



# Cook County Historical Society/ Johnson Heritage Post Art Gallery: Request for Qualifications for Site-Specific Public Art Project

Budget: \$28,000

Activated: July 19, 2023

Deadline: August 18, 2023 - due by 5:00 p.m. CST

## **CALL SUMMARY**

The Johnson Heritage Post Art Gallery (JHP) of the Cook County Historical Society (CCHS), through the generous support of the Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation and the State of MN, seeks an artist or collaborative team to thoughtfully design and install an outdoor public art piece for the main plaza entrance of the JHP Art Gallery in Grand Marais, MN (115 W. Wisconsin St., Grand Marais, MN 55604). The artwork should reflect the context of this request and be consistent with the mission of the JHP.

## **BUDGET DESCRIPTION**

The budget for this project is \$28,000. This budget includes artist pay, travel, and all additional costs associated with the design, engineering, fabrication, permitting, artist insurance, deliveries, and installation of the artwork.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The mission of the Johnson Heritage Post is to promote public awareness of the culture of arts in Cook County, MN, communicate the history of this region, and provide quality exhibits, programs, and events.

The JHP features local, regional, and national artists in revolving exhibits, as well as a permanent collection of original art by early 1900s artist Anna C. Johnson, and other regional artists. The JHP is located in the heart of the Grand Marais business district. The newly landscaped central plaza allows for a focused main entrance and an inviting space that welcomes the public.

## **PUBLIC ART GOALS**

Through the artwork the JHP aims to celebrate our community and the cultural heritage of the region. We wish to commission a public art piece that reflects artistic and technical qualities, and fosters a welcoming and uplifting environment. Placing the artwork at the exterior entrance will create an aesthetically pleasing focal point for visitors of the gallery, as well as those passing by. The artwork's design must consider the safety of the gallery's visitors and should be easy to clean and maintain. The artwork will be located directly in front of the main doors to the JHP building and will be exposed to the elements. Additional materials and information will be provided to the chosen artist(s).

## **SPECIFICATIONS FOR ARTWORK**

- The completed artwork must be no larger than 13' x 13' and take into consideration the safety of passing pedestrians.
- The completed artwork should be void of any sharp surfaces and tripping hazards.
- Only durable materials may be used in the creation of the artwork and it should be weather-proof for sustained outdoor exposure.
- The selected artist(s) must supply their own materials and media for the production of the artwork using the allotted funds. Artists will be expected to budget intentionally. Said budget will be subject to approval by CCHS
- Drop cloths or other protective materials should be used at all times while installing the artwork.
- The design may not include copyrighted or trademarked images and must be an original design created by the artist(s) submitting it. The artwork should be appropriate for guests of all ages to view.
- The selected artist(s) are responsible for protecting their work from the elements and possible vandalism by selecting durable, weatherproof media, and a design that does not allow for portions of the artwork to be easily removed.

## **SITE HISTORY**

The first log-built Johnson's Trading Post was built in 1906 by Charles Johnson and consumed by fire in 1926. The temporary replacement white framed building was used for a variety of retail purposes including the sale of Anna C. Johnson's artworks for six decades. Over time, that building became dilapidated and was torn down. In 1989, Lloyd K. Johnson, the son of Charles and Anna, made a donation to the CCHS with the stipulations that a new log building be built closely resembling the original trading post and that his mother's paintings be permanently displayed in one wing. His generosity, along with his desire to honor his mother (Anna C. Johnson) as a symbol of all area pioneers, resulted in the present building. Lloyd K. Johnson passed away in 2006.

Lloyd's nephew, Duane Johnson from Duluth, was the architect of the building and worked with local contractors Glenn Peterson and Mike Senty, owner of "Senty Handcrafted Log Homes" located in Grand Marais, to build the structure. The logs used in the construction of the building are lodge pole pine from Montana. Each tree stood for at least three years after being killed by a fungus deposited under the bark by the Mountain Pine Beetle. The interior was finished with a white stain to allow the natural color to come through.

In addition to the permanent collection of Anna Johnson's paintings and many other regional artists, the gallery seeks to promote public awareness of the culture of arts in Cook County, MN and the North Shore through high-quality exhibits of the work of artists past and present. The JHP honors the past and upholds the spirit of creativity that settler Anna Johnson shared more than 100 years ago!

