



Washington State Arts Commission (ArtsWA)
Central Washington University – North Academic Complex
CALL FOR ART / REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

Due: Tuesday, June 3, 5pm PT

Budget: \$350,328.00 inclusive of design, fabrication, and installation.



What we're looking for

Central Washington University (CWU) and ArtsWA are seeking an artist or artist team to design and create original, permanent, site-responsive artwork for the North Academic Complex. There are both interior and exterior opportunities. We seek applicants who can design and create artwork that promotes themes of welcome, belonging, collaboration, and community. We also seek artwork that connects to the Yakama Nation, and a legacy of land stewardship. Artists from the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation and other tribes of Washington State are encouraged to apply.

Eligibility

Artists located within the Pacific Northwest are eligible to apply (US and BC). Students and those with active or recent ArtsWA projects are ineligible for this call. Artists currently on ArtsWA's Public Artist Roster or applying for the 2025-2029 Public Artist Roster are eligible to apply. We do not discriminate based on race, sex, religion, color, national origin, age, ancestry, disability, or gender identity.

The Washington State Arts Commission is committed to values of inclusion, diversity, equity, and creative expression. We believe in diverse forms of artistic expression, and we believe in access to arts and arts education for all individuals in our state. The arts can and should play a role in addressing inequities, modelling inclusion, and teaching empathy.

How to submit

Please apply on Submittable: [ArtsWA Public Art Submission Manager](#) by, **Tuesday, June 3**. You should receive confirmation of your submission within one business day. If you are unable to submit electronically, contact Rebecca Merkley to discuss possible accommodations by phone: 360-252-9986 or email: rebecca.merkley@arts.wa.gov.

What to submit

Artists interested in this project must prepare and submit the following set of documents:

1. **A letter of interest** outlining your approach to public art as well as providing the Art Selection Committee with insights regarding your interest in making art for the CWU North Academic Complex. It should outline:
 - What you bring to the project as an artist or artist team
 - Any other comments that might help to differentiate you
 - Your name(s), address, and primary phone number and e-mail address
 - Not to exceed one page. **PDF or DOC format.**
2. **8 images of past works**, preferably created within the past 5 years. 1,200 pixels on the long side, 72 pixels/inch minimum, file size less than 1.5 MB. Named uniquely. **JPG format.**
3. **An image list document**, this document should describe the images you've submitted. The document should indicate:
 - Title
 - Dimensions
 - Materials
 - Date of work
 - City/ locations
 - Project budget and client, if applicable.
 - A brief description of the ideas, themes or context behind the artwork
 - (250 words max per image). **PDF or DOC format.**
4. **References:** A list of at least three references from past projects. The list must include complete addresses and telephone numbers. **PDF or DOC format.**

OPTIONAL: A resume/CV (limit 2 pages). Artists working collaboratively may submit a resume/CV for each member. **PDF or DOC format.**

About the North Academic Complex project and CWU

CWU is located in Ellensburg, Washington in the Kittitas Valley. CWU welcomes and embraces diversity in all its forms and is a campus where any student can succeed. Ellensburg has significant and unique

geography featuring mountains, rivers, and valleys. It is the historic home of the Yakama people. The federally recognized Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation include Kikitat, Palus, Wallawalla, Wanapam, Wenatchi, Wishram, and Yakama people. The Yakama Nation continues to be a committed steward of this land, cherishing it and protecting it as instructed by elders through generations. The Kittitas Valley was a traditional gathering place for tribes and often included trading and sharing of resources. CWU is honored and grateful to be here today and gives thanks to their legacy.

CWU is currently constructing the North Academic Complex (NAC), a new 108,000 square-foot building located in the north central area of campus on the south side of Dean Nicholson Blvd. The heating and cooling system for the NAC will consist of a new closed loop ground source heat pump system drawing water from the Ellensburg Aquifer. This system will be housed in a separate geothermal building located on the north side of Dean Nicholson Blvd, northeast of the building site. The buildings feature major wood components such as atrium wall finishes and structural glulam beams sourced from the Yakama Nation. The building will be home to the Dean of the college of Arts and Humanities, World Languages, History, English, Philosophy and Religious Studies, Political Science, Sociology, and Law and Justice. It is a flexible, interdisciplinary, and active space designed to be a central gathering place on campus.

ArtsWA Art in Public Places program vision

ArtsWA's Art in Public Places program is uniquely positioned to advance and support art and artists across Washington. Our goal is to build and care for a dynamic contemporary art collection that is accessible and valued. We seek impactful and lasting artworks that reflect Washington's diverse communities.

What you will need to do if chosen

The artwork will be commissioned through ArtsWA's Art in Public Places program. Artists will coordinate work with ArtsWA and CWU staff. An agreement between ArtsWA and the artist or artist team will formalize budget, schedule, and design. The selected artist(s) will be expected to:

- Design and propose an artwork for review and approval by ArtsWA staff, conservators, and the Art Selection Committee
- Travel to and/or virtually meet with the project site up to three times during the proposal/design process to meet with the Art Selection Committee and ArtsWA project manager
- Work within the fixed budget
- Maintain registration as a WA State vendor and adhere to applicable state permitting and licensing requirements, including those relating to contracting and prevailing wages
- Enter into contracts with ArtsWA and fulfill those requirements, including paying applicable taxes.

What the budget needs to include

The project budget is **\$350,328.00** inclusive of design, travel, structural engineering, materials, fabrication, installation, artist fee, taxes and all other associated project costs.

How we choose the artist(s)

The Art Selection Committee consists of local stakeholders including CWU staff and community members. The selection process is facilitated by ArtsWA staff. The panel will review submitted portfolios and materials of all applicants and select one or more artists or artist teams to create a proposal and artwork.

The criteria used by the Art Selection Committee will include:

- **Appropriateness**
Evidence of the artist's ability to execute artwork at an appropriate scale and using materials suitable for permanent artwork in public places, or demonstrated potential for successful transition to public art;
- **Site Responsiveness**
Evidence of the artist's ability to create artwork that addresses the physical and/or community context of its placement; and
- **Artistic Excellence**
Evidence of some or all the following: mastery of skills and techniques, professional approaches to process and presentation, and/or communication of unique vision or perspective.

Timeline

- RFQ distributed: May 13
- All materials due: June 3, 5:00pm PT
- Art Selection Committee review: June 9
- Notification to selected artist: June 16
(Committee may decide to interview 2-3 finalists before making selection)
- Artist site visit: July 2025
- Design: 6-9 months
- Fabrication: 9-12 months
- Anticipated artwork installation: Fall 2026

To avoid technical problems, artists are encouraged to submit well in advance of the deadline. Late submittals will not be accepted.

Due Date and Time: Tuesday, June 3, 5PM Pacific Time

The Art Selection Committee may opt to not select an artist from this submission process. The committee reserves the right to commission one or multiple artists/artist teams if appropriate.

Have Questions?

Contact Rebecca Merkley, Art in Public Places Project Manager, 360-252-9986,
rebecca.merkley@arts.wa.gov