

LOVE WHERE YOU LIVE
Region 1: Request for Proposal – Artist/Creative Team

ARTS ACROSS THE PRAIRIE:
Placemaking in Rural North Dakota

Arts Across the Prairie is a first of its kind, statewide Creative Placemaking program, developed by North Dakota Council of the Arts (NDCA). This grew out of a presentation on art as a catalyst for community change at the fall 2019 Governor’s Main Street Initiative in Bismarck. The statewide participants discussed the need for artistic and cultural enrichment and access to art within their rural communities. North Dakotans expressed a concerted desire for greater cross-community collaboration and to enhance the vitality of the state through art.

Arts Across the Prairie will create eight large-scale art installations – one in each geographic region in the state – that reflect the unique history, landscape, and cultural heritage as defined by Stakeholder Groups in these regions. All eight artworks will be placed in decidedly rural locations. (Rural = no buildings, no people!) The art installations should reference and represent the natural setting, as well as the cultural and economic history of the region as determined by each of the Stakeholder Groups.

As a community-driven initiative, *Arts Across the Prairie* aims to promote civic pride, affirm uniqueness of place, and strengthen cultural identity. This program will create public-private partnerships throughout the state and will provide a national model of this type of creative placemaking, an important step forward for our state. The initiative will foster community innovation across ND in a way that is equitable, scalable, and sustainable.

The goals of *Arts Across the Prairie* are to:

- Strengthen cross-county networking and regional collaboration
- Promote tourism for in- and out-of-state visitors
- Stimulate economic activity and development in rural areas of North Dakota
- Build stronger arts communities across the state
- Invest in North Dakota artists by providing professional training and support
- Celebrate and leverage existing assets with an infusion of creative expression
- Heighten visibility of ND’s creative sector and talent

Rural communities are often siloed, without the means to travel far to participate in activities or share resources. The eight regions within the state have a variety of cultural heritages based on the experience of tribal nations and early settlers – a multi-faceted Dakota Indian and immigrant experience rarely intersects with today’s agricultural, civic, and working economies.

NDCA is committed to a policy of providing opportunities to all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnic origin, religion, political belief, sexual orientation, age, veteran status, or physical ability.

Region 1- LOVE WHERE YOU LIVE

North Dakota has eight distinct regions. NW North Dakota's Region 1 is comprised of Williams, Divide, and McKenzie Counties. Regional and community leaders from business, arts, education and community were recruited to formulate a roadmap for the development of one site to be the artistic, historical, and cultural representation for the three counties.

Beginning in March 2020, the Region 1 Stakeholders group came together and continued to meet online for over two years to plan the inaugural *Arts Across the Prairie* project.

Love where you live. *The vision is for a permanent large-scale art installation, and the finalist's proposals should reflect your affection for and attention to place. Rural communities/residents will be living with the artwork for a long time, perhaps generations. Selection for this project will also require the ability to teach and share with others as we further train North Dakota artists in the outdoor installation process.*

WHO WE ARE LOOKING FOR:

An artist or creative team may apply; the total fee for the project will not alter. You must be an established artist with experience in large-scale outdoor installations, public art, placemaking or placekeeping, community work, and teaching. Finalist interviews will take place online, Monday, July 11.

SELECTION PROCESS

Phase One: Selection of finalists

NDCA Staff will review all initial submissions to determine if basic qualifications are met. Applications will then be reviewed by a Selection Committee composed of stakeholders, artists, and community members.

Selection of three (3) finalists will be based on the following criteria:

- Quality of letter of interest directly related to the site; why do you want to be involved in this project?
- Quality of work samples
- Ability of artist(s) to complete project based on bio and prior work experience

An informational webinar will be held on Thursday, May 26th, 4-5pm CT

Please email arts@nd.gov by Wednesday, May 25 if you are interested in attending to receive Zoom link. You will be contacted by June 15 if selected as one of the three finalists.

Phase Two: Initial design concepts by finalists

Only *three* finalists will develop a design concept to present to the Selection Committee. They will be selected based on the following criteria:

- Design concept's resonance with the project description
- The installation is presented as a community asset and create sense of welcome
- The artist/s mode of working and design process approach, including budget
- An ability to communicate and engage with diverse communities, including fabrication and construction professionals

From this, after a Zoom interview on July 11, the Selection Committee expects to announce the finalist for the Region 1 - Love Where You Live, *Arts Across the Prairie* project, by July 13.