## **ELIGIBILITY**

The project is open to all artists and artist teams, 21 years and older, residing in or near Cook County, MN, or having strong ties to the North Shore of Minnesota. Applicant(s) must be a U.S. citizen or a legal resident. Professional artists with experience completing projects of similar size and budget are encouraged to apply. All applicants, regardless of race, gender, religion, nationality, origin or disability, will be considered. Please see the selection criteria below.

The JHP is a non-profit art gallery operating as part of the greater CCHS. As such, we curate our exhibits and feature artists with the goal of furthering our mission to collect, preserve and share our cultural and artistic heritage. We will prioritize applications submitted by regional artists, with consideration given to non-regional artists after this has been done.

## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Interested applicants wishing to respond to this RFQ must submit all of the following (*please submit the application as a single PDF file via email or on a flash drive or disc*):

**Resume:** Current resume, no more than two pages with your name, address, phone number, and e-mail address

**Work examples:** 5 – 10 (Please use high resolution and easily readable file formats (i.e. jpeg, pdf)). Include information about each example including the title of work, media, size, location, and artist fee received (if applicable)

**Artist Statement:** 800 word maximum

**Letter of Interest:** 800 word maximum

**References:** Please include names and phone numbers of up to three professional references who can address your ability to complete a public art project.

Artists are allowed to apply in teams.

Artists applying as a team must split the allotted number of work examples between themselves.

All materials submitted become the property of CCHS.

CCHS strongly discourages artists from mailing or hand-delivering any physical material or samples that have not been expressly requested by the committee. Any materials received, solicited or unsolicited, will not be returned to the artist. CCHS reserves the right to accept or reject any and all responses received, or commission an artist through another process should responses to this RFQ prove unsatisfactory.

## SELECTION INFORMATION

### Selection Process

A selection panel made up of artists, CCHS board members, and members of the community will oversee the selection process. The panel will review applications received through this RFQ and forward a recommendation to the CCHS board for approval. Selection will be based on a review of each applicant's style, experience with projects of similar size and scope, and examples of previous work. Additional discussions with individual applicants may be held before the final decision is made.

- Previous experience with public or private commissions is desirable, but not essential.
- The board reserves the right to revise the project parameters as needed, and to reject all proposals if no consensus is reached on the final selection.
- Selected artist(s) should expect to commit to at least 2 rounds of revisions that might be requested by the panel in order to conform to expectations on design (artwork goals, walkability, maintenance expectations, etc.)

### Selection Criteria

Responses to this RFQ will be evaluated based on the following criteria - only artists who meet these criteria should apply:

- Artistic merit and technical quality of the body of work
- Strong professional qualifications and/or experience completing public artwork of similar scale and scope
- Demonstrated ability to work within a given budget and time frame
- Demonstrated ability to work with a team within a diverse community
- Compatibility with the mission of JHP and with the goals outlined in this RFQ

Once awarded, the commissioned artists:

- Must complete the project to the highest level of quality by the deadline outlined below.
- Must commit to at least 2 rounds of revisions that might be requested by the panel in order to conform to expectations on design (artwork goals, maintenance expectations, etc.)
- Understand that final artwork becomes the property of CCHS. While artist(s) retain copyright, the CCHS will receive permission to use images of the artwork for publicity and marketing purposes.

## **TIMELINE**

The schedule is contingent upon the CCHS's project schedule as well as the weather, and is subject to change.

July 19, 2023: Request for Qualification released  
August 18, 2023: RFQ submissions deadline--due by 5:00 p.m. (CST)  
September 1, 2023: Finalist selected by the selection panel  
September 14, 2023: CCHS Board takes action on the recommendation  
September 18, 2023: Selected artist(s) notified  
October 16, 2023: Anticipated execution of contract  
January 12, 2024: Completion of design development  
July 19, 2024: Completion of artwork and installation  
August 2024: Unveiling of project

## **Deadline for Submission**

All applications must be delivered by 5:00 p.m. (CST) on Friday, August 18 2023, to either:

Katie Clark  
Email: [katie@cookcountyhistory.org](mailto:katie@cookcountyhistory.org)

Or

Postal Address:  
Cook County Historical Society  
PO Box 1293  
Grand Marais, MN 55604

Postmarks and faxes will not be accepted.

## **Purchase Agreement**

Selected artist(s) will be required to sign a contract with the CCHS. A sample art purchase contract is available by contacting Katie Clark at [katie@cookcountyhistory.org](mailto:katie@cookcountyhistory.org).

## **Contact Person**

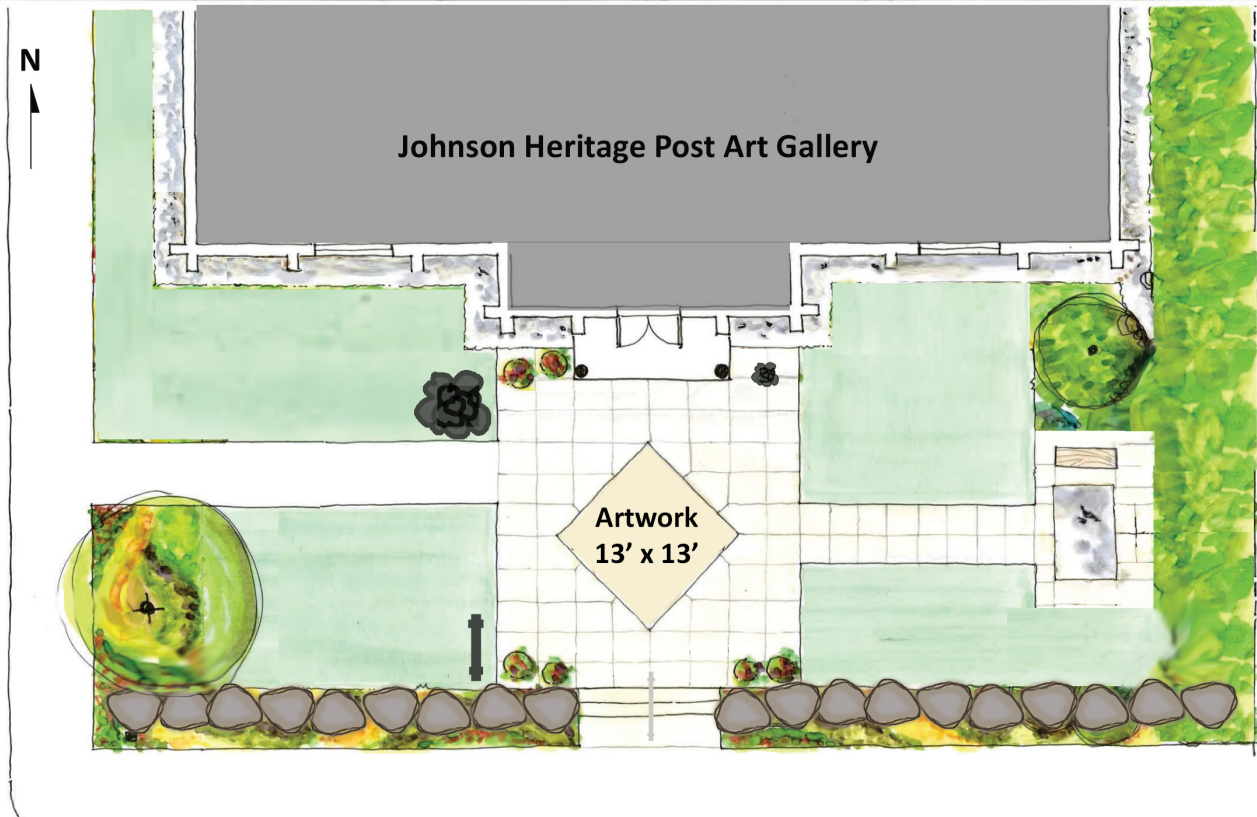
Questions, inquiries, and requests for additional information should be directed to:  
Katie Clark, Director of Operations  
[katie@cookcountyhistory.org](mailto:katie@cookcountyhistory.org)  
218-387-2883

## **No Obligation**

CCHS is not responsible for any loss, damage or expense incurred by a consultant as a result of any inaccuracy or incompleteness in the Request for Qualifications, or as a result of any misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the terms of this Request for Qualifications on the part of the Consultant. Further, the CCHS is not liable for any costs incurred in the preparation of the RFQ submittals.

*Cook County Historical Society does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its services, programs, or activities. Upon request, accommodation will be provided to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in all Cook County Historical Society services, programs, and activities. Cook County Historical Society does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status or status with regard to public assistance in employment or the provision of services.*

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**



Artwork location measures 13' x 13' x approx. 6" deep (opening is in poured concrete plaza with dirt base)

Images of the Johnson Heritage Post Art Gallery



