

Code:ART 2027 Call for Artists

Interactive Media Installations

Code:ART 2027: October 13–16, 2027 | 6–10 p.m. nightly

Application deadline: Monday, November 16, 2026 | 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time

Project budgets: Up to \$9,000 each for up to five installations

The City of Palo Alto Public Art Program invites artists and artist teams to apply for Interactive Media Installations, site-specific temporary outdoor artworks activating downtown Palo Alto during Code:ART.

Artists may submit an existing artwork for consideration or apply based on their qualifications and relevant experience if they intend to create an original artwork for Code:ART Festival 2027.

About Code:ART

Code:ART is a four-evening interactive media festival that transforms downtown Palo Alto through light, sound, motion, and technology. Returning for its fifth edition, the festival invites visitors to play, participate, and experience familiar public spaces in new ways.

The festival will feature large-scale projections, a major interactive media artwork at Lytton Plaza, and up to five additional interactive media installations activating alleys, parking lots, plazas, and other public spaces. Free public tours, performances, and community programming will take place throughout the festival.

The Opportunity

The City of Palo Alto Public Art Program seeks up to five site-specific temporary outdoor interactive media installations to activate downtown Palo Alto during Code:ART.

These installations will invite visitors to engage with public spaces through light, sound, motion, and technology. Potential sites include alleys, parking lots, walls, plazas, and other outdoor locations.

Each installation should have a strong nighttime presence, demonstrate innovative use of technology, and encourage public interaction, play, and shared experiences.

Artists may apply to Code:ART by submitting either existing artwork for consideration or their qualifications and relevant experience for the development of a new, original artwork. A detailed project concept, design, or fully developed proposal is not required at this stage.

Artists may submit:

- **An existing artwork**, that can be adapted to a downtown Palo Alto site and the festival setting; or
- **Qualifications and samples of relevant previous work, along with an initial concept for a new artwork** to be developed for the festival.

Eligible Art Forms

Proposed works may include, but are not limited to:

- Immersive, interactive, and participatory media environments.
- Audiovisual and time-based works.
- Computational, generative, and AI-based practices.
- Extended reality (XR) (including virtual, augmented, and mixed reality)
- Responsive, kinetic, and robotic systems.
- Projection, light, and spatial media.
- Data-driven and networked experiences.
- Other experimental or emerging forms of technology-enabled art.

Project Budget

Up to \$9,000 per selected installation

The project budget must cover all costs associated with designing or adapting, producing, transporting, installing, operating, and removing the artwork for the four-evening festival. This includes artist fees, travel, lodging, and insurance.

Technical assistance with installation may be provided by the City of Palo Alto Public Art Program.

Artist Participation

Selected artists or artist teams must be present at their installations each festival evening from 6–10 p.m. and engage with visitors, press, and festival partners.

Depending on the artwork and its location, daily installation and removal may be required.

Artist Eligibility

The call is open to individual artists and teams, including designers, inventors, and creative practitioners based in the United States or internationally.

Individual applicants must be over the age of 18. For team applications, at least one member must be over the age of 18 and able to enter into a contract with the City of Palo Alto.

Applicants residing in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties are particularly encouraged to apply.

Artists may also apply to the separate Lytton Plaza Installation call for Code:ART but may receive only one commission across the two calls.

Installation Sites

Sites for the Interactive Media Installations will be determined within downtown Palo Alto, with the festival focused around King Plaza, Lytton Plaza, Ramona Street, University Avenue, and Hamilton Avenue.

Applicants may explore potential locations using [Mapme](#) showing locations from the 2025 festival edition. Artists may identify preferred sites, but the City cannot guarantee a particular location. Staff will consider preferences alongside technical requirements, public access, and overall festival planning.

Applicants are not required to develop a detailed site plan for the application.

Selection Process

A panel of arts professionals, community representatives, and Public Art Program staff will review applications and select up to five artists or artist teams for the Interactive Media Installations opportunity.

The review will focus on artist qualifications and relevant previous work and, for existing-artwork applications, the suitability of the submitted artwork for the festival. Relevant experience should also demonstrate the artist's ability to deliver projects within the available budget and timeline and address the demands of a public setting.

Selected artists will be responsible for developing new artworks or adapting existing works for the festival.

Selection Criteria

Applications will be evaluated using three criteria:

Artistic Quality / Excellence / Wow Factor

The quality, originality, and impact of the artist's previous work or existing artwork submitted for consideration.

Civic Engagement & Social Exchange

Demonstrated ability to create interactive artworks that use innovative technologies and offer meaningful, memorable public engagement.

Appropriateness to Code:ART

Suitability for Code:ART, demonstrated through previous work or the existing artwork submitted for consideration, including a strong nighttime presence and the ability to invite interaction and play, spark curiosity, and create shared experiences for people of diverse backgrounds and abilities.

For artists applying to create a new artwork, the panel will evaluate qualifications and previous work. For existing artworks, the panel will also consider suitability for the festival setting. Polished renderings and fully resolved technical designs are not required. Public safety, durability, and detailed feasibility will be addressed during subsequent review and project development.

