

# Open Borders: Between Confinement and Liberation

## ARTISTS INFORMATION PACK

**EOI Deadline:** 11:59pm, Monday 8th August 2022.

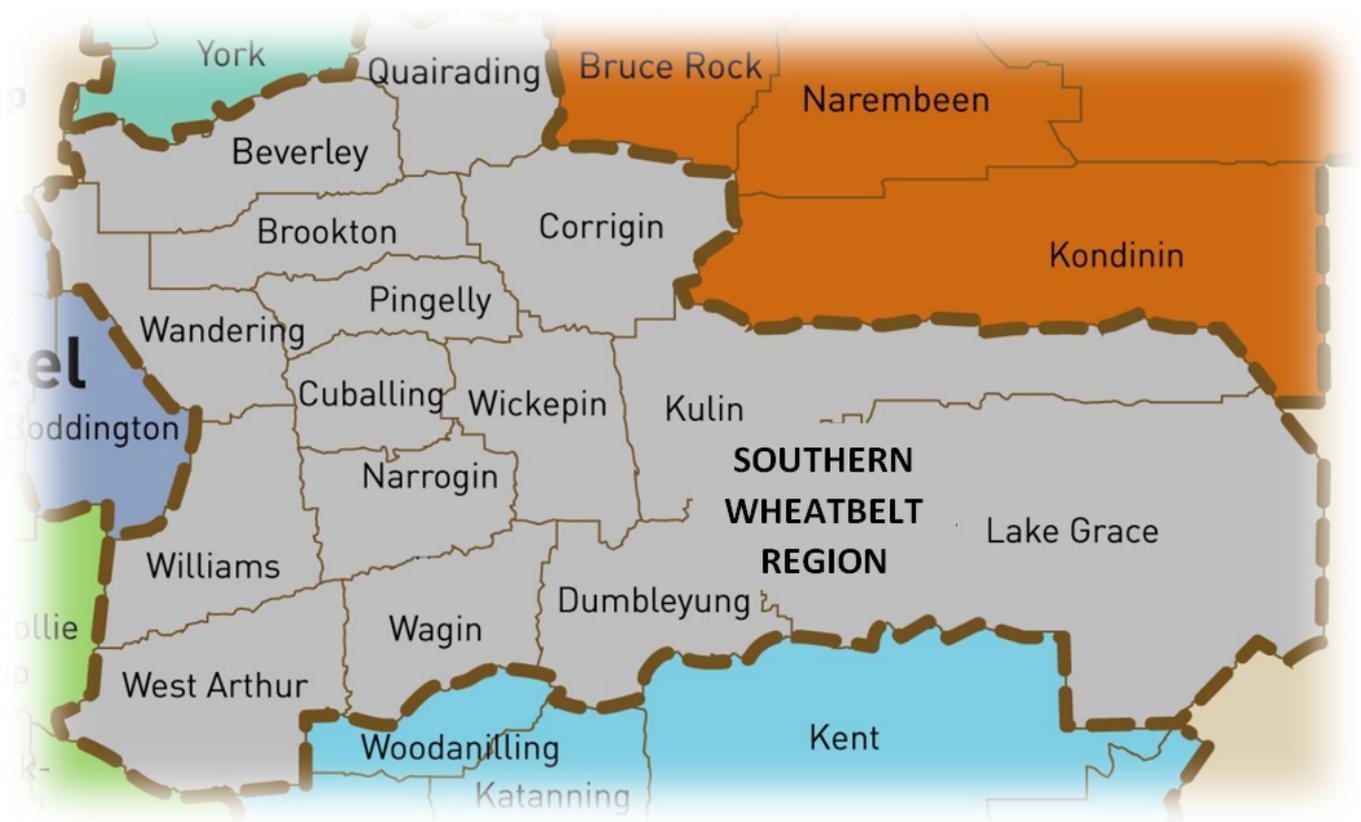
**EOI submission form can be found [here](#).**

## Call For Artists

Arts Narrogin is delighted to participate in the Open Borders Project, and to showcase a selection of our region's visual artists in an exhibition of contemporary visual art to be held at NEXIS (Narrogin Exhibition Space) from 28 January –19 February 2023.

The title of our exhibition is Open Borders: Between Confinement and Liberation.

