

Request for Qualifications
Smithfield Street Sculptural Lighting Project
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Implementation Budget: \$300,000
Deadline: July 21, 2025 at 11:59 pm
Information Session June 23, 2025 at 12pm EST
To Apply: <https://publicart.slideroom.com/>



Overview

The Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership (PDP) is collaborating with the City of Pittsburgh to redesign the streetscape on Smithfield Street between Forbes and Sixth Avenues. A study conducted by SmithGroup identified many opportunities to improve the experience of this historic Downtown location including better connection to Market Square and Mellon Square, improved transit amenities, and a better pedestrian experience. Planned enhancements include new planters and street trees, wider sidewalks, improved crosswalks, and raised intersections. The project is currently in the construction document phase and will begin construction in 2026.

Building on their long-term commitment to working with artists to create permanent and temporary artworks, PDP is seeking to commission one artist to create six permanent sculptures with a lighting component in this corridor. To take advantage of the opportunity to collaborate with the project engineers and prepare the location for artwork, infrastructure for the artwork including electrical junction boxes and 2'x2' foundations to support the six sculptures will be installed along with other

street improvements starting in 2026. Artwork will be installed at the end of construction in Fall 2028.



Three finalists will be selected from this RFQ process to learn more about the location and the streetscape parameters to develop initial conceptual designs for a fee of \$5,000. One commissioned artist will be selected from the finalists to develop their design further for an additional fee of \$15,000. PDP expects the budget to implement the artwork will be \$300,000. This may change based on the artist's advanced design and availability of funds. The commissioned artist will enter into an agreement with PDP for implementation.

For more information about the PDP visit: <https://downtownpittsburgh.com/publicart/>

PDP's Commitment to Public Art and Public Spaces

For nearly three decades, the PDP has delivered impactful results and led meaningful progress for Downtown Pittsburgh. Since the establishment of the Business Improvement District (BID) in 1996, the PDP has been synonymous with turning strategy into action and results. In a post-pandemic world, we stand ready once again to lead the charge and deliver on Downtown's immense potential. We recently released our [2025-2028 Strategic Vision](#). Guided by input from the community and over 100 stakeholders—including developers, corporate leaders, and government and nonprofit partners—the PDP has identified three strategic priorities to drive Downtown's evolution:



- Core – Ensuring clean, safe, and welcoming public spaces
- Activation – Cultivating vibrant, inclusive experiences that draw people Downtown.
- Transformation – Driving economic growth through advocacy and attracting businesses, investment, and innovation.

We see art as a component of our three strategic priorities. Art is a part of creating welcoming and meaningful spaces. Experiencing art has been one of the main draws to Downtown for decades. We have commissioned over 25 works of temporary and permanent public art and have collaborated with our partners to commission permanent works of art. In addition to our initiatives to add light-based art to our Downtown pedestrian alleys, previous programs including Market Square Public Art, Allegheny Overlook, and Project Pop Up engaged artists to be a part of the transformation of Downtown. Some of the artists we have worked with on permanent and long-term installations since 2009 include Toby Atticus Fraley, Carin Mincemoyer, Kit Monkman and KMA, Andrea Poli, Jennifer Wen Ma, Alisha B. Wormsley, and Janel Young.

These priorities form the backbone of a bold vision that blends immediate action with long-term transformation. Together, they ensure Downtown Pittsburgh is dynamic, accessible, and inspiring—a true destination where innovation thrives, and people want to be. The Smithfield Street renovation is an opportunity to integrate permanent artwork into the design of a vibrant new streetscape, creating a memorable and meaningful experience Downtown for decades to come.

Project Phases and Budget

Phase 1- Initial Concepts

PDP's artist selection committee will identify three finalists through this RFQ process to develop initial concepts for the site. Finalists will be invited for a site visit, meet with the project engineers, and have access to PDP staff and consultants to assist with community connections and content resources.

While the artwork aesthetics are open ended, including the balance of light and other materials, the following design parameters are known. Initial concepts will need to take the following into account:

Clear Area

- Artwork cannot extend into the area that is 1.5' outside of the face of the proposed roadway curb

line and a minimum of 14'-6" above the roadway surface.

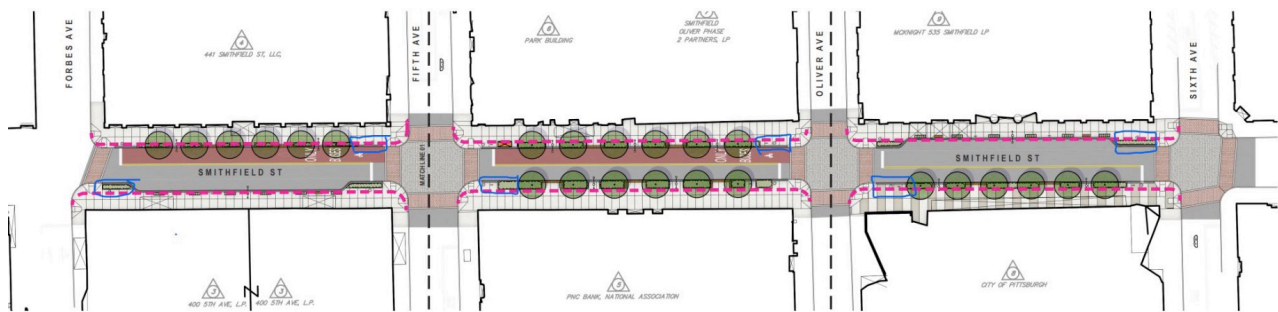
- Artwork cannot extend into the edge of the sidewalk and an area that is a minimum of 10'-0" above the sidewalk surface.

