

Public Art New Work Fund:  
Art and Civic Engagement

**DEADLINE FOR PRELIMINARY APPLICATIONS: January 31, 2020. All applications must be submitted electronically.**

The City of Milwaukee Arts Board Public Art Subcommittee seeks strategic partnerships with organizations, neighborhoods, and artists to commission public art in the City of Milwaukee. In 2020, a year that brings the Democratic National Convention to Milwaukee, an additional, separate pool of funding of up to \$25,000 has been made available to realize one or more nonpartisan project(s) that respond to the role of the arts and artists in civic engagement. This round of funding includes specific parameters that do not apply to the traditional New Work Fund application cycle, which will open January 1, 2020. These parameters include:

- Submissions should address any number of facets related to the aesthetic and political power of public art, i.e., demonstrate the importance of public art (through its visibility, authority, and voice(s)) in shaping views of democracy, explore ways that public art can reflect the values of democracy and/or extend its meanings, or consider forms of public art that motivate people to participate in civic activities.
  - See Fred Evans, *Public Art and the Fragility of Democracy*: Government public art in democracies should...help characterize and support the idea of democracy as a unity composed of difference; resist the colonization of democratic values by autocratic interests, concretize the abstractness of this political idea as well as motivate civic practices expressive of it; and, perhaps most important, stay true to its transformative capacity, revealing new possibilities for democracy and acts of citizenship. (p. 15)
  - See excerpts from *Civic Responsibility and Higher Education*, edited by Thomas Ehrlich, published by Oryx Press, 2000:

Civic engagement means working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes. (Preface, page vi.)

A morally and civically responsible individual recognizes himself or herself as a member of a larger social fabric and therefore considers social problems to be at least partly his or her own; such an individual is willing to see the moral and civic dimensions of issues, to make and justify informed moral and civic judgments, and to take action when appropriate. (Introduction, page xxvi.)
- Various forms of public art will be considered. These can include traditional forms of public art, such as sculpture, as well as more ephemeral forms, such as performance, video projection, or participatory projects.

- This round of funding is open to local artists as well as local organizations working with artists from outside the area.
- The Milwaukee Arts Board will work with successful applicants to locate their projects downtown, outside the security perimeter for the Convention.
- Tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organizations are eligible to apply. Groups or individuals without tax-exempt status must use a fiscal receiver (a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization that agrees to receive and account for the funds) for their project. The Milwaukee Arts Board will work with individual artists or groups without tax exempt status to find fiscal receivers for their projects. For this application cycle, one organization can serve as fiscal receiver for multiple projects.
- Applicants may apply for any amount up to \$25,000 but are responsible for providing a match (cash, in-kind, or a combination of both) for their projects.
- Physical projects must be completed by July 1, 2020 and they will remain on view through October 2020. Ephemeral projects must be enacted between July and October 2020; those that lend themselves to multiple performances/enactments are welcome. Projects that can transfer to neighborhood locations after the grant period are encouraged.

## **THIS IS A TWO STAGE APPLICATION PROCESS**

### **Preliminary Applications**

Preliminary proposals must be submitted electronically to [artsboard@milwaukee.gov](mailto:artsboard@milwaukee.gov) (put New Work Fund – Democracy in the subject line) no later than midnight on **January 31, 2020**.

In a document of 1-2 pages, please include your **contact information**:

name, address, phone, email. If an organization is applying on behalf of an artist, please include additional information for an organizational contact person and indicate if you have tax-exempt status.

Answer the following **questions**:

1. Briefly describe your project.
2. How does your project respond to the prompts outlined above? How does it showcase the role of art and artists in civic engagement?
3. Please provide a rough project **timeline**.
4. Please provide a rough **budget**.

Attach 2-4 images of the project you are considering or similar work.

### **Full Proposals**

Full proposals will be due no later than **February 29, 2020**.

Preliminary proposals will be reviewed at the Public Art Subcommittee Meeting on Tuesday, February 11, 2020. Successful applicants will then be invited to submit a full proposal. At this

time we should be able to provide more information about locations, fiscal receivers, and the review panel for the final round. Full proposals will be due by February 29, 2020.

Final funding decisions will be approved by the Milwaukee Arts Board at their meeting on April 14, 2020.

**Additional Information**

If an organization is invited to submit a full proposal, and elects to submit, that organization will not be able to apply for the traditional New Work Fund or to the Project Grants Program in 2020.

Grantees will be expected to appear before the Milwaukee Arts Board to make a final report on their projects. A written report including photos and a full financial accounting will be required.

We understand that applicants may be at a very early stage in developing their projects, and may not have many details yet. We also understand that the timeline for these projects is very short. If you have questions about your project, the application, or the process, contact Polly Morris, chair of the Public Art Subcommittee, at [artsboard@milwaukee.gov](mailto:artsboard@milwaukee.gov).