



Open Call to Artists: Arts Alley Initiative

Art Inventory

(25) Murals across multiple Alleys

(2) Special Art Installation Projects

City of Detroit: Transforming Neighborhood Alleys with Art

Deadline to apply: Friday, February 7, 2025, at 11:59 PM

Virtual Q & A session January 28, 2025 10 – 11am. Register:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/dujSPWxRT46Ouge9AP59Q>

Project Overview

Space Lab Development, Inc. (SpaceLab Detroit) is excited to issue an Open Call to Artists on behalf of The City of Detroit's City Walls and Arts, Culture and Entrepreneurship (ACE) divisions for the **Arts Alley Initiative**, a groundbreaking program to transform neighborhood alleys into vibrant spaces through murals and art installations. This project aims to celebrate local culture, foster community pride, and showcase the exceptional talents of both experienced and emerging artists.

Vision Statement

The Arts Alley Initiative is a transformative project that envisions vibrant, safe, and inclusive community gathering spaces in the heart of Detroit's neighborhoods. As part of Mayor Duggan's Blight to Beauty Initiative, this effort harnesses the power of art and design to address long-standing challenges amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic—challenges such as limited access to safe green spaces, deteriorating infrastructure, and insufficient support for the creative workforce.

Through the Arts Alley Initiative, artists, residents, and community leaders have collaborated to reimagine residential and commercial alleys, transforming them with innovative landscaping, stormwater management, and pedestrian-friendly amenities. Now, artists will create captivating public art in these spaces to reflect Detroit's rich history, culture, and resilience, creating hubs of beauty and imagination while fostering pride and connection among neighbors.

By uniting local artists, residents, and the city's creative resources, the Arts Alley Initiative is more than an investment in physical infrastructure—it is a celebration of Detroit's spirit, an opportunity to

amplify voices through art, and a catalyst for building stronger, more beautiful neighborhoods for all.

Alley Locations and Themes

1. Manistique Alley: 14600 Korte St, Detroit, MI 48215

An alley that anchors a series of spaces all designed to promote wellness and good mental health. The spaces include a Butterfly Garden, a Wheelchair Garden, a Treehouse Community Center, and the Creative Empowerment Garden with a solar movie theater, as well as emergency power plug-in for the community.

2. Snowden-Hartwell Alley: 17129 Snowden St, Detroit, MI 48235

This is one of 18 alleys stewarded by the Neighborhood Association (of District 2) that has been activated as a “dream way” embracing both art and science. This green alley will feature murals and other artistic expressions to enhance the alley’s beauty creating a welcoming gathering space for the environmentally conscious residents living in this northwest Detroit neighborhood.

3. Yellow Brick Road Alley: 14208 East Jefferson, Detroit, MI 48215

An alley a decade in the making that residents will use for youth education and safety. Following the death of several children and teens due to speeding cars in the neighborhood, the neighbors wanted a safe place for children to ride their bikes, play, and learn about history through a community library and a variety of art projects.

4. Burrell Trail Alley: 7601 Harper Ave, Detroit, MI 48213

An alley and marketplace that will anchor the Alkebu-lan Village campus, where youth have learned responsibility and self-defense for more than 40 years. Alkebu-lan expanded its mission to neighborhood development and is now transforming the area by rehabbing houses and offering new amenities, such as a small park. The project is named for the Burrell brothers, two brilliant youth who participated in the Village's programs and were tragically killed in a house fire in 2015.

<https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2015/02/09/detroit-cristo-rey-student-dies-fire/23152179/>

Special Art Installation Projects

Chain Link Fence Woven Art

The artist chosen for this project will use weather-resistant materials to transform a chain link fence into standing woven or decorative art. Additional details will be made available upon request.

Examples of the types of art we are looking for include:



Cascade Vista, Cascade Vista Ball Field, Renton, WA, June 2023, 5' x 165' by Christy Caravaglio. Photo Credit: <https://www.ccpatchwork.com/fences2>

The Alley Carpentry Project

The artist/carpenter chosen for this project will build (4) arbors that will serve as entryways off the alley into additional spaces that stakeholders have created. The arbors should be artistically designed and built in consultation with the community stakeholders. While the arbors might be exclusively made of wood, other materials could be incorporated as long as the materials are durable for outdoor use and approved by the stakeholders. Additional details will be made available upon request.