Lighting

- Artwork lighting is not to exceed 100 watts at each location.
- Artwork is to connect to a #6 AWG wire (from the street light circuit) at each location.
- Provide a hand hole at the base of the artwork (for pulling and making connections of electrical wires) with a 6" x 4" minimum opening.

Structural

- A standard lighting pole foundation will be installed for mounting the artwork at each location.
- The artwork will need to be designed to not overstress the foundation and meet the maximum anchor bolt capacity for shear and tensile stresses. Additional foundation details can be provided during the artwork design phase.



Phase 2 - Design Development

One commissioned artist will be asked to advance their design in response to feedback from the selection committee, project stakeholders, project engineers, City of Pittsburgh, and others.

The artist will receive \$15,000 upon delivery of their final design deliverable. Currently, the final design deliverable for this phase includes a visualization of the concept, written description, material samples, budget, project schedule, project narrative, quotes from fabricators, product sheets, and design documents.

Artists will be required to have their concepts reviewed by an engineer or architect during this phase. The contents of the final design deliverable may change based on the content of the initial concept.

Phase 3 – Implementation

The commissioned artist will contract with PDP to implement their project based on the approved design. The budget for implementing the concept is currently \$300,000.

Artists will be responsible for additional design development, construction documents, fabrication, transportation, and all coordination

to implement the project. The foundations and electric junction boxes for the sculptures will be

provided by the City of Pittsburgh through the renovation of Smithfield Street.

Project Schedule

June 23, 2025 / Information Session, 12PM EST
July 21, 2025/ Artist Application Deadline 11:59 PM EST
September 2025 / Finalist Selection Complete
November 2025 / Initial Designs Due
December 2025 / Commissioned Artist Identified
May 2026 / Final Design Due
December 2028 / Project Complete

This schedule is subject to change without notice.

Eligibility and Qualifications

- This opportunity is open to professional visual artists based in the United States of America.
- Artists must have experience implementing light based or 3D temporary or permanent work of art.
- Artists who have completed at least one project of a similar scale in a transportation setting are encouraged to apply.
- Artist teams are welcome to apply. Teams must have at least one visual artist to qualify. Teams that do not have at least one visual artist are not eligible to apply.
- Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership staff, board members, and consultants are not eligible to apply.

How to Apply

Interested artists must apply through Slideroom using this link:
<https://publicart.slideroom.com/>

The deadline is July 21, 2025 at 11:59 PM EST.

Artists must supply the following materials to complete an application.

- A. Work Samples.** Up to fifteen image or video work samples depicting projects that relate to this opportunity.

On Slideroom, follow the upload instructions. For video work samples, please include the URL in addition to the video file. If you do not want to upload the entire video, you may upload a still image and URL link to the full video. If your video is password protected, include the password. If you want to

begin the play of your video at a specific time, provide the timecode.

For all work samples, include the name of the work sample with each upload.

- B. Work Sample Description.** Describe each submitted work sample in the space provided on Submittable. Be sure to provide the title of the project, date completed, project budget,, name of client (if applicable), name of design

team collaborators (if any), location of project, and a description of your role as the artist on the project.

C. Resume. Up to five pages.

D. Letter of Interest. In the letter, tell us why you are interested in this project, a

streetscape that inspires you, and why art is an important part of a streetscape. We'd like to hear about your previous work experience that aligns with this project, even if it is not part of your work as an artist. Letter must not exceed two pages.

Are you applying as a team? Artist teams must submit up to fifteen work samples total for the team, resumes for each member totaling no more than five pages, and a joint letter that details the information requested in (D) above. The letter must also state previous experience of members of the artist teams collaborating with each other.

Information Session

PDP will host an online information session on June 23, 2025 at 12pm EST. During the information session, we will present the Smithfield Street renovation, artwork opportunity, and application process. Artists do not need to attend the information session in order to apply.

The information session will be recorded. A link will be posted on the Slideroom application page.

To register, click here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/smithfield-street-sculptural-lighting-project-rfq-info-session-tickets-1373506217069?aff=oddtcreator>

Questions

Please direct questions about the opportunity via email to publiart@downtownpittsburgh.com

If you experience any technical difficulties while completing the form, please contact support@submittable.com.