HOW TO SUBMIT

Do not submit a project proposal or design at this time

Provide the following in a single (one) PDF document. Please do not include supplemental materials beyond the requirements listed below. Work samples (JPEGs) can be sent as separate files.

- One-page of contact information for the lead artist, as well as creative team members. All applicants must live in the contiguous United States.
- One-page letter describing interest in the project and approach to art making; please include statement addressing eligibility criteria, and your approach to research and stakeholder engagement.
- One-page bio or resume; if you have multiple team members, please keep biographical information for each team member to one (1) page.
- A pdf document identifying each of five images to include title, year, medium, dimensions.
- Work samples: up to seven (7) digital images of your recent projects. Individuals and teams are limited to seven (7) images maximum. All images must be in JPEG format, 1920 pixels maximum on the longest side, 72 dpi, with compression settings resulting in the best image quality under 2MB file size. The image files should be named so that the list sorts in the order of the image listing.
(If the work cannot be documented well with still images, please include video links; reminder up to 7 work samples total.)

Again, do not submit a project proposal or design at this time

DEADLINE

Please submit all RFQ materials via email to arts@nd.gov

Subject Line – **Love Where You Live – Region 1**

All materials must be received by 11:59p.m. CST Wednesday, June 1, 2022

This is not a postmark deadline; no materials will be accepted after this time.

No application materials will be returned.

NDCA will not be responsible for applications delayed or lost in transit.

NDCA and the Selection Committee reserve the right to withhold the award of a commission or re-release the call for entries.

SELECTION PROCESS AND SCHEDULE

Once selected as a finalist, the Stakeholder Group will work to provide as much information and access as possible to assist in the artist/s research while developing their proposal.

BUDGET

Region 1 – The artist/creative team budget is \$55,000. The expenses covered include:

- design
- technical drawings
- 3D charette/model
- two trips to ND (dates to be determined)
- in-state transportation
- lodging
- per diem

The total project budget of \$150,000 is secured. Fabrication/construction and other expenses will be discussed with finalist/s for this remote build.

TIMELINE

- 4-5pm CT - Thursday, May 26, 2022: Informational Webinar; email arts@nd.gov by May 25 to receive log-in information
- 11:59pm CT - Wednesday, June 1, 2022: Interested artists and collaboration submit initial artist application and materials
- June 13-15: Selection Committee will discuss and narrow possible candidates to three finalists
 - Detailed RFP will be requested from three finalist candidates
- 11:59pm CT - Thursday, June 30, 2022: Second evaluation materials due
- 3:30-5pm CT – Monday, July 11, 2022: Online interviews with three finalists
- Wednesday, July 13, 2022: Final Selection of artist announced

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- Summer 2022: Planning Process includes design, budgeting, community involvement and construction plans
 - Fall 2022: Break Ground
 - Winter 2022/2023: construction work will be build-dependent
 - Subsequent training of ND artists TBD. This will be a workshop situation, hopefully on-site, providing training using artist's specific installation materials
 - Spring/Summer 2023: construction
 - Late fall 2023: public unveiling

BACKGROUND/THEMES - LOVE WHERE YOU LIVE

Region 1 Stakeholders met over 24 months, interviewed indigenous citizens and discussed culture and history. Interesting imagery began to emerge, representing the proud people and land.

In seeking a location to best represent the cultural heritage of Region 1, over nine locales were seriously reviewed. Ultimately, the Stakeholder group selected Writing Rock, a remote State Historic Site in Divide County, the smallest of the three counties in Region 1. This location contains two Native thunderbird drawings on rocks set in a small, enclosed building (State Historical Society), a community park/camping area, *and a bluff that overlooks quilted farmland with views as far as the eye can see.*

Many hours were spent discussing what type of art that should best represent the three distinct counties of Region 1. Stakeholders met with two historians and one native elder. From those hours of discussions, certain themes began to evolve, and common threads arose. The design for the artwork should make symbolic reference to the natural setting, and to the cultural and economic history of the region. Historians and Native elders talked about Lake Sakakwea, the ebb and flow, year to year. The Stakeholders made connections to the people that traveled and settled here throughout the years, to find a better life. The ebb and flow of people, not only of the Lake, following the promise of certain industries were of interest.

The people that lived here and that came here had to endure many hardships due to the weather and landscape. Adaptation was a major theme. One native elder talked about collecting berries and hearing the wind move through lakeside reeds and the ever-present North Dakota wind. The height and perspective of looking out over the land was another important aspect discussed. The twinkle of light reflected on the snow, one source of water. The installation should harmonize with and reinforce these key symbolic messages. Stakeholders would like to see these themes represented in the art installation. You are encouraged to investigate.

RESOURCES

Arts Across the Prairie [Website](#) and [Facebook](#) pages

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Williams_County,_North_Dakota ; Williams County population 35,350

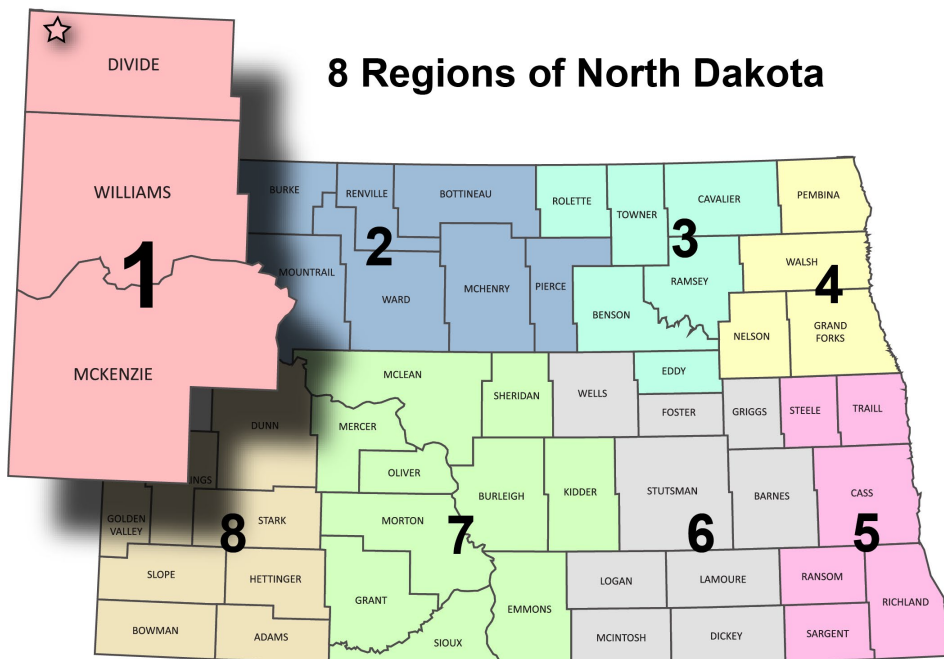
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/McKenzie_County,_North_Dakota; McKenzie County population 13,632

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Divide_County,_North_Dakota ; Divide County population 2,283

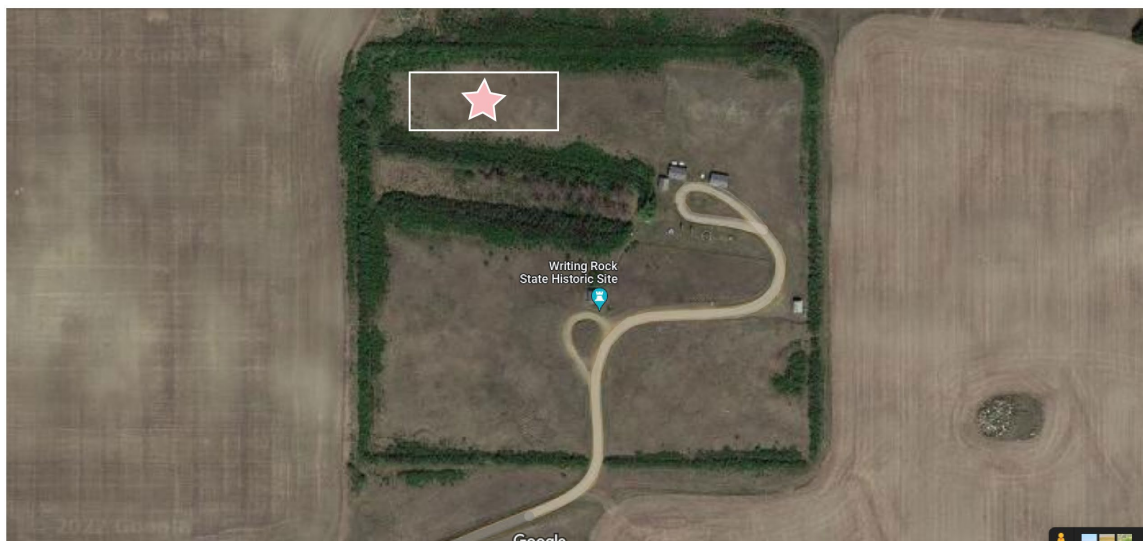
<https://www.history.nd.gov/historicsites/writingrock/index.html>

<https://www.ndtourism.com/grenora/history/historic-sites/writing-rock-state-historic-site>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake_Sakakawea



Building Site



ADDITIONAL PROGRAM BACKGROUND

Arts Across the Prairie: Placemaking in Rural North Dakota was developed to:

- Celebrate the cultural heritage of rural areas
- Foster creative relationships across counties and regions
- Bolster NDCA's role as a rural development partner
- Spur economic development through tourism

This program will create public-private partnerships throughout the state and will provide a national model of this type of creative placemaking.

Transformation of Communities:

Through this program, empowered groups will reach across their regions (and the state) for mutually beneficial partnerships. The culture of rural areas will be celebrated; and community-driven placemaking will create economic, tourism, and equity benefits.

Transformation of Local Art:

The artist(s) will offer training to ND artists to take on projects of this nature. Local artists' capacity will increase with these enhanced skills, resulting in the creation of more art for local communities. This will also expand artists' eligibility for additional funding opportunities. (Workshop parameters TBD)

Transformation with/through State Agencies:

The program signals a shift in the way NDCA does business; instead of acting solely as a granting institution, the Council is actively collaborating with other state agencies and communities to better service their constituents.

- ND Tourism will elevate rural communities and the travel that connect the eight artworks.
- Main Street Initiative (Commerce) communities will use the economic development practices learned to fund new and ongoing projects.
- NDDOT will make meaningful investments that enhance the driving experience on rural byways with roads, pull outs and parking for all eight artworks.

Transformation of Cultural Policy:

The Legislature has gained a better understanding of the importance of art, creativity and culture in building and sustaining healthy vibrant communities around ND. They recently gave support to the *Arts Across the Prairie* program with a \$1 million investment; the annual interest will provide the resources to maintain all eight creative installations. Furthermore, NDCA will be more fully engaged with ND citizens – creating a resident-centered responsiveness within their institution.

Partnerships:

Existing Partnerships - This statewide program is in collaboration with North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT), North Dakota Commerce/Tourism, and the State Historical Society, who have committed financial resources for creative installation placement and marketing as the eight locations are identified and constructed.

NDCA is creating multi-sector, multi-jurisdiction groups of statewide Stakeholders who will collaborate to maximize resources and expertise. NDCA will focus on the following list of primary stakeholders in each region to accomplish the *Arts Across the Prairie* program goals and achieve the outcomes identified for each specific region:

- NDCA Board of Directors (Governor Appointed)
- Tribal Governments (Regional)
- NDDOT
- Department of Commerce/Tourism
- City/County Governments
- Public Schools
- Regional Convention & Visitor Bureau and/or Chamber of Commerce
- National/State Park (Regional)
- Nonprofit(s) (Regional)
- Local Artists
- Local Historians

Following are the specific steps for the overall *Arts Across the Prairie* program. Timelines for each region will vary depending on resource availability and Stakeholder involvement.

1. Cultivate stakeholders: NDCA will form regional teams, encouraging residents to invest in the project together, across county lines.
2. Foster Learning & Consensus: NDCA will host/facilitate two community events per year in each region for peer learning, with hands-on activities and material supports. NDCA will also sponsor professional development online with experienced specialists on topics such as planning, design, budgeting, project management, fundraising, partnerships, artist selection process, building, maintenance, and marketing.
3. Create Art: NDCA will support the process of site selection, and the development of regional approaches to create each installation. Broad definitions for creative installations will be used to draw inspiration from the authentic history, current reality, or future aspirations from each of the eight regions.
4. Market: NDCA will market the eight artworks in partnership with ND Commerce/Tourism, while also educating and engaging decision-makers to understand and support the work.
5. Document/Evaluate. NDCA continually documents the project (narrative, data, videotape) and measures/shares its local, regional, and statewide impact.

