
ARTISTS' CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Indigenous Presence and Place at St. John's City Hall

DEADLINE FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST:

Friday, August 8th, 2025, 4:00 p.m. NDT

PROJECT OVERVIEW

This project, initiated by First Light, is building on the shared work of the **Joint Coordinating Committee on Indigenous Rights** (JCCIR)—a formal partnership between both organizations established to advance the City's 2020 *Declaration in Support of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

First Light is inviting **Expressions of Interest** (EOIs) from Indigenous artists or artist teams for a site-specific commissioned artwork for First Light to gift to the City of St. John's and to be installed in Council Chambers at St. John's City Hall. EOIs are welcome from Indigenous artists in Newfoundland and Labrador who have a connection to an Indigenous community, including those within urban Indigenous communities.

This initiative is part of ongoing efforts to advance truth and reconciliation at the municipal level. It aims to enhance the visibility of Indigenous Peoples in civic spaces and reflect the deep and enduring relationships Indigenous communities have with this land. The work is grounded in the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), the Calls for Justice of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG), and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

The selected artist or artist team will create and install a culturally grounded work that centres Indigenous worldviews, affirms Indigenous rights and sovereignty, and strengthens Indigenous representation within a space of municipal governance.



PROJECT VISION: INDIGENIZING THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS

This project aims to create visible and lasting space for Indigenous voices in civic decision-making. To advance this shared commitment, First Light is commissioning a **permanent Indigenous artwork for installation in Council Chambers**—the heart of municipal representation.

This work is intended to be more than a decorative element. It will serve as a symbolic and visual affirmation of urban Indigenous presence, identity, and continuity within the governance of the City. The installation should honour the diversity of Indigenous Peoples in Newfoundland and Labrador, reflect Indigenous cultures, histories, and rights, and acknowledge the enduring relationships between Indigenous Peoples and the land where St. John's is now situated.

While no structural changes will be made to Council Chambers, the work will be installed in a central and highly visible location and must integrate respectfully and meaningfully with the space. It must also maintain the unobstructed lines of sight necessary for Council operations.

Artists may propose one of the following formats:

- A floor-based tapestry or textile piece, potentially incorporating traditional patterns, teachings, or cultural narratives, mounted flat under a transparent protective cover.
- A low-profile central sculpture, no taller than 36 inches, using traditional or contemporary materials, placed on a small base or pedestal.
- A ceiling-suspended installation, such as a hanging sculpture, mobile, or symbolic representation using lightweight materials that complement the chamber's architecture.



PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS

The following are the site specifications and design expectations:

- The available installation space is cylindrical, located within or above the Council seating area. It measures approximately 13 ft. 10 in. in circumference at table level, 17 ft. 1 in. from the floor to the bulkhead, and 19 ft. 9 in. to the top of the ceiling (please see image with dimensions in Appendix A).
- Proposals may include visual art (e.g., painting, textile, sculpture, or mixed media), small statues, or installations integrated into the physical space.
- Installations may be floor-based, suspended, or realized through another spatial or conceptual approach.
- Artwork must be safe, durable, non-obstructive, and appropriate for a formal civic environment.
- No changes to the physical structure of the space is allowed.
- All submissions must be new, original, and created by the submitting artist(s) for the purposes of this call.
- Submissions must not contain copyrighted, trademarked, or offensive content.

SELECTION PROCESS

A selection committee made up of Indigenous artists, community leaders, and representatives from First Light will review submissions using the following criteria:

Criteria	Weighting	Submission Requirement
Artistic merit & cultural vision	40%	Description and sketch of concept
Relevance to space & goals	35%	Statement on how design reflects intent
Artist experience & capacity	25%	CV and portfolio, past public art work

BUDGET AND COMPENSATION

The **total budget available is \$30,000** (all-inclusive). This includes artist fees, taxes, materials, travel, design, fabrication, and installation.

Two (2) shortlisted artists will be invited to submit more detailed proposals and will receive a design development fee of \$500 in accordance with CARFAC's fee schedule. *This does not guarantee selection for the contract.*

TIMELINE

Milestone	Date (Tentative)
Expressions of Interest Due	August 8, 2025
Shortlist Notification	August 15, 2025
Detailed Proposals Due (if applicable)	August 29, 2025
Final Artist Selection	September 05, 2025
Production of the Artwork	September to November
Project Installation	Winter 2025

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

STEP ONE: EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Interested artist(s) are invited to submit the expressions of interest by email to Hannah@firstlightnl.ca with the subject line "**Council Chambers Art – Expression of Interest**" on or before the deadline noted above.

