CALL TO EMERGING ARTISTS – Expression of Interest

Public Art Banners in Mississauga

Submission deadline: January 11, 2027 at 11:59 p.m. EST

Artist fee: $10,250 + HST CAD

The City of Mississauga's Public Art Program seeks to commission an emerging artist, artist team, or illustrator to create original banner artwork celebrating urban agriculture, environmentally sustainable horticulture practices, and the connection between people, plants, and place.

The commissioned artist(s) will be expected to create six digital artwork files, which will be printed on vinyl banners. Banner artwork will be displayed on light pole standards throughout the city, creating a captivating and uplifting visual presence from summer 2027 to early 2028.

The City will work directly with a contractor to fabricate and install the banners. Directly overseeing and managing this contract are not included in the commissioned artist(s)' scope of work or budget, although the commissioned artist(s) will have the opportunity to shadow City staff to gain knowledge in contracting public art fabricators. Professional artists, illustrators, muralists, and Indigenous artists are encouraged to apply.



Daria Domnikova, *Becoming*, 2026

1. Eligibility

This is a public competition open to emerging* artists, illustrators, and artist teams residing in Canada. Students, including art, design and architecture students, and established gallery artists looking to expand their practice into public art are encouraged to apply.

** The City defines an emerging artist as an artist in the early stage of their professional career who may have specialized training (not necessarily gained in an academic institution) and has created a modest independent body of work that may include professional exhibitions, commissions, presentations and/or installations.*

2. Submission Checklist

Apply via our online submission software at:
https://mississaugapublicart.smapply.ca/prog/2027_public_art_banners/

Please read all components of the RFP prior to completing your submission. A complete proposal includes the following:

Juried Submission

- ☐ **Artist expression of interest**: describe your artistic practice and why you are interested in this opportunity.
  - You can submit a written statement (1000 word maximum) or a recorded video (an MP4 file or online link, max 20 MB).
  - If you do not have any prior public art experience, you may submit an optional concept proposal (with up to three images) with your expression of interest.

- ☐ **Artist portfolio**: submit up to 10 images of past work, highlighting work that showcases your style, approach and interests.
  - Each image should include: title, year, media, location, project budget, dimensions, and collaborators and/or commissioning agencies. AI technologies must also be disclosed. The images should illustrate your artistic practice and interest in this project.

- **Tip:** We recommend creating a 10-slide PowerPoint presentation, in which each image includes the required descriptive text. Once the presentation is complete, you can export it as one PDF and upload this file.

Curator Information

☐ **Artist contact information**: personal information is kept confidential by public art curatorial staff and is not provided to art selection juries.

☐ **References**: provide contact information for two references who can speak to the artist's artistic practice and interest and/or experience in public art projects. If contacted, information provided by a reference may be shared with art selection jury members. However, their contact information will remain confidential.

☐ **Anonymous survey***: Please complete the survey and include a screenshot of the completion page (after clicking "Submit"). https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/d8c39d6f93344ce4a09eebb6c1104e11

** The personal information collected on this form is anonymous and confidential. Your survey answers are not linked to your application in any way. The results of this survey help us create opportunities for artists that are accessible, discoverable, relevant, interesting, and applicable for a wide range of artists, including artists of varying skills, experiences, disciplines, and practices.*

☐ **Artificial Intelligence (AI) declaration**: Artists that utilize artificial intelligence (AI) technologies in their practice are permitted to apply to this opportunity and to use AI in the creation of the commissioned artwork, provided they adhere to an artist-first approach**. Artists are required to disclose AI usage and have the option to provide a brief description of how their AI usage aligns with the City's artist-first approach. Disclosure may be shared with art selection jury members, but personal information is kept confidential.

*** An artist-first approach to Artificial Intelligence (AI) means disclosure and identification of AI technologies used and the protection of other artist's moral rights and artistic integrity (i.e. technologies used do not utilize creative work without the consent of its original creators or subjects). Artists should approach these technologies in the spirit of accessibility, consent, innovation, creative and critical thinking.*

Incomplete submissions or submissions received after the deadline will not be juried.

Artist(s) retain copyright over their submissions. However, submissions may be used by the City of Mississauga in meetings with stakeholders and staff.

Accessibility: The City will provide accommodations, including reading or writing support, throughout the selection process to applicants with disabilities and/or English as a second language. Please notify Rachel Pennington, Public Art Curator at public.art@mississauga.ca of the nature of any accommodation(s) that you may require in respect of any materials or processes used to ensure your equal participation. If you are unable to use the online submission software, you may submit these materials as one PDF document to public.art@mississauga.ca. If you are submitting by PDF, please use the Curator Information Form at the end of this document.

