



CALL FOR ART PROPOSALS

Roots of Phoenix: Growing Canopies and Empowering Communities

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS

September 30, 2026 at 5:00 PM

OFFICE HOURS FOR QUESTIONS (virtual/optional)

September 15, 2026 from 1:30-2:30PM

Join using [this link](#)

Contact: Liesl Pimentel

City of Phoenix Office of Heat Response and Mitigation
200 West Washington Street, 14th Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85003
602-695-3680

ABOUT THE CITY OF PHOENIX OFFICE OF HEAT RESPONSE AND MITIGATION

The Office of Heat Response and Mitigation (OHRM) was established in 2021 to help protect people from extreme heat. Staff run programs that give residents places to stay cool, access to water, and safety information during extreme heat. Staff also support long-term heat mitigation projects like adding built shade, planting trees, and improving infrastructure. The OHRM team studies heat trends, shares data, and works with partners across the region to find and use the best solutions for extreme heat. By combining emergency response with long-term planning, the goal is to help make Phoenix a healthier, more comfortable place to live.

INTRODUCTION

Trees are a needed and critical asset in Phoenix neighborhoods. Many studies have documented the disproportionate impact of heat on low-income neighborhoods in Phoenix. These same neighborhoods also tend to have the lowest tree canopy coverage in the city. The disparity between the neighborhoods with the most and fewest trees in Phoenix is more than ten-fold: some of the wealthiest neighborhoods have above 20% tree canopy coverage, while other neighborhoods have less than 2%, according to tree canopy data embedded in the American Forests Tree Equity Score Map.

City of Phoenix residents have identified trees as a top solution to create safer, cooler, and more comfortable experiences for people using outdoor spaces and to combat the urban heat island at a neighborhood scale. Tree planting is both a responsive strategy to improve heat-related public health and quality of life for the city's population.

As part of a focus to expand and improve tree canopy coverage to help lower urban temperatures for underserved populations, the Office of Heat Response and Mitigation applied for and received a \$10 million grant through the Urban and Community Forestry Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) program, distributed by the U.S. Forest Service. 100% of these funds must be spent on support and services for low tree canopy coverage areas in the city of Phoenix. With a goal of planting 6,000 trees over 4 years (concluding in 2029), this grant supports the planting and monitoring of trees throughout eligible areas of Phoenix with Green Stormwater Infrastructure projects on streets and city facilities, and through three community support programs: Community Canopy, Canopy for Kids, and Tree Stewards.

The **Community Canopy Grant Program** is an initiative designed to increase tree shade and strengthen long-term heat resilience by supporting tree planting at homes within neighborhoods where trees can significantly improve comfort, walkability, energy use and public health. The program provides trees, planting services, tree care supplies, technical assistance, and support for both individual recipients and community-led tree planting projects. Community events are held at most neighborhood tree plantings.

The **Canopy for Kids Program** is an initiative designed to offer public and non-profit charter schools an opportunity to integrate urban forestry, rainwater harvesting, and sustainability into campuses and classrooms. This program is run by Arizona State University (ASU) and Watershed Management Group (WMG). With guidance from expert educators, students will co-design their school landscapes and learn how urban forestry mitigates climate stress. Then participants from the school, ASU, and WMG create rainwater systems and plant trees on each site using the student's design.

The **Tree Stewards Program** is an initiative designed to ensure the long-term success of trees in the priority city areas. This program prioritizes both workforce development and equitable urban forestry by training and hiring local community members from priority areas to become Tree Stewards and who will assist in the planting of new trees and in the care, monitoring, and education surrounding newly planted trees.

A map of the qualifying areas for this grant can be found here:

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/4ff4f175842f4fc5b8b73f2f24a2c39d>

The IRA grant received by the City also includes funding to integrate arts into this community-centered work, and **this call seeks artwork or creative experiences that help Phoenix residents connect with the community value provided by trees — either from shade, resilience, stewardship, neighborhood identity, or other benefits.**

SCOPE OF WORK

The OHRM seeks to commission community-engaged and/or community-inspired artwork. This work should have urban trees as a main subject to the work.

A list of trees that OHRM plants with their programs can be found here:

<https://www.phoenix.gov/content/dam/phoenix/heatsite/documents/English%20Tree%20Species.pdf>. A

list of common urban trees can be found here: <https://extension.arizona.edu/publication/tree-reference-guide-maricopa-county>

The artwork could take almost any form — physical, digital, experiential, or a combination — with a focus on connecting residents to the community value provided by trees, either from shade, resilience, stewardship, neighborhood identity, or other benefits.

Examples include:

- Print or multimedia pieces
- Community participatory art
- Artworks or objects people can interact with
- Temporary activations or displays (artist to propose and make arrangements for location and/or in association with relevant community events)
- Workshops or creative engagement experiences
- Story-gathering or co-creation projects

It is preferred that projects include a community engagement piece.

Examples include:

- Co-creating with residents
- Inviting the public to contribute materials, stories, drawings, etc.
- Facilitating creative activities at events

The OHRM team can help connect the artist to participating residents and/or relevant community groups via the Community Canopy events (taking place October 2026-April 2027, these are small neighborhood focused events). The artist is welcome to utilize Community Canopy events for community engagement and/or event-

bound, temporary displays of artwork.

Project Budget

The OHRM has set a *total* budget of **up to \$30,000** to commission art for the Urban and Community Forestry Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) grant program. Artists will need to submit an all-inclusive and itemized budget with their application.

