Halifax Regional Municipality

Call for Proposals – Public Art

Opportunity for African Nova Scotian and Afro-Diasporic Artists

Beechville Lakeside Timberlea Community Centre

Project Budget: $200,000 + HST (Canadian Dollars)
Deadline for Submission: Sunday, Aug. 16 at 11:59 p.m. (AST)
Non-Mandatory Virtual Artist Info Session: July 17 @ 2 p.m. AST
pre-register by emailing artgrants@halifax.ca

Contact

Lindsay Cory - Community Developer, Public Art
Parks & Recreation
Halifax Regional Municipality
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Project Description

Halifax Regional Municipality is seeking artist-led proposals for the creation of hanging indoor sculptural installations as part of the new Beechville Lakeside Timberlea Community Centre (BLT Community Centre). The new community centre is located near the historic African Nova Scotian community of Beechville. We are prioritizing submissions with established ties to one or more of the 52+ historic African Nova Scotian communities, while also encouraging submissions from artists of African descent across the wider community.

Mentorship Component:

With the goal of creating more opportunities, the submitting artist or artist team is encouraged to name an emerging artist to work alongside them in this project as a mentee. The submitting artist will act as a mentor to the mentee and will remain responsible for the overall delivery of the project. The mentee should have a clear and meaningful role in the project and/or its outcomes which can be outlined in the Statement of Interest (see Submission Requirements section for details). This partnership is meant to be meaningful to both parties, offering opportunities for shared learning, professional development and community building.

Site:

The sites of the artworks are located inside the building. There are multiple interior locations that have been identified as suitable for public art. The fireplace (Site A) is considered the primary location, and the artist and mentee may choose any of the other identified sites (Site B or C) (see Opportunity Site section for details) for additional artwork(s).

Budget:

The total budget for the project is $200,000 + HST (Canadian Dollars) for at least two artworks in at least two of the opportunity sites. This fee includes (but is not limited to) artist fees (including appropriate mentee artist fees), administration, development, fabrication and installation, insurance costs, travel/accommodations and technical consultation as needed.

Timeline:

- Submission Deadline: Sunday, Aug. 16 at 11:59 p.m. (AST)
- Selection & Notification: October 2026
- Detailed design and fabrication: 2027
- Project installation: December 2027

Introduction

The BLT Community Centre is located at 1492 St Margarets Bay Road and replaces the old Lakeside Community Centre, which was originally designed in the 1950s as a school to service the community of Lakeside. The Lakeside Community Centre opened in 1991 to offer recreational and community programs.

Construction of the new BLT Community Centre started in 2023 and officially opened to the public in April 2026. The new BLT Community Centre includes a multipurpose dance space, program rooms, gymnasium, kitchen, splashpad, playground and more, and offers a range of

activities for the public. The naming change better represents the communities primarily serviced by the centre. It also recognizes Beechville, an historic African Nova Scotian community, first settled in the early 1800s.

The BLT Community Centre offers recreational programs for all ages and abilities, including creative movement, arts and crafts, basketball, dance and painting, among many others. The centre will serve as a multi-functional community space and is expected to welcome hundreds of patrons each week.

Beechville Community Profile

The community of Beechville, originally called Beech Hill, was first settled by refugees who had escaped from slavery during the War of 1812. Many had fought for the British in the war and for their service were granted acreage near the Northwest Arm, an area that includes present day Beechville, Chain of Lakes, and Nine Mile River. The community is one of the oldest African Nova Scotian communities in Nova Scotia. Over the years, outside pressure, particularly the annexation of the former Halifax County by the City of Halifax in 1969 (Map 3), and the construction of Highway 103 have decreased the size of the community. Throughout the 1970s and 80s, the provincial government and City of Halifax targeted large areas of Beechville for industrial development, which further eroded traditional community boundaries.

Diversity & Inclusion Framework

This public art opportunity will be administered in accordance with the core values embedded in the Municipality's Diversity and Inclusion Framework, which states:

The Halifax Regional Municipality values diversity and inclusion in all that we do, think and pursue. Diversity is more than race, ability, sexual orientation, language, gender or any other descriptive category. Diversity means understanding and utilizing different views, ideas, life experiences, skills and knowledge. By recognizing diversity as a core value, we are laying the foundation for a municipality that aspires to accurately represent the communities we serve.

