



Request for Qualifications: Lead Artist

A citywide public art project facilitated by Mural Arts Philadelphia
A dialogue about how the Declaration of Independence has set the stage
for life in our city and our nation today

Issued: January 30, 2025

Letters of Interest Due: April 15, 2025

For more information: printmaking@muralarts.org

Collaborators:

Philadelphia250

Free Library of Philadelphia

Visit Philadelphia

To submit an application, [click on this link](#).



**Mural Arts
Philadelphia**
Roots & Reimagination
40th Anniversary



1. Introduction

Printmaking by the People – a reflection on the nation’s semi-quincentennial – is a public art project that will engage people across Philadelphia in a dialogue about how the promise of the Declaration of Independence has set the stage for life in our city and our nation today. It will result in a signature Center City mural and an exhibition at the Free Library of Philadelphia in 2026.

Printmaking by the People will reimagine the Declaration of Independence, asking people across Philadelphia simple yet catalytic questions that arise at this moment:

- What values do we share?
- What work remains to be done to realize the promises of the Declaration?
- How might the Declaration’s vision be reimaged for the future?

The project will also reimagine printmaking’s historic role in public communication and civic dialogue, particularly its roots in Philadelphia as a means of disseminating debates and news about the movement for independence. It will embrace the tradition of poster-making as a means of political expression and advocacy.

Throughout the coming year, Mural Arts will convene free workshops across the city, led by facilitators and artists, that feature small-group dialogues and hands-on printing activities that engage people in this dialogue and provide a space for them to create prints with their own messages.

We are searching for an artist or a collaborative team who can lead the design of a mural that reflects on these conversations and contribute to the final exhibition and programming. In addition, artists/teams can join the workshop process and lead/participate in the mural installation, depending on their interest and availability.

We are open to working with an artist/team with experience in mural design, printmaking, graphic design, poster-making and/or related creative fields. The artist/team should have a strong orientation towards public practice, as well as the ability to synthesize many voices into a coherent vision for a mural. The artist/team need not have experience in producing murals; we can build a team to support that aspect of the project if necessary.

The artist/team should have a strong personal or professional connection to Philadelphia, enabling them to be a voice for the voices of the people that are collected through this project. Collaborations, including collaborations with artists outside Philadelphia, are welcomed.

For more information, contact: printmaking@muralarts.org

To receive information about our artist information session (schedule to be determined), please send your contact information to printmaking@muralarts.org

To submit an application, [click on this link](#).

2. About the Project

Philadelphia, the city where the Declaration of Independence was written, will be a major focal point of the commemoration of the 250th anniversary of its signing, and of our nation’s founding, in 2026.

Printmaking by the People is Mural Arts Philadelphia’s signature project for this commemoration.

While the city will be alive with celebrations that gather the attention of the nation and the world, *Printmaking by the People* will provide an opportunity for Philadelphians to directly participate in this milestone moment by adding their voices to the conversation about our nation’s future. The project will result in a legacy mural in a prominent, soon to be announced, Center City location, as well as an exhibition in the Free Library’s flagship Parkway Central location.

The project is grounded in the living traditions of print-making and poster-making, which have historic roots in Philadelphia. Important political manifestos and graphics seeking to unite people in the revolutionary cause were circulated as printed in newspapers or as broadsides – the forerunners of posters and murals, which have long been popular forms of art associated with political advocacy and grassroots messaging. The Declaration of Independence itself was first printed in Philadelphia.

In 2024, with seed funding from the Connelly Foundation, Mural Arts organized a network of collaborating printmaking organizations and commissioned nearly a dozen artists to help test workshop designs in various formats. Based on those experiences, Mural Arts has developed two models that it will replicate throughout this coming year – an “immersive” two-hour workshop that will be scheduled in publicly accessible locations like libraries, and a “pop-up” experience that can be organized for events like street festivals. In both the “immersive” and “pop-up” models, participants will create prints and/or posters that reflect on the questions at the heart of this project.

We expect the artist/team’s engagement with the project to last about a year, starting in time to participate in these workshops and the planning of the exhibition that will accompany the mural. Design would occur in the fall of this year, with production planning and installation to occur in the first half of 2026.

