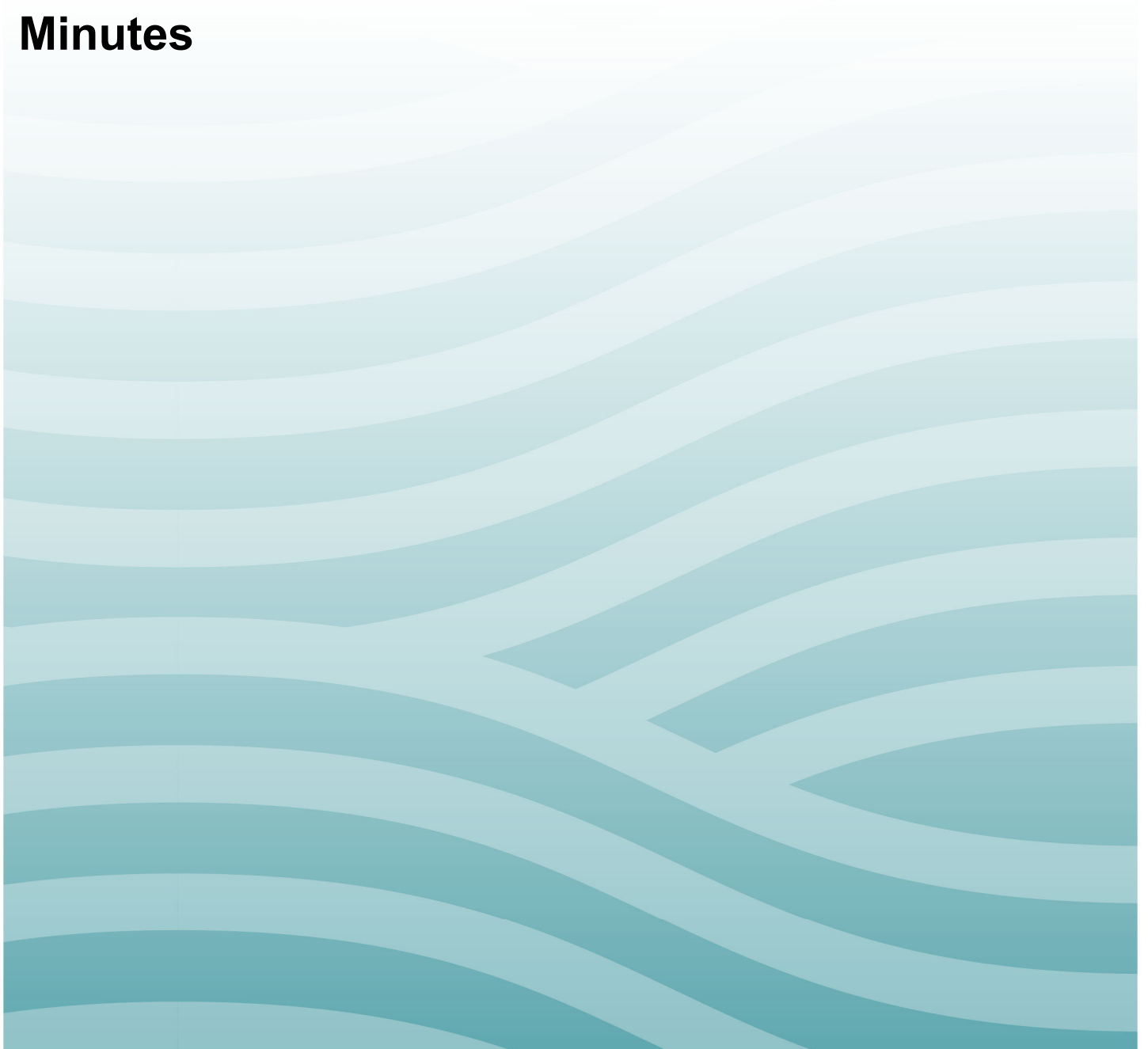




# Woollahra Small Sculpture Prize Committee

Tuesday 13 February 2024  
5.00pm

## Minutes



# Woollahra Small Sculpture Prize Minutes

**Tuesday 13 February 2024**

**Present: Councillors:** Isabelle Shapiro (Chair)  
Nicola Grieve

**Community  
Representatives:** Christopher Dawson  
Stella Downer  
Elizabeth Hastings  
Professor Emeritus Ian Howard  
Anna Waldman  
Ali Yeldham

**Staff:** Anna Legge (Gallery Administration Officer)  
Pippa Mott (Director Woollahra Gallery at Redleaf)  
Vicki Munro (Manager Community and Culture)  
Patricia Occelli (Director Community and Customer Experience)

**Others:** Nil

**Meeting opened:** 5.05pm held in person.

## 1. Opening

The Chair declared the meeting open and welcomed all those in attendance.

## 2. Acknowledgement of Country

The Chair acknowledged the traditional custodians of the land, the *Gadigal* and *Birrabirragal* people the traditional custodians of the lands upon which we meet

## 3. Apologies

An apology was received from Allison Renwick.

## 4. Declarations of Interest

Nil

## 5. Late Correspondence

Nil

## 6. Confirmation of Minutes

**Item No:** 6.1  
**Subject:** CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE WOOLLAHRA SMALL SCULPTURE PRIZE COMMITTEE HELD ON 8 AUGUST 2023  
**Author:** Pippa Mott, Director Woollahra Gallery at Redleaf  
**Purpose of the Report:** To present the minutes of the Woollahra Small Sculpture Prize Committee meeting 8 August 2023.

