

Request For Qualifications

Creative Interim Wayfinding

RFQ Deadline: October 25, 2026

Project Budget: Up to \$23,000

Location: Downtown Rochester, MN

Rochester has been awarded a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) to develop and implement a creative component as part of the interim wayfinding system deployed downtown.

With multiple major construction projects underway between 2026-2028 a wayfinding campaign, utilizing [Detours Lead to Discoveries](#) was implemented in 2026. (See photos on pages 3-5 of this document) The NEA grant will support an addition to this campaign, to further help residents, visitors, patients, and families navigate downtown while maintaining access to arts and cultural destinations.

The City of Rochester in partnership with Rochester Art Center seeks an artist or artistic team to develop a public artwork and visual concept that complements Rochester's "Detours Lead to Discoveries" interim wayfinding campaign. The selected artist(s) will create artwork that engages pedestrians and bicyclists, encourages exploration of downtown, and includes visual elements that can be adapted for use on temporary wayfinding signage.

Up to \$23,000 is available for the project. This total budget must cover all project expenses, including the artist's time for concept development, design, production, and public engagement, as well as materials, fabrication, graphic design, and other necessary project costs.

This will be a two-part selection process beginning with a letter of interest responding to this RFQ followed by an invitation-only submittal of a final proposal.

Artists may propose 2D or 3D work in a range of media. The final artwork must include visual elements that can be reproduced and adapted for use in interim wayfinding signage. Artists may use a portion of the project budget to hire a graphic designer or other design professional to assist with translating their artwork into signage-ready imagery.

Artwork is expected to remain at outdoor public sites through mid-summer of 2028, with locations subject to change.

A minimum of three installation sites will be selected by the artist collaboration with the City of Rochester.

Timeline

2026

- October 25 – Qualifications due
 - One or more artists will be invited to submit a more complete proposal based on their initial letter of interest
- November 3 – Request for proposals
- November 30 – Full proposals due
- Mid-December – Selected artist will be under contract

2027

- Jan-Feb – Design & Development including check-ins
- March-April Final production
- May-June Installation by City Crews
- June 30 Grant deadline for project completion

Eligibility

Artists ages 18+ of all backgrounds are welcome to submit their qualifications. There is no fee to apply.

Criteria

Required:

- Tell a story that engages & encourages exploration
- Include reproducible 2D images to incorporate into or alongside *Detours Lead to Discoveries* signs.
- Include vibrant eye-catching imagery that is not confusing with traffic symbols or could create dangerous situations for pedestrians
- Prioritized engagement with pedestrians and bicyclists
- Be durable or reproducible (with planned replacements) to be on display for at least a year, starting in June 2027.

Desired:

- Connects to downtown Rochester's history, culture or identity through symbols

- Incorporate interactive elements like scavenger hunts, games or prompts
- Includes public participation during artwork development

Submission

Interested artists should submit a letter of interest providing their qualifications which includes the following:

- Briefly describe your artistic practice and why this project interests you.
- Describe experience creating public art, temporary outdoor work, graphic imagery, interactive work or projects related to wayfinding or placemaking.
- Briefly describe how you might approach creating artwork that encourages exploration of downtown and can translate into 2D imagery for wayfinding.
- Describe any experience with community engagement.
- Provide 5-10 samples of previous work.
- Please share with us what information you need to develop a full proposal.

Link to the submission form: <https://forms.gle/xAGuz7QdW9gkx87S8>

If you have questions or need accommodations, please contact Kallianne Morrison, kmorrison@rochesterartcenter.org





