



Pittsburgh Creative Corps: Request for Qualifications Pittsburgh, Pa

Call for Artists: Pittsburgh Creative Corps Spring 2026 Review

Application Deadline: Monday, March 9, 2026 at 11:59 PM ET for Spring 2026 consideration

Information Session: Monday, February 23 at 10 AM

Register: tinyurl.com/Corps-Spring-2026-Info-Session

Session will be held via zoom. Attendees must register in advance.

Summary

Shiftworks Community + Public Arts seek artists living in southwestern Pennsylvania to be considered for the Pittsburgh Creative Corps (Corps), a group of pre-qualified artists whose work has been reviewed by a panel of artists, art and design professionals, and community stakeholders for various public art opportunities in southwest Pennsylvania. An online directory featuring Corps artist profiles is available at tinyurl.com/corps-artist-directory to serve as a resource for public agencies, private businesses, or other organizations that seek to commission artwork in the public realm in southwestern Pennsylvania.

The Pittsburgh Creative Corps was originally designed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the opportunity to engage artists and creative workers to activate the public realm while providing economic opportunity. The Corps was designed to make the artist selection and vetting process for individual projects more equitable and time efficient, allowing the program to more quickly commission artists. The Corps continues to engage a broad pool of artists in southwestern Pennsylvania for various public art opportunities that arise.





A. About

The Pittsburgh Creative Corps is a coordinated effort to commission artists and other creative workers to fabricate and install public art, and create civic engagement programs throughout the greater Pittsburgh region.

The Corps is a group of pre-qualified artists who may receive invitations for temporary and permanent public art projects managed and/or commissioned by the Corps stakeholders. An online directory featuring Corps artist profiles is available at tinyurl.com/corps-artist-directory to serve as a tool for public agencies, private businesses, or other organizations that seek to commission artwork in the public realm in southwestern Pennsylvania.

As projects are defined and funded, Corps artists may receive an invitation to indicate their interest and availability for the specific project. The Corps artist(s) would then go through a simplified selection process for the potential commission, which may include an interview or submission of a paid project proposal.

Shiftworks will use the Corps in the following ways:

1. As projects are identified, scoped, and budgeted, staff may identify a shortlist of artists from the Corps and invite them to indicate their interest and availability for the commission. If they are interested and available, they may be invited to participate in an interview or other selection process with project stakeholders.
2. Staff may also identify one or more Corps artists and invite them to submit a paid conceptual proposal for a project or commission that has been identified, scoped, and budgeted.
3. Staff may utilize the Corps to connect artists and others to fabrication and implementation resources.

4. The Pittsburgh Creative Corps Directory is available to public agencies, private businesses, and other organizations who seek to commission artists for projects in the public realm.
5. Staff may elect to design opportunities to support the specific development needs of Corps artists with little or no experience working in the public realm in order to expand the capabilities and experience of Corps artists

In addition, all Corps artists will be notified via the Shiftworks' Artist Opportunity List of open calls for artists that are released by Shiftworks.

B. Eligibility & Review Criteria

This opportunity is open to all artists living and working in southwestern Pennsylvania, including those working in visual arts, literary, performance, and other forms of practice. Artists who identify as established public artists, early/mid career public artists, and artists whose practice is poised for an opportunity in the public realm, regardless of career level and who fulfill the review criteria below are encouraged to apply.

Artists who have previously applied to the Corps but were not accepted are encouraged to reapply.





WHAT IS OUR DEFINITION OF PUBLIC ART?

At Shiftworks, we define public art as all art that impacts the public realm, regardless of ownership of the land on which it is located. Public art may include physical artworks, such as sculptures or murals, or other types of artist-designed activations of the public realm, such as performances, workshops, walking tours, etc.

WHAT IS OUR DEFINITION OF THE PUBLIC REALM?

