

CURRENT:LA WATER
Public Art Biennial 2016

currentLA.org

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**Bloomberg Philanthropies
Announces
Los Angeles
As One of 12 Finalist Cities
In the Running to
Receive Up to \$1 Million in Funding
As Part of Public Art Challenge**

Los Angeles – **Bloomberg Philanthropies** has announced **Los Angeles** as one of **12 finalist cities in the running to receive up to \$1 million each** as part of its **Public Art Challenge**, a new program aimed at supporting temporary public art projects that engage communities, enhance creativity, and enrich the vibrancy of cities.

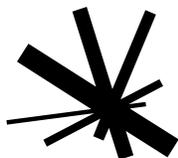
Bloomberg Philanthropies invited mayors of U.S. cities with 30,000 residents or more to submit proposals for innovative temporary public art projects that address a civic issue and demonstrate close collaboration between artists or arts organizations and city government. More than 230 cities submitted proposals for consideration in the *Public Art Challenge*, representing 68 million residents across the United States. Proposals covered a range of areas such as the revitalization of decayed downtown areas, underutilized waterfronts, and vacant neighborhoods. They also addressed other social themes including civil rights, neighborhood safety, environmental sustainability, and promoting city identity.

“At a time when imaginative ideas are redefining every industry, cities increasingly realize how important it is to embrace and encourage creativity,” said **Michael R. Bloomberg**. “There was a great response to the challenge we issued, and we hope these projects spur new excitement about the ways public art can strengthen neighborhoods, inspire residents, and fuel local economies.”

The Office of Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti partnered with **the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA)** in drafting the letter of intent for the proposed project called:

CURRENT: LA River

Call to Action on Water Conservation Through Art



The project proposes to establish a Los Angeles Public Art Biennial with an inaugural installation of contemporary art along the Los Angeles River. Working with independent curator Marc Pally, the city would commission five large-scale, multidisciplinary art works, along with smaller commissions and educational programming to support the focus of topics including water conservation, ecology, and drought.

“The Public Art Challenge will provide us an opportunity to harness the current enthusiasm on revitalizing the Los Angeles River,” said **Councilmember Mitch O’Farrell**, who chairs the City’s Arts, Parks, Health, Aging, and Los Angeles River Committee. “I applaud the Department of Cultural Affairs for their work on this ambitious public art project, which was made possible by a motion I introduced that led to unlocking the Arts Development Fee. The unique neighborhoods that touch the banks of the River will benefit greatly from the work by local artists who are improving the look and feel of five communities along our urban waterway.”

Initial submissions from each city were evaluated on their potential viability as dynamic public art projects, capacity to establish or strengthen public-private partnerships, inclusion of strong audience engagement strategies, and commitment to evaluating outcomes and impact on the host city.

Cities of all sizes applied: nearly 50% of the 237 submissions were from cities with populations between 30,000 and 100,000, 38% had populations between 100,000 and 500,000, and 13% of the applicant cities had over 500,000 residents. A variety of artistic disciplines were represented amongst the applications: 61% of the proposed public art projects involved visual art, 19% combined multiple disciplines, 17% featured digital media, and 3% were performing art projects.

The *Public Art Challenge* grant will cover development, execution, and project related expenditures, but will not fund 100% of project costs. The grant is intended to provide catalytic funds as part of a strong, committed consortium of supporters. **At least three winning cities will be selected in May, 2015 to execute their projects over a maximum of 24 months.**

More information about Bloomberg’s *Public Art Challenge*, including links to images and maps can be found at:

<http://www.bloomberg.org/program/arts/public-art-challenge/>

The other 11 finalists invited to submit a full proposal include:

Albany, Schenectady, and Troy, NY

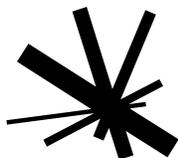
Breathing Lights
Illuminating the Need for Community Revitalization