(Shapiro/Grieve)

**Resolved:**

THAT the minutes of the Woollahra Small Sculpture Prize Committee meeting of 8 August 2023 be received and noted.

## 7. Items for Discussion

**Item No:** 7.1  
**Subject:** WOOLLAHRA SMALL SCULPTURE PRIZE 2023 DEBRIEF AND PLANNING UPDATE FOR 2024 PRIZE  
**Author:** Pippa Mott, Director Woollahra Gallery at Redleaf  
**Purpose of the Report:** To provide a debrief of the 2023 Woollahra Small Sculpture Prize and to provide an update on planning for the 2024 Woollahra Small Sculpture Prize

**Discussion:**

**WSSP 2023 Debrief**

- The Committee was debriefed on the 22<sup>nd</sup> Woollahra Small Sculpture Prize, 2023. The Gallery Director noted the significant number of entries (610) and the diversity of artists and artworks submitted.
- Consistent with broader art world application trends, the bulk of entries were received last minute. Councillor Shapiro noted issues with the handover of the full artist list to the new Gallery Director, which resulted in a small delay in the distribution of the WSSP opening round to the full artist list.
- There were several trends of note amongst finalists: a significant increase in international interest, with a total of 19 international entries; an increase in wall-mounted and suspended works; and a strong representation of works with kinetic, electronic or durational elements. The Committee was in agreement about the importance of Gallery / Prize accommodating works that extend beyond the plinth.
- Ian Howard, Ali Yeldham, Stella Downer, and Elizabeth Hastings noted the success of curatorial strategies in terms of artwork groupings, layout and artwork didactics.
- Councillor Shapiro noted that due to an earlier event timing and thus earlier sundown, stage lighting was required. This was intense and prevented speakers from seeing and engaging with their audience. With another early opening scheduled, an effort should be made to address this.
- The Gallery Director noted that the income from the 2023 prize was lower than the previous year, however, more artworks sold (17 versus 14 in the previous year). Artworks in the \$500-\$4,500 price range seemed to be the most saleable. The Committee agreed that this reduction in value reflects overall trends in the art market and broader consumer spending patterns, but that the overall commission total was a good result,
- The Gallery Director noted the upward trend in visitation, with a 10.7% increase on 2022 visitation, and a 23.5% increase on 2021 visitation. The Committee discussed how to further improve visitation: members suggested contacting more diverse groups for tours, and sending invitations earlier. Ali Yeldham suggested that collector's circles and buying groups could be approached for the 2024 prize.
- Sponsorship was down from 2022: only 70.5% of the forecasted income was secured. The Committee noted that many possible sponsors/donors were unable to come on board due to conflicts of interest.
- Articulate PR achieved extensive media coverage across print, digital and radio.
- The Committee emphasised the success of the expanded Artist Talks event with prize finalists, and agreed that the panel approach – two artists + mediator – in thematic groupings was more successful than the previous “roaming” format.
- The Committee discussed the collection of past winning works and how/where to display this collection, noting the significant responsibility we have in caring for these assets.
- Anna Waldmann queried why the works are not shown permanently at the Gallery. Patricia Ocelli explained that this was due to limited space in the Gallery.

### **WSSP 2024 Planning Update**

- The 2024 WSSP will open on Thursday 12 September, with an earlier presentation to accommodate Council elections and the Jewish holiday, Rosh Hashanah.
- Call for entries will be staged earlier than last year – launching in April with a firm closing date of 30 June 2024.
- The Gallery Director presented a list of 28 potential judges, with the aim to select up to 6 potential judges.
- The Committee agreed that a combination of artists + industry experts is recommended for the judging panel, and emphasised the need for judges with a high profile as this will help with the promotion of the prize.
- Anna Waldmann noted that artists want to be judged by their peers, so artist participation will be key. This view was supported by Stella Downer.
- The Committee agreed with the list of 28, and requested the addition of Penelope Benton (Executive Director of NAVA) and Vivienne Webb.

- The Committee noted keen interest in Patricia Piccinini, Ramesh Mario Nithiyendran and Callum Morton.
- The Committee would like to keep the proposed list of judges as a rolling list for future years.
- The Gallery Director discussed sponsorship with the committee, noting the 2024 target is \$30,000, with sponsorship being sought from mid-March to 30 June 2024.
- The Committee discussed some strategies to reach this target:
  - Approaching previous/loyal sponsors first and then opening up to a broader network;
  - Emphasising exclusivity - e.g., exclusive provisions for sponsors (hosting exclusive/private events in the Gallery); and
  - Creating competition and urgency (e.g., approaching more than one per industry)
- Manager, Community and Culture advised that the key components of the 2024 Sponsorship Proposal would remain the same as for the previous year.
- Anna Waldmann suggested approaching auction houses for possible sponsorship.
- Patricia Occelli discussed DGR status, clarifying arrangements for Donors – donations are tax-deductible and donors can be acknowledged but do not receive the same benefits as sponsors. This information will be added to the 2024 Sponsorship Proposal.

**(Shapiro/Grieve)**

**Resolved:**

THAT the Committee

- A. Received and noted the Woollahra Small Sculpture Prize 2023 Debrief and 2024 Planning Update report.
- B. Requested the Gallery Director to circulate an online poll for the selection of up to 6 potential judges for the upcoming 2024 Woollahra Small Sculpture Prize, by Sunday 18 February, 2024.
- C. Requested the 2024 WSSP Sponsorship Package be updated and circulated to the Committee, prior to distribution to potential sponsors.

---

## **8. General Business**

Nil.

## **9. Advisings**

Nil.

## **10. Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for early May 2024.

---

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 6.20pm.