



Call for Artists and Creatives: ArtLift Grants 2026

Program Overview

The Palo Alto Public Art Program is making ten \$5,000 ArtLift Grants available to artists and creatives with the goal of inspiring the community and spreading joy through art and creativity. Proposed projects will encourage play, belonging, community participation, and promote shared experiences throughout Palo Alto. ArtLift Grants in 2026 fund temporary projects across various commercial corridors and neighborhoods of Palo Alto, centering on Downtown, California Avenue, and Cubberley Community Center.

Intent and Types of Suitable Projects

ArtLift Grants support temporary artworks and creative experiences that activate public spaces and foster community connection. Projects should be uplifting and imaginative, free and accessible to people of all ages and abilities, and safe and appropriate for their intended locations.

Examples of suitable projects include:

- Temporary public art installations in commercial corridors and at Cubberley Community Center, including works incorporating Augmented Reality or Virtual Reality.
- Temporary murals or installations in vacant storefronts with confirmed site permission at the time of application.
- Live, scheduled, or pop-up performance-based art experiences presented in public settings.

Eligibility

Applicants must be 18 or older and have a demonstrated connection to Palo Alto. Artists and creatives living in Palo Alto or East Palo Alto are especially encouraged to apply. Individual artists, artist teams, and creative groups are eligible. Only one proposal may be submitted per applicant.

Funding and Payment Structure

Each selected project may receive up to \$5,000, inclusive of all costs. Typically, half of the award is paid at project start and the remainder upon completion and submission of required documentation. The City may adjust the payment schedule for projects that require more funds at the outset to be successfully realized. Depending on project scope, artists may be required to obtain general liability insurance.



How to Apply

Submit your proposal at <http://CPApublicart.slideroom.com>. There is no application fee. Deadline: 11:59 PM on Friday, February 20, 2026.

Required Proposal Materials

- Contact Information**
- Statement of Interest – Describe your connection to Palo Alto and why this opportunity interests you.
- Project** Proposal – Title, description, goals, duration, budget with any in-kind support, and collaborators or sponsors.
- Project Location(s)** – Primary and alternate sites. Proposals on private property must include written permission.
- Visuals or References** – Images, sketches, mock-ups or materials illustrating the concept.
- Work Samples** – Prior work. Links are acceptable.

Selection Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- **Alignment with ArtLift Grant Program Goals:** Projects should inspire joy and creativity, foster a sense of belonging, and encourage community participation and shared experiences throughout Palo Alto.
Palo Alto residents and those with demonstrated connection to Palo Alto are particularly encouraged to apply.
- **Playful and Uplifting Approach:** Projects should invite play, curiosity, whimsy, and optimism, creating positive and engaging experiences in public spaces.
- **Public Engagement and Accessibility:** Proposals should demonstrate how the project will be accessible and welcoming to people of all ages and abilities, with thoughtful consideration of inclusivity and broad public participation.
- **Originality and Creative Vision:** Projects should present a clear, original concept that offers a memorable and meaningful experience for the public.
- **Feasibility and Implementation:** The proposed scope, timeline, and budget must be realistic and achievable. Applicants must demonstrate the capacity to complete the project independently.
- **Temporary and Reversible Nature:** Projects must be appropriate as temporary installations or activities, with a duration of up to six months, and be fully reversible without permanent impact to the site.

Review Process

The ArtLift Grant selection panel will review eligible proposals in March 2026. Up to ten projects will receive funding. The Public Art Program reserves the right to request reasonable modifications to selected proposals to ensure compliance with municipal code, safety standards, or other City requirements.



Project Requirements

All ArtLift projects must be temporary and fully removed by the agreed-upon date. Any artwork, installation, or performance element, including temporary murals, must be removed if damaged or deemed unsafe. Artists are responsible for placement, maintenance during the project period, and clean-up or removal without assistance from City staff. ArtLift recipients will provide photo and video documentation of their completed projects for public sharing. All projects should be completed in 2026.

What is not funded?

- Signage as defined in Municipal Code [16.20](#).
- Fee-based or ticketed experiences.
- Projects incorporating logos, copyrighted material, nudity, or profanity.
- Artwork containing political or religious messaging, symbols, or advocacy of any kind.

All projects must be suitable for public audiences of all ages.

Questions & Inspiration

For questions, contact Public Art Program Staff at nadya.chuprina@paloalto.gov.

To view past ArtLift projects, visit:

[ArtLift Microgrant Program 2021](#)

[ArtLift Microgrant Projects 2022](#)

Stay in Touch

Sign up for the monthly Public Art newsletter for artist opportunities at paloalto.gov/publicart.

Follow the program on **Instagram** and **Facebook** at @publicartpa.

About the Public Art Program

The City of Palo Alto Public Art Program is committed to contributing to the intellectual, emotional, and creative life of the Palo Alto community by creating engaging art experiences and dynamic public spaces for Palo Alto residents and visitors. The Program operates in accordance with Chapter 2.26 of Palo Alto Municipal Code to provide opportunities for the placement of permanent and temporary site-specific public art projects in municipal projects across Palo Alto. Additionally, the Program oversees the implementation of the Ordinance requirement to incorporate public art in private development projects. The Public Art Commission (PAC) reviews and advises the Public Art Program on selection, placement, and care of public art throughout the City of Palo Alto.

