

2026 Gateways and Corridors RFQ



Application Deadline: October 15, 2025

Timeline: Design Phase: October, 2025 - January, 2026.
Production/Installation Phase: March - May, 2026

Scope: We are seeking artists for several types of opportunities, described in the RFQ. Artists can apply for any or all of these opportunities, depending on their interests and qualifications. We have created this one application that artists can use to apply for any or all of these opportunities, and we will use these lists to select artists for specific opportunities once sites and budgets are finalized.

Budget: Mural budgets will be commensurate to the scale and complexity of each opportunity. Artist fees will be commensurate with the artist's role in the project, primarily design and installation. Mural Arts will arrange for permissions and provide production support.

Eligibility: **Artists must live and/or work in the Philadelphia region** (City of Philadelphia and Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Burlington, Camden, Gloucester and Mercer counties).

Questions: Contact **Todd Bressi**, Public Art Project Specialist
todd.bressi@muralarts.org

To Submit: Submissions will be accepted through [this link](#).

Introduction

Mural Arts is seeking artists for multiple opportunities related to enhancing gateways and corridors as part of the City's preparations for the semi-quincentennial. Murals will be commissioned in a variety of sizes, design approaches, installation approaches and themes. To reduce the amount of effort required to apply for these multiple opportunities, we have created one application that artists can use to apply for any or all of these project types, depending on their interests and qualifications in various locations.

Scope of Project

Mural Arts Philadelphia is recruiting artists for several signature mural projects that will mark key gateways into and paths through the city, planned for completion in time for the 2026 semi-quincentennial (May-October, 2026). These works are intended to serve as signature public landmarks – bold, resonant, civic-scale artworks that not only shape people's experience of travelling through the city, but also offer a reflection on the city and the nation in this important year in its history. Some of the projects will be permanent, legacies for years to come, and others will be temporary, reflections of this moment.

We are recruiting artists for several opportunities, described below. At the moment, we are looking for artist expressions of interest; we will use these lists to select artists for specific opportunities as they are finalized. The project types and artists needed are as follows:

1. **Landmarks** (design artist, lead artist): These opportunities will be at highly visible locations on public infrastructure or private buildings. Applicants must be highly experienced at designing and/or installing large-scale murals; applicants for lead artist must have experience working on lifts and/or swing stages for technically challenging projects.
2. **Gateways** (design artist, lead artist): These opportunities will be at busy locations, such as walls along major streets, at high-traffic intersections, highway entrances/exits, and underpasses. Some walls will be suitable for *narrative, representational murals*, others will be suitable for *abstract color murals*. Applicants must be experienced in designing and leading the installation of major murals. We will accept portfolios for representational projects and abstract color projects.
3. **Colorways** (design artist, lead artist). These opportunities will activate highway infrastructure, brighten vacant storefronts and create visual continuity throughout the city. They will range from murals on infrastructure walls to installations on vacant storefronts and construction walls. Opportunities will include both paint-to-wall and vinyl applications printed from digital files.
4. **Portraits of Philadelphia** (design artist). This project will be a celebration of the city's residents, as well as the diversity of visual artist practices, through portraiture. We are seeking artists who can submit portraits for inclusion in a larger project – portraits of Philadelphians of the artist's own choosing, represented in the artist's own artistic voice. The portraits will be reproduced as temporary banners or vinyl installations, and will be installed in locations yet to be determined. Applicants are required to submit a portfolio that demonstrates a strong portraiture practice.

Mural budgets will be commensurate to the scale and complexity of each opportunity. Artist fees will be commensurate with the artist's role in the project, primarily design and installation. Mural Arts will arrange for permissions and provide production support.

Mural installation will begin as soon as possible in early spring, 2026, and murals must be installed by the end of May, 2026.

To reduce the amount of effort required to apply for these opportunities, we have created this one application that artists can use to apply for any or all of these project types, depending on their interests and qualifications.

Artist Eligibility

Landmark and **Gateway** opportunities are open to highly experienced muralists in the Philadelphia region who have a track record of working on murals of this scale and complexity. All artists must be available to complete a design process by the end of January. Lead artists must be available to install the murals in April and May, 2026.

Colorway opportunities are open to any artist in the Philadelphia region whose work is characterized by explorations of color. We are primarily interested in non-representational work, such as abstract compositions and pattern work, but work samples that demonstrate the use of color in graphic approaches such as iconography, silhouette, typography and zines, etc. are also welcomed. Work can be in any visual medium that can be reproduced as a two-dimensional work. Some digital wall projects could be installed as early as winter, 2026.

Portrait opportunities are open to any artist in the Philadelphia region who has created portraiture in any visual medium that can be reproduced as a two-dimensional work, such as for banners or vinyl wall installations. Portrait artists must be able to submit completed portraits by the end of the year, 2025.

Mural Themes

For **Landmark** and **Gateway** projects, we will be seeking bold, memorable imagery that will inspire reflection on and participation in the 250th milestone. While this is a time in which our nation's struggles to create a just, inclusive and sustainable world are on many people's minds, we see these murals as creating a message that is intrinsic to this place, to its history, to the joy and pride we take in being here and being together -- reaffirming our own values, telling the world who we are, and taking inspiration the prospect of beauty and creativity in the world around us.

For **Colorway** projects, we are looking for artists who have examples of work that are colorful, eye-catching, joyful and could represent the spirit of positivity, energy, and excitement that this project will be injecting on otherwise underused windows and walls along important corridors.

For the **Portrait** project, we seek to commission many artworks that altogether result in a celebration of the people of the city and of the visual styles that artists here embrace.