All expressions of interest must include the following:

- Artist(s) contact info (name, address, email, phone)
- A short bio (maximum 200 words) and CV



- A short statement of positionality (maximum 500 words) sharing connection and belonging to an Indigenous community (Rural or Urban).
- Portfolio of past work (5-10 images in JPEG format, including an image list containing descriptions and project relevance)
- A brief concept proposal (maximum 1 page) outlining:
 - Initial idea/sketch
 - How the concept aligns with Indigenous values and public space
 - Proposed medium and approach

STEP TWO: DETAILED PROPOSAL (SHORTLISTED ARTISTS ONLY)

- An expanded and detailed concept draft and visual references
- Work plan and timeline
- Budget breakdown
- Statement of capacity and availability to work within the established timeline

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The Artist(s) will convey all interests in the Art, save and except copyright and moral rights, to First Light and that Agreement is Assignable by First Light to the City of St. John's. First Light and its assignees will have the right to use the Art in any and all signage/advertisements, languages, media, formats and markets now known or hereafter devised, provided that such use shall be for the promotion of First Light or its assignees and/or its programs **or as depicted in any broadcasts from Council chambers**. First Light or its assignees will not be required to pay any fee to the Artist(s) other than the consideration referenced in this Agreement, provided, however, First Light agrees to compensate the Artist in accordance with the CARFAC-RAAV minimum fee schedule where applicable, in uses not contemplated above. First Light will allow the Artist to use the Art in any media created by the Artist or with the Artist's consent to document the Artist's career.

First Light reserves the right to:

- Cancel or modify the RFP at any stage
- Accept or reject any project

The total fee is fixed and includes all related expenses.

Final artwork may be subject to modifications to ensure suitability for the space and technical feasibility.



FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information, please contact:

Chad Bedard

Manager of Knowledge Mobilization
First Light St. John's Friendship Centre
chad@firstlightnl.ca
709-726-5902

APPENDIX A: PHOTOS

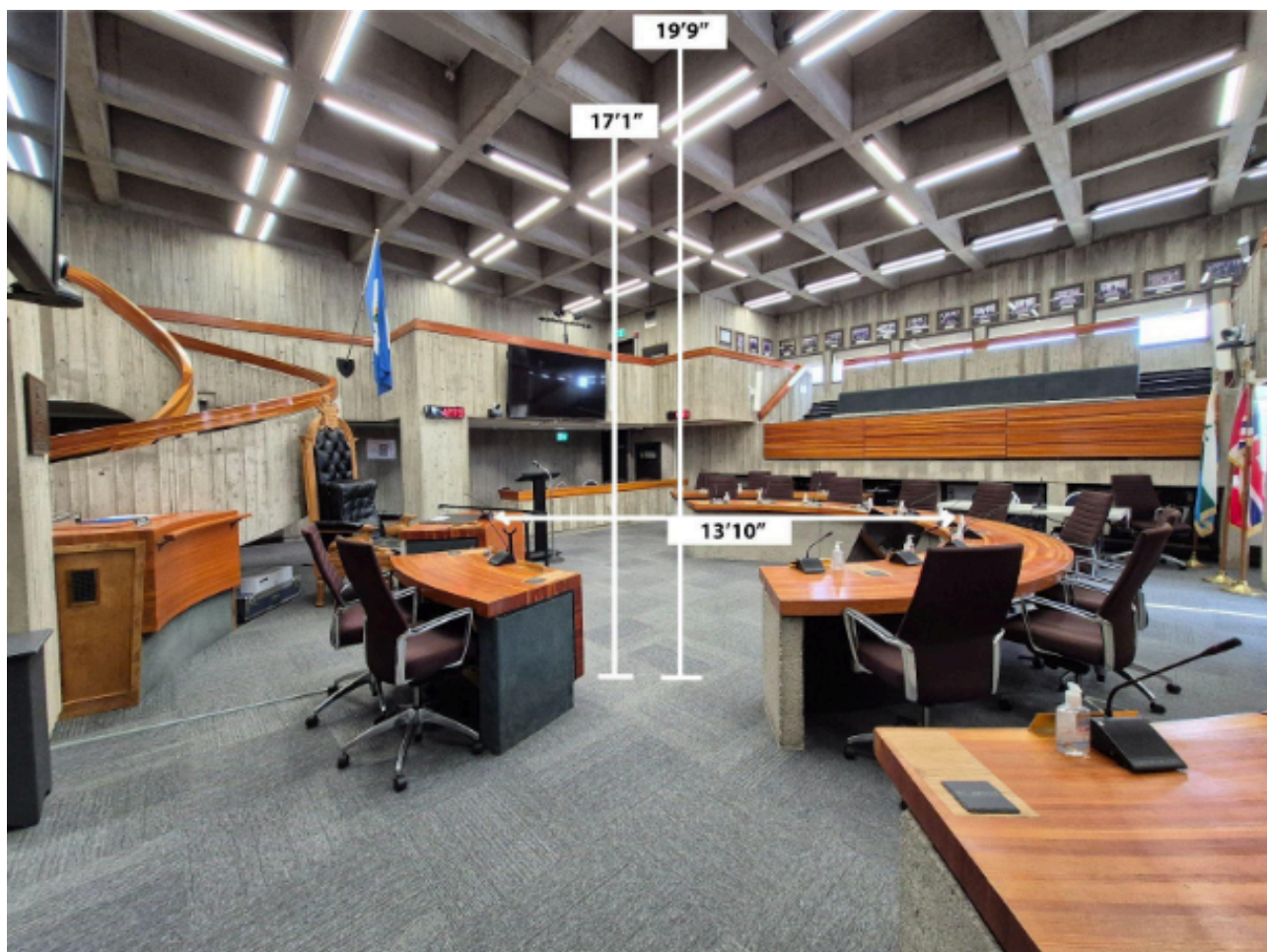


Image 1: Dimensions of cylindrical space within the Council Chamber.



Image 2: View of the Council Chamber ceiling.



Image 3: Entrance View of the Council Chamber.