How to Apply

Submit by Monday, November 16, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time.

Applications must be submitted through [SlideRoom](#). There is no application fee.

Applications submitted by email, mail, or in person will not be considered. Prepare the materials below according to whether you are proposing a new artwork or an existing work.

Option A: Qualifications for a New Artwork.

Applicants interested in creating an original artwork may apply based on their qualifications and relevant experience.

1. Artist Statement

Describe your professional art experience, recent work in media art, and interest in participating in Code:ART.

For team applications, describe your collaboration and each member's role.

2. Initial Concept

Briefly describe the artwork you have in mind and how visitors might interact with it. A few sentences are sufficient; a fully developed proposal is not expected.

3. Four Images of Previous Work

Submit four images documenting completed projects or commissioned projects currently in development.

Label renderings clearly. Do not include renderings of unsuccessful or uncommissioned proposals in this previous-work section.

You may submit an optional fifth file showing a simple sketch or visualization of your initial concept.

4. Annotated Image Descriptions

For each previous-work image, include:

- Title and date.
- Location.
- Materials.
- Art budget.
- A brief description of up to three sentences.

For team applications, identify the lead artist and each applicant's role in the project.

5. Current Resume

Provide a current artist resume.

What Is Not Required at This Stage

Applicants do not need to submit detailed designs, fabrication plans, engineering documents, technical specifications, or an itemized budget. These details will be developed with shortlisted or selected artists, as appropriate. Any additional materials requested at a later stage will be specified in advance.

Option B: Existing Artwork

Applicants may use existing documentation. New renderings or detailed adaptation plans are not required.

1. Artist Statement

Describe your professional art experience, recent work in media art, and interest in participating in the 2027 edition of Code:ART .

For team applications, describe your collaboration and each member's role.

2. Artwork Description and Potential Adaptation

Briefly describe the existing artwork, how visitors interact with it, and how it could fit the festival setting.

Include any known dimensions, weight, power needs, or other essential technical requirements. Note any major adaptations you anticipate.

Applicants are not expected to resolve site-specific modifications or prepare an itemized budget at this stage.

3. Five Annotated Images or Existing Renderings

Provide five images documenting the artwork or existing renderings that help explain it.

Clearly distinguish photographs of the realized artwork from renderings. New adaptation renderings are not required.

4. Current Resume

Provide a current artist resume

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

We recognize that Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be a useful tool in developing application materials, including visualizing proposed artwork within a site. However, applications should authentically represent the artist's own work, ideas, skills, and experience.

Any images, renderings, or other application materials created or substantially modified using generative AI must be clearly disclosed and identified as such. Failure to disclose the use of AI-generated imagery may result in disqualification. Applicants must also provide or identify the original source material used to develop AI-assisted visualizations so that the selection panel can clearly distinguish the artist's original work from AI-generated content.

AI-assisted renderings should accurately represent the proposed artwork and site. Artists should avoid introducing architectural features, landscaping, furnishings, or other elements that do not exist or are not part of the proposed project.

Applicants will be asked to disclose whether and how generative AI has been used in preparing the application and whether it is anticipated to be used in the development or creation of the proposed artwork. This information may be considered by the selection panel as part of its review.

Requirements for Selected Artists

The following requirements apply during project development and delivery. Supporting technical documents are not required with the initial application.

Safety and Engineering

Artists are responsible for addressing safety considerations in their artwork and installation and removal plans.

Artworks must be durable and able to withstand repeated public interaction throughout the festival.

The City may require designs and construction documents to be reviewed and approved by a City-appointed structural engineer.

Insurance

Selected U.S.-based and international artists may be required to provide proof of general liability insurance, as determined by the City's Risk Manager based on the scope and scale of the installation.

Tentative Timeline

Date	Milestone
October 7, 2026	Artist Call for Code:ART released
November 16, 2026, 11:59 p.m. (PST)	Application deadline
November–December 2026	Application review and artist selection
January–February 2027	Project awards and artist contracts, as applicable
February–September 2027	Concept development, design, production, fabrication, and coordination with Public Art Program staff
Spring–Summer 2027	Project updates and technical and site coordination
August 2027	Virtual artist meet-up and concept presentations
September–October 2027	Final production, testing, and installation logistics
October 13–16, 2027, 6–10 p.m. nightly	Code:ART Festival (All installations to be removed after 10 pm on Sat, Oct 16.)
End of October, 2027	Post-event de-brief

An informational session may be added. Details will be announced if scheduled.

Questions and Updates

For questions about Code:ART or the application process, contact:

Nadya Chuprina

Public Art Program Coordinator

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Sign up for the Public Art Program's monthly newsletter for artist opportunities and follow **@publicartpa** on Facebook and Instagram.

About the Palo Alto Public Art Program

The City of Palo Alto Public Art Program commissions memorable artworks and experiences that encourage discussion and thoughtful reflection, celebrate Palo Alto's character, and strengthen civic pride and a sense of place.