

## OBIAA 2023 AWARDS SUBMISSION

<b>Contact Name:</b> Dawn Pond	<b>Pillar &amp; Category:</b>
<b>BIA/Organization:</b> Peterborough Downtown Business Improvement Area (DBIA)	<b>Time period:</b> 2022-23
<b>Entry title:</b> The Illustrated Boro	
<b>Project description:</b> <i>The Illustrated Boro Project encourages people to look at The Boro businesses through the eyes of 5 local creatives, and discover more about downtown culture. Illustrations, stories, and poems were created about 10 downtown businesses and these were featured in an Art Show and on our social media platforms.</i>	

### NEED OR OPPORTUNITY

Provide some basic background on your BIA/organization and some context around how it operates,

Peterborough's Downtown Business Improvement Area (DBIA) aims to continuously improve the experience of all who live, work, and visit downtown by creating and championing initiatives that make Peterborough's downtown a unique destination, inclusive public space, and strong economic centre. The DBIA represents about 400 businesses in the downtown core. Our main focus is promoting and beautifying the downtown as well as assisting and advocating on behalf of the downtown businesses.

Our organization and initiatives are guided by 4 key pillars of our strategic plan:

**Be Champions, Be Ready, Be Advocates, and Be Ready.**

and recent relevant internal or external issues or events that have impacted the organization.

In the past, the DBIA has been relatively unsuccessful in making strong connections with certain sectors of our local arts community. This was not for lack of effort and for unknown reasons, however, Strategically the DBIA aims to build strong relationships with the downtown arts community.

Most importantly, describe why this initiative was undertaken – what strategic goal was it addressing for your organization/community?

**Be Champions** guides our efforts in keeping downtown beautiful while enhancing public perception of Peterborough's downtown as an entertainment destination, a place to do business, and a place to live.

**Be Partners** describes our desire to foster vibrant relationships within our community that strategically improve downtown as an economic, cultural, and environmental leader for our city.

### DIRECTIONS

- Write your entry/plan in this Word doc and keep it for your files.
- Provide required information for all 5 sections
- Less is more; keep your application to no more than four pages in Word format
- Drop your 1-6 supplementary materials into this document and upload it to the online form
- Tell the judges a great story
- Use the judges' evaluation form to understand what is required in each section and the Marks of a Winner resource to understand what evaluators will be looking for
- Delete this text box!

What was the need or opportunity that presented itself that only this project could address?

Along with the need for a stronger relationship with our arts community, we also saw the negative impacts that the covid-19 restrictions caused artists and makers. The Illustrated Boro project gave us an opportunity to work with a selection local artists, hold an art show as part of the First Friday Art Crawl, and inspire businesses to work with local artists for merchandise, promotional materials, and store décor. The project offered an unique opportunity to not only enliven our social media pages with interesting visual elements but also highlight our downtown culture in a very meaningful way while also supporting and highlighting our local artistic talent.

In other words, why now and why this project.

The Illustrated Project was a fresh approach to improving the online personality and in turn improving the perception of our downtown core. It was also perfect timing to provide extra support to local artists as they recover after the Covid-19 pandemic. It was time to connect, the businesses, artists, the community, and the DBIA. It's amazing what can happen when we get together!

## AUDIENCE

Describe who your main audience was for the project;

The primary Boro social media audience is consumer-facing typically female dominated, between 35-50 years old. They are health conscious and value supporting small business over big box stores. High-value downtown users who frequent local markets, engage in active transportation and view downtown as a primary destination for shopping, dining and entertainment.

Audience Segmentation

- Downtown residents & white-collar

Workers

- Toronto expats (residing in Ptbo/area)
- Empty nesters
- Young urbanites
- Regional visitor

how you came to decide on this audience;

This audience profile was formed based on psychographic data for the population living in this location. We partner with Peterborough and The Kawarthas Tourism and use resources such as 66 faces of Canada and Environics Analytics.

Other audiences:

We also reach over 100 people during our in-person art show that would part of the Monthly First Friday Art Crawl in downtown Peterborough. The people attend these art crawls are patrons of the arts and are huge supporters of our local artists and attending shows and purchasing pieces.

## GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

**Goal:** The Illustrated Boro project inspires business and artist collaborations and celebrates our downtown community in a new way.

### Engagement Objectives:

1. At least 50 people attend the in-person art show launch of The Illustrated Boro project.
2. At least 20 postcards sets were sold at the art show (proceeds 100% for artists).
3. At least an average of 50 people interact with our social media posts featuring the artwork.
4. At least one of the businesses will choose to work with an artist for a spin-off project (i.e merch)

## IMPLEMENTATION

Describe how you developed, created, implemented or rolled out your project.

The DBIA's Placemaking Project Manager presented a proposal of the Illustrated Boro (a ten-artwork collection, highlighting 10 downtown businesses, that will create engaging social media content, an art show, and hopefully further art collaborations) to the DBIA Marketing Committee and it was well received and the approval was given to move towards with the project. Therefore, we proceeded to add this project to a list of 2022 projects that we were applying to have funded through RTO's Tourism Relief Fund. We were successful in receiving the funding and proceeded to hire 5 talented local artists with experience in illustration. Our budget, fully covered by the Tourism Relief Fund, was \$12,000.

We worked with professional artists, all with a very good local reputation. Many of whom have international success.

Kathryn Durst, worked with Sir Paul McCartney of his series of children's books.

Jason Wilkins, has worked with McDonalds, Adidas and other international companies.

Julii McMillan has worked all over the world with Disney and Cirque Du Soleil.

Brooklin Holbrough has worked with Toronto placemaking projects, local placemaking projects, and she's Illustrated a Canadian children's book.

Samantha Chuisolo is an award-winning Editorial Illustrator who has had her work published in Self Love Club, Applied Arts Magazine, and on Collective Arts cans.

We predicted encountering challenges with perception. We thought businesses may think we were 'picking favourites' when it came to the selection of businesses to feature through this project. To tackle this, and because we thought it would be more meaningful and result in better artwork, we left it to the artists to choose which businesses they felt most connected or drawn to. We did not receive any negative feedback regarding this project so I'd say that's a success. We believe this project is unique and innovative as it took our social media pages goal of highlighting our downtown businesses and culture, and found a new way to tell these stories, while combining both the business and art worlds. This project was available to the public via social media, our website blog, printed postcards, and a live art show. All of these methods to view the art, hopefully gave everyone the chance to enjoy it.

## RESULTS

1. Over 100 people attend the in-person art show launch of The Illustrated Boro project.
2. Over 45 postcards sets were sold at the art show (proceeds 100% for artists).
3. Over 100 people interact with our social media posts featuring the artwork on average.
4. 3 of the featured businesses chose to work with an artist for a spin-off project (T shirts, prints, postcards)

**SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS**

Blog Post with Artwork and writings: [The Illustrated Boro - The Boro](#)

Media Articles about the Project:

[Downtown Peterborough shops reimagined through the eyes of five local artists | kawarthaNOW](#)

[Five Local Artists Reimagine Downtown Peterborough Through The Illustrated Boro Project — PtboCanada](#)

[Photos: Peterborough artists portray downtown businesses through the Illustrated Boro Project | The Star](#)