Albuquerque, NM

Albuquerque’s Orphan Signs of Route 66 and Beyond
Engaging Youth and Local Artists to Enliven Barren Spaces

Atlanta, GA

Freedom Now
Highlighting Atlanta’s Civil Rights Legacy



Boston, MA

The Sapphire Necklace
Using Culture to Enliven the Harbor

Chicago, IL

Make Way for Art: Activating Chicago's Public Plazas
Revitalizing Public Space through Art

Des Moines, IA

Listening to Water
Calling Attention to Local River Ecology and Urban Water Trails

Gary, IN

ArtHouse: A Social Kitchen
Connecting Food and Art to Develop a Cultural District

Grand Rapids, MI

SiTE:LAB – Rumsey Street Project
Revitalizing Vacant Structures for Art Performances

Hartford, CT

Subject Matter
Honoring and Inspiring Civically Engaged Citizens

Maplewood, MN

Kid City
Empowering the Youth Community

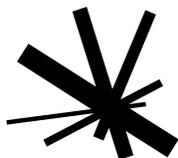
Spartanburg, SC

Seeing Spartanburg in a New Light
Addressing Crime through Creative Partnerships

About Bloomberg Philanthropies

Bloomberg Philanthropies' mission is to ensure better, longer lives for the greatest number of people. The organization focuses on five key areas for creating lasting change: Public Health, Environment, Education, Government Innovation and the Arts. Bloomberg Philanthropies encompasses all of Michael R. Bloomberg's charitable activities, including his foundation and his personal giving. In 2014, Bloomberg Philanthropies distributed \$462 million. For more information on the philanthropy, please visit bloomberg.org or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter @BloombergDotOrg](#).

Bloomberg Philanthropies has a proven track record of supporting creative and innovative public art that enlivens urban landscapes. In 2014, Bloomberg Philanthropies supported artist Tobias Rehberger's *Dazzle Ship* in London; *We the People*, Dahn Vo's multi-site exhibition in New York City, organized by Public Art Fund; and Doug and Mike Starn's *Big Bambú* installation in Jerusalem.



About the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs

The **Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA)** generates and supports high quality arts and cultural experiences for Los Angeles' 4 million residents and 40 million annual visitors. DCA advances the social and economic impact of the arts and ensures access to diverse and enriching cultural activities through: grantmaking, marketing, development, public art, community arts programming, arts education, and building partnerships with artists and arts and cultural organizations in neighborhoods throughout the City of Los Angeles. DCA's operating budget and managed portfolio totaled \$56 million in fiscal year 2013/14. It consisted of: \$13.4 million in City related and indirect cost allocations; \$10.5 million in Transient Occupancy Tax funds; \$9 million in one-time City funding; \$9 million in funds from the Public Works Improvements Arts Program (PWIAP); \$7.5 million from the Private Arts Development Fee Program (ADF); and \$6.3 million in private and public funds raised from foundation, corporate, government, and individual donors.

DCA significantly supports artists and cultural projects through its Public Art Division by administering a portfolio that totaled \$16.5 million in PWIAP and ADF funds in FY13/14. Of this amount, typically 15% to 20%, or between \$2.5 and \$3.3 million, was attributable to artists' fees.

DCA's Marketing and Development Division has raised \$34 million over the last 12 fiscal years to re-grant to LA-based artists and arts and cultural organizations, and to support DCA's special programming and facilities. DCA also grants approximately \$2.3 million annually to 268 artists and nonprofit arts and cultural organizations through its long-established Grants Administration Division. Additional special project support of more than \$1.5 million is also awarded annually for a total of approximately \$3.8 million invested each year in LA's creative community.

DCA provides arts and cultural programming through its Community Arts Division, managing numerous neighborhood arts and cultural centers, theaters, historic sites, and educational initiatives. DCA's Marketing and Development Division also markets the City's arts and cultural events through development and collaboration with strategic partners, design and production of creative catalogs, publications, and promotional materials, and management of the culturela.org website visited by over 3 million people annually.

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