

AMPLIFYARTS

Omaha Public Library's Central Library Makes Call for Public Artwork

The partners collaborating to build Omaha Public Library's new Central Library are teaming up with Amplify Arts to open a call for permanent public artwork in the interior and exterior spaces of the new library. Artists, artist collectives, and collaborative groups will be selected and awarded project budgets in amounts ranging from \$5,000 to \$100,000 to realize new work. Selected artists will collaborate with representatives from the Central Library design team to refine and install their work.

About Omaha Public Library's Central Library

[Omaha Public Library's new Central Library](#) will be a hub for creativity, collaboration, education, innovation, and workforce development. The library is currently under construction at the intersection of 72nd and Dodge streets and scheduled to open in 2026. Launched by Omaha Public Library and the City of Omaha in partnership with three nonprofit organizations - Omaha Public Library Foundation, Heritage Omaha, and Do Space - this new library is an important financial and cultural investment in literacy, digital equity, and community. The building is designed with accessibility in mind and includes spaces to learn, spaces to gather, and spaces to create for people of all ages.

About Amplify Arts

[Amplify Arts](#) provides resources for artists, organizers, and cultural workers to incubate liberatory ideas that move our community forward.

About Omaha Public Library's Central Library Call for Public Artwork

An architecturally significant addition to the built environment, Omaha Public Library's Central Library will integrate public artworks throughout the building and welcome work in a wide range of disciplines. The categories listed below include examples of artwork that can be incorporated into the Central Library design. Applicants will be asked to reference one or more of these categories in their application materials. Please view the informational video embedded at the top of this application or attend the in-person Info Session for details.

- **Wall Work:** The Central Library has flat wall surfaces that can accommodate individual works or series. Some examples of Wall Work include: photography, printmaking, painting, fiber art, ceramics, murals, mosaics, etc.
- **Free-Standing Work:** The Central Library has floor space and spaces on the exterior of the building that allow Free-Standing Work to be experienced in the round. Some examples of Free-Standing Work include the following in any media: sculpture, assemblage, installation, etc. and floor and/or ceiling video projection.

- Integrated Work: The Central Library has a children’s play space and a calming station that includes sound and digital imagery. Integrated Work that enhances these spaces might include: calming sound and/or field recordings, calming moving and/or still digital imagery, kid-friendly play sculpture and/or soft sculpture, etc.

Applicants will also be asked to reference one of the following budget tiers in their application. If selected, applicants will be awarded a total project budget based on their application that must cover all costs associated with artist fees, fabrication, production, and installation in the new Central Library.

- Budget Tiers
 - Tier 1: \$5,000 - \$10,000
 - Tier 2: \$10,000 - \$30,000
 - Tier 3: \$30,000 - \$50,000
 - Tier 4: \$50,000 - \$75,000
 - Tier 5: \$75,000 - \$100,000

Applicants with meaningful relationships to libraries as spaces for learning, creative growth, community building, and resource sharing are strongly encouraged to apply. Amplify Arts’ goal is to award at least 51% of all opportunities to those who have been historically underrepresented based on race/ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, socioeconomic status, or citizenship status. Applicants who reflect our city’s diverse populations, yet remain underrepresented in public artwork collections, such as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color); LGBTQIA+ Identifying People; and Disabled People are strongly encouraged to apply.

Selected artists will be confirmed in late summer of 2024 and will collaborate with the building design team to refine, fabricate, and install their work in 2025 before the Central Library opens to the public in 2026. Because collaboration will play a central role in fully realizing each project, applicants should welcome opportunities for feedback, thoughtful dialogue, and reflection if selected.

Eligibility

- Any artist, artist collective, or collaborative group maintaining a residence within the Omaha Metro Area including Washington, Douglas, Sarpy, and Saunders counties in Nebraska, and Pottawattamie, Mills, and Harrison counties in Iowa is eligible to apply.
- Limit to one submission per artist, artist collective, or collaborative group.
- Applicants must be at least 18 years old.
- Applications are welcome from artists and organizers working in any discipline regardless of race/ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, socioeconomic status, or citizenship status. BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color); LGBTQIA+ Identifying People; and Disabled People are strongly encouraged to apply.

- Applicants with meaningful relationships to libraries as spaces for learning, connection, and community building will be favored.
- All applicants who submit a complete application including an Artist Statement, a Project Description, a Budget Tier, a Work Sample, and Works Cited Page will be considered.
- A formal education is not required to apply.

For collaborative groups

Submissions from artist collectives and collaborative groups are welcome. Collectives and collaborative groups are eligible if:

- At least one member of the group meets the eligibility requirements outlined above.
- The group is not incorporated into a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.
- Members of the group are committed to working on a deeply collaborative level to advance the goals of the group, rather than those of the individuals within the group.
- Collaborative groups should submit as a group and discuss the nature and duration of the collaboration in their Artist Statement.

Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed in a four phase selection process:

1. Amplify Arts staff will review to ensure applicants meet eligibility requirements and have submitted a complete application.
2. All eligible applications will be reviewed and scored for by an external panel of arts professionals.
3. Top ranking applications will be reviewed by a panel of representatives from Central Library stakeholder groups to be considered for interviews.
4. Applicants selected for interviews will meet with representatives from Central Library stakeholder groups who will make final selections.

Prospective applicants will be selected based on the following evaluation criteria:

- The Artist Statement enhances an understanding of the artist's practice and their relationship to libraries as spaces for learning, creative growth, community building, and resource sharing.
- The Project Description describes materially and conceptually rich work that will enhance the physical space of the Central Library.
- The Budget tier selected inspires confidence in the artist's capacity to realize their work.
- The Work Sample illustrates a history of past work that inspires confidence in the artist's capacity to realize new work for Omaha Public Library's new Central Library.

Amplify Arts staff do not evaluate applications but will offer decision making support and context to reviewers based on applicants' responses to application questions.

[Click here to view the full evaluation rubric.](#)

Selection Process Timeline

- April 25: Applications Open
- May 8; 6:30pm - 8pm: [In-person Info Session at Alley Poyner Macchietto Architecture](#)
- May 13; 6pm - 8pm: [Virtual Application Office Hours](#)
- May 23; 11am - 1pm: [Virtual Application Office Hours](#)
- June 9; 11:59pm: Applications Close
- June 10 - July: Application Review
- August: Initial application status updates will be delivered and interviews (for selected applicants) will be coordinated.
- September: Final application status updates will be delivered.

If selected, applicants can anticipate beginning work in September of 2024. Below is a flexible production timeline with general dates and milestones:

- September 2024 - December 2024: Contract and Design Phase
Selected applicants will research, develop, and refine their proposed work in collaboration with the Central Library design team.
- January 2025 - December 2025: Production and Installation Planning Phase
Selected applicants will focus on the production and fabrication of their work during this phase. They will also work with the Central Library design team and Amplify Arts staff to plan and consider the logistics of installing their work.
- January 2026: Installation Phase
Selected applicants will work with the Central Library design team and Amplify Arts staff to install their completed work in the new Central Library.

Application Accommodations

By clicking the link below, you'll also find this application form available

- [In Spanish](#) (written)
- [Read aloud in English](#) (audio)
- [Read aloud in Spanish](#) (audio)

Please email Peter Fankhauser (peter@amplifyarts.org) if you need:

- Help navigating Submittable, the application submission software.
- A quiet space to work on your application.
- Access to a reliable wireless connection.

Reporting

Selected artists will complete a contract before funds are distributed. All awards in amounts of \$600 and more are considered taxable income by the IRS and selected artists will receive a 1099 form for tax purposes.

When their project is complete, the recipient will be asked to complete a narrative evaluation that describes their experience.

Selected artists will receive recognition via announcements on digital platforms and in press and news outlets. They may be invited to events associated with the Central Library's opening and have the opportunity to engage with the public and talk about their work.

Privacy

All personal information provided in this application is limited to the application review and selection processes associated with the Omaha Public Library's Central Library Call for Public Artwork.

Application Materials

Artist Statement: Please share some information about you, your work, and your experience with library spaces.

- What questions motivate your practice?
- Why do you investigate those questions in your work?
- What is your relationship to libraries as spaces for learning, creative growth, community building, resource sharing, or otherwise?
- If you have a special connection to any particular branch within the Omaha Public Library system, please talk about it!
- If you don't have a meaningful relationship to libraries as spaces for learning, creative growth, community building, resource sharing, or otherwise, why would you like to have this opportunity now?

Your Artist Statement should be narrative and written in the first person, or the I/we perspective, and be clear, direct, and concise.

Upload your response as text (DOC, DOCX, PDF, or plain text files. Suggested 500 word limit).

Or upload an audio / video recording of your response (MP3, WAV, AAC, MOV, or MP4 files. 4:00 minute max).

Project Description: Please share your ideas about the work you'd like to make for the new Central Library.

- What would you like to make? Do you envision contributing wall work, free-standing work, or integrated work? Please reference the categories listed below.
- What materials do you envision using to create work for the Central Library?
- How much interior / exterior space do you envision your work occupying?
- How will the work you're proposing invite people to engage with Omaha Public Library and the Central Library on a deeper level?
- How do you respond to feedback and incorporate it into your work?