3. Land Acknowledgement

The lands that constitute the present-day City of Mississauga are part of the Treaty and Traditional Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, The Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the Huron-Wendat and Wyandot Nations. We recognize these peoples and their ancestors as peoples who inhabited these lands since time immemorial. The City of Mississauga is home to many global Indigenous Peoples.

4. Project Goals

This City seeks to commission artwork that encourages community that:

- ✓ Honours the past, present, and future of Mississauga's urban agricultural landscape;
- ✓ Celebrates urban agriculture as an important part of vibrant, sustainable communities;
- ✓ Creates an engaging and accessible artwork for residents and visitors;
- ✓ Reflects the diversity, creativity, and character of Mississauga;
- ✓ Encourages curiosity, dialogue, and appreciation for local food systems; and,
- ✓ Contributes to a welcoming public realm through thoughtful, high-quality artistic design.

5. Artwork Theme

The City seeks to commission artwork that results in a vibrant visual expression of how urban agriculture contributes to healthy, resilient, and connected communities. Through creative storytelling and colourful visual imagery, the selected artwork will invite residents and visitors to reflect on where our food comes from, how it is grown, and the role that community gardens and other growing spaces play in our shared urban environment.

The land on which the City of Mississauga resides holds a rich agricultural history, and the surrounding area was historically characterized by farmland, cultivated fields, and a close connection between people and the land. As the area has evolved, this agricultural legacy remains an important part of its identity and offers an opportunity to reflect on how the land has shaped the community over time.

Urban agriculture offers a way to connect our agricultural past with the possibilities of our future. From historic farmland and traditional growing practices to community gardens, rooftop farms, pollinator habitats, and innovative approaches to local food production, agriculture continues to shape how we live, gather, and care for our environment.

The word “agriculture” has Latin roots in the word *agricultura*, with *ager* referring to “field” or “land,” and *cultura* meaning “cultivation,” “tilling,” or “growing.” The root cultura shares its origin with the Latin verb *colere*, meaning "to cultivate” or “to care for.” This idea of “cultivating the land” extends to concepts of “cultivating the mind” and has strong relations to modern concepts of “cultivating the mind,” cultural traditions, and community culture, making explicit the link between farming and growing food to shared community identity.

The Public Art Program welcomes imaginative, thought-provoking, and community-minded applicants that explore the many ways growing food can bring people together and help cities flourish.

Artists are encouraged to interpret this theme broadly and creatively. Applying artists are encouraged to review past banner installations and find opportunities to present new thinking. Past banner installations can be viewed at https://www.mississauga.ca/arts-and-culture/arts/public-art/temporary-public-art/.

For inspiration, artists are invited to review the City's Urban Agriculture Strategy, to learn how the City supports activities such as community gardens, vertical growing, urban farming and composting that enhance health and well-being while stimulating the local economy: https://www.mississauga.ca/publication/urban-agriculture-strategy/.

6. Artist Responsibilities

If selected for this opportunity, the commissioned artist(s) will be responsible for:

- Creating and submitting high-resolution digital files of six (6) art designs
- Writing a brief statement for each art design and for the overall series
- Working with the City through design review, including providing up to three (3) revisions
- Supporting fabrication, installation, and interpretive signage, in an advisory capacity

The City will work directly with a contractor to fabricate and install the banners. Directly overseeing and managing this contract are not included in the commissioned artist(s)' scope of work or budget.



Daria Domnikova, *Becoming*, 2026

7. Location Details

Banners will be installed on light poles at various locations throughout the city. The commissioned artist(s) will create artwork that fits banner dimensions of 28” (700 mm) wide and 72” (1830 mm) high. Artwork is printed on both sides of the banner. The City utilizes a PVC-free banner material that can be disposed of responsibly, rather than contributing to landfill.

Artwork is expected to be colourful (as light or pale colours tend to fade more), bold and visible from a distance. Artwork must adhere to Corporate Policy and Procedure Banners 06-02-06.*

**Banners may not promote a political party or election candidate; promote tobacco and/or cannabis use; present demeaning or derogatory portrayals of individuals or groups; or contain anything which, in light of generally prevailing community standards, is likely to cause deep or widespread offence.*

8. Artist Fee

The commissioned artist(s) will receive an artist fee of **$10,250 + HST Canadian Dollars**. This fee includes (but is not limited to): contract execution; development of artwork and/or design; submission of artwork in required form; design review and revisions (up to three revisions); supplying artist and project statement, bio, headshots and suggested didactic text; attendance at meetings; and insurance as required by the City.

This fee does not include contractor fabrication and installation costs, which is overseen directly by the City.

