ARTISTS WANTED
Responding to a Public Art Call
Public Art – the basics

Term implies:
• Source of Funding
• Process that brings it about
• Context in which the art exits, and which often determines its meaning

Question:
What do you want to achieve?
Before you apply – **Know the Goals** of the Art in Public Places Program

- Contribute to building and sustaining the unique cultural heritage and identity of Sacramento
- Encourage community dialogue and interaction
- Provide unique educational opportunities
- Influence the way we think of others and ourselves
- Inspire, celebrate, and help us remember
- Create a more beautiful built and natural environment
- Encourage economic development and vitality by providing business opportunities and by making Sacramento a better place to live
RFQ

What is that?
Anatomy of a Public Art Call

• Date Posted & Deadline
• Project Description and Goals
• Artwork Opportunity
• Budget
• Timeline
• Selection Process
• Selection Criteria
• Application Materials
• Fine Print...
Project Description and Goals

• What is the overall mission of the facility?

• What project goals might the art program help support?

• Who is the audience?

• What are the constraints?

• What are the unpleasant realities of the site?
Artwork Opportunity
Public Art Project Examples

The following examples demonstrate how a variety of mediums can be translated into durable, permanent materials.
Selection Process really is a process

- RFQ
- Panel 1: Selection of Finalists
- Orientation of Finalists
- Development of Proposals
- Proposal Display for Public Comment
- Panel 2: Selection of Project Proposal
- Approvals
- Contract
Panel One Selection of Finalists

- A Selection Panel will meet to review all applications and score the applicants using the established criteria.

- Typically the top three or four scoring artists are selected as the finalists.
Who is on a Selection Panel

May include:

• Arts Commissioner
• Client representative
• 1 or more arts professionals
• Community Representative
• Project Architect
Selection Criteria: The RFQ reveals a lot...

Criteria may include:

• Innovation, creativity, and quality of craftsmanship in previous projects (artists must show evidence of creating 3-dimensional artworks).

• Ability to create artwork that is unique to the site.

• Appropriateness of artwork media and scale relative to the site.

• Demonstrated knowledge of the materials and techniques in the artist’s chosen medium.

• Ability to design, fabricate and install artwork within the project timeline and budget.
Translation – What is the panel looking for?

Artistic Quality
• A cohesive, mature body of work
• A unique vision or perspective.
• Professional level of skill and execution work: professional quality of craftsmanship, mastery of skills and techniques, professional approaches to processes and presentation

Appropriate for the Site
• A good fit between the style, skills, interest of artist and the project goals

Sufficient professional experience, skill, and maturity to successfully execute the project
Application Materials
Letter of Interest

• One page maximum
• Summary of your interest/practice as an artist (3 - 4 sentences)
• Career highlights (awards, important exhibits, etc.) list no more than 3 or 4
• Summary of past or current experience that may relate to the skills or experience needed for this project
• If you are collaborating with another artist address the reason for the collaboration
• If you have never done a permanent work, address how you might translate your work into permanent materials
• Do not make a specific proposal
Resume

- Tailor your resume to reflect relevant experience: education, exhibition history, previous commissions, residency programs

- Your resume should not be more than 4 pages.

- It should support and document your activity as a practicing professional artist

- Highlight any experience that supports your qualifications for this project.
Image Selection

• Pick your strongest work and start with a strong image

• Submit only images of work for which you are the original creative artist

• Do not include text in your slides or compile multiple images within one slide

• Do not include more than two images of the same work

• Select work that has been completed; not proposals

• Do not submit a specific proposal for the site
Image Descriptions

Include a brief description of each project
- What is the project about?
- What other information do you think the panel needs to know to understand the work? (Site info, context, references, etc.)
- Do not include links to websites to explain the project further
So, you are a Finalist: What Next?

- Making a proposal
  - Proposal board: clear visual representation of your proposed artwork and how it will fit into the site with brief descriptive text.
  - Descriptive narrative of proposal, which will include project inspiration & concept; proposed materials, required maintenance
  - Project Budget
Kendal Buster’s proposal for Topograph (I & II)

Site: Either side of pedestrian bridge mezzanine, T-2 Ticketing Lobby

Materials: Powder coated steel tubing, shade cloth, and stainless steel cable

Size: 18’ x 24’ x 24’ each
Kendal Buster’s completed project for Terminal 2, SFO
Typical Budget Items

• Artist Fee (10-20%)
• Consultants (structural engineer, architect, etc.)
• Art materials & fabrication
• Transportation of work to site
• Insurance
• Site Work

• Lighting
• Travel (out of area artists)
• Installation
• Project contingency (10-20%)
Budget tips

• Get written estimates when possible.

• Consult with Public Art staff regarding how much work, if any, will be executed by the General Contractor.

• Where written estimates are not possible, try to get an “order of magnitude” range.

• Propose what you know can be built for the budget. If there are additional elements that can be included if budget allows, list separately as “add alternates.”

• Don’t over promise what you can deliver for the budget!
How are proposals judged?

- Artistic Quality
- Appropriateness to the Site
- Durability
- Assessed ability to complete within budget
- Assessed ability of artist to execute project as designed
Panel Presentation

• Opportunity to re-acquaint the panel with your work.

• Opportunity to present proposal in depth, including samples, models, etc.

• Present past your work as it relates to your proposal (theme, materials, experience)

• Remember: You were selected on past work; panel will want to know how your practice relates to this proposal.
Any questions?

- Should I apply if I’ve never done a public art project before?
- How can I increase my chances of getting a public art project?
- Should I apply for a million dollar project?
- Other questions???