Artist Selection Process

This is an open call. Mural Arts will also recruit artists that it thinks are suitable for the commissions to submit their proposals.

For each **Landmark** and **Gateway** opportunity, a curatorial panel will review the responses to the RFQ and identify a short list of artists, each of whom will be invited to develop a concept for a specific site (and be paid a stipend) or to interview for the projects. These selection processes will occur on a rolling basis as project locations and budget are confirmed.

The designs will be reviewed by a broad panel of advisors who will provide feedback to the curatorial advisors, who will make a final recommendation to Mural Arts and the site owners about the artists and concepts that should be selected. There is potentially an option for public review and comment to inform the advisory panel and curators.

For the **Colorways** and **Portraits** project, a curatorial panel will review the responses to the RFQ and identify the list of artists who will be invited to submit portraits.

First Stage Selection Criteria

All portfolios will be reviewed by a curatorial committee to determine which artists will be in the pool for considerations. Artists will be evaluated according to the following threshold criteria:

- Experience in developing a mural of this scale and complexity
- Ability to work collaboratively and flexibly in a high-pressure project
- Ability to work on time and on budget
- Availability to work on the design phases of the project, and if applicable the installation phase

Second Stage Selection Criteria

All eligible portfolios will be reviewed by a curatorial committee to determine which artists will be considered for each particular opportunity. Artists will be evaluated according to the following threshold criteria, as well as any other criteria related to the specific opportunity. Artists will not have to apply again, but may be asked to participate in a concept or interview phase.

- Appropriateness of painting style and approach to this project

Schedule

The RFQ will be released and recruitment will begin August 7, 2025. Responses will be accepted through October 15, 2025. Early responses are strongly encouraged as short lists for specific projects will be created as soon as walls are confirmed.

Project design deadlines and installation schedules will vary based on the nature of the project.

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How to Apply

Submission Requirements

Interested artists should submit the following material, via [this link](#).

1. Cover Sheet (template attached)

- a. Application Checklist
- b. Contact information
- c. Opportunities you are applying for
- d. Technical Skills

2. CV/Resume

3. Statement of interest

- a. This is a qualifications-based solicitation. Therefore, the **statement of interest** should explain your qualifications according to the criteria outlined for the project type you are applying for, and how this opportunity relates to your artistic practice

4. Up to 10 images of completed artwork specific to the opportunities you are applying for.

- a. *Images must be JPEG files and must be no more than 300dpi and no larger than 1024 x 768 pixel resolution. Each JPEG file must be titled with the artist's name and number that corresponds to the annotated image list. File name example: JonesJane001, JonesJane002.*
- b. The **portfolio** for **Landmark** and **Gateway** applications should include images of at least five different murals / artworks, with a maximum of ten images
- c. The portfolio for **Portrait** applications should include images of at least five different portraits you have created.

Notes:

Do not organize multiple artworks on a single image.

Only submit examples of artworks that you designed and completed yourself.

Please do not send examples of artworks on which you were an assistant unless you are using these to illustrate your proficiency on scaffolding, lifts and/or swing stages. For works you assisted on, they must be clearly identified as such.

5. Image list, including the following information:

- a. Title of artwork, location, date of completion,
- b. Budget, Medium and Dimensions
- c. Your role in creating the artwork (e.g., lead artist, design artist, assistant)
- d. Muralmaking skills exhibited

6. Reference outside of Mural Arts. Please include:

- a. Full name
- b. Phone number
- c. Email
- d. Relationship

2026 Gateways and Corridors Cover Sheet

Checklist

- ☐ Cover Sheet
- ☐ CV/Resume
- ☐ Statement of Interest
- ☐ Images
- ☐ Image List
- ☐ References

Contact Information

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Website (optional) _____

Instagram (optional) _____

Opportunity You Are Applying for:

Please check all that apply. Make sure you follow the portfolio guidelines for each project type.

- ☐ Landmark Mural
- ☐ Gateway Mural, Representational
- ☐ Gateway Mural, Abstract Color
- ☐ Colorways project
- ☐ Portraits of Philadelphia project

Your Muralmaking Skills:

Please check all that apply. Your portfolio must include at least one example of each type of work that you check, clearly indicated as such.

- ☐ Direct paint to wall, acrylic
- ☐ Direct paint to wall, spray
- ☐ Parachute cloth (have completed Mural Arts training)
- ☐ Digital design/illustration, for printing on mesh or vinyl
- ☐ Scaffold (have completed Mural Arts training or hold current OSHA certification)
- ☐ Lift (have completed Mural Arts training or hold current OSHA certification)

[] Swing stage (have appropriate certification)

About Mural Arts Philadelphia

Mural Arts Philadelphia is the nation's largest public art program, dedicated to the belief that art ignites change.

For 30 years, Mural Arts has united artists and communities through a collaborative process, rooted in the traditions of mural-making, to create art that transforms public spaces and individual lives. Mural Arts engages communities in nearly 100 public art projects each year, and maintains its growing collection through a restoration initiative. Core Mural Arts programs such as Art Education, Restorative Justice, and Porch Light yield unique, project-based learning opportunities for thousands of youth and adults.

In recent years, Mural Arts has evolved into a multi-disciplinary arts organization exploring the intersection of muralism, public art and contemporary art. In addition, Mural Arts has collaborated with an increasing range of community, civic, cultural and development organizations to realize projects that have expanded the city's public art portfolio in new and exciting ways. Increasingly, Mural Arts has assisted in private organizations in commissioning artworks that engage the communities where they are working.

For more information, visit [www. https://www.muralarts.org/](https://www.muralarts.org/)

Miscellaneous

For more information about **Proof of Insurance**, click [here](#).