



18TH STREET ARTS CENTER CURATOR OF ARTIST COMMISSIONS REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

INTRODUCTION

18th Street Arts Center (18SAC) is inviting proposals from qualified persons or organizations to serve as the **Curator of Artist Commissions (“Curator”)** to develop and implement a multi-year season of artist commissions (“Commissions”) that culminate annually in a city-wide arts festival, for an initial term of three years, with the possibility of renewal.

18SAC currently presents its artist commissions in the exhibition space at the Santa Monica Airport hangar, known as the Propeller Gallery, and at-large in temporary public spaces across Santa Monica (such as the Pier, local parks, and beach).

BACKGROUND

18th Street Arts Center is a nonprofit arts organization founded in Santa Monica 35 years ago. Its mission is to provoke public dialog through contemporary art making. It values art making as an essential component of a vibrant, just and healthy society.

PROGRAMS

18SAC reimagines the impact of artists on society. Conceived as a radical think tank in the shape of an artist community, 18SAC is a globally recognized catalyst for deploying artistic imagination to meet society’s needs. 18SAC curates an environment for artists and the public to directly engage in creating experiences and partnerships that foster positive social change. Founded in 1988, 18SAC is a hub for artistic innovation that actively nurtures and promotes the work of contemporary artists from around the globe, from all disciplines at various career stages.

Through its multi-tiered residency program, exhibitions of artist commissions, and community treasure mapping work, 18SAC provides artists with a center for artistic creation, innovation, collaboration and growth.

Recognized for its international artist residency program, it has hosted more than 600 international artists-in-residence from 61 countries. Annually we host 20-30 short-term visiting artists. 18SAC also provides long-term affordable studio space, professional development, and visibility to over 60 local artists. These studios are subsidized by 18SAC and its partners.

18SAC's **Culture Mapping 90404** initiative is a living community resource helping to shape public policy and community development. Launched in 2015 it includes ongoing collaborations with municipal partners (library, parks, housing, schools), research and evaluation partners (USC, Rand) and community groups representing the concerns of local Hispanic, Black, and Asian families. 18SAC pairs community treasures and concerns with artists we commission to create locally relevant social impact artworks. To date we have produced over 60 projects with artists and graduate students that address community concerns and wellbeing in Santa Monica and in 2023, this program will expand to multiple California towns to advance health equity across the state.

COMMUNITY

18SAC is committed to supporting artists who empower others, make equitable places of community and reimagine oppressive structures. We honor solidarity with the marginalized and disenfranchised, and work to center traditionally decentered voices with a sense of humility. 18SAC was founded on the belief that diversity is our greatest strength as a nation. We began with a diverse group of artists seeking to create an active, multicultural, brave space for artistic exploration. Many of our founding artists were engaged in dismantling various manifestations of oppression. Thirty-five years later, these values remain central to our core. As an international residency center, 18SAC believes that racial, cultural, ethnic, gender, ability, sexual and language diversity in its program offerings, leadership, staff, and artists leads to greater community wellbeing and a more just, peaceful world. We work towards non-exploitative, sustainable processes and practices that reconnect us with the Earth and to one another.

CAMPUS VENUES

18SAC supports our programs on two Santa Monica campuses. Our original 30,000 square foot campus, owned by 18SAC, is where Judy Chicago and 129 other women artists crafted the iconic *Dinner Party* in 1979. Our visiting artists live and work on this campus, along with 25 other visual and performing artists, and several cultural organizations that uniquely add to the vibrancy of the 18SAC. Our second campus is located at the Santa Monica Municipal Airport in a 22,000 square foot

converted hangar owned by the City of Santa Monica. This campus includes our primary exhibition space, the Propeller Gallery, and provides day studios for 39 visual artists.

Santa Monica, CA is a city which values, promotes and invests in the arts. Currently, city governance is evaluating and developing new long-term plans for the future conversion of the Santa Monica Airport into an 'arts and parks' destination, as well as a city-wide "experience management plan" which includes arts and culture experiences.