The goals of the Framework are reflected in the goals of this process, which include the development of:

- **Inclusive public service:** To ensure inclusive and equitable access to and benefit of, municipal services, programs and facilities;
- **Equitable employment:** To attract and retain a skilled workforce that reflects the diverse residents of the municipality; and
- **Meaningful partnerships:** To develop positive and respectful internal and external partnerships that contribute to inclusive decision making.

Public Art Project Intent

Public art is one way we can reflect the rich diversity of our region, including Indigenous voices that tell the past, present and future stories of Mi'kma'ki. The Halifax Regional Municipality is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and traditional lands of the Mi'kmaw people. The municipality

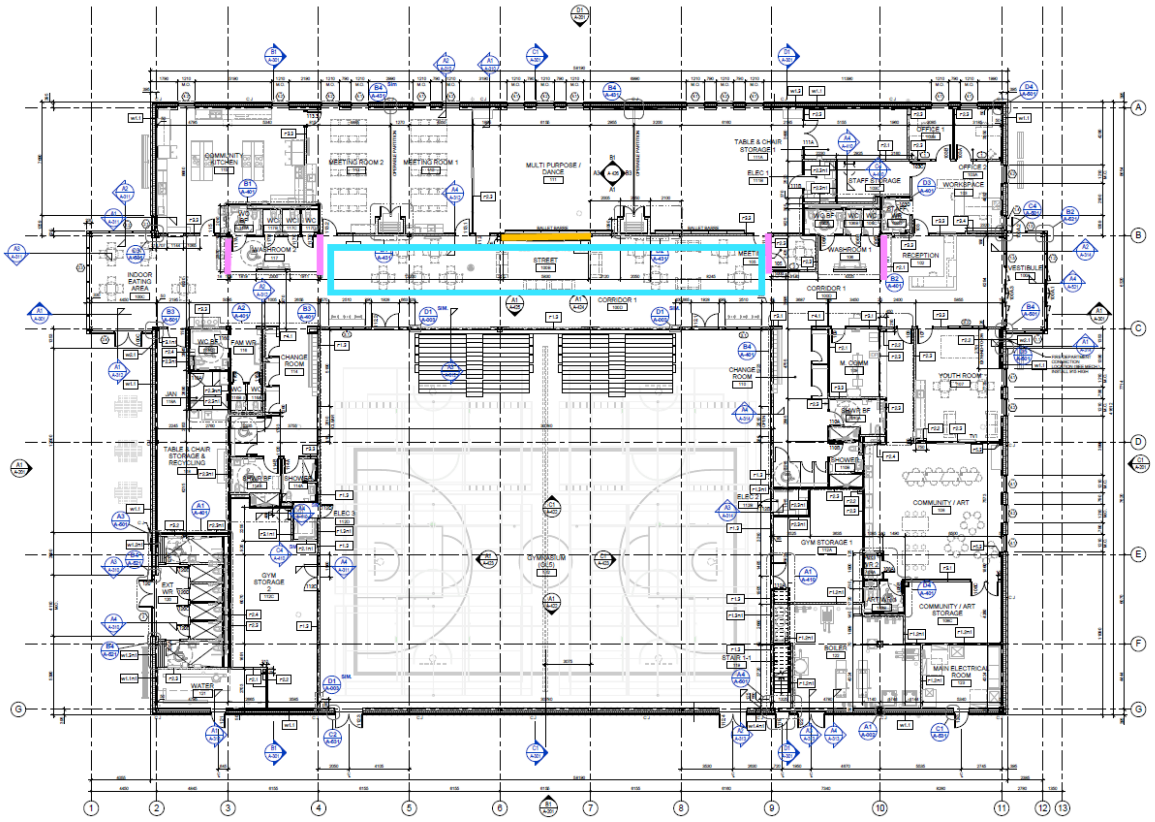
acknowledges the Peace and Friendship Treaties signed in this Territory and recognizes that we are all Treaty People. We also acknowledge and celebrate the profound contributions of people of African descent in shaping Nova Scotia's rich history and vibrant culture. From their earliest presence to the present, African Nova Scotians have been integral founding members, leaving an enduring mark on our community for over 400 years. We remain committed to working with communities that have historically been underserved, guided by the core principles of equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility.

