



Mural at Whirlpool Bridge

Niagara Falls, NY

Request for Proposals

Issued: Friday, June 13th, 2025

Issued by: Niagara Falls National Heritage Area

Deadline: Monday, July 7th, 2025



Project Overview

The Niagara Falls National Heritage Area (NFNHA) is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) for the design and creation of a mural underneath the Whirlpool Bridge, 2250 Whirlpool Street, Niagara Falls, NY 14305. The budget for this project is up to **\$20,000.00**, and project must be completed by **September 30th, 2025**.

The Niagara Falls National Heritage Area preserves, protects, and promotes historic, natural, and cultural resources in an 11-mile expanse that stretches from Niagara Falls State Park in Niagara Falls, NY to Old Fort Niagara in Youngstown, NY. The NFNHA is one of 62 areas across the United States designated by Congress as a landscape where natural, cultural, and historic resources combine to form a nationally important landscape. The NFNHA tells these nationally-important stories that celebrate the diverse heritage of Niagara Falls.



Photograph courtesy of Alana Adetola Art Photography

At the heart of all NFNHA projects is community engagement and collaboration. Over the course of over 30 public art projects over the past five years, the NFNHA has created an inclusive process that prioritizes the input and feedback of community members, particularly in the Highland Community, where the majority of these projects are located. The process employed by the NFNHA offers community input and feedback at each step of the project, from the creation of subject matter and themes, to the selection of the artist, to the proposed designs themselves.

Public art projects foster pride in communities, assist with neighborhood revitalization, and build appreciation for our community, culture, and heritage. The Niagara Falls National Heritage Area has fostered deep relationships within the community, and has proven experience implementing public art



projects, including the murals at Main & Depot and along Main Street. The NFNHA will administer this project and work with the community to create a story that reflects the Niagara Falls community.

****A representative of the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area Public Art Team will give a virtual presentation about this project and the Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Heritage Center on Monday, June 23rd at 7 PM EST. Applicants interested in attending this presentation should email tyshaun@discoverniagara.org.****

Mural Specifics

The mural will be painted on the underpass of the Whirlpool Bridge, where the supports for the bridge connect with Whirlpool Avenue. This location is visible to all pedestrians and vehicles who use Whirlpool Street, which is generally used as a main thoroughfare comparable to Main Street. This location is also directly adjacent to the Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Heritage Center, a popular museum dedicated to the local history of the Underground Railroad in Niagara Falls.

The area for the mural measures 14.5' high x 64' wide, is made of concrete, and is in relatively good condition. The mural must be painted on the concrete, either freehand or utilizing stencils, and sealed to prevent wear and tear. The concrete will be power washed prior to installation.



Mural Dimensions: 14.5 ft. x 64 ft.



Goals

The NFNHA is seeking a mural that will celebrate **powerful stories of freedom**. The area directly adjacent to the Whirlpool Bridge is where many freedom seekers took their final steps to freedom, and is a powerful place of memory and history in Western New York. Our goal is to create a dynamic and artistically-forward mural that evokes the emotions of this powerful history. Specifically, the mural should:

- Celebrate stories of freedom, particularly in Niagara Falls.
- Be relevant to the stories told at the Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Heritage Center on a daily basis, and reflect stakeholder input in the creation of the mural.
- Be dynamic and artistically forward. The incorporation of elements such as three-dimensional forms, typography, and abstract elements will be looked upon favorably.
- Complement without replicating the existing Niagara Falls National Heritage Area's cultural corridor, and create a well-rounded public art experience in the North End of Niagara Falls.

Eligibility Criteria

Qualifications for the asphalt art mural, located in the Abate Elementary courtyard, will be reviewed by team members from Abate Elementary and the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area.

Applicants will be judged by the eligibility criteria listed below:

- Complete application submitted by the proposal deadline.
- The submitted application demonstrates evidence of professional competence.
- Eligible artists should have a record of successfully completed permanent and/or temporary public art commissions in public and/or private development.
- Creative approach to the proposed mural concept that is reflective of the listed vision and project goals.
- **AI-based or AI-enhanced artwork not accepted at this time. All artists are required to disclose the usage of AI-enhancements in their final submission, if any.**
- Digital artwork acceptable, and digital artists encouraged to apply. If utilizing digital artwork, please include a brief explanation of your medium in your Statement of Intent. Please note that the budget is inclusive of all costs, including stipend, insurance, medium, lift, and supplies.
- Contracted artist is required to be flexible, accountable and work collaboratively with the NFNHA teams.



Proposal Requirements

- 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.
- 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.) Statement of Intent, that outlines a proposed approach to this project, including artistic medium and installation plan.
- 5.) Proposed Design, that includes an image, dimensions, and preliminary materials list.
- 6.) Itemized Budget, including artist fee, supplies, travel, insurance, and any other requirements. Please note that the budget must be inclusive of all costs, including stipend, insurance, medium, lift, and supplies.
- 7.) Proposed Timeline, that includes revisions, preparation of mural space, installation of mural, and any additional work needed.

Deadline and Budget

Proposals will be accepted between **Friday, June 13th, 2025** and **Monday, July 7th, 2025**. Applicants will be notified following the deadline whether or not they have been accepted for the project. **The mural project must be completed by September 30th, 2025.**



The maximum budget for this project is **\$20,000.00**. Please note that the budget is inclusive of all costs, including stipend, insurance, medium, lift, and supplies. Applicants should detail the use of funds in the budget section of their proposal.

Proposal Submission

Applicants should submit their application materials to Tyshaun Tyson, NFNHA Artist Development Manager, at tyshaun@discoverniagara.org by the deadline of **May 31st, 2025**. For additional information, please visit discoverniagara.org.

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