



Oklahoma Art in Public Places Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

Project: Route 66 Public Art Trail (Bridgeport, OK)

Deadline: April 15, 2025

Overview and Project Description

Artists and artist teams are invited to submit qualifications and a proposal for the design and installation of artwork for an Oklahoma Art in Public Places project at the William H. Murray Bridge (Pony Bridge) located in Bridgeport, Oklahoma. The Oklahoma Arts Council (OAC) in partnership with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) are seeking an artist or a collaborative artist team to create an installation artwork along the roadway of Route 66 and adjacent to Pony Bridge. The location for the public art will be in a highly visible and publicly accessible area where travelers will drive by and have the opportunity to access a parking lot for up-close interaction.

Theme and Intent

The vision for this monumental project is a dynamic and visually striking public artwork of exceptional quality and enduring significance, positioned along this prominent roadway to welcome visitors traveling on Route 66. The newly restored Pony Bridge stands as a testament to the region's rich history and serves as a model of engineering innovation. Originally built in 1933, this iconic structure is a rare example of a Warren pony truss bridge, a design that features open space between the verticals of the "camelback" truss spans, allowing for increased clearance and scenic views. The recent restoration not only preserves the bridge's historic charm but also highlights the craftsmanship of early 20th century bridge construction. As a local landmark, featured in the 1940 film *The Grapes of Wrath*, the 3,945-foot-long bridge symbolizes the resilience of the people of Oklahoma and exemplifies the community's commitment to preserving its architectural heritage. To further honor the bridge, a public art sculpture will be commissioned that will reflect the bridge's distinctive design and historical significance. This striking monumental sculpture, to be installed adjacent to the bridge, will be inspired by the bridge's structure, celebrating the intersection of art and engineering while fostering a deeper connection between the community and its heritage.

Additional themes could center on the impact of Route 66 in relation to Oklahoma's history, and the celebration of the Route 66 centennial of 2026. The artwork will be original art appropriate for outdoor installation and able to withstand conditions of all possible weather conditions. The art will enhance Route 66 with a distinctive aesthetic experience both highly visible and welcoming to visitors.

Educational Resources

Route 66 Bridgeport Pony Bridge

https://oklahoma.gov/content/dam/ok/en/odot/federal-grants/raise/2020/us-281_route-66_bridgeport_bridge.pdf

Route 66 in Oklahoma

<https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/interpretation-of-route-66-in-oklahoma.htm#:~:text=Designated%20as%20U.S.%20Highway%2066,first%20major%20east%2Dwest%20highway.>

Project Funds

The artist or artist team will receive \$325,000 to create the artwork. All costs associated with the public art project including, but not limited to, artist design fee, structural engineering, eligible materials, fabrication, insurance, transportation, installation, building or site modification, travel to and from the site, per diem expenses, project documentation, contingency to cover unexpected expenses, and any other costs related to the project are covered by the budget. All costs associated with the public art project are covered by this budget, and no additional funds will be available.

Eligibility

This opportunity is open to artists and artist teams with prior experience in working with departments of transportation and public art project budgets exceeding \$200,000.

Application Requirements

[Artists must complete this application form](#) and provide support materials specified below. Please be sure to allow adequate time to submit your application as technical difficulties can occur. Applications that are mailed, emailed, faxed, or hand delivered will not be considered.

Proposals will not be accepted after the April 15, 2025, 11:59 p.m. (CDT) deadline.

Application materials include:

1. Statement of Intent
 - A statement of intent will include a summary of artistic focus and professional career, especially as your background relates to this project.
 - A brief description of the concept to be proposed, should the applicant be selected. Can include materials, colors, etc. Sketches are not required at this stage but can be attached to the statement.
2. Resume/CV
 - If applying as a team, please include the team/studio resume. If a team/studio resume is not available, please combine the individual resumes of each team member into one document.
3. Five images of relevant previous work, per member of team with a maximum of fifteen images
 - Files can be up to 2mb. Images should be at least 72 dpi.
 - Please number images 1-5, etc., in the file name using this system, #LastName,FirstName.jpg
4. Image descriptions
 - Please include title, medium, dimensions, and year for each artwork. You may also include a brief statement about each work (2 sentence maximum).
 - Number your descriptions, corresponding to the file names.

Selection Process

RFQ applications will be reviewed and scored by the Director of Art in Public Places to identify the short list of qualified artists to be considered for the project based on the following criteria:

- Artistic excellence as evidenced by representations of past work and other supporting materials.
- Appropriateness of artwork to the goals of the project, as evidenced by representations of past work and other supporting materials.
- Professional experience is adequate to meet the demands of the project, including working in a large scale.
- Availability to participate in the design, approval, and implementation of the project as required.

The list of qualified artists will be presented to the Route 66 Public Art Selection Committee, consisting of one representative of ODOT, one artist, one arts professional, one art educator, two to five community representatives, and the Director of Art in Public Places and the Director of Visual and Public Art from the Oklahoma Arts Council. The selection committee will identify up to four finalists who will be invited to develop conceptual site-specific proposals after attending a mandatory orientation session with the project team and key stakeholders. Each finalist will be paid an honorarium of \$1,000 for the development and in-person presentation of a conceptual design proposal. Artists residing greater than 60 miles from Oklahoma City are eligible to receive up to \$2,000 total towards the reimbursement of reasonable travel expenses approved by the Oklahoma Arts Council prior to travel arrangements being made for the orientation session and panel interview. Receipts will be required for travel expenses to be considered. The public art selection committee will submit rankings of finalist proposals and recommendation for approval to the Art in Public Places Oversight Committee.

Timeline

Application opens February 2025

Application deadline April 15, 2025

Notification of selected finalists May 30, 2025

Mandatory virtual finalist orientation session June 2025

Finalist presentations in Oklahoma City July 2025

Anticipated notification of selected artists August 2025

Installation of artwork spring 2026

**Timeline is subject to change.*

Once selected, the artist or artist team will work with Sterling Hayes, Director of Art in Public Places, to coordinate an installation schedule.

Questions/Follow up

Please direct questions or requests for additional information to Sterling Hayes, Director of Art in Public Places, at sterling.hayes@arts.ok.gov or (405) 308-0975.

The Oklahoma Arts Council administers the Oklahoma Art in Public Places Program in accordance with HB 1824.





Artwork will be placed adjacent to parking area.