9. Schedule

It is expected that the commissioned artist(s) will comply with the project's general timeline dates, as highlighted below:

Project Phase	Date*
Virtual Office Hours with Public Art Curator (see section 11)	December 7, 2026
Submission Deadline	January 11, 2027 at 11:59 p.m. EST

Art Selection Committee evaluates proposals; Contract execution; Applicants notified	January-February 2027
Final Artwork Files Due	April 30, 2027
Banner Fabrication, Installation, and Unveiling	Summer 2027

** Schedule subject to change*

10. Selection Process and Criteria

An art selection panel comprised of arts professionals and City staff will recommend an artist or artist team for the award of commission based on the following criteria:

- Artistic merit, including quality of work, originality, and artistic excellence in the field of contemporary art;
- Artist's interest and expressed desire in this project;
- Artist's demonstrated ability to meet the artwork goals and technical requirements, within the set timeline and budget.

Our public art program accepts informal training and community/peer recognition, and recognizes artists, creators, and storytellers from a diverse range of disciplines. Please do not hesitate to reach out to our team or send a submission, even if you are unsure if your credentials are suitable for the opportunity.

11. Questions and Support

Virtual office hours: The City's Public Art Program will host virtual office hours on Monday, December 7, 2026. Attendees may schedule a one-on-one meeting with the curator to review their application or answer any specific questions. Space is limited. Please email public.art@mississauga.ca to schedule a meeting.

Questions: Please email public.art@mississauga.ca with any questions about this call to artists and we will get back to you by email.

For more information about the City's public art program, visit: missississauga.ca/publicart.

12. Commitment to Equity

The City's Public Art Program is committed to continually improving our application processes to ensure equitable and inclusive opportunities for all. If you have feedback on this application process, particularly if you are a racialized individual or individual facing systemic barriers that limit your full participation within the public art industry, we invite you to complete a quick and anonymous survey here:
https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/69f7aba68a7b4964a78abece6e0b125d

13. Reserved Rights of the City of Mississauga

The City of Mississauga (the "City"), at its sole discretion, may request clarifications or request additional information, as deemed necessary to evaluate the submissions. The City retains the sole discretion to determine whether a submission is responsive and if the prospective Artist or Artist Team is capable of performing the Work. The City reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to determine the number of pre-qualified Artists or Artist Teams. The City reserves the right to not proceed with awarding a contract.

The City of Mississauga shall have the exclusive right to issue all public announcements regarding the competition.

Appendix 1. Curator Information Form

Please apply to this opportunity by clicking here. If you are unable to use the online submission software, you may submit your submission in PDF format to public.art@mississauga.ca. If you are submitting by PDF, please complete this Curator Information Form and submit it with your application. The personal information collected on this form will be kept confidential and is not provided to juries.

Personal information on this form is collected under the authority of sections 11 and 227 of the Municipal Act, 2001. The personal information you agree to provide herein, will be used by the Corporation of the City of Mississauga (the "City") for internal administration and statistics-gathering purposes only (the "Purpose"). The information will not be disclosed to any outside party. Questions about this collection should be directed to Rachel Pennington, Public Art Curator, City Planning Strategies Division, City of Mississauga, 300 City Centre Dr, Mississauga, ON L5B 3C1, Email: public.art@mississauga.ca.

1. Artist Contact Information

Name(s):

Pronouns: *(common pronouns are she/her/hers, he/him/his and they/them/theirs)*

Mailing Address:

Email Address:

Website:

Social media links:

2. References

Please provide contact information for two references who can speak to the artist's artistic practice and interest and/or experience in public art projects. If contacted, information provided by a reference may be shared with art selection panel members. However, their contact information provided on this form will remain confidential.

Reference Name:
Pronouns:
Title:
Organization:
Email Address:
Phone Number:

Reference Name:
Pronouns:
Title:
Organization:
Email Address:
Phone Number:

3. Artificial Intelligence Disclosure

Artists that utilize artificial intelligence (AI) technologies in their practice are permitted to apply to this opportunity and to use AI in the creation of the commissioned artwork, provided they adhere to an artist-first approach. An artist-first approach means: disclosure and identification of AI technologies used and the protection of other artist's moral rights and artistic integrity (i.e. the technologies used do not utilize creative work without the consent of its original creators or subjects). Artists should approach these technologies in the spirit of accessibility, consent, innovation, and critical and creative thinking. Please disclose if you have used AI technologies in your work or in any portion of this submission:

- ☐ My work and artistic practice utilizes AI.
- ☐ My submission materials were created utilizing AI.
- ☐ I have not utilized AI.

If you have used AI in the creation of your work or in any other portion of this application, you may provide a brief description of how your usage aligns with the City of Mississauga's artist-first approach.

4. Artist Declaration

I am 18 years of age or older. I have read and understand this form, and by signing below, I hereby voluntarily give my consent and authorize the City to collect the personal information I have provided herein for the above-stated Purpose, and to do so without any payment or

compensation to me of any kind. I hereby declare that the information provided in this entire submission package is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature:
Name:
Date: