



THE GREAT VANCOUVER ISLAND LAND GRAB

— *Travelling Exhibit* —

CALL FOR ARTISTS

The [Vancouver Island Local History Society](#) and the [Nanaimo Museum](#) have partnered to develop a travelling exhibit about the history and legacy of the Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway land grants. The development team seeks one or more First Nation artists to work with them to develop artworks for the exhibit.

Background: The Land Grab

In August 1883, coal baron Robert Dunsmuir secured a contract to construct the Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway in exchange for nearly 2 million acres of land on which First Nations had been living for millennia. These land grants, also known as the Great Land Grab, now primarily in the hands of private forestry companies, are notable for their exclusion from Crown land. This has significantly affected treaty negotiations for First Nations communities, such as the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group.

Travelling details

We have partnered with the Vancouver Island Regional Library to tour the exhibit. The exhibit is expected to launch at the Nanaimo Harbourfront Library in 2026, and will travel the library system through to 2027. The exhibit will also be displayed at the Nanaimo Museum.

Who can apply?

We welcome applications from First Nations artists who are interested in collaborating with us to tell the Great Land Grab story.

Preference will be given to artists from First Nations whose territory is impacted by the E&N Railway Land Grant on Vancouver Island.

Exhibit approach

Designed to engage diverse audiences, the exhibit critically examines the intersection of colonial land policies, environmental impacts, and ongoing socio-political challenges. Through archival images, interpretive panels, and interactive displays, the exhibit invites visitors to connect the historical narrative to current issues of land use, First Nations land rights, and sustainable futures. Art is one of many ways we are bringing First Nation perspectives into the telling of the Great Land Grab story.

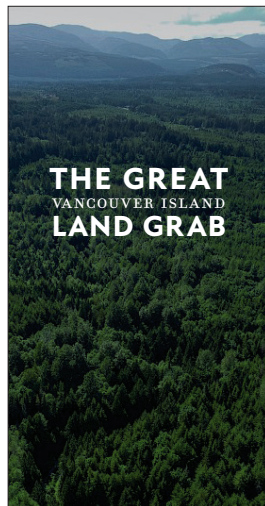
THE ARTWORK OPPORTUNITIES

There are four opportunities for First Nation artwork to be incorporated into the exhibit. Artists can apply to produce one artwork or all of them. Please indicate in your application which artwork(s) you are interested in producing.

1. Intro panel / Title artwork

An illustration that communicates the concept of the Great Land Grab. The concept will be developed with the chosen artist. This illustration, or portions of it, will be used to introduce the exhibit and may be produced in multiple formats (title panel of the exhibit, title artwork for the video, promoting the exhibit online). The artist will support efforts of the design team to apply the artwork across these various formats.

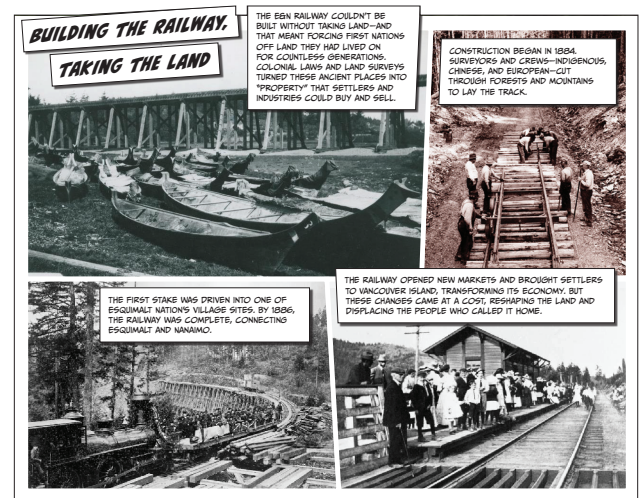
Print size: 48" wide x 92" tall



2. Illustrated interpretive panels

Four interpretive panels will be presented in a graphic-novel style. The panels will break down complex themes into visually engaging narratives that resonate with a wide audience, including youth and families, while maintaining the gravity of the Great Land Grab story. The artist will work with initial concepts from the design team. There will be approximately 4 to 6 illustrations per panel

Print size: 48" wide x 36" tall



Mockups by Double Dare Design and Kiko Communications

3. Illustrated map of the Land Grant

Illustrations to accompany a historic map of the E&N Land Grant at the center of the exhibit. This could be a series of small illustrations spread across the map or one big illustration on top of the map. The concept will be developed with the chosen artist.