We define the public realm as the physical space and place from building face to building face that influences the way in which we experience and inhabit the shared spaces of our city. It includes exterior spaces, such as streets, sidewalks, front yards, parks, public courtyards and plazas, and building facades. In our definition, it can also include interior spaces if those spaces are open and fully accessible to the general public. Examples of interior spaces that are part of the public realm include public libraries, public transit stations, and public buildings such as government offices.

Artists will be reviewed based on the following criteria:

- Past work shows a strong, consistent, and clear artistic voice
- Experience working collaboratively, either in their artistic practice or other experience
- Interest in working in the public realm with community members, clients, and/or stakeholders, as demonstrated in the responses to the Artist Questionnaire
- Strength of past work in the self-selected areas of expertise and media indicated in the application
- Responses to the Artist Questionnaire

Inclusion in the Corps does not guarantee a commission. In addition, Shiftworks may release additional open calls for artists that include artists beyond those listed on the Corps.

C. Selection Process

Twice a year, a panel of art and design professionals and community stakeholders will review application materials and select a list of pre-qualified artists for future Corps projects. Selected artists will be added to the online artist directory. A completed application is not a guarantee of selection.

Applications submitted after March 9, 2026 at 11:59 PM ET will be moved to the fall 2026 selection review meeting. Applicants will be notified of the panel's decision in spring 2026.

D. How to Apply

Interested artists must submit an application through Submittable using this link: tinyurl.com/rfq-pcc. Applicants must supply the following information and materials in entirety for an application to be considered complete.

ARTIST INFORMATION

Please provide the following:

- Name
- Gender identity
- Racial and/or ethnic identity
- Disability (optional)
- Business or studio name (if applicable)
- Email address
- Phone number
- Mailing address
- Primary website/social media URL
- Secondary website/social media URL (if applicable)

If applying as a team or collective, the above information must be submitted for each member (up to two others), as well as a brief description of each member's role on the team.





If applying as a business, the above information must be submitted for the business owners (primary contact plus up to two others).

ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

I certify that I am an artist living and working in southwestern Pennsylvania.

- Yes

ARTIST QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer the following three (3) questions either in written form or as video or audio recording submission. The video or audio recording should be no more than four (4) minutes long. Please note that this should not be a highly produced or edited recording. The intent of this option is to provide an opportunity for individuals who feel they can represent themselves better verbally versus in writing.

If applying as a team or business, please be sure that the key members are represented in the recording, and that their roles are indicated.

1. Why do you want to be a part of the Pittsburgh Creative Corps? (100 words suggested max)
2. What does public art mean to you as part of your personal creative practice? If not currently an artist in the public realm, how might an opportunity in the public realm affect your personal creative practice? (100 words suggested max) **Tip: Keep in mind the distinction between public art and public realm, as defined within this artist call.**
3. In what ways do you work collaboratively as an artist or otherwise? Why is collaboration important to you? (100 words suggested max) **Tip: Other forms of collaboration may also include experiences working with the general public, teaching, clients, community organizing, etc.**

ADDITIONAL KEY DETAILS

Applicants are asked to identify their areas of expertise and primary media. Applicants who select more than the indicated maximum will have their applications returned to them for revision. **When making your selections, please keep in mind that your self-identified categories should be further demonstrated in your responses to the Artist Questionnaire and/or project/artwork samples provided in your application.**

1. What are your areas of expertise and artwork types? **(select no more than three)**
 - Community engagement and social justice
 - Digital / lighting / projection art
 - Environmental and landscape art
 - Sculptural art
 - Site-specific and integrated art
 - 2-D art, including murals, mosaic, photography, etc.
 - Literary arts, including poetry, creative writing, fiction, and non-fiction
 - Live performance, including puppetry, theater, dance, music, and spoken word poetry, etc.
2. What are your primary media? **(select no more than three)**
 - Assemblage, including found objects, multimedia
 - Audio / sound recording
 - Carving, including wood, stone, other materials
 - Ceramic / glass
 - Digital / photography
 - Fabrication, including wood, metal, glass
 - Illustration / comics / graphic novels
 - Kinetic art
 - Landscape design
 - Metals / Jewelry
 - Murals
 - Painting / works on paper / printmaking
 - Textile / fabric / weaving
 - Site-specificity determines materials used





3. Have you completed a public art project in which you were the lead artist?
 - Yes or No
 - If yes, how many public art projects have you completed in which you were the lead artist?
 - If yes, what is the largest public art commission you have received in which you were the lead?
4. Are you a teaching artist / workshop artist?
 - Yes or No
 - If yes, what age range(s) or specific audience(s) do you teach?
5. Do you provide fabrication services for other artists or designers? E.g. Work for hire to implement another artist or designer's vision.
 - Yes or No
6. Do you have any accreditations, certifications, notable experiences (formal or informal), or awards that are relevant to this opportunity?
 - Yes (please list, including the year received) or No
7. If selected, do you grant permission for the Shiftworks to include all of the material provided within this application in your profile as part of the online directory? The directory would include: Artist name; website (if applicable); areas of expertise and artwork types; primary media; and submitted work samples.
 - Yes or No
8. If you are selected for the Corps, you will be required to submit an artist statement/ biography (250 words max) and a representative artist photo, such as a headshot or other image that is representative of yourself, team, or business to be included as part of your online profile. You will have an opportunity to review the profile prior to it

being published online. Choosing to not be part of the public-facing directory will NOT preclude you from being selected as a Corps artist.

- I understand

PROJECT / ARTWORK SAMPLES

As part of your application, you may submit up to five (5) project/artwork samples. These work samples should clearly demonstrate your experience and skills in the self-identified areas of expertise and primary media that you selected in this application.

- For visual work, you may submit up to three (3) jpg images to represent each sample, or one (1) video.
- For text based work, please submit a single PDF.
- For video and audio samples, URL links to third-party hosting sites are preferred, but uploaded files will be accepted. Video and audio samples must be no longer than 3 minutes each.

If applying as a business or team, it is recommended that you submit samples of artwork that were created collaboratively.

Please name files using the following naming convention: Artist Last Name_Artist First Name_Name of Artwork1 (for example, "Kahlo_Frida_Self Portrait1.jpg")

PROJECT SAMPLE DESCRIPTIONS

Within the application form, you will be prompted to enter descriptive information for each work sample, including the title, medium, dimensions, year, and a brief (50 words max) description of each to share any critical contextual information that is not already evident in the work sample.

REFERENCES

Please provide three references. References should be affiliated with projects or relevant professional experiences that were *ideally* completed within the past five years.





E. Information Session

Shiftworks is hosting a virtual information session for this opportunity on the following date. Attendees must register in advance by clicking the meeting's unique Zoom link below:

- Monday, February 23 at 10 AM. Register: tinyurl.com/Corps-Spring-2026-Info-Session

Artists are not required to attend the info session in order to submit an application.

About Shiftworks Community + Public Arts

shiftworkspgh.org

Shiftworks Community + Public Arts envisions a region in which the creative practices of artists are fully engaged to collaboratively shape the public realm and catalyze community-led change. Shiftworks builds capacity for this work through civically engaged public art, artist resources, public programming, and technical assistance.

F. Application assistance

Twice a week, Shiftworks offers in-person and virtual office hours to assist artists with application preparation prior to the submission deadline. Attending office hours is not required in order to submit an application. If interested, please follow the directions below:

- VIRTUAL meetings are available weekly on MONDAYS from 10 AM–1 PM. You may schedule a meeting using this link: tinyurl.com/Corps-Office-Hours-Virtual
- IN-PERSON meetings are available weekly on THURSDAYS from 2 PM–5 PM. Our office is located in East Liberty at 224 North Euclid Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA. You may schedule a meeting using this link: tinyurl.com/Corps-Office-Hours-In-Person

G. Notification of Results

Applicants will be notified of the panel's decision in spring 2026. Inclusion in the Pittsburgh Creative Corps does not guarantee a commission of artwork.

Shiftworks reserve the right not to select any of the applicants for commissions.

