



MOBILIER NATIONAL

# Call for projects

Design of two models for the creation and weaving  
of two monumental tapestries for  
Saint-Peter's Cathedral of Beauvais in collaboration  
with the Manufacture nationale de  
Beauvais - Mobilier National



**MINISTÈRE  
DE LA CULTURE**

*Liberté  
Égalité  
Fraternité*

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# About the project

## Two tapestries to celebrate the 800th anniversary of Saint-Peter's Cathedral of Beauvais, to be woven by the Manufacture nationale de Beauvais - Mobilier National

To mark the 800th anniversary of Saint-Peter's Cathedral of Beauvais, the Hauts-de-France Regional Directorate for Cultural Affairs (DRAC), the Oise Department, the Beauvaisis urban community, the city of Beauvais and the diocese of Beauvais, Noyon and Senlis have entrusted the Mobilier National with the production and deposit of two tapestries woven at the Manufacture nationale de Beauvais, as well as coordinating the call for projects inviting artists to submit their creations.

Saint-Peter's Cathedral of Beauvais is a masterpiece of gothic art, and has been listed as a historic monument since 1840. To celebrate its restoration and the laying of its foundation stone 800 years ago, the commissioners would like to call on an artist to design two models for two tapestries that will then be woven at the Manufacture nationale de Beauvais using the basse-lice technique.

The purpose of this call for projects is to select an artist in order to purchase two designs for the creation of two tapestries, as well as two enlargements required to weave the tapestries and exhibit them on-site. During the renovation work, the cathedral will remain open to the public, with partial closures to meet the worksite's needs.

## Purpose and inspiration

The theme of the tapestries is inspired by the setting of the cathedral. The cathedral's unique character, as well as its liturgical and theological purpose, must guide the creative approach. Thus, the elevation of the vaults and the placement of the tapestries on the north and south pillars led to the choice of format, to the thematic expression of the project, and to the dialogue between the two tapestries on either side of the choir.

The spiritual expectations of the commissioners are expressed by the diocese as follows:



*The divine light entering the sanctuary leans towards the earth, while the elevation of the vaults leads us towards heaven. In a descending and ascending movement, heaven and earth meet. On either side of the choir, framing the altar where heaven and earth are reconciled in the sacrifice of the cross, the tapestries, in a symbolic and representational language, express the movement of redemption:*

- *On the north pillar, overhanging the cathedra (place of teaching) and the ambo (where the Gospel is proclaimed), God's arrival in Revelation, the dialogue between heaven and earth (Covenants, Jacob's ladder...), the Incarnation and the descent of the Holy Spirit.*
- *On the south pillar, a path back to the Father, the Word made flesh having accomplished its mission: the ascension and elevation of Man to the new heavens, the Celestial Jerusalem and its procession of saints.*

## The Mobilier National

Support for craftsmanship and creation since the 17th century, the Mobilier National's mission is to ensure the conservation and restoration of its collections, which are unique in the world, and to perpetuate and pass on exceptional savoir-faire.

As a major heritage center, this institution is also a major contributor to contemporary creation and the promotion of French decorative arts. The Gobelins and Beauvais manufactures are specialized in tapestry, the Manufacture de la Savonnerie in rug-making, and the Puy-en-Velay and Alençon workshops in lace-making. The Atelier de Recherche et de Création - ARC - promotes creation and contemporary design in France. Seven restoration workshops specialize in wood, metal and textiles. The Mobilier National is a State-owned administrative establishment attached to the French Ministry of Culture.

## The Manufacture nationale de Beauvais

The Manufacture de Beauvais, founded in 1664 on the road to Flanders to meet the demands of a private clientele, reached its pinnacle in the 18th century. It uses the basse-lice technique exclusively, weaving on horizontal looms.

This technique involves stretching a cotton warp on a horizontal loom. All warp threads are wrapped around odd and even numbered heddles connected to treadles. These treadles are used to cross the threads required for weaving. The weft is made using a wooden "flute" loaded with wool, silk, cotton or linen.... which is woven between the warp threads. The licier sits facing the loom, with the heddles placed beneath him, hence the name "basse lice" (low heddle). He works on the reverse side, following the pattern. The bas licier checks the right side of his weaving by sliding a small mirror in between the warp threads. All tapestries bear the Manufacture monogram "MBN", which stands for Manufacture-Beauvais-Nationale.

