



Howard County Arts Council

# ARTsites 2026

*A Public Art Competition & Exhibit*



## Artist Application

Deadline: March 2, 2026

Howard County Arts Council  
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Ellicott City, MD 21043  
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[hocoarts.org](http://hocoarts.org)

The Howard County Arts Council (HoCo Arts) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to enrich and uplift our communities by advancing the arts, artists, and arts organizations for the benefit of all. To fulfill its mission, HoCo Arts offers a wide variety of programs and opportunities – grants to local and regional arts and cultural groups; exhibits; affordable studio, performance, and meeting space for artists; classes for children and adults; a quarterly newsletter; arts advocacy and awareness initiatives; and others that are essential to artistic development in Howard County. HoCo Arts also manages space at The Capital Line Center, providing opportunities in the arts for people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities. The center features two professional galleries, a 100-seat black box performance space, meeting and classrooms, a dance studio, individual artists' studios, and administrative offices.



Howard County Arts Council receives major support from Howard County Government, Maryland State Arts Council, The Reis Foundation, Inc, COPT Defense Properties, Ellen Flynn Giles & Ronald H. Giles, The Isadore & Bertha Gudelsky Family Foundation, The Howard Hughes Corporation, Elizabeth & Ken Lundeen, M&T Bank, and SECU.

# HOWARD COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL

## ARTsites 2026

### PUBLIC ART COMPETITION & EXHIBIT CALL FOR ARTISTS

#### Project Description

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The Howard County Arts Council (HoCo Arts) is seeking up to 12 artists to participate in its 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Juried Public Art Competition for a temporary outdoor exhibit from August 2026-July 2027. HoCo Art's goal is to make art more accessible to the entire community by placing sculpture at sites throughout Howard County. The sculptures will serve as major visual anchor points that will enhance and activate community spaces and generate interest in public art.

HoCo Arts will administer the selection process and provide an identification plaque for each work and promotional support for the exhibit. HoCo Arts staff will serve as a liaison with site administrators. Sale of artwork will be encouraged; a 20% commission of work sold as a result of the exhibit will go to HoCo Arts. Work must remain on view for the duration of the entire exhibit.

#### Grant Awards

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HoCo Arts will provide up to 12 artists with a \$3,000 grant to cover the temporary loan, insurance, installation, de-installation, and repairs to the sculpture. If multiple pieces are selected from one artist a separate grant will be awarded for each piece. Selected artists will receive two grant payments, one after the contract is signed and the sculpture is installed, the other after the sculpture is de-installed and the site is returned to its original condition. Artist fee is contingent upon HoCo Arts receiving full funding for ARTsites 2026 from Howard County.

#### Eligibility

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The competition is open to all professional visual artists, aged 18 and older, with public art experience that is commensurate with this project's scope. HoCo Arts Board, staff and their immediate family members, and selection panelists and their immediate family members are not eligible to participate. In addition to finished pieces, proposed work will also be considered (based on previous examples of public work).

#### Insurance

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The artist is responsible for:

- general liability insurance
- insurance needed for installation contractors hired by artist.
- insurance to cover the artwork for vandalism or theft for the duration of the exhibition (or artist must sign an agreement that the work is on display at the artist's own risk).

## Materials & Construction

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Sculpture submitted should have strong visual impact and:

- Must be of a scale and material suitable for long-term outdoor display.
- Must be of sound design, free standing and suitable for public display.
- Must be able to be placed or anchored in a secure fashion; should a base be necessary, the artist will be responsible for the design and installation of the base. (**Some** sites have concrete pads available for installation).
- Be designed to withstand an outdoor, high traffic, unmonitored environment with no or very little maintenance for the duration of the exhibit.

The artist is responsible for making and financing any repairs for the duration of the exhibit. Materials must be chosen to endure an outdoor environment for 12 months; materials that are sensitive to severe weather, rust, deterioration and fading should be adequately protected or not used.

Due to pedestrian and commercial activity around the sculpture sites, the artwork must be compatible with these activities; sculptures that are hazardous, sharp or dangerous to the public, or easily vandalized, ruined or stolen will not be selected. Completed installation must meet all safety requirements and, if it is deemed necessary for any reason, be approved by planning/zoning officials. HoCo Arts will not consider works that have been declined for safety reasons the previous year.

HoCo Arts reserves the right to remove damaged or improperly installed sculptures. In either case, HoCo Arts will notify the artist to repair or remove the work. If no action by the artist is taken, HoCo Arts reserves the right to remove the work and will notify the artist of its course of action and the artist will forfeit the remaining portion of the grant.

## Artist Responsibilities

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Artists selected to exhibit their sculpture will be responsible for:

- signing a contract before the first portion of the grant is disbursed.
- transportation and proper installation of the sculpture. (Please note: HoCo Arts **does not** have or provide an installation crew, nor do sites have appropriate staff for installations. **Installation/de-installation and employment of any crew is the sole responsibility of the artist.**)
- maintaining any applicable insurance limits for themselves or any subcontractors including, but not limited to, worker's compensation, automobile, etc. during the construction and installation of the artwork and provide proof thereof. Any lapse in insurance is cause for the immediate termination of the contract.
- maintaining insurance for damage or theft of the work for the duration of the exhibit or sign an agreement that the work is being exhibited at its own risk and the artist will cover the cost of any repair.
- maintaining general liability insurance
- being available for information requests, educational interviews, etc.
- removing their work promptly at the end of the exhibit.

## Copyright

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Participating artists retain sole ownership and copyright of the artