



Q&A from the Artist Information Meeting held on February 4, 2016

Additional information provided by Austin Fire Department (AFD) staff:

- During the construction, some stations may not be functioning for a period of time. Some stations may host two crews at one time. Space could be tight. The selected artist(s) will work closely with AIPP and AFD to coordinate accordingly.
- A background check will be conducted for the selected artist(s). AFD's risk manager will give the final approval.
- Work space for the selected artist(s) can be made available at the stations.
- The selected artist(s) can go on ride-a-longs however they cannot enter someone's home.
- During the course of the residency, the selected artist will be getting to know approximately 100 employees across six stations. There are three shifts at each station: 24hrs ON/48hrs OFF.
- The residency, and resulting artwork, should be meaningful to the staff, station visitors, and the selected artist(s). AFD is committed to making this a successful endeavor.

Q: During the selection process, will the selection panel put artists together to form teams?

A: Though technically possible, this is not likely. The selection panel will be charged with selecting one artist and one alternate. Artists can apply as a team, so it is possible for a team to be selected, but the selection panel will not be looking to make teams after the application deadline.

Q. Are seasonal and temporary City of Austin employees eligible to apply?

A: No. Per the AIPP Guidelines, all employees of the City of Austin are ineligible.

Q. Will the selected artist(s) be required to complete the residency on a full-time schedule?

A: No. Expected residency hours are 10-15 per week. Once the selected artist(s) is under contract, a residency schedule will be set. There is flexibility in the schedule however consistency is necessary for a successful residency.

Q. What is the timeline of the residency?

A: The residency is expected to begin in the summer, likely June. The schedule listed in the RFQ is intentionally vague to allow for coordination with the selected artist(s) and AFD staff to determine the best schedule for both parties. Construction will also begin in the summer so the residency schedule will have to take that in to account.

Q. Does AFD have any scheduled outreach or community events that the selected artist(s) could/should participate in?

A: Not currently. The selected artist(s) is welcome to participate in any future AFD community events however it may not be the best opportunity to learn about the department or operations.

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Questions? Contact Carrie Brown at 512-974-9310 or carrie.brown@austintexas.gov

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Q. Since the construction will add women's locker and restroom facilities at the six fire stations, is it necessary for the artwork to focus on female fire fighters?

A: No it is not necessary for the artwork to focus on female fire fighters. The proposal that the selected artist(s) will submit at the end of the residency should be informed by the experience.

Q. Is it okay to propose 2D work with relief?

A: Yes. A variety of materials will be considered however the proposal should take into consideration the site conditions. Note: 3D works are not desired for this opportunity.

Additional Q&A

Q: Are there examples of good Letters of Interest?

A: Yes. Please see attached letters from past finalists and commissioned artists.

Letter of Interest
Examples from finalists and commissioned artists

Dear _____,

I am delighted to express my interest in the opportunity to create artwork for the CONRAC at the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport. My work is site specific, focused on developing dynamic pieces that visually transform with engagement. With a background in music, much of my work is defined by concepts of choreography, performance and composition. Over the past fifteen years, I have worked on numerous transportation initiatives such as the Anaheim Regional Transportation Intermodal Facility, the San Diego Airport Gate 51, the SeaTAC Airport gateway (Seattle), the 14th Street Bridge in Washington D.C., the International Arrival Building at the Dulles Airport, and the new Incheon Airport in Korea.

I am deeply committed to a creative process that is culturally responsive and offers the public a memorable multi-sensory experience. I have twenty years of experience working with designers, engineers, contractors and community members to bring compelling and timeless works of art to large scale, integrated complex public projects. My work has responded to the needs of diverse demographics, incorporating the unique identities and characteristics of communities.

Through my artistic endeavors, I strive to create works that highlight the changing qualities of human perception in response to environmental changes and human interactions. My interest in the transformative and temporal aspects of art and dynamic spaces will create visually meaningful and culturally significant artwork for the public. Given the opportunity, it would be a privilege to engage the City of Austin to develop a memorable sense of place.

Dear _____,

My name is _____ and I am writing on behalf of a team of designers who would like to be considered for the Downtown Austin Wayfinding Project. Briefly, our team consists of _____, a local architectural designer with a background in graphic design; _____, a digital designer who's created several location based apps; and myself, an architectural designer active in the local art scene and looking to move into the larger scaled city wide projects.

