

Open Call: Red Hook Climate Change Public Art Project

Ends on April 22, 2017

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Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI)

Temporary Public Art Commission

Budget: \$20,000

Deadline: Earth Day (April 22nd, 2017)

Open to All Professional Artists

PUBLIC ART COMMISSION

The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA), in conjunction with the Mayor's Office of Recovery and Resiliency (ORR) and Council Member Carlos Menchaca is issuing this Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI) to engage an artist or artist team (Artist) to create a temporary public artwork for the neighborhood of Red Hook, Brooklyn.

Artists are encouraged to consider some or all of the following goals for the Red Hook public art project:

- Addresses climate change and sea level rise
- Engages youth in the design or creative process
- Educates and inspires residents of Red Hook and the city in era of vast climate change challenges
- Invites social interaction and shared experience
- Resonates with people of diverse backgrounds, both within the neighborhood and beyond
- Is durable and requires little or no maintenance
- Must be located in an area that is accessible to the public

Potential locations include:

- Louis Valentino, Jr. Park and Pier (art work cannot be in the water or secured to the pier due to regulatory restrictions, but can sit on the pier)
- Coffey Park
- Open concrete area on Halleck and Columbia Street
- Department of Transportation sites (street medians, triangles)

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Red Hook is a diverse neighborhood located on the Brooklyn waterfront. It is made up of single-family homes and the Red Hook Houses. The area was particularly hard hit during Hurricane Sandy. The FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map shows a population of approximately 4,600 people in City Council district 38 currently live in the high-risk floodplain and that number is projected to grow as revised maps are developed. This is because much of the neighborhood rests on low-lying former marshland, leaving it flood-prone. The neighborhood's proximity to the harbor is ingrained in the history of this community.

Red Hook remained largely rural and undeveloped from the mid-17th century through the mid-19th century, when the construction of sheltered ports at Atlantic Basin and Erie Basin on Red Hook's waterfront turned the area into one of the busiest shipping centers in the United States. From the beginning of the Civil War to the 1940s, ships from all over the world docked at Red Hook to load and unload cargo and for repairs and maintenance. This, in turn, attracted generations of immigrants and others to the area. To house the families of area dockworkers, in 1938, NYCHA's Red Hook Houses opened—among the first public housing complexes in the city and a model that would be replicated widely elsewhere.

In the second half of the 20th century, Red Hook's fortunes began to change. With the introduction of container shipping, many of Red Hook's dock facilities suddenly became obsolete. Rapidly, businesses—and the jobs they created—left. With the decline of the maritime industry, the local economy weakened, a trend that was exacerbated by the construction of the Gowanus Expressway in 1946, which cut the neighborhood off from the rest of Brooklyn. At the same time, the area saw crime rates soar.

Over the past two decades, however, Red Hook has begun to turn around. Several factors, including community and government initiatives such as the Red Hook Community Justice Center, helped to contribute to the area's renaissance. As crime plummeted and community-based organizations increased their presence in the neighborhood, public and private investment followed. Businesses, including larger retailers, opened on and near Van Brunt Street, bringing new visitors and economic activity to the area.

However, transportation options to and through Red Hook remain limited. Red Hook lacks a subway stop, with the closest one requiring crossing heavily trafficked Hamilton Avenue. This is a particular issue for area residents who face long commutes to work. In many cases, schools, healthcare, and other key services are also not easily accessible. The limited availability of public transit also has affected a number of the local businesses that have opened in recent years, making it difficult for them to attract a large customer base.

Despite these challenges, strong local relationships and a diverse network of community-based organizations form a strong foundation for social resiliency in the neighborhood, and were able to mobilize quickly and provide meaningful, critical support for the residents and businesses after the peninsula was hit hard by Hurricane Sandy.

SUBMISSION AND SELECTION PROCESS

This competition is organized in two phases.

Phase One is a Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI) in which artists may respond with samples of past work and supplementary materials. The City, in partnership with a committee of local arts and design professionals and community representatives will review submissions to the RFEI, and at least 5 artists will be selected as finalists during an open vote at a public meeting to proceed to Phase Two of the selection process.

During Phase Two, the 5 finalists will submit full proposals. The artist selected to receive the commission will be chosen from among the Phase Two finalists and will have a total budget of \$20,000 to realize a public art project in Red Hook in partnership with the City of New York. Each finalist that participates in Phase Two, but is not selected for the commission, will receive a \$500 honorarium.

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

This RFEI is open to all professional artists or artist teams. Preferred artist qualifications include:

- Experience producing site-specific, socially-engaged, and/or public artworks
- Ability to successfully work with diverse communities and stakeholders in a creative process
- Demonstrated knowledge of the project area and local community
- Availability to complete the project within the given schedule

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All artists interested in being considered must apply through the online program at:

<https://nyculture.submittable.com/submit>

Submissions will only be accepted using this online application program. Submissions must be completed by midnight on **Earth Day (April 22nd, 2017)**.

Interested artists must submit the following application materials online as described below:

1. Statement of Interest (500 words max)

Provide a narrative description of how your art practice and process of collaboration can be translated to this project and how you might approach this project.

2. Artist's Statement (250 words max)

Provide a narrative description of your work past work and current practice, including reference to submitted work samples, as relevant.

3. Resume or CV

Provide a current resume or CV, highlighting artistic excellence, any teaching experience, community engagement work, and/or experience working with multiple stakeholders.

4. References

Provide the name, phone number and email addresses of two (2) professional references that have experience working with you as a partner or client on a creative project. Please indicate your relationship to each reference.

5. Work Samples

Provide up to 10 digital images of recent works and/or up to 3 links to video or audio with maximum lengths of 5 minutes. For literary projects, submit samples no longer than 5-10 pages of scripts, poetry, prose or other relevant materials.

6. Work Sample List

Provide a list of submitted work, including title, date, materials and dimensions, locations, and/or running times. Include 1-2 sentence descriptions as needed.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

All Artists submitting to this open call must be available during 2017 to attend meetings in New York City with the project team, as necessary.

PROJECT BUDGET AND CONTRACT

The project budget is not to exceed twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) and must include all project costs, including but not limited to the following: artist's fees, design services, community engagement, site preparation, engineering, fabrication, travel, transportation of the work to the site, insurance, permits, installation, documentation of the artwork, and contingency.

QUESTIONS

Please direct all inquiries regarding this open call to percent@culture.nyc.gov