Print size: Table top 45" wide x 81" long

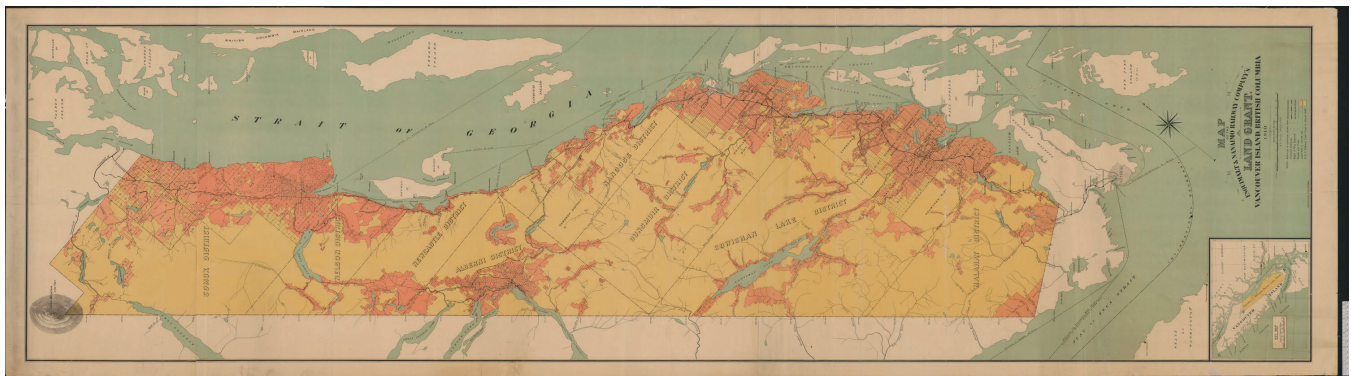
4. One contemplative illustration

An artwork to accompany the contemplative space in the exhibit offers visitors a place to sit and reflect. The concept will be developed with the chosen artist. See mockup above.

Print size: 48" wide x 36" tall



Mockups by Double Dare Design and Kiko Communications



Historic map of the E&N Land Grant from 1910

THE ARTIST'S WORK

During the production of the artwork, the artist(s) will:

- Work with the design team, including a historian, a creative director, a graphic designer and an exhibit designer.
- Deliver initial drafts of the artwork for review and coordination with the team, as well as up to 2 revisions of the final artwork.
- Provide art work in a digitized format (high resolution image files or vector files) suitable for large scale prints.
- Participate in team meetings with the exhibit design team to ensure seamless integration of all works into the final exhibit product.

Notes:

- The design team will provide communication objectives and interpretive content for the artist(s) to work with. The design team wishes to collaborate with the artist(s) on ways to achieve the objectives.

Artist fees

We are looking for professional artists to take part in this opportunity. Selected artist(s) will be paid fairly, following professional standards.

Copyright

The selected artist(s) will retain the copyright to their work and grant the Vancouver Island Local History Society with a perpetual, non-transferable, non-exclusive license to reproduce the work for the Great Vancouver Island Land Grab exhibit.

Schedule

Call for Artist Schedule:

Publish Call for artists: February 3, 2025
Deadline for applications: February 28, 2025
Announce finalist(s): March 7, 2025

Artwork Delivery Schedule:

Start Contract: March 10, 2025
1st Draft: End of April 2025
2nd Draft: End of June 2025
Final Draft: End of September 2025
Print ready art: End of October 2025

Questions and more information

We have additional information to share about the project. Interested artists are encouraged to reach out for more details about the exhibit.

Feel free to email us with questions at:
land_grab_artwork@doubledaredesign.ca

Need help with your application?

If you need support with your application, please reach out to:

Aimee Greenaway, Nanaimo Museum
aimee@nanaimomuseum.ca
250-753-1821

The Nanaimo Museum will also assist the selected artist(s) by providing access to scanners, printers, and other resources to help with the completion and delivery of their artwork. In your application, please let us know what we can do to help.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Send applications to: land_grab_artwork@doubledaredesign.ca
Email subject line: **Great Vancouver Island Land Grab Artist Application**
Application deadline: **4:00 pm PST on February 28, 2025**
Application format: **One PDF document. File name should contain the artist's name.**

In a SINGLE PDF document, please include:

MANDATORY REQUIREMENT	GUIDELINES
Tell us why this project interests you and how you create your artwork. Share your creative process and let us know what support you may need along the way.	Up to 200 words. Note: we are not looking for visual concepts in your application.
Provide good quality digital images of similar works and/or illustration style, including detailed information for each artwork.	Up to 5 artworks, 2 images per artwork. Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Title• Year Produced• Size
Provide prices for the artwork(s). Artists are invited to apply to produce one or more artworks. (Eg: you can choose to apply to make art for the introductory illustrations but not the graphic novel illustrations.)	Indicate which illustrations you wish to work on and provide a price for each item on a separate line. Include applicable taxes. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction / title artwork• 4 graphic novel panels• Illustrated map artwork• Contemplative space artwork
Artist's curriculum vitae, including Nation(s) of origin, and preferred media.	Up to 2 pages Include your contact information

Artwork Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed by a panel of staff from the Vancouver Island Local History Society, the Nanaimo Museum and Double Dare Design. A selection of one or more artists will be made by March 7, 2025. Sending an application is not a guarantee of being selected to produce an artwork. All artists will be contacted regarding the status of their application by March 14th, 2025.

