



Salomee Souag, 2021, Hey Love, 920 E Burnside St

Public Art MURALS Program

process and guidelines

updated January 2025

Interpretation services available 503-823-5071
Servicio de interpretación disponible 503-823-5071
Предоставляются услуги переводчика 503-823-5071
Có dịch vụ thông dịch 503-823-5071

DEADLINES

Applications must be completed by
5:00PM on the third Wednesday of every month.
Upon receipt of all materials, there will be a minimum of
4 weeks required for RACC review/approval.



Regional Arts &
Culture Council

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BACKGROUND

The Public Art Murals Program is a City of Portland program administered by the Regional Arts & Culture Council (RACC) as part of its Public Art Program. Proposed murals are reviewed by the Public Art Murals Program Committee, whose members include artists, arts advocates and other creative professionals. The program provides approval and/or funding for murals that reflect diversity in style and media and encourages artists from diverse backgrounds and range of experience to apply. All property owners are required to provide a signed/notarized Art Easement form that is recorded with Multnomah County. Murals approved through this program become part of the City's public art collection for as long as the Art Easement remains in effect. Since its inception in 2005, over 100 murals have been approved through the program. All of them can be viewed on [RACC's website](#).

Individuals/organizations not requesting public funding may still either apply for approval through the RACC program or apply for an Original Art Mural Permit (\$50 fee) through the City of Portland's Bureau of Development Services at 1900 SW 4th Avenue. Guidelines and process for this program are available [here](#).

QUESTIONS?

RACC is committed to assisting artists with the application requirements and process. If you have any questions, please contact RACC's office at publicartmurals@racc.org or at 503.823.5111.

GLOSSARY

For the purposes of the RACC program, here is how we define some of the following terms:

Mural: A mural is defined as a painting, mosaic, bas relief that is applied directly to a wall, or other process as approved by RACC that is visible from the public right-of-way.

Community: A particular group of people or an organization with shared cultural and/or regional similarities.

Public: Volunteers and participants recruited for a mural project who are not part of a specific community.

Community-Partner Mural: A project initiated either by a group of people who are seeking a mural that is related to their interests and identity or a lead artist who will create a mural design and lead a process involving community in the design process and actual mural painting. The intention is that the mural will be accountable to the needs and expectations of the community.

Artist-Focus Mural: A project created by the lead artist with the intention of fulfilling their own artistic vision. Public participation may or may not be utilized in the execution of the mural.

CRITERIA

Eligibility Criteria

An individual/organization intending to create a mural on an exterior wall that is visible from the public right-of-way and within the boundaries of the City of Portland may apply for funding through RACC's Public Art Mural Program.

Due to limited funding, the maximum amount that can be awarded to one project has been reduced to \$5,000.

Applicants may be:

1. An individual artist or group of artists; or
2. A curator who selects artist(s) for a project; or
3. Students enrolled in an art program at a degree-granting institution (eligible for up to \$2,500 in matching funds); or
4. Neighborhood associations, citizen-based groups/organizations, LLCs, non-profit organizations or private developers.

All murals proposed for contributing historic buildings or in historic districts must be approved by RACC. To determine if

a property falls into either of these categories or is on the Historic Registry, go to portlandmaps.com. (Enter address in top right search bar; scroll down to *Permits & Zoning* heading on right side; click on *Zoning & Districts* button; review classification and type under *Historic Resource* heading.)

Ineligible Projects or Applicants

1. Murals on private single family residences/property.
2. Murals which are not clearly visible/accessible to the public from the public right-of-way.
3. All interior murals or temporary exterior banners.
4. Murals for which the property owner will not provide a signed and notarized Art Easement Form.
5. Applicants who are members of the RACC staff, Board, Public Art Committee or who serve on the Public Art Murals Committee.