The manufacture is composed of two workshops, one in Paris, the other in Beauvais. The former Manufacture de Beauvais burned down in June 1940, and was transferred to Les Gobelins, before partially relocating to Beauvais in 1989. The two tapestries for Saint-Peter's Cathedral of Beauvais will therefore be woven at the newly relocated Manufacture de Beauvais.

# Project commissioners

## The Regional Directorate of Cultural Affairs (DRAC) of Hauts-de-France

The French government, owner of Saint-Peter's Cathedral of Beauvais since the French Revolution, is taking numerous measures to ensure the conservation, safety and security of the building and its furnishings. Since 2022, the Hauts-de-France Regional Department of Cultural Affairs (DRAC) has been carrying out a major restoration initiative, amounting to over 17 million euros, on this exceptional heritage site. This decentralized service of the French Ministry of Culture, placed under the authority of the regional prefect, carries out its missions from the Lille and Amiens sites, as well as through the Departmental architectural and heritage units (UDAP), located in each department.

To celebrate the 800th anniversary of the Gothic edifice in 2025, the French government, in association with its partners and in close collaboration with the cathedral's clergy, commissioned two tapestries from the Mobilier National. The goal was to bring contemporary art to as many people as possible, to enrich the national heritage and to highlight the arts and crafts.

## The Oise Department

Every day, the Oise Departmental Council works alongside the 820,000 inhabitants of the Oise Department. From early childhood services to tele-assistance, as well as the management of secondary schools, the organization of cultural events and support for associations, the Department supports the people of Oise on a daily basis. This is particularly true in rural areas, where it has set up a network of reception points and relays to ensure local public services and territorial solidarity. Every day, 3,300 men and women in 125 different professions are mobilized to serve the people of Oise.

## **The Beauvaisis urban community and the city of Beauvais**

The city of Beauvais and the Beauvaisis urban community are keen to position the 800th anniversary of the cathedral as the major event of the 2025 cultural year. As a result, the two local authorities are piloting a working group focused on local events, aiming to bring together all partners - cultural, associative, national education and youth - as well as social players, to work together on a radiant, sustainable project. Awarded the "Ville et Pays d'art et d'histoire" label in 2012, Beauvais is deeply attached to the art of tapestry, a skill that has made Beauvais and the Beauvaisis famous since 1664. During the Second World War, all the city's collections were destroyed, as were the facilities of the Manufacture Nationale de Tapisserie.

Since then, Beauvais has endeavored to re-establish links with its tapestry-making past, to which its inhabitants are particularly attached, by working to bring the manufacture back to its territory and by promoting this textile heritage (exhibitions, deposit by the Mobilier National in the town hall, etc.). The creation of two tapestries for Saint-Peter's Cathedral of Beauvais, to mark the cathedral's 800th anniversary, is a further step in this public initiative, and will ensure the event's place in the region's history and heritage.

## **The diocese of Beauvais, Noyon and Senlis**

The diocese of Beauvais Noyon et Senlis covers the Oise Department, with a population of over 800,000. Until the French Revolution, the Oise had three Bishoprics: Beauvais, Noyon and Senlis. It wasn't until 1822 that the diocese of Beauvais took on its current form. Today, the Catholic Church in Oise consists of 30 parishes, 25 religious communities and 60 active priests.

# Technical details

The tapestries will be identical in size, 1.60 m wide by 7 m high, and will be hung on either side of the choir on the two monumental pillars to the south and north, 2.50 m from the floor.

The sequencing of the 800th anniversary celebrations, combined with the restoration of the cathedral and the weaving of the tapestries, will lead to the delivery of two designs by the selected artist, resulting in the production of :

- Two models (enlargements) on a 1:1 scale for the work of the liciers,
- Two 1:1 scale representations (support to be defined; printed tarpaulin, textile tarpaulin...) for their exhibition in the cathedral.