Artwork Categories

- **Wall Work:** The Central Library has flat wall surfaces that can accommodate individual works, or series. Some examples of Wall Work include: photography, printmaking, painting, fiber art, ceramics, murals, mosaics, etc.
- **Free-Standing Work:** The Central Library has floor space and spaces on the exterior of the building that allow Free-Standing Work to be experienced in the round. Some examples of Free-Standing Work include: sculpture, installation, assemblage, etc. and floor and/or ceiling video projection.
- **Integrated Work:** The Central Library also has a children's play space and a calming station that includes sound and digital imagery. Integrated Work that enhances these spaces might include: calming sound and/or field recordings, calming moving and/or still digital imagery, kid friendly play sculpture and/or soft sculpture, etc.

Your Project Description should be narrative and written in the first person, or the I/we perspective, and be clear, direct, and concise.

Upload your response as text (DOC, DOCX, PDF, or plain text files. Suggested 1,000 word limit).

Or upload an audio / video recording of your response (MP3, WAV, AAC, MOV, or MP4 files. 8:00 minute max).

Budget Tier: Please select a budget tier that accurately represents costs associated with the work you envision.

Tier 1: \$5,000 - \$10,000

Tier 2: \$10,000 - \$30,000

Tier 3: \$30,000 - \$50,000

Tier 4: \$50,000 - \$75,000

Tier 5: \$75,000 - \$100,000

Take into account costs associated with prep work, preliminary research, supplies, labor, and artist and organizer fees. Participating and collaborating artists and organizers must be paid.

If selected for an interview, you'll be asked to complete a line item budget with estimated costs that reflect the budget tier you select in your application.

[Click here to download and use this template to complete your budget.](#)

Keep in mind that this template is but one example of how a budget might be structured. Percentages and categories outlined for each section can be modified and reallocated based on the specific circumstances of your individual project.

Work Sample: Please upload samples of past or current work that will give selection panelists confidence in your capacity to complete the work you are envisioning.

Consider both the breadth and depth of your sample and feel free to include detail and/or installation images.

If you have questions about assembling a work sample, visit [Amplify's Resources Page](#) on Work Documentation for helpful tips.

You may submit up to ten still images of your work, up to two audio and/or video samples, and up to two links to external sites where reviewers can see your work.

- Still images: Please upload up to ten JPG, TIFF, or PNG files. Files should be sized at a minimum of 1920 pixels on the longest side and no larger than 5.0MB maximum.

Still images might include photographic documentation of static works, including installation shots and detail shots, and photographic documentation of performance or socially engaged work.

When labeling your files, please use the following format: Lastname_Firstname_01 (e.g. Doe_Jane_01).

- Audio and/or video samples: Please upload up to two MP3, WAV, AAC, MOV or MP4 files. The combined total running time of audio and video samples should not exceed 5:00 minutes.

Audio and/or video samples might include sound, film, and/or video work. Audio and/or video samples might also include audio and/or video documentation of installation, performance, kinetic sculpture, or socially engaged work.

When labeling your files, please use the following format: Lastname_Firstname_01 (e.g. Doe_Jane_01).

- Links to external sites: Please submit up to two links to external sites like your artist website, social media page, Soundcloud, YouTube, and/or Vimeo pages.

Please make sure these sites are accessible, active, and not password protected.

Works Cited Page: Please upload a document that tells reviewers more about your work sample(s). Please include in the following order all that apply:

- File Name
- Title of the work
- Date created
- Medium and dimensions
- Names of collaborators (if applicable)
- A brief summary (1-2 sentences) of the work that gives context, clarifies your role, your collaborators' roles, and location(s) of the work, if applicable.

Please make sure to list works in the same order that they appear in your work sample.

Upload your response as text (DOC, DOCX, PDF, or plain text files. Suggested 1-page limit).

Additional Materials

If selected for an interview, you'll be asked to complete a line item budget with estimated costs that reflect the budget tier you select in your application. You can download the template below to begin thinking through how you might structure your budget. Remember, percentages and categories outlined for each section can be modified and reallocated based on the specific circumstances of your individual project.

[Click here to download the budget template.](#)

You'll also be asked to provide a professional CV or resume that outlines your past projects, exhibitions, collaborations, etc. and two references, ideally people who know you well and with whom you've worked in the past.

Please update your CV and contact references early in case you are selected for an interview.

Before you submit your application:

- Ask a friend to look over your application and be open to feedback.

- ❑ Revise your writing. Use direct language and logical sentence structures. Don't use language or phrasing you wouldn't use in regular conversation. Aim to be clear, genuine, and concise.
- ❑ Double check to make sure the images, audio, and/or video clips in your work sample are clear, well-lit, and legible. Double check your file dimensions, file names, and lengths. Also make sure links to reels, clips, or documentation on external sites like Soundcloud, YouTube, or Vimeo, are accessible, active, and *not* password protected.