Funding Criteria

The number of Public Art Murals awarded funding is dependent on the funds available and the number of applicants submitting each year. Because of limited available funds it is rare to receive all of the requested public funding. Applicants/artists may be funded one time only between July 1, 2024 and June 30, 2025. (**NOTE:** To achieve diversity in artists and styles, artists may only receive approval and/or funding once every two years.)

Matching Funds

Individual artist applicants are not required to provide an **1:1** match (cash, volunteer time and in-kind contributions: grant amount requested). Business/organization applicants are required to provide a **1:1** match with the amount of requested funding.

1. Funds will be awarded based on the Public Art Murals Program Committee's evaluation of the mural proposal using review criteria described below.
2. Eligible expenses may include artist fees, assistant fees, supplies and materials, rental equipment, liability insurance, space rental, transportation, installation costs and promotional materials related to a dedication event.
3. Items not eligible for funding through this program include operating costs for organizations; purchase of equipment; and administrative costs of sponsoring organization unrelated to the mural project.

Review Criteria

- **concept, scale and execution:** original concept and excellence in execution; scale is appropriate to the building and wall on which it will be painted/attached (**RACC highly encourages applicants to use images and compositions that will bring innovation to our Mural Program collection. To see murals in the City's Public Art collection click [here](#).*)
- **context, design:** creatively responds to site and neighborhood; demonstrates ethical use of references to specific cultural origins; design clearly depicts ideas expressed in project description
- **support:** written evidence of support from property owner, building and business owner(s), neighborhood association or adjacent neighbors.
- **feasibility:** ability to complete the proposed mural, a realistic budget, agreement between property owner and artist regarding responsibility for wall preparation for painting, and use of acceptable graffiti/UV coating, as needed (contact RACC regarding options).
- **for community partner projects:** images associated with concepts mean the same for artist and community (i.e., shared meaning beyond individual perspective and experience).

PROCESS

Community – Partner Mural	Artist – Focus Mural
<p>1. For a community mural or a mural for a community, notify RACC with <u>letter of intention</u> to apply 3-6 months in advance of a deadline by emailing publicartmurals@racc.org or contacting RACC at 503.823.5111. A meeting between the lead artist, community partner(s) and RACC representative will follow to ensure guidelines, expectations, and points of accountability are understood.</p>	<p>1. For an art-for-art sake mural, notify RACC of intention to apply 4-6 weeks in advance of a deadline by emailing publicartmurals@racc.org or contacting RACC at 503.823.5111.</p>
<p>2. Obtain permission from property owner. To find out how to contact the property owner, either ask the building tenant or go to portlandmaps.com and search for information using the site’s street address. The property owner will be listed in the “Assessor” section. Provide a copy of the Art Easement form to the property owner and confirm they will sign it. <i>The easement does not need to be signed and notarized until after the project has received RACC approval.</i></p> <p>3. Complete an application through the on-line process on RACC’s website.</p> <p>4. Submit supplementary materials listed under <i>Required Application Materials</i> below within <u>seven days after completing your on-line application</u>. These materials can be emailed to publicartmurals@racc.org (limit is 25M per email) or uploaded onto DropBox as a zipfile (a link is provided on the on-line application).</p> <p>5. The Public Art Murals Committee reviews proposal and supplementary materials. The committee’s decision is based upon adopted review criteria for public art murals. <u>If proposal is not approved, applicant may resubmit additional materials as requested.</u> The applicant is not required to attend the meeting.</p>	

REQUIRED APPLICATION MATERIALS

- Letter of intention (required for the community-related murals)
- Completed on-line application. If there is trouble accessing a personal computer, please contact RACC to use a computer to submit online application.
- Digital images:
 - One color image of proposed concept
 - One color image of the overall building and mural wall
 - One color image of the proposed mural on the building wall
 - Up to 6 images of past work from each artist contributing to the mural design and an image list that includes location, budget, year completed, and description of artist’s role (e.g., lead, collaborator, assistant) OR a link to websites/social media accounts that feature artworks
- Résumé or bio for each artist involved in the design of the mural.
- If attaching panels to a wall, a materials list, drawing and attachment plan must be submitted.
- Letter from property owner that states commitment to sign the Art Easement Form.
- Letter(s) of support from the neighborhood association.
- Letter(s) of support from community partners.