# Entry requirements

- This call for projects is open to artists or artist collectives. Each artist is required to provide a professional guarantee (Maison des artistes or AGESEA certificate, SIRET number, or foreign equivalent).
- There are no age or nationality restrictions.
- Artists may enter alone or in groups, and collaborations are accepted (artists' collective made up of individuals).



# Process and procedures

## **Phase 1 : pre-selection of five artists**

**December 12, 2023 - April 2, 2024**

December 12, 2023:

- Launch of the call for projects by the Mobilier National and the commissioners: the DRAC Hauts-de-France, the Hauts-de-France region, the Oise Department, the Beauvaisis urban community, the city of Beauvais and the diocese of Beauvais, Noyon and Senlis.

March 26, 2024 at midnight:

- Submission of applications.

April 2, 2024:

- The jury selects 5 candidates on the grounds of the proposals received and the assessments made by the jury members following consultation of the digital files. These five proposals will be considered the most relevant, in terms of artistic sensibility in context with the architecture of the site and its liturgical and theological purpose,
- The result of the pre-selection of the five artists chosen by the jury committee 1 will be notified to the candidates.



## **Phase 2 : selection of the laureate**

**April 2, 2024 - June 17, 2024**

April 2 to June 2, 2024:

- Discussions with teams from the Manufacture nationale de Beauvais and the Mobilier National, and with those of the project partners, as well as a visit to the cathedral destined to house the two tapestries organized by appointment during the fourth week of January 2024. This will enable the five preselected artists to refine their artistic project for phase 3.
- The five selected artists or artists' collectives will be compensated and will produce detailed sketches (handwritten or digital) of the two model drafts.

June 2, 2024 at midnight:

- Deadline for entries

June 17, 2024:

- The five selected artists will audition with the jury and each will present their artistic proposal in 20 minutes. The jury will deliberate and announce the selected artist or collective in the afternoon.

## **Phase 3: selection of the winner and commitment to the contract**

**June 17 to September 17, 2024**

June 17 to September 17, 2024:

- The two cardboard models will be commissioned in the same size as the two final tapestries and in a maximum format of 2 meters high.
- Delivery of the models on June 17, enabling the creation of two 1:1 scale enlargements:
  - one for the liciers (cartons)
  - the other for intermediate display, pending weaving of the tapestries by the Manufacture nationale de Beauvais.

## **Jury composition**

The juries for phases 1 and 2 of the call for projects are made up of the same people:

- 7 ex officio members
  - 2 members from the Mobilier National
  - 1 member from the DRAC Hauts-de-France
  - 1 member from the Oise Department
  - 1 member from the town of Beauvais
  - 2 members of the diocese of Beauvais, Noyon and Senlis
  - 5 experts in textile and contemporary art
- 2 non-voting liciers will take part in the jury 1 and 2 commissions.



## **Award criteria**

The selection criteria used by the jury committee will include the following:

- Compliance with the terms of reference
- Relevance to the commission's theme
- Suitability for its liturgical and theological purpose
- Appropriateness to the cathedral's architectural space
- Coherence of the overall proposal and harmony of the various elements
- Aesthetic, symbolic and plastic qualities
- Feasibility of textile art interpretation and production lead times

# Documents to be submitted

The documents to be delivered take the form of a file containing the following elements:

## Phase 1 : pre-selection of five artists

Candidates are required to send an artistic portfolio and a descriptive statement of intent illustrated with a first sketch in digital format, in which they present their artistic sensibility to the project in an architectural, liturgical and theological context.

Required documents in editable digital format:

- Artist's CV and digital portfolio.
- A concept note in French on the project (maximum 2,500 characters including spaces): aims, objectives, solution and consideration of its liturgical and theological purpose.
- A digital sketch (drawing, photos, collage, painting, watercolor, etc.).
- Candidate's full contact details: postal address, telephone number, e-mail address, website, also to appear in the body of the e-mail.

Incomplete or off-topic documents will be disqualified, and no response will be given.