This request for qualification was first brought to my attention by a friend who was familiar with my 'choose-your-own-adventure: urban exploration edition' project. This project involved scanning in every page from an old 'Choose-Your-Own-Adventure' (CYOA) book, printing them out and separating them chapter by chapter, altering the directional text from a page number to a hidden place in the city, and then going and hiding those pages all across the city in the predefined locations. The goal of the project was simple: encourage exploration of the city. There was no active interaction, no web presence, no reward for finding the last chapter, just a pure and child-like adventure tucked into the fabric of the city. It was important to me that this first iteration be static, an artifact that required no upkeep, no interaction, no human guidance, just a growing mythology.

The project became the subject of much discussion. There was a strong interest to advance it by bringing it into the interactive realm. Something tied into local downtown businesses or allows user feedback and user generated adventures. And this is all BEFORE the release of the Downtown Austin Wayfinding RFQ.

As an architectural designer I am extremely drawn to alternative, playful uses of the built environment. I believe in a time when so much of our lives are predefined and sorted into 'safe' options there can still exist the opportunity to suspend our daily routine, step off the beaten path, and see the city with a new set of eyes. This simple change in perspective has the power to change the mundane into the extraordinary. These moments that are created stick with us. They alter our perception.

Our project intends to harness those moments by adding a digital layer of adventure created by the users and navigated by anyone willing to play. With _____'s experience in wayfinding and design, _____'s skill in developing engaging user interactions, and my drive to create novel experiences in an exceptional city I feel we are uniquely suited to design and implement an exceptional wayfinding experience.

Dear _____,

Public art is one of my deepest passions. I love the idea of art that is accessible to all people in the community. I am particularly drawn to the University Hills public art project for many reasons.

I have lived and worked as an artist in East Austin for over 15 years, and I have seen East Austin transform over the years first hand. I would relish the opportunity to create a permanent art piece in the part of town I have lived in for my entire adult life.

I am also an avid reader. After one year of studying architecture at A&M in my early years, I left university and started a path of self-education. I decided that what I wanted to learn could not be learned solely in a classroom. I spent countless hours in libraries, poring through art history books, instructional manuals on welding, botany and science textbooks, and design journals. Searching through books in those formative years shaped my life's art practice. For this reason, I have always been fascinated with the possibility of creating public art for a library. I would love to share the fruits of my personal explorations with people who aim to guide their own education, people who are using our public resources to learn and explore.

If chosen for this project, I would like to create a piece that the neighborhood is proud of, something that can reinvigorate the community's identity. I understand the city's goals for this project to integrate the neighborhood's input in choosing the theme for this work. I also understand that University Hills is one of the most ethnically diverse neighborhoods in Austin. I believe that I cannot gauge the neighborhoods' deepest desires on my own.

My entire life is spent in my art studio. I work with my hands and I am a skilled fabricator. I am not a neighborhood organizer who is masterful at navigating public dialogue. Therefore, I am teaming up with _____ to create a series of talks and Q&A sessions to extract the hopes and wishes of the people who live in the area who will likely enjoy and interact with the sculpture on a regular basis. _____ is a community activist, performance artist, and visual artist. She worked closely with the George Washington Carver Museum and at the African American Cultural and Heritage Facility to

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champion those stakeholders in East Austin who were at the risk of being marginalized. _____ has won numerous awards including "Austin's favorite multi-disciplinary artist" by the Austin American Statesman and served as a community liaison in East Austin for APD, which eventually landed her the NAACP's "Buffalo Soldier Award" and the Austin Dispute Resolution Center's "Peacemaker of the Year" award. I believe that combining _____ expertise in navigating the neighborhood's voice and my expertise in creating and fabricating monumental sculpture can result in a beautiful expression to be loved and enjoyed by all of Austin.

I have been awarded two public art projects, both featured in my images for this application. I have also completed several private art and architectural commissions in the \$20,000-\$300,000 range. I have significant experience with budgets in this range and am qualified to manage these projects with timeliness and professionalism.

I would be honored to create a public art piece for the University Hills Library. I love East Austin and I would relish the opportunity to create a piece that would be timeless for the neighborhood and admired by the whole city.