In addition to the arbors, the artist/carpenter will build a kiosk that should be artistically designed and built in consultation with the community stakeholders. While the kiosk might be exclusively made of wood, other natural/organic materials may be incorporated as long as the materials are durable for outdoor use and approved by the stakeholders. The kiosk will be used to share information related to youth development, environmental learning, and community events.



Additional details will be made available upon request. Examples of the types of art we are looking for include:



Twisted Bittersweet Vine Arbor by Nancy Reilly. Photo Credit: <https://entangledfurnishings.com/handcrafted-furniture-bittersweet/>

Project Timeline

- **Call Release Date:** January 14, 2025
- **Virtual Q & A session January 28, 2025** 10 – 11am. Register: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/dujSPWxRT46Ouge9AP59Q>
- **Deadline for Questions:** January 31, 2025. Send questions to info@spacelabdetroit.com
- **Proposal Submission Deadline:** February 7, 2025
- **Artists Notified:** February 21, 2025
- **Artist Agreements & Onboarding Documents Due:** February 28, 2025
- **Community Engagement Begins:** March 7, 2025
- **Mural Painting Begins:** March 25, 2025
- **Painting/Installation Completion Deadline:** May 31, 2025



What We're Looking For

We encourage submissions from:

- **Experienced and emerging artists** specializing in murals or public art installations.
- Individual artists and collaborative artist teams.
- Artists 18 years or older, available to work within the project timeline.
- Artists with a connection to Detroit or Michigan are strongly encouraged to apply.

The Arts Alley Project seeks art that:

- Reflects Detroit's rich cultural, social, and historical narratives.
- Enhances the visual appeal of neighborhood alleys and strengthens community pride.
- Demonstrates innovation and is suitable for outdoor public spaces.

Artists will work on concrete walls, fences, garages, or alley structures. Artists must prep all surfaces before painting or installation begins.

Open Call

Artists interested in applying should send an Artist Packet to SpaceLab Detroit at info@spacelabdetroit.com with the following information:

- Name, address, email address, and phone number
- Three (3) examples of past work that would prove relevant to this project. Digital images must be high-resolution JPEG files. Each image must be unlocked and downloadable for viewing. Each JPEG image must be titled with the artist's name and image number. (Example: SaraSmith001, SaraSmith002).
- Resume or CV that includes art and community engagement experience
- Two (2) references from previous public art clients or teachers
- An Artist/Team Statement (max. 800 words) that lists all materials needed and answers the following questions:
 - What interests you about the project?
 - What are your preliminary ideas for the project?
 - How do you envision working in collaboration with the community?
 - What is your experience working on complex projects with desires and constraints dictated by the site owners?



- How would your project benefit the community?
- Do you have any connection to city employees that would constitute a conflict of interest?
- Availability to complete the artwork by the required completion deadline.

Stakeholder Selection Process

The judging panel, which will be comprised of property owners in the alley community, will use the following point system:

Points

- 10** Artist Statement
- 10** Detroit Based Artist
- 10** Experience with Community Engagement
- 20** Project Proposal/Preliminary Ideas or Sketch
- 25** Experience Creating Permanent, Durable, Outdoor Public Artwork
- 25** Ability to accomplish projects of similar complexity within the budget, timeline and technical constraints presented (based on examples of prior works)

100 Points Total

Compensation

Artists will receive:

- **50% of their fee upon selection and completion of required documents.**
- **50% upon project completion.**

Selected artists will be notified by **February 21, 2025**, and must submit onboarding documents by **February 28, 2025**.



Submission Process

- Email your completed proposal to info@spacelabdetroit.com with the subject line: "Arts Alley Proposal - [Your Name]."
- As part of your response, please indicate what type of project you want to work on (mural, chain link or carpentry).
- All proposals must be submitted by **February 7, 2025, at 11:59 PM**. Late submissions will not be considered.

Selection Process

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

1. Creativity, quality, and originality of the design.
2. Relevance to Detroit's culture and community values.
3. Feasibility of the design within the given timeline and budget.
4. Artist's experience or demonstrated potential.

Additional Details

- Artists will be provided with site dimensions and specifications upon selection.
- Final designs must be approved by the City of Detroit before implementation.
- Artists are responsible for creating durable, weather-resistant work suitable for outdoor conditions.



Questions?

For inquiries, email info@spacelabdetroit.com. All questions must be submitted by **January 24, 2025**.

Join us in creating a lasting artistic legacy for Detroit's neighborhoods. We look forward to your submissions!