A broad number of user groups take advantage of the BLT Community Centre's offerings, which include athletics and recreation, arts and cultural expression, community gatherings, family and social support services, educational activities and workshops and more. As such, it is important that the artwork commissioned through this process be relevant, engaging and accountable. Artists are invited to visit the BLT Community Centre anytime during open hours to get a feel for the space and how it's used. Specific questions related to this call for proposals should be directed to the **project contact** (see cover page).

Opportunity Sites

Based on the assessment of the building program, community use and architectural design, staff have identified three opportunity areas within the project scope for the accommodation of public art. **The selected artist(s) and mentee will create works for two of these locations: Site A, and either Site B or Site C.** All works will require engineered drawings/approvals, which are not required at the proposal stage.

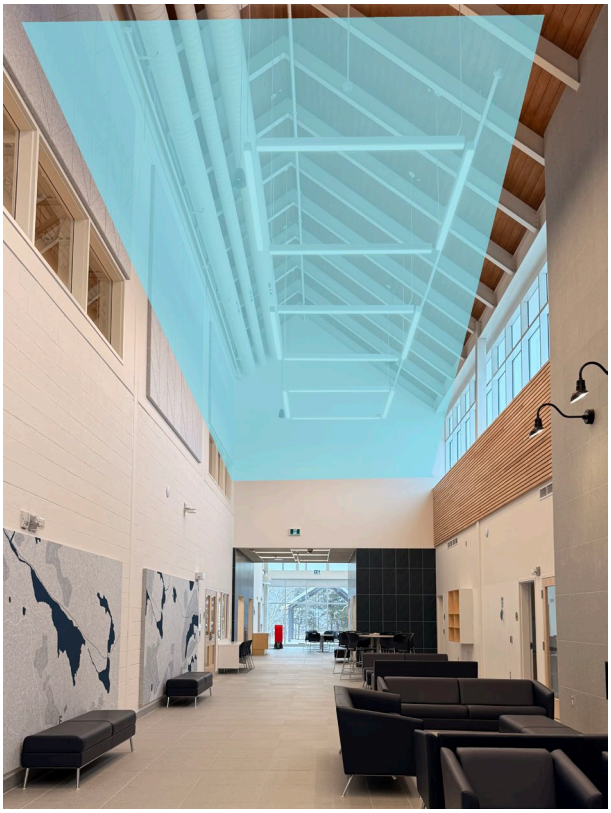
Site	Location Description	Considerations
Site A (primary site)	Wall mounted above the fireplace in main gathering area.	• 2 dimensional or low-profile sculptural work would be best in this location. • Space has dedicated lighting already installed. Lighting cannot be moved or changed.
Site B	Suspended in double height space from ceiling throughout the main gathering space	• 3 dimensional but must be lightweight for this location • Suspended artwork weight not to exceed 0.5 kpa (10 psf) in distributed weight. • Localized rigging point load not to exceed 2.5 kN (500 lbs). • Brace any rigging point that induces a torsional moment into roof framing members.
Site C	Wall mounted in the double height space(s) above the reception desk or throughout the gathering space.	• 2 dimensional would be best in this location.

