

LGBTQ+ Leaders Mural

Request for Qualifications



Application Deadline: November 2, 2025

Timeline: Design Phase: December, 2025 - February, 2026.
Production/Installation Phase: March - June, 2026

Scope: We are seeking a Lead Artist to design, paint, and install a diptych mural on two adjoining walls in Philly's Gayborhood that honors LGBTQ+ leaders. The total wall space for the project is ~1,200 square feet.

Budget: The overall production budget for the project is \$35,000, inclusive of assistant fees. The Lead Artist payments will include: 1) a \$1,000 design stipend for three finalists to create concept designs renderings, and 2) a Lead Artist fee of \$14,500 for the design, production, and installation of the mural.

Eligibility: **For this project, the artist must live and/or work in the Philadelphia region** (City of Philadelphia and Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Burlington, Camden, Gloucester and Mercer counties). **And the artist must be a part of the LGBTQ+ community.**

Questions: Contact **Conrad Benner**, Project Manager
conrad.benner@muralarts.org

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

Introduction

Mural Arts Philadelphia is partnering with the Washington Square West Civic Association, Voyeur Nightclub, the Offices of Councilmember Rue Landau and Councilmember Mark Squilla, and additional community groups to create an exterior mural at 1221 St James St, Philadelphia, PA 19107. The mural will honor LGBTQ+ trailblazers and history in Philadelphia and will provide spaces for rotating engagement with emerging, LGBTQ+ identifying artists. Qualification submissions will be reviewed by Mural Arts with the stakeholder committee to select three finalists to produce concept designs. Designs will be presented to the committee and a final artist will be selected to lead the project.

Community Engagement: Once selected, the lead artist will engage in a collaborative design process, incorporating the feedback into a design that is then reviewed by all stakeholders including community members, the site owner, and an internal design review committee. The Artist will facilitate two community paint days to allow community members to experience painting the approved mural design in advance of the mural installation. The mural will be completed and dedicated in early June 2026 during Pride Month.

Mural Narrative: The permanent mural will feature pre-determined key historical figures that paved the way for the LGBTQ+ community in Philadelphia. These legends will include Gloria Casarez and other recent leaders to be identified through the mural creation process. The mural will intertwine portraiture with iconography that tells the history of LGBTQ+ community and celebrates the achievements of these figures. The mural will be a visual representation of the legacy of these community leaders and will enshrine them as icons for generations to come. This mural builds on the success of the nearby “Finally on 13th!” mural at 306 S 13th Street that preserves the rich history of queer black ballroom culture in the neighborhood. Like “Finally on 13th!”, this mural will ensure the cultural heritage of the surrounding neighborhood is visualized for the local community, some who stood at the sides of these giants and some that take inspiration from them to move forward towards a more inclusive future for LGBTQ+ youth.

Scope of Work

The Lead Artist will be responsible for the following work:

- Meet with community groups and leaders to inform the design direction
- Research histories of selected mural honorees to inspire your design
- Incorporate community feedback into the final design (design approval is contingent upon community acceptance)
- Design mural digitally for review processes
- Lead and work with two assisting artists to complete project
- Produce approved mural design on Polytab mural cloth and install the cloth at the project site
- Paint mural with assisting artists in your studio space
- Facilitate up to two community paint days
- Meet project timeline deliverables, as noted below

Mural Arts Responsibility:

- Secure wall and site permissions
- Order lift, paint, and other necessary materials

- Hire up to two assistant artists
- Schedule and lead meetings with key community leaders
- Schedule and lead design reviews
- Schedule paint days and mural dedication
- Manage vendors as necessary

Timeline

OCT 13 - NOV 2, 2025	RFQ is open
NOV 3 - 23, 2025	Mural Arts and Panel to review applicants
NOV 24 - JAN 4, 2026	Final three artists are contracted and work on designs
JAN 12 - 20, 2026	Lead Artist contracted, reacts to feedback and updates design
JAN 21, 2026	Initial MAP Design Review
JAN 22 - FEB 10, 2026	Lead Artist continues to refine/update design based on feedback
FEB 11, 2026	Final MAP Design Review
FEB 16 - APRIL 30, 2026	Mural painted in studio; paint days to be programmed for this time
MAY 1 - JUNE 14, 2026	Mural is installed, finished, and sealed on site
Week of JUNE 22, 2026	Mural dedication

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 this opportunity, the Mural Arts project lead will review the responses to the RFQ and identify three final artists, each of whom will be invited to develop a concept and design for this project. Those designs will be reviewed by a small stakeholder committee who will provide feedback and who will make a final recommendation to Mural Arts and the site owners about the artists and concepts that should be selected.

Selection Criteria – All portfolios will be reviewed by Mural Arts 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
- Experience in community engaged design process
- Ability to work collaboratively and flexibly on a time-sensitive project
- Ability to work on time and on budget
- Availability to work on the design phases of the project, as well as the installation phase
- Meet the requirements for eligibility, that the artist must live and/or work in the Philadelphia region (City of Philadelphia and Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Burlington, Camden, Gloucester and Mercer counties); and the artist must be a part of the LGBTQ+ community