

Upcycle St. Clair is a comprehensive, arts-based strategy that will show how creative reuse can lift an entire Rust Belt neighborhood through education, community empowerment and market-driven responses, proving that creativity is the key to Cleveland's renewal.



The Upcycle St. Clair Fellowship Program will grant fellowships to three to eight fellows over 12 months from June 2014-June 2015 in St. Clair (the Cleveland neighborhood between East 55th and Addison, centered around St. Clair Avenue).

Fellows will work on community revitalization in the areas of:

- **Communications/storytelling:** This neighborhood is rich in many ways that have not been captured or celebrated. Fellows will elevate the stories of those who live and work in St. Clair.
- **Economic development:** This strategy will bring St. Clair residents into new economic opportunities that have been demonstrated by the Cleveland Flea.
- **Community arts engagement specifically around creative reuse/upcycling:** Harnessing the creative potential in waste streams, these fellows will engage community members around upcycling and transform space.

The purpose of the fellowship program is to bring professional expertise into St. Clair to connect with existing merchants and residents, support their endeavors and goals, and engage them in the work of the Upcycle St. Clair revitalization project. Fellows will participate in professional development opportunities and special events that further their role in the development of the St. Clair neighborhood.

Fellows will receive a stipend for their work with oversight and support by staff of the CDC. Positions are not full time but fellows are asked to provide 10-20 hours toward their fellowship goals each week, with at least 40% of that time physically taking place in the St. Clair neighborhood each week of the fellowship. Each fellow position varies in scope, goals and activities; more on each is described in detail to follow.

The fellowship program is a first-time project for SCSDC and we fully anticipate that the chosen fellows will, quite simply, blow our minds. We ask that each fellow start with our goals and bring to the table their own creativity, professional expertise and passion (we'll bang out a work plan, together). We strongly believe in

putting people in the work they dream of and this fellowship program is an exciting way of providing that opportunity. Individuals who don't like pursuing dreams need not apply.

All fellows will be asked to represent St. Clair Superior CDC as an Upcycle St. Clair fellow at several community functions to be scheduled upon selection. In addition to the regular goal achievement of a given fellowship work week, fellows will collaborate with others on the Upcycle St. Clair project through:

- **Bi-weekly fellowship team meetings:** To help you align your own activities with the group
- **Monthly Upcycle St. Clair team meetings:** To serve as check-ins, support sessions, calendaring and collaboration of the awesome work that the whole team is doing
- **Brainstorm sessions with staff at SCSDC:** the existing staff members at SCSDC are experts in their work supporting the St. Clair Superior community and the fellows are experts in their own areas of work. We believe that objective perspective can be one of the strongest tools for collaborative work. These periodic meetings will create safe and supported space to introduce concepts, share community contacts, collaborate on projects, bounce ideas and discuss struggles.

The schedule for these standing meetings will be determined once the full team is in place.

Theory of change The St Clair Superior service area has been left with a legacy of vacant properties and storefronts yet is rich in history, long-term community anchors, and remains the cultural home for Cleveland's Slovenian community. In 2012, we conceived of an approach to leverage the assets in our Business Revitalization District along St Clair Avenue. The project goals – to create five to ten new, permanent retailers in previously vacant storefronts; to invest in public art; to offer small businesses grants; and to develop robust events programming - are being realized as thousands of visitors are attracted to the neighborhood every month. Driven by the momentum of the project's first phase, it was dramatically expanded into an arts-based strategy for neighborhood revitalization. Upcycle St Clair, as the combined projects are called, has garnered over \$700,000 in public support and private foundation grants, including the highly competitive ArtPlace America award, tying a historic retail district with artists' vocalized needs: affordable, publicly interactive space; clustered talent; co-location of like-minded businesses; and an ongoing marketplace that supports it all.

Our strategy for neighborhood investment supports a theory of change that is asset-based. We strive to work with our communities to reimagine resources in ways that support organic transformation from within. Where some may see vacant buildings and an impoverished community, we see opportunities for new businesses, new inclusive economic opportunity, and new life. As our neighborhood is a microcosm for the cultural and economic diversity of the city of Cleveland as a whole, we hope the successful interventions we create can form a strategy that informs other city neighborhoods

or other Rust Belt communities. As such, St Clair Superior is fast becoming a concept neighborhood, where new ideas for community revitalization are not only embraced but proven.

