be reported to VCU Facilities Management according to the procedures in this policy.

**Reporting Concerns about the Condition of Public Artwork:** Any individual concerned about the condition of public artwork should report concerns to the Facilities Management Department.

- Notify the Campus Coordinator in Facilities Management of the concern, including photographs if possible.
- Facilities Management will investigate the condition of the artwork and shall notify the Office of Risk Management and the Committee.
- The Committee, after consultation with both the Facilities Management Department and the Office of Risk Management, shall provide a recommendation to the president (or president’s designee) to (1) require immediate removal of the artwork, (2) require prompt conservation and repair efforts by a qualified professional, or (3) monitor the artwork on a recommended routine time frame.

**Forms**

1. VCU Public Artwork Acceptance Proposal
2. VCU Public Artwork Deaccession Proposal

**Related Documents**

1. VCU Policy: [Policy on Gifts of Art to Virginia Commonwealth University](#)
2. [Policy on Gifts of Tangible Personal Property/Gifts-in-Kind](#) (local policy in DAR)
Revision History

This policy supersedes the following archived policies:

08/09/2007       Art on Campus

FAQ

1. Why is art associated with the Institute for Contemporary Art (ICA) and the Qatar Campus excluded from this policy? With an independent curatorial staff, the ICA will bring nationally and internationally respected artists and scholars to Richmond and to become a catalyst for new experiences that will enrich the lives of Richmonders, Virginians and cultural tourists from across the globe. As such, oversight by the Art on Campus Committee is not appropriate nor necessary. Similarly the Qatar Campus cultivates a dynamic intercultural environment of diverse research, learning and community engagement that propels the development of exemplary artists, designers and scholars to build vibrant communities and diversified economies. Since it has its own leadership and administration, oversight by the Art on Campus Committee of the Qatar campus is not appropriate nor necessary.

2. Why is artwork that is located in spaces regulated by individual schools or departments not subject to review by the Art on Campus Committee unless the school or department requests Committee review? The university believes that schools and departments are equipped to handle most curatorial decisions on their own for public art placed in the facilities they control without oversight by the Art on Campus Committee. If the school or department does not feel comfortable making these decisions on their own, they can request review by the Art on Campus Committee.

3. Is the Art on Campus Committee responsible for review of artwork acquired or loaned by the University Libraries? Only if the artwork is intended for public display.