Project budgets of up to \$30,000 may be proposed. Depending on the amount and quality of submissions received, we may select one or several projects, at varying budget amounts.

Artwork Goals

- Connect OHRM's grant participants (in the three initiatives listed in the introduction) along with other community members to the benefits of trees.
- Foster/Inspire engagement from the community to be stewards of trees.
- Represent the City of Phoenix's diverse communities and their connections to trees.
- Engage community members in meaningful ways.
- Celebrate urban trees within the City of Phoenix

Project Schedule (subject to change)

August 28, 2026	Call to Artists released
September 15, 2026	Office Hours from 1:30-2:30pm (optional) - OHRM staff will be available to answer questions. Registration not required, use this link to join: https://cityofphoenix.webex.com/cityofphoenix/j.php?MTID=maecd9ae4ff6fb57cf3d0036c433e97d1
September 30, 2026	Application Deadline 5:00 PM
October 6, 2026	Selection panel review and recommendation of awardee
October 2026	Contract Execution/Project Development
November 2026-April 2027	Production and Community Engagement Window
June 18, 2027	Project Conclusion

Disclaimers

Artwork intended to engage and connect a diverse community has limitations. Proposals with overly explicit themes, such as nudity, weapons, or violence will not be considered. The Office of Heat Response and Mitigation will work closely with the selected artist to fully develop and implement their proposed idea. After the artist is selected, they will need to complete the following:

- Register as a City of Phoenix vendor or confirm previous registration.
- Review and sign a contract.

Contact Information

All questions about this opportunity can be submitted to Liesl Pimentel, at Liesl.Pimentel@phoenix.gov or 602-695-3680.

HOW TO APPLY

Eligibility

This opportunity is open to all artists, at least 18 years of age, living in Arizona, regardless of race, color, age, sex, religion, national origin, genetic information, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression. No public art experience is required. Teams are eligible to apply but must designate a lead applicant for communication purposes. Artists applying as a member of a team are not eligible to also apply as an individual.

City of Phoenix employees, selection panelists and selection panelists' immediate families, are excluded from participating in this opportunity. Applications from artists' representatives, managers, or galleries will not be accepted.

Submissions

Applications must be submitted to Liesl Pimentel via email at Liesl.Pimentel@phoenix.gov with "Tree Grant Artist Submission" as the subject line. Do not mail applications or original artwork. Applicants are strongly encouraged to request and retain an email "read receipt" of their application submission.

Application Materials

1. Letter of Interest (Total 1000-word-limit for all four questions)
 - a. Identify lead applicant and any partners to be involved, if applicable, and describe why you are interested in this opportunity.
 - b. Summary of your proposed idea, including materials to be used and any engagement or interactive components.
 - c. Describe previous collaborations you've been involved in. Share an example of when you've received feedback from collaborators and/or community that resulted in shaping a project design.
 - d. To ensure we can support a diverse group of projects within the program's total budget, selected artists may be asked to adjust the scale or budget of their proposed project. This might include modest revisions to size, materials, or scope. Are you willing and able to scale your project's scope and budget if needed to align with the overall program budget and project selections?
2. Artist/Team Bio (250-word-limit) – summarize your/your team's artistic practice.
3. Project Budget – the all-inclusive budget for the project is up to \$30,000. This includes all costs related to the completion of the project, including but not limited to, research, design development, fabrication, materials, installation and removal of the artwork (if applicable).
4. Support Materials – Support materials can include your portfolio, samples of your past work, and/or media coverage of your past work. Basic renderings of your proposed idea will be accepted but are not required. Submit no more than 5 files and include a detailed description of each file.

SELECTION PROCESS

A selection panel will be convened to review the eligible submissions and recommend an artist(s)/artist

team(s) for this opportunity. Members of the selection panel may include art and design professionals, artists, subject matter experts, educators, community members and city staff.

Evaluation Criteria

Responses to this Call for Art Proposals should be concise, well-organized and provide the requested information. Late applications, incomplete applications, or applications that fail to meet the eligibility requirements will not be considered.

During the evaluation process, applications will be scored using the following criteria:

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 1. Responsiveness to the Call | 10 pts |
| Proposal meets the Artwork Goals. | |
| 2. Artistic Merit | 10 pts |
| Proposal shows innovation with the use of materials, processes, and/or themes. | |
| 3. Feasibility and Potential for a Successful Outcome | 10 pts |
| Proposal clearly describes how the project will come to fruition. Budget and support materials demonstrate knowledge of related costs and experience. | |
| 4. Community engagement | 15 pts |
| Proposal clearly includes a community-engagement piece. | |
| Total | 45 pts |

Commitment to Transparency

The City of Phoenix OHRM is committed to transparency and best practices in the selection of artists for this opportunity. Any conflicts of interest that arise during the selection process will be addressed immediately. This policy is intended to create a level playing field for all applicants and to protect the integrity of the selection process. Additionally, the City reserves the right to disqualify incomplete or late applications or applications that do not meet the eligibility requirements.

Our Commitment

The Office of Heat Response and Mitigation believes in fair treatment, access, and opportunity for all individuals. We aim to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented marginalized groups' full participation in the agency's programs.

The City of Phoenix fully endorses and supports the concept of equal business and employment opportunities for all persons, regardless of race, color, age, sex, religion, national origin, genetic information, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression.

*****END*****