We believe in the generative nature of citizen engagement and we think it is the role of a community development organization to develop and support connections among residents, merchants, and large-scale collaborative opportunities. We define successful neighborhood revitalization through equal parts new audiences coming to our neighborhood AND developing ways for existing residents and merchants to thrive in place. We seek urban-minded visionaries to help reimagine the neighborhoods we serve and see not only what they are, but what they can be. Our fellows will exemplify this approach. This one-year fellowship is designed to bring new expertise into St. Clair in the areas of communications/storytelling, economic development, and upcycling. The fellowships will be launched in June and July of this summer with the upcycling fellowship beginning first.

Upcyclist fellow Request for Proposals

The upcyclist fellowship program aims to bring artists into the St. Clair neighborhood. In particular, we seek artists who reuse materials originally generated from other uses/sources and divert them from the waste stream. We define upcycling as taking a material that has been discarded and transforming it in a way that adds value and creates new audiences.

Our goals with this fellowship are:

1. To demonstrate creative solutions to waste and that there is value in materials other people might not see as valuable. In a community that has been devalued, this is a key message and demonstrating it visually is a strong way to connect to our audience.
2. To teach upcycling to people who may have never done this kind of art before.
3. To beautify St. Clair with a visual presence that communicates that art and upcycling are strategies for this neighborhood's vibrancy.
4. To support the launch of the Upcycle Parts Shop, Cleveland's first creative reuse center, based in St. Clair and opening in June 2014.

With these goals in mind, we seek strong candidates as our upcyclist fellows. We are able to provide a monthly stipend of \$1,500 and a small supply budget for three to eight fellows who will be chosen for one to three-month terms.

We envision that the fellows that are the best match for this position connect with neighborhood residents and merchants in meaningful ways. We are here to help and support this connection to the greatest extent possible, but a person who is not comfortable working with the public will not be a good fit. Community ownership and engagement is one of the ways we will measure the success of this project.

Community engagement strategies might include examples such as the following:

- Community workshop(s) with an emphasis on teaching others how to create from the waste stream
- Public art installation(s) that include a community engagement component
- Creative intervention(s) for St. Clair Avenue that will help designate this section of the street as the St. Clair neighborhood – with community input into this process
- Artistic signage or visual identity that multiple residents or merchants can choose to display
- Support in the development of the Upcycle Parts Shop creative reuse art center such as use of trade skills like building (merchandising fixtures, building artistic displays, etc.)

Are you interested in playing a critical role in the revitalization of St. Clair? Knowing our vision, our goals, and our examples of community engagement, what would you do?

To be considered, please apply no later than May 15th with your answers to these questions in an email to hello@upcyclepartsshop.org Resumes can also be attached but we're really looking for these answers:

- 1) What kind of upcycled art do you do?
- 2) Where can we see it? *
- 3) How would you engage the community in your role as a fellow?
- 4) How long would you propose your fellowship last (one to three months, consecutively) and when do you prefer it starts? **
- 5) How would the St. Clair neighborhood be different when your fellowship is over? (we're looking for measurable impact here, i.e. the ways your work transforms place and impacts people)
- 6) What do you need to know from us?

* please provide a link to an online album with images or indicate that you will mail a CD and then mail it to SCSDC offices at 4205 St. Clair Avenue, Cleveland OH 44103, attn: Upcycle St. Clair Fellowship program

** Understanding that we would like to spread the upcycling throughout the year and plan to stagger the projects, please consider your general availability monthly terms from June 2014- May 2015. If there are months during that time you that you strongly prefer, as well as any that you will be out of town for a week or more, please let us know.

Questions can also be directed to hello@upcyclepartsshop.org but please put "Question" in the subject line. -----

We will confirm receipt of your email and we will review responses by May 22nd.

Finalists will be interviewed, timelines will be established and fellows will be announced the first week of June.

Upcyclist fellows will bring visual impact and community engagement to a national grant project that celebrates the history and vibrancy of neighborhoods. We invite you to join us on the ground floor of building up St. Clair!