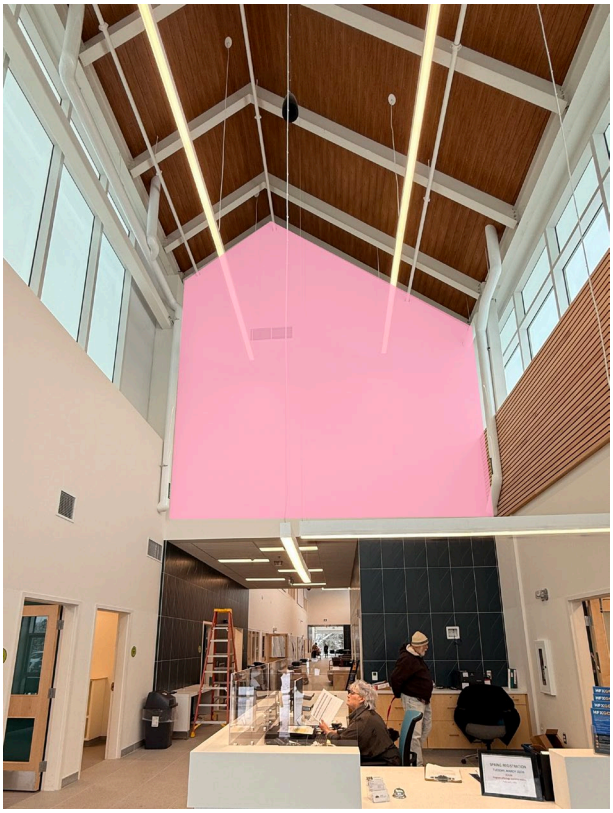


Floor plan and site considerations

- High traffic area
- Durability is a main consideration, especially for Site A where it is more accessible to the public.
- The main colours in the area are white, grey and blue. It is not necessary to use these colours in your work.
- The selected artwork will be a permanent artwork.
- Lighting already in the space is permanent with no changes able to be made. Additional lighting may be a consideration.

Site Images





Submission Requirements

Email all documentation as one (1) PDF document, not to exceed a file size of 5 MB to: artgrants@halifax.ca with the email subject: *BLTCC Public Art Proposal – [Your Name].*

1. **COVER PAGE** – Please provide accurate contact information for the applicant, including mailing address, email address and phone numbers for the project lead (if submitting as a team), website information (where applicable), as well as the names of all collaborating parties.
2. **ARTIST CV** – Please include a brief bio and a resume outlining the professional experience of the applicant (not to exceed 2 pages). If submitting as a group, please include a resume for the project lead (maximum 2 pages), and brief bios for each of the participating members.
    a. **MENTEE CV** – Please include a brief bio and a resume outlining the experience of the emerging artist/mentee named on this project who will act as a collaborator on the project.
3. **STATEMENT OF INTEREST** – 300 words (or less) that explains:
    a. Why the artist/team is interested in this opportunity and how their practice relates to this project and the posted selection criteria.
    b. The applicant must speak to their community connections with one or more of the African Nova Scotian communities.
    c. Artists are also encouraged to name an emerging artist who will collaborate on the project as a mentee and describe why they would like to work with this artist.
4. **VISUAL PROJECT DESCRIPTION** – A PRELIMINARY visual concept (drawings/renderings) sufficient to illustrate the applicant's approach to the site(s). *
5. **WRITTEN PROJECT DESCRIPTION** – 500 words (or less) that describe the project, including relevant project methodology. *
6. **PRELIMINARY BUDGET** – Artists are asked to submit a preliminary budget to indicate the project's feasibility. This budget should include costs associated with designing, creating, producing, and installing the artworks, including material costs and artists fees. The budget should also consider appropriate artist fees for the partnering mentee. CARFAC can offer some guidance on these fees.
7. **DIGITAL IMAGE WORK SAMPLES** – Applicants must submit a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 10 samples of past work that best illustrate their qualifications for this project. Submit each image on a separate page, portrait format, and include title of work, artist(s), location, commissioning agency, date and budget. If submitting as a team, the team submits no more than 10 images.

* It is understood that the project descriptions received at this stage through this process will be preliminary in nature, and intended to express the concept of the artwork, not the detailed final design. The selected concept and all particulars pertaining to the installation of the artwork will be further developed post-award in consultation with Municipal staff and members of the project team.