Joint Curators of the exhibition are Casey Thornton and Ned Crossley are inviting artists with a demonstrable connection to the Southern Wheatbelt Region (see map) to submit an Expression of Interest by 11:59pm on Monday 8th August in response to the exhibition concept and guidelines below. Please note; the curators will exercise their discretion to consider EOIs received after this time, if required.



*The Southern Wheatbelt region.*

## Background

'Open Borders' is a series of 12 group exhibitions and 3 original performances held across all 9 regions of WA during 2022-23. Each event reflects the unique interests, artists and experiences of the diverse participating communities (Kununurra, Broome, Port Hedland, Gascoyne Junction, Geraldton, Carnamah, Kalgoorlie, Esperance, Ravensthorpe, Narrogin, Denmark, Northcliffe, Margaret River and Dwellingup). Interconnected through the central theme of 'Open Borders', the project aims to culminate in a survey of contemporary regional art practice at John Curtin Gallery (Perth) in September-November 2023.

Further information about the Open Borders series is on the Southern Forest Arts website [here](#).

## Curatorial Brief

Artist applicants are also urged to read the unifying curatorial brief written by Lead Curator, Annette Davis [here](#) prior to submission of an EOI. The following is taken from Annette's Brief:

- A border is a barrier which can be tangible or intangible.
- Borders are used to keep things in and to keep things out. They can be protective and they can be prohibitive.
- Borders within the mind direct thought, assumptions and conclusions.
- Borders manage behaviour.
- Borders are often managed by regulations which require evidence of authorized movement across a border.
- Borders can be contravened, overturned and broken down.
- Borders can be the site of protest.
- Borders can be permeable and impermeable.
- A border might be a clear red line on a map but it can also be shifting and nebulous, with grey areas subject to change.
- Over the past twelve months as the COVID-19 pandemic has spread, the presence of borders, and the fact that they can be closed and opened, has had innumerable impacts on our physical and psychological lives.
- International borders have been closed, not only to people arriving but during some periods, to Australian citizens leaving the country.
- State borders are closed and re-opened as State governments choose how to manage the risk of the spread of COVID-19.
- Regional borders within WA used to be accepted as a way of describing the different geographic areas of this huge state or of delineating government jurisdictions, but since 2020 they have at times become an enforceable barrier, restricting our daily lives in innumerable ways. Within regions, Indigenous communities have been protected by borders, and some towns have sought the protection of borders to keep COVID-19 out of their community."

*"With the capacity to tell us about our world and ourselves in ways that are poetic and potent – in ways that we'd never imagine – contemporary artists challenge us to understand and engage in our world. Contemporary art is always related to the time and place in which it is produced."*

Dr. Lisa Slade, Assistant Director of Artistic Programs, Art Gallery of South Australia

As observers of and commentators on their social, physical and cultural environment, and as communicators of ideas and imagination, contemporary artists are encouraged to consider and reflect on how the concept of borders relates to their life and the life of their community.

The Lead Curator and Director of the John Curtin Gallery will (where possible) visit each group exhibition to select works for the Perth-based survey exhibition.

Annette Davis  
Lead Curator  
Albany, Western Australia

## Extending the Brief

### Open Borders: Between Confinement and Liberation at NEXIS (Narrogin Exhibition Space)

The closing and opening of state borders, and the creation of new 'hard borders' between regions during the COVID19 pandemic were arbitrary acts of parliament; in the first case, the 'lock out' was enacted ostensibly to protect the health of the citizenry (never mind the economy) in the second case 'opening up' was viewed by the government as the best way to stimulate the health of the economy (never mind the citizenry). For the citizenry, closing and opening both instilled feelings and emotions across the spectrum from feeling safe to feeling trapped during the 'lockout' and from feeling liberated to feeling endangered following the 'opening up'.

Borders are a human construct, arbitrary acts of governments, drawn for political and economic expediency; lines on maps, established or erased at a whim and the stroke of a pen to differentiate what's on one side from what's on the other. Over time, a border becomes a cultural thing, there's a border zone, a sort of no man's land with its own boundary conditions. There can be border tensions, expressed or suppressed, leading to border clashes; border security forces exist to maintain the integrity and sovereignty of the states separated by the border, ostensibly to protect the inhabitants of each state. During the pandemic we've begun to think in terms of hard borders and soft borders, however they are never absolute, never totally impermeable, always there is a border region; there can be a mixing of cultures from both sides, an understanding of the other, the facilitation of trade between states.

