



African Heritage Food Co-op Mural

Request for Proposals

Issued: September 25, 2018

Issued by: African Heritage Food Co-Op and Niagara Falls National Heritage Area

Deadline: October 10, 2018

Project Overview

The African Heritage Food Co-Op's vision is to create "A just and livable world wherein inner city communities can eat, better employ themselves and prevent predatory pricing." The African Heritage Food Co-Op (AHFC) formed in August of 2016 in order to address the urgent need for fresh and affordable foods in East Buffalo. As a predominantly black community, residents in East Buffalo have battled for years against predatory pricing and mistreatment from business owners outside of the community. Rather than withdraw community resources, the goal of The African Heritage Food Co-op is to strengthen the community by creating pride around member-ownership, expanding employment opportunities, and providing healthy food.

AHFC brings mobile markets to our communities, coordinates monthly produce box pickups often including a Black Business Bazaar, and has recently signed a lease on a brick-and-mortar store in Niagara Falls, New York. AHFC is partnering with the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area (NFNHA) to fund and coordinate the creation of a mural on the AHFC's new building at 2616 Highland Ave, Niagara Falls, NY 14305.

Public art projects foster pride in communities, tackle blight and build appreciation for our culture and heritage. The Niagara Falls National Heritage Area has deep community relationships and has proven experience implementing projects, including the Discover Niagara Shuttle and the Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Heritage Center. Working together, the AFHC and NFNHA will work with the selected artist to bring our stories to life on AFHC's new building.



Goals

Across the country, cities large and small are beginning to showcase the stories of their communities through a variety of public art projects. Groups that aim to promote local talent and engage the community have been turning empty city walls into public canvases and the results of their labor can have a lasting effect on local neighborhoods. Niagara Falls is a place of global significance with a rich history and culture, and we are ready to include artistic interpretation outdoors in our neighborhoods.

The AFHC is seeking proposals that reflect neighborhood champions past, present, and future. Our goal is to reflect the strong African American heritage in Niagara Falls by creating an inspiration public art piece for the new AFHC building. Specifically, mural proposals should:

- Create a public art mural on the AFHC building that is reflective of the spirit of Niagara Falls and depicts its rich African American history.
- The mural should be relevant to the people in who live in the community and should reflect community participation or involvement in the creation of the mural, keeping in mind, “it doesn't work if it is just me.”
- The mural should reflect AFHC’s mission and work: “anything less than ownership is unacceptable.”
- The mural and process should make a connection to the Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Heritage Center, with the purpose of connecting people to place. The Heritage Center is located nearby at 825 Depot Avenue West, Niagara Falls, NY 14305 (niagarafallsundergroundrailroad.org). *The mission of the Heritage Center is to reveal authentic stories of Underground Railroad freedom seekers and abolitionists in Niagara Falls, that inspire visitors to recognize modern injustices that stem from slavery and take action toward an equitable society.*

Eligibility Criteria

Proposals for the AHFC mural project will be reviewed by team members from the African Heritage Food Co-Op and the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area.

Applicants and proposals will be judged by the eligibility criteria listed below:

- Complete application submitted by the application deadline.
- The submitted application demonstrates evidence of professional competence.
- Eligible artists may have a record of successfully completed permanent and/or temporary public art commissions in public and/or private development, exhibition history, education and training as an artist.
- Creative approach to the proposed mural concept that is reflective of AFHC’s mission and the listed project goals.

Required Application Materials

- 1.) Artist Statement that outlines your interests, describes your art practice, provides a summary of your professional experience as an artist, and addresses how that experience may qualify you for public art commissions. If applying as a team: please clarify collaborations and outline roles.
- 2.) Current Resume, including public art commission, exhibition and publication history. Links to online portfolios are encouraged.
- 3.) Images of previous work including most recent commissions and realized projects. Please submit only successfully completed projects or renderings for projects that are in process.
- 4.) Mural Proposal, including image (design, sketch, etc) of proposed concept and artistic intent, detailed description of your process for transferring your work from small to large scale, and your expected time frame.
- 5.) Project budget, including artist fee, supplies, and any other requirements.

Deadline and Budget

Proposals will be accepted between September 25th and October 10th. Applicants will be notified following the deadline whether or not their application and mural concept has been selected. The mural project is expected to be completed in 2018.

The maximum budget for this project is \$5,000. Applicants should detail the use of funds in the budget section of their application.

Application Submission

Applicants should submit their application materials to Ally Spongr at ally@discoverniagara.org by the deadline of October 10th.