

Art on the Underground

UITP Cultural Actions Award Application April 2009

Introduction

This document outlines the Vision, Mission and key objectives for the **Art on the Underground** programme as a way of introducing it for submission for a UITP Cultural Actions Award.

The programme has now been in place since 2000 but builds on London Underground's powerful brand heritage which has been borne out of its association with the highest quality art and design that has been an integral part of London Underground's brand, identity and service for over 70 years. It is this image and reputation that has made London Underground not only one of the most recognised and highly envied subterranean railways in the world but also one of the most well known brands across the globe. **Art on the Underground** is built on this heritage, demonstrating London Underground's continued investment in a relationship with art and design to maintain and develop this area of its service for the present and the future. Customer service is at the heart of London Underground's business objectives and **Art on the Underground** plays a key role in helping to deliver an enhanced journey experience for its customers.

Accompanying this document is a pdf presentation that summarises the programme's key objectives and outlines how, where, when, why and by and to whom this it is delivered. This presentation presents a selection of images that show the range and quality of projects delivered.

Art on the Underground's vision, mission and objectives

Art on the Underground commissions high calibre contemporary artworks for London Underground, directly supporting its mission to be a 'World Class Tube for a World Class City'

Our mission is to bring the very best in contemporary art to the travelling public of the city of London.

We do this through our strategically designed programme which aims to

- Surprise and delight as many LU customers as possible by
- Commissioning the world's best contemporary artists to work in a
- Broad range of geographic areas of the city of London including outer zone stations as well as
- Engaging directly with London Underground staff in the planning, development and delivery of projects that
- reflect on our distinctive and world class heritage in a contemporary, imaginative and informative way whilst
- investigating the social and architectural environment of the Tube in ways that are both
- imaginative and great value for money for our customers in order to
- positively change our customers' perception and experience of London Underground

The projects presented by the programme over the past 8 years have been presented as temporary art works in a wide range of settings. The programme is also working on a programme of permanent commissions that are part of London Underground's investment programme to upgrade the network. This programme will see new works by important and influential, globally recognised artists realised as part of the Tube network and as new cultural assets for the city of London.

Communication with passengers, how the public engages with our work

The public engages with our work via a range of strategic mechanisms -

- **Through encountering the works themselves on the network.** We have devised a number of projects models to maximise the number and ways people come across art on the network - from giving it directly to them for free, to putting it in prominent places, and by involving them in it's realisation.
- **Through encountering publicity directing them to our work or places where you can find out more.** We are adept at making use of the systems and resources available to us on the underground, for example; by taking advantage of unsold advertising spaces, by emailing our audiences and continually adding to our databases each time we produce a project. This approach extends both internally for our staff and externally for our customers and other stakeholders.
- **Through encountering projects on our website pages at www.tfl.gov.uk/art.** This site gives an up to date account of what's currently on show and what's coming up and gives access to a comprehensive archive of all our projects as well as an opportunity to leave comments, which that are published on line.
- **Through working in partnership with other organisations.** Where possible and appropriate, we work in partnership with other art organisations such as galleries, museums and art colleges in order to: maximise our audiences, benefit from reciprocal promotion of our projects and to enable the realisation of larger scale projects than we could achieve alone. For example, we are currently collaborating with Tate Britain on a project to coincide with Richard Long's major retrospective there in 2009. Other organisations that we have worked in partnership with include: Serpentine Gallery, Whitechapel Gallery, Frieze Art Projects, Royal College of Art, Royal Academy, Wimbledon School of Art.
- **We involve the public in our planning** by analysing our experience of previous projects and through information captured from them through our evaluation processes. Consequently we have shaped a number of the projects specifically around their behaviours and responses in the past, ensuring that we tailor our projects to our audience feedback whilst challenging these responses where appropriate.

Evidence of demand and responses to Art on the Underground

We evaluate the demand for and response to projects in a range of ways. This evaluative research has shown that the programme is very popular, with a growth of awareness and support from Tube users as it has developed and expanded.

Research generated by the London underground Customer Insight team shows that the work of **Art on the Underground** is one of the top six 'best things about London Underground'. The research shows that we actively and measurably improve the environment for our customers and their experience of travelling on the network.

How we reach people through our marketing activity

Wherever possible we consider each marketing opportunity equally as an exhibition opportunity. In this way, artists and artworks are at the very heart of everything we do including the communication of projects to our audiences.

Some good examples of how this has worked in the past are the Roundel Centenary project in 2008 and the Stratford Hoard commission by Alan Kane in the same year. For both of these projects, promotional material and posters carried actual artworks as a way of circulating segments of the exhibition to a wider audience, some elements of whom might not have had an opportunity to go to the actual station or site itself.

This promotional and creative material is carried across, posters, information sheets, adverts, internal and external mailings, bulletins and updates. The programme also has a dedicated section of the TfL website that is crucial for providing information and promotion of projects as well as presenting an archive and enabling interaction with our audience.

Information about each project is available at the site of presentation where people can also read about other commissions currently on view around the network.

Examples of our work

The pdf presentation accompanying this application shows images of a selected range of our recent projects.