Format Guidelines

1. All supporting documents must be complete and strictly adhere to these guidelines and submission requirements (above) or risk not being considered.
2. All submissions must be formatted to 8.5 x 11-inch pages (can be in portrait or landscape format)
3. Submission files must be 5 MB or smaller.
4. If submitting as a team, the team should designate one representative to complete the entry form. Each team member must submit individual resume/curriculum vitae. (see Submission Requirements)
5. All documents must be sent by email to: artgrants@halifax.ca and must be received on or before **Sunday, Aug. 16 at 11:59 p.m. (AST).**

Questions regarding the expectations of the submission process should be directed to:

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Selection Process

This is a single-stage process.

A peer selection panel comprised of arts sector representatives and community representatives will review all application materials. At the conclusion of the review, the selection panel will recommend the selection of one artist/artist team to undertake the work.

The selection panel reserves the right to request additional information from any of the applicants to inform their decision, a shortlist with applicable additional fees may be proposed. The panel also reserves the right to make no recommendation from the submitted applications.

Once the selection panel has recommended a proposal and an award has been issued, the successful artist/artist team will be asked to prepare detailed concept designs based on the preliminary proposals.

Additional Information

- The selected artist will be required to show proof of WCB coverage and $2 million general liability insurance. The mentee artist may need to named on this insurance depending on the scope of their work with the project.
- The selected proposal is understood to be a concept for a future artwork. The selected artist will be required to enter into agreement with the municipality to provide a detailed design for the artwork, including a budget and installation plan, which will be subject to the approval of the municipality. Consideration of the detailed design proposal will be technical in nature.

- Submission at this stage does not require a detailed budget; however, proposals should demonstrate feasibility within the $200,000 + HST budget. Possible costs may include but are not limited to: artist and design fees, appropriate mentorship fees, consultant fees, including the production of stamped engineered drawings where applicable, subcontractor fees, material and fabrication costs, transportation, all elements of installation. CARFAC is a good resource to use when preparing budgets.
- The municipality and the selection panel are not obligated to accept any of the submissions and may reject all submissions. The municipality reserves the right to reissue this Call for Proposals as required.
- All information provided under the submission is subject to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (NS) and shall only be withheld from release if an exemption from release is permitted by the Act. The artist shall retain copyright in the concept proposal.
- The ownership of design ideas submitted with this application remain with the submitting artist until a selection has been made and a contract signed. Once a contract has been awarded, the selected artwork will be owned by the Halifax Regional Municipality, and images of the work may be used in publicity for the Halifax Regional Municipality. Copyright of the work and all intellectual property shall remain with the artist.
- Extensions to the submission deadline will not be granted under any circumstances. Submissions received after the deadline and those that are found to be incomplete will not be reviewed.

Evaluation

Proposals will be evaluated through peer assessment. The review process will be informed by a technical review of the proposals by municipal staff, where deemed necessary.

Scoring Section	Assessment Criteria	Score
Artistic Merit Statement of interest, examples of past work, quality of proposal	• Overall quality of submitted past work* • Professional standing • Artistic quality of submitted proposal	/30
Methodology & Approach Demonstrates the artist's level of understanding of the municipality's design requirements outlined in this project brief and asses the proposal's response to the opportunity and varied user groups.	• Submitted proposal in relation to the design and function of the Facility as an active public space with broad and diverse community use • Resonance of the artists professional practice to the architecture and design elements of the Centre as reflected in submitted examples of past work and the conceptual proposal for the Centre	/40
Experience & Expertise Scoring of this category will be based upon the submission of past work as an indication of the applicant's capacity to take on this project	• Applicant's ability to manage projects of a similar scale and scope** • Applicant's familiarity working with public agencies and experience working with community groups and in community • Applicant's demonstrated ability to work to schedule and budget in a collaborative environment	/20
Project Feasibility Scoring in this category will be based on the preliminary budget submitted indicating an understand of the total project budget.	• Demonstrated understanding of project management as it pertains specifically to the management of project costs, and the perceived ability of the artist to complete the project within the allotted budget.	/10

** Applicants do not need to have led public art projects of a similar scope and scale, but their record of experience should reflect a capacity to successfully meet the requirements of this opportunity. Examples of past work need not reflect public realm projects of a similar scale (e.g. equal or greater budgets). All past experience that affirms the applicant's capacity to lead the management of this project will be considered.