Mural Arts has worked for more than 40 years to unite artists and communities through a collaborative process, rooted in the traditions of mural-making, to create art that transforms public spaces and individual lives. The project has been supported from its early stages of development by Philadelphia250, whose mission is to support programs and events that bring this milestone commemoration to Philadelphia’s neighborhoods, showcasing their culture, history and contributions to the fabric of the city and the nation. Visit Philadelphia, which is leading the City’s efforts to welcome visitors, helped catalyze early foundation support and remains a partner. The Free Library of Philadelphia is providing venues for its workshops at its branches throughout the city, and producing an exhibition that will be staged at its flagship location, Parkway Central.



3. Scope of Work, Budget and Schedule

Artist Scope of Work

A. Design Signature Mural

The artist/team's core responsibility will be to design the mural. **These are core scope items:**

- Review poster material developed during community workshops
- Undertake additional research as necessary
- Conduct roundtable with workshop artists for input
- Develop mural concept based on themes raised in community workshops
- Create a physical maquette (a rendering or a print) of the mural concept
- Present mural design to Mural Arts Design Review Committee, the project Advisory Committee and other approval authorities

B. Collaborate on Public Programming Around Development and Completion of Mural and Exhibition

In addition, the artist/team is expected to support Mural Arts programming and public communications related to the project. **These are core scope items:**

- Develop artist statement and related material
- Participate in announcement of mural design
- Participate in dedication and at least two other public events
- Participate in general promotion of 2026 public art initiatives

C. Support / Advise Printmaking Workshops

The artist/team will join the project as the immersive and pop-up workshops, led by numerous Philadelphia artists, are underway. Depending on the artist/team's interest and availability, the artist/team can play a role in shaping the direction of workshops and can participate in them.

These are optional scope items:

- Collaborate with Mural Arts and workshop leaders on developing workshop approach, including conversational and visual prompts and printmaking approaches
- Participate in orienting artists for workshops
- Participate in or lead workshop/s

D. Produce and Install Signature Mural

While we encourage artist/teams to be involved in the installation/painting of the mural, we can build a team to support that work. The following responsibilities will be assigned to the artist/team or to the Mural Arts project management team, depending on the artist/team's capability, interest and availability. **These are optional scope items:**

- Confirm feasibility of materials – cloth, paints, primers, sealers
- Plan for materials, supplies and equipment necessary for installation
- Build installation team – arrange for supporting labor, including assistant artists
- Manage installation – schedule work and oversee installation team
- Translate design to wall and install mural

Mural Arts Responsibilities

- Contract with and pay artist/team
- Support research, stakeholder engagement and design development
- Assist with reviews and permissions
- Lead or support production and installation process
- Manage project budget
- Coordinate marketing and documentation

Editions

We recognize that for many printmakers, a core aspect of their work is the art and craft of making editions, whether limited editions of fine art prints or larger runs of poster-type prints. We will encourage the artist/team to consider how their mural design concepts can also be produced as editions, and collaborate on developing strategies for how those editions can be sold, exhibited, installed as temporary public art, and otherwise made accessible to the public.

Budget

The budget for the design and the production of the mural will be a minimum of \$100,000. This will include all artist and artist assistant fees, materials, supplies and equipment. This budget will be re-assessed once a wall for the mural is confirmed.

The fee for the artist/team's services for the "Design Signature Mural" and the "Collaborate on Public Programming" (scope items A and B outlined in the above section) will be \$6,000.

This amount will remain the same whether it is a single artist or a collaborative team.

The fee for artist/team's services for other scope elements, "Support / Advise Printmaking Workshops" and "Produce and Install Signature Mural" (scope items C and D outlined above) will be negotiated based on the artist/team's involvement in those tasks.

Schedule

This is our best estimate of the schedule:

- Artist interviews and selection: April, 2025
- Artist contracting: May 2025
- Community workshops: March through August 2025 (35 weeks)
- Mural Design: December approval
- Pre-production planning: January
- Installation: Beginning in March 2026
- Dedication: May / June 2026

4. Artist Selection Process

Eligibility Criteria

This opportunity is open to any artist who meets the Eligibility Criteria listed in this section and the Qualifications listed below.

- We are open to working with artists/teams with experience in mural-making, printmaking, graphic design, poster-making and/or related creative fields. Experience producing / installing murals is not required. We welcome collaborative teams.
- The artist should have a strong personal or professional connection to Philadelphia, enabling them to be a voice for the voices of the people that are collected through this project. Collaborations, including collaborations with artists outside Philadelphia, are welcomed.
- Artists must be U.S. citizens or have U.S. work authorization.