PURPOSE:

In 2022 18SAC hired public art consultant, Tamsin Dillion, to do an assessment of the opportunities presented by 18SAC's expansion to the Santa Monica Airport campus. The study, titled "***Looking Ahead Artists in the Public Realm***", calls for a new platform for a program of contemporary public arts that reinforces the power of art for social change and to imagine different futures for the people of the iconic City of Santa Monica. **This report and options the Board chose to explore will be provided to all serious inquiries.**

The Curator of Artist Commissions will develop an integrated series of public art/social practice artist commissions for 18SAC based on the recommendations of the study generated by consultant Tamsin Dillon.

This new 10 year strategy will engage artists in a diverse range of interventions, temporary (and potentially more permanent) works, with a focus on **social and participatory practice and events** with overlap to visual arts in locations operated by 18SAC and other locations, operated by civic partners in Santa Monica.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION / SCOPE OF WORK

The Curator-of Artist Commissions will report to 18SAC's Deputy Director.

Term: Three Years starting 2023

Compensation: \$170,000

Year 1 \$50,000 Annual Fee of \$4,167 paid monthly

Year 2 \$60,000 Annual Fee of \$5,000 paid monthly

Year 3 \$60,000 Annual Fee of \$5,000 paid monthly

Availability:

- 1/3 time (typically 13-15 hours per week)

- On-call as needed via zoom, email, text, or phone
- On-site as needed (approximately 1/3rd of total hours per month)
- Adjustable to workload, for example, hours expand during installation or while working on a major grant deadline, with the expectation that these periods are balanced with periods of lighter workloads

Airfare and Lodging Budget:

3-5 nights for up to two approved research trips yearly, total budget of \$2,500 per trip/ per year

Primary Services:

1. Steward 4-6 existing Artist Commissions for 18SAC's partnership with Quinn Research Center for a new Black Cultural Heritage District in Santa Monica. Steward the commissioning of Jenny Yurshansky's exhibition opening July 2024.
2. Develop, with 18SAC leadership, an overall strategy that integrates 18SAC's exhibition space at the airport into the new 'Art in the Public Realm' initiative over time, and takes into consideration Frieze Fair being located at the Santa Monica Airport in future years.
3. Identify and commission an agreed upon annual number of artists' new work projects in 2024, 2025 and 2026.
 - a. Propose and secure approvals for identified artists' commissions from the Deputy Director.
 - b. Develop and manage each artist's contract, timelines and budgets with the Deputy Director.
 - c. Coordinate with 18SAC directors to integrate advanced timelines for fundraising, PR, and public programs and events.
 - d. Coordinate with 18SAC's administrative team to process payments to artists and vendors.
 - e. Draft, collect, and/or provide content about artists' projects for 18SAC's development department (grants and donors), communications + PR, as well as external art world publications as needed.
 - f. Hire and supervise appropriate contractors to prepare and install the commissioned artist projects for public presentation, including exhibition design, branding, preparation of the location, space, and interpretive materials.
4. Maintain a departmental budget for commissions to build interpretation resources for the public around artists' projects.

5. Public speaking and/or conversation moderation/facilitation as needed to support artists' projects and 18SAC programs.
6. Collaborate with 18SAC directors to understand and identify potential overlaps with future, incoming artists-in- residence, cultural treasures and public engagement opportunities.
7. Maintain and expand cultural & business partnerships on behalf of 18SAC, including building strong relationships with tourism entities, galleries, art fairs, and museums.

TO BE CONSIDERED PLEASE SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING

1. Curriculum Vitae (PDF)
2. Cover letter demonstrating your interest and fit for the position (PDF)
3. 3-5 work samples illustrating recent public practice artist commissions that you curated (PDF)

Research shows that women and individuals from underrepresented backgrounds often apply to jobs only if they meet 100% of the qualifications. We recognize that it is highly unlikely that an applicant meets 100% of the qualifications for a given role. Therefore, if much of this job description describes you, then you are highly encouraged to apply for this role.

We are an equal opportunities employer and welcome applications from all suitably qualified persons regardless of their race, sex, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age.

More information here: www.18thstreet.org

UPLOAD ALL YOUR ATTACHMENTS TO THIS FORM:

<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/7c497b100bc24c86b0fbca4763ee6be>