Call for Artists

Straight Up Art Program

In Downtown New Haven, Straight Up Art is partnering with property owners to invite artists to transform nondescript walls and other surfaces into sites of public art making that stimulate excitement, thought, and desire to take care of each other and the Downtown environment we share. Straight Up Art is a program managed by Town Green Special Services District (TGD).

Straight Up Art values cultivating neighborhood pride, growing the local creative economy, and creating a beautiful, walkable Downtown environment for all. As prospective artists are preparing their applications, they are encouraged to walk the Downtown streets where the walls are located, learn about the neighborhood history, and appreciate the context in which they are wanting to contribute their creativity. Site-specific, interactive murals are especially welcome.

Artist Eligibility:

- Must be 18 years of age or older.
- Prior experience and/or demonstrated technical ability to complete a large scale painted composition on a unique, outdoor surface.
- Artists must be willing/able to work in public in proximity to foot and vehicular traffic.
- Ability to collaborate and receive input from community members

Successful Proposals will feature:

- Artistic excellence. Prior experience creating murals or a large scale painting preferred (include sample images)
- Contextualized themes and visual vocabulary relevant to Downtown New Haven, open to wide interpretations
- Unique design and high visual impact
- Content appropriate for all audiences
- Content that supports the cultural equity of all of neighborhoods in New Haven

Artists will be selected through a two-round review process: first, a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) round and then secondly, finalists will be invited into a Request for Proposals (RFP) round. The selection committee is comprised of residents of Downtown, arts & culture professionals, student representatives from local schools, and local business owners. They will evaluate the submissions and recommend the best proposal(s) to the Owner for final sign off before painting begins.

Selected Artist Responsibilities:

- Executed work must be true to the submitted concept design, stay within the project budget, and be completed in a timely fashion by end of June 2022.
- Artist must be approachable to the community and should detail what this looks like in their application questions
- Provide brief remarks during the Mural Walk and Celebration in June.
Tentative Project Timeline:

- March 1, 2022: Open call for First Round RFQ
- March 29, 2022: Deadline for First Round RFQ submissions
- April 14, 2022: Finalists invited to Second Round RFP will be notified
- April 29, 2022: Deadline for Second Round RFP submissions
- May 13, 2022: Selected artists announced; artist signs Work for Hire agreement and receives initial 20% deposit of stipend.
- May 27 - June 20, 2022: (flexible and weather permitting) Work on murals commences and is completed.
- June 25 (tentative date) - Mural Walk and Celebration

Compensation:

The selection committee will choose 4-7 finalists who will receive a $100 stipend as an acknowledgment of their creative labor to prepare preliminary design concept/renderings. Finalists are welcome to meet with committee representatives as they prepare their final proposals.

Out of the finalists, the selected muralists will each be awarded a stipend (to include travel and painting supplies) in three installments. Wall locations vary in size and the stipend amounts are priced accordingly: ranging between $3,000 and $7,000). Upon signing the Work to Hire agreement, each muralists will be given a deposit that is 20% of the total stipend for purchasing paint and materials. When painting begins, muralists will receive 40% of stipend and upon completion of the mural, the last 40% of stipend.

Application Requirements:

Round One - RFQ Submissions should include:

- Application via Google Form: contact info and questionnaire answers
- 3-5 images or examples of your artwork (saved as .jpg or .png files and named as "artwork title, date, size, location" ex: "Clouds, 2014, 6x4ft, New Haven")
- Current resume or bio

*Round One Submissions will be accepted until March 29, 2022*

Apply by the google form on the program website. Any difficulties with the online portal, please reach out to tara@downtownnewhaven.com.

Round Two (for 4-7 invited finalists) - Requested Proposals should include:

- One-page narrative describing the concept of the proposed mural design
- Sketches and visual renderings of the proposed design concept (up to 4 images)

*Round Two Finalist Design Proposals will be accepted until April 29, 2022.*

If you have any questions, please contact Tara von Schmidt at tara@DowntownNewHaven.com. For more information about the Straight Up Art Program, go to DowntownNewHaven.com/straightupart