Process

Artists/teams are requested to submit a letter of interest and portfolio, as described below.

Artist submissions will be reviewed by an Advisory Committee consisting of artistic advisors, who will identify a short list of finalists according to the review criteria outlined below. The Committee will interview finalists and make a recommendation based on the interviews, the qualifications that have been submitted, and conversations with references.

The Executive Director of Mural Arts Philadelphia will review the Committee's recommendation and make the final determination of the selection.

Qualifications and Review Criteria

Artist/team letters of interest will be reviewed using the following criteria:

- Experience designing large-scale murals in highly visible locations
- Understanding of printmaking history and experience in printmaking techniques
Though this mural is not necessarily going to be made of printmaking techniques, we would like the artists to be familiar in order to inform their design
- Understanding of poster-making history and poster design techniques
- Ability to distill large and complex information streams into succinct and memorable themes and messages
- Experience with community-based practice and interest in incorporating community engagement into this project (even if their overall practice is not always centered in community-based practice)
- Experience working with topics of deep significance and complexity in public dialogue and public space
- Visual aesthetic that reflects that spirit of the artistic processes and traditions this project embodies

Artists/teams invited to participate in an interview will be evaluated according to the following additional criteria:

- The artist's vision for creating a compelling artwork, melding their own aesthetic approaches with a process for synthesizing the contributions of workshop participants

5. How to Apply

Preliminary Consultation / Information Meeting

Artists/teams who are interested in submitting their qualifications are encouraged to contact us with any questions about the project, its scope or requirements, or how to complete an application. Artists/teams can obtain more information in the following ways:

- Submit a question via email. Questions will be answered directly. Questions and answers will be posted in an addendum to the RFQ on the [Mural Arts Institute's](#) website,
- Contact us for a preliminary consultation at: printmaking@muralarts.org

Submission Requirements

For the initial submission, please provide the following information on a single **PDF**:

- An application checklist including the names and contact information for the artist, or all artists on the team, and an inventory of all material that is being submitted.
- A letter of interest that addresses:
 - What is your perspective on this milestone and the Declaration of Independence?
 - What are your artistic connections to printmaking and poster-making?
How would you see those traditions influencing a mural design?
 - Why would it be important to you to do this project?
- A CV or resume for each artist (up to 2 pages).
- Images of past completed work that help us understand your qualifications for this project.
- A list of the images provided, including the following information:
 - Image name, Artist's name
 - Title of artwork, Location (if a public artwork), Date of Completion, Budget or Price
 - Medium and Dimensions
 - Brief description
- References who can speak to your creative practice and ability to work on a project of this nature

Submission Instructions

To submit an application, visit the [Mural Arts Institute's opportunities](#) page or [via this form](#).

Mural Arts will reply with an acknowledgement of all submissions it receives.

6. Questions?

For more information, contact: printmaking@muralarts.org

To receive information about our artist information session (schedule to be determined), please send your contact information to printmaking@muralarts.org

Miscellaneous

Proof of Insurance

Prior to performing any Works or Services, or entering into a contract with Mural Arts, the selected artist(s)/artist team(s) must show proof of the minimum insurance as indicated below. This insurance must be maintained during the term of this Agreement:

- a. Workers' Compensation Insurance (including without limitation coverage for Artist, its officers, owners, principals, directors, employees, volunteers, guests, and/or agents) if applicable.
- b. Employers Liability Insurance, if applicable, with minimum limits of the greater of \$100,000 E.L. each accident, \$100,000 E. L. disease-each employee, \$500,000 E.L. disease-policy limit or as required by the law of the state in which the Project is located.
- c. Commercial General Liability Insurance, Insurance Services Office (ISO) form Commercial General (CG) 00 01 (12/07) or equivalent occurrence policy which will provide primary coverage to the additional insureds (Owner) in the event of any occurrence, claim, or suit with limits of the greater of: (1) Artist's actual coverage amounts or (2) One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) per occurrence and Two Million Dollars (\$2,000,000) in the aggregate. Artist's insurer will add Owner as an additional insured on this policy using ISO endorsement CG 2010 (07/04) or its equivalent.
- d. Automobile Liability Insurance (1) having a combined single limit each accident in the amount of Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$300,000) or in the amount of Artist's actual coverage, whichever is greater, and (2) coverage applying to "any auto", including hired and non-owned auto liability.

Artist may satisfy the insurance amounts by an umbrella / excess insurance coverage policy.