Creating a Budget

As part of the application you must submit a budget and indicate donated time and materials and cash expenditures. Adding those two items together will equal your total project expenses.

How to Pay an Artist

Artists may either ask for a flat fee or charge by the square foot (sf) which typically includes labor, supplies and materials. This artist fee is dependent on several factors:

1. **Experience.** An emerging artist and an established artist demand different fee structures
2. **Scope of work.** Consider the physical size of mural and/or special skills muralist is employing (e.g., mosaic work)
3. **Other demands.** Activities like leading workshops or participating in community engagement events associated with mural require additional time from the artist.

Other Budget Costs to Consider:

1. **Design Time.** Compensation for time devoted to designing the mural before the application is submitted.
2. **Materials.** Using higher priced materials (e.g., Nova Color vs. house paint).
3. **Intricacy of design.** Costs may increase if the mural includes an unusual high amount of detail.
4. **Travel.** Commuting costs can be reflected.
5. **Insurance.** Liability insurance is required for all projects. This cost can be in-kind if provided by a third party or it would have to be part of the cash expenses.
6. **Equipment.** If the rental for scaffolding, lift, moveable stairs or ladder is not donated or paid for by a third-party, it will be part of the cash expenses.
7. **Cost of easement.** Every project will be charged \$75 for the processing of the easement.

Building a Solid Budget

For planning purposes, you may want to create drafts for three budgets, keeping in mind that most applicants do not receive all of the requested funding:

Budget #1 Total costs of an ideal budget (i.e., you receive every penny you requested).

Budget #2 Total costs of the minimum budget with which you are willing and able to complete the mural.

Budget #3 An average of the best and worst case funding scenarios.

Budgets #2 and #3 will be useful after awards are made and you are planning your mural project.

Completing the Budget Section

Project Budget:

The “Expenses” column on the left should list all of the project costs (including both cash and in-kind contributions).

The “Contributions” column on the right should list only the *cash* and *in-kind* donations the project receives. **Expenses** minus **Contributions** will equal your mural grant request.

AFTER FUNDING APPROVAL

The following requirements apply to all applicants whose project is approved through this program:

1. If the approved mural is located in neighborhood zoned as residential, the applicant will be required to notify nearby residents with plans/images of proposed project as provided by RACC.
2. The applicant must have liability insurance for the duration of the mural project and provide a **Certificate of Insurance** at the time a contract is issued that lists the City of Portland and RACC and their officers, agents and employees as additional insureds. Contact RACC for available resources for insurance.
3. RACC issues a **Personal Services Contract** outlining the terms of the mural project and the payment schedule. Once RACC receives the signed agreement, processing of payments begins. The awarded amount of funding is typically divided into two or three payments. The final payment is made following receipt of the final report and documentation.
4. The mural **must begin within one year** of being awarded funding. If the project is unable to meet that deadline, approval will be rescinded and another application must be submitted for approval.
5. As part of the contract, the artist agrees to **waiver of any rights covered in the federal Visual Artist Rights Act** that would interfere with the performance of all rights under the Art Easement agreement. For more information on VARA, go to racc.org/public-art/mural-program
6. RACC sends the Art Easement to the property owner with instructions.
7. Applicant notifies RACC public art staff of **completion of mural**.
8. Applicant **acknowledges RACC support** on the mural wall and in all printed materials related to the mural project. RACC will work with the artist to provide appropriate acknowledgement.
9. Applicant submits a **final report** within 45 days of completion of the mural summarizing the completed project and detailing the use of Public Art Mural funds. Copies of invoices, receipts and checks are required documentation for the final report.