## Phase 2 : selection of the laureate

Required documents:

- A statement of conceptual intent for the project (maximum 2500 signs including spaces): aims, objectives, solution and consideration of the aspect of its liturgical and theological destination.
- A pre-project: detailed sketches (handwritten or digital), essays, artwork, models, images of the space in question, with a view to the candidate's audition before the jury commission 2.

# Submission of applications

## Phase 1 : pre-selection of five artists

The application, including all required documents, must be sent by e-mail in the form of a digital file of less than 7 MB in size, or a link to this digital file, by midnight on January 21 at the latest, to the following address:  
communication.mobilier@culture.gouv.fr

The application file should be named as follows:

cathedraledebeauvais\_nomducandidat

The model application form is attached in Appendix 1. The note of intent is described in the previous point.

## Phase 2 : selection of the laureate

The pre-selected candidates will be requested to complete their application by sending the documents listed in the previous point phase 2 no later than midnight March 25 (date as postmark) to the following address:

Mobilier National  
Appel à projets cathédrale de Beauvais  
1, rue Berbier du Mets 75013 Paris

The submitted elements will be kept in the archives of the tapestry project for Saint-Pierre de Beauvais cathedral.

The template for the application form is attached in Appendix 2.

# Criteria for compensation and acquisition of the designs by the Mobilier National



## Compensation for phase 1

Compensation of €2,500 (two thousand five hundred euros) including tax will be paid to each artist or collective who submits a pre-project in phase 2 and is not selected.

## Acquisition and transfer of rights to the two designs

On behalf of the French State, the Mobilier National acquires ownership of the two models from the selected artist for the sum of €25,000 (twenty-five thousand euros) including tax. The two designs are to be interpreted as two tapestries to be installed in Saint-Peter's Cathedral of Beauvais.

The Mobilier National reserves the right to produce eight (8) copies of the model for institutional, cultural or museum purposes. The author will not be remunerated for the production and use of these copies, in view of the Mobilier National's cultural and heritage promotion mission.

# Terms of use of the project and designs

On an ancillary basis, the Mobilier National may reproduce and represent the model and its products, free of charge, for public communication of the project and its products, and for editorial projects evoking the project and its products.

## Making of the tapestry

The Mobilier National carries out the project on behalf of the French State.

Once the model has been received, the liciers at the Manufacture de Beauvais workshops carry out a preliminary analysis of the model, in order to find a suitable technical approach for the weaving process. The workshops, in consultation with the author, will approve the adjustments and interpretations of the model.

The author undertakes to follow the entire preparatory process for weaving the tapestry. He will give his best support to the finalization of the tapestry's production elements, in particular concerning the adaptation of the tapestry model, color sampling, or the validation of tests.

The wool, and its quality will be guaranteed by the Mobilier National, which also ensures the exclusive selection of wool suppliers. The dyes will also be produced exclusively by the Mobilier National workshops.

The author may visit the workshops while the tapestry is being made, subject to the agreement of the workshop concerned.

The tests, the model and the tapestry will be the property of the Mobilier National and will be kept by the latter in its collections in such a way as to ensure the best possible conservation.



# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Sample artist application form for Phase 1 pre-selection of five artists

Application form

Mobilier National

Project name :

Surname - First name of the artist or members of the collective involved in the project :

I hereby certify that I have compiled an application file that meets the requirements.

- A professional guarantee (attestation Maison des artistes or AGESEA, SIRET number, or foreign equivalent), a CV and a digital portfolio of the artist.
- A concept note in French on the project (maximum 2500 characters including spaces), outlining the project's aims, objectives and solution, as well as its liturgical and theological purpose.
- A sketch in A4 format (drawing, photos, collage, painting, watercolor...)

Date :

Signature :

## **Appendix 2: Sample artist application form for Phase 2 selection process**

Application form  
Mobilier National

Project name :

Surname - First name of the artist or members of the collective involved in the project :

I hereby certify that I have compiled an application file that meets the requirements.

- A statement of conceptual intent in French on the project (maximum 2500 characters including spaces): aims, objectives, solution; as well as consideration of the aspect of its liturgical and theological destination.
- State of research presented: detailed sketches (hand-written or digital), essays, works, models, images of installation in space, with a view to the candidate's audition before Jury 2.

Date :

Signature :