Nowadays, crossing over human borders requires authorisation; a passport, visa or some other documentation to be legal. Otherwise if you know a secret way, it could cost you money...or maybe your life. Who gets to cross? Do you qualify?

Borders are not so obvious in nature. You don't find many hard borders in nature, sure there are edges, but permeability is more common.

How are you responding to borders now they've been declared open? Where do you sit on the continuum between Confinement and Liberation?

## Invitation to Artists

You are invited to interpret and prepare work on the theme of Open Borders: Between Confinement and Liberation for an exhibition of work in at NEXIS Narrogin Exhibition Space from 27 January 2023 to 19 February 2023

We'd like you to explore notions of borders and opening borders within your lives and that of your community and to research, investigate, consider and discuss various themes as you develop and refine ideas in the creation of the work. This may mean engaging with a person or persons or a group who rarely engages with arts projects or engaging with someone whose practice is focused on a different art form, learning from each other and potentially leading to an exciting new collaboration.

Artists may take a self-reflective approach and consider the impact of physical, political, cultural or psychological (or other) borders in their own life.

You are encouraged to consider different types of borders in the contemporary context and to make artworks that are "poetic and potent" in the words of Dr Slade."

Applicants are encouraged to approach the EOI with works that are currently in development and/or artworks still being conceived. The curators will consider EOIs from artists and collaborators at all career levels and welcome applicants from, and encourage collaborations with intergeneration, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, First Nations peoples, LGBTQIA+ practitioners and people with a lived experience of disability.

The curators retain the right to invite artists to create an artwork for the exhibition outside the EOI process, if required.

## Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated according to:

- Calibre of previous artwork
- Evidence of previous relevant experience
- Response to the Curatorial Brief
- Diversity of art forms in the exhibition
- Diversity of participating artists
- Diversity and originality of conceptual/artistic responses
- Availability of space to accommodate a range of artwork sizes

EOIs will be evaluated by the local exhibition curators, Ned Crossley and Casey Thornton, while Annette Davis (lead curator) will provide curatorial oversight. While feedback may be provided upon request, The Curators' decision will be final and no discussion will be entered into.

## Fees:

There is **no cost** to submit an EOI or participate in the exhibition.

Successful applicants will receive a Creative Development grant to assist with the costs associated with preparing your work and being part of the exhibition. The fee is dependent upon the number of artists selected. Payment of the fee will be made prior to August 31 2022.

## About the Exhibition Space And the works

NEXIS Narrogin Exhibition Space is located within the Narrogin Town Hall Complex. Information about the gallery is available [here](#). Should additional exhibition space be required, works will be exhibited in ARTS Space adjoining NEXIS.

Due to limitations of wall space and plinth size, artworks smaller than 1.5m x 1.5m x 1.5m are encouraged. Larger works may be considered by the curators, however artists wishing to exhibit larger works must consult with the curators before mid-November.

Artworks can be in any material or medium from traditional to contemporary and ephemeral to permanent; in 2D (including but not limited to painting, prints, drawing, photography), or 3D (including but not limited to sculpture, ceramics, jewellery, woodwork, papercraft).

Artists must coordinate delivery of their artworks to and from the gallery. Artists are responsible for insurance of their artwork during development, transit and throughout the exhibition.

## Indicative Timeline:

Selection of artists will be based on an initial Expression of Interest (EOI) process. The process will be as follows:

July 2022	EOI advertised, invitations sent
8 August 2022	EOI deadline
31 August 2022	Selected artists and unsuccessful artists notified. Invitation to apply for Creative Development Grant
24 September 2022	Selected artists invited to attend the gallery for site visit and briefing session.
24 September 2022	Payment of Creative Development fee.
August - December	Creative Development
26 November 2022	Photography of finished artworks
1 December 2022	Deadline for images, artist statements, final artwork information and bios for digital catalogue
22 - 23 January 2023	Delivery of artwork to NEXIS
24 - 27 January 2023	Exhibition installation
28 January 2023	Exhibition opening event
19 February 2023	Exhibition take down and artworks collected

## Contact:

Please contact Curator Ned Crossley ([wandoo@treko.net.au](mailto:wandoo@treko.net.au)) or Casey Thornton ([casey@artsnarrogin.com.au](mailto:casey@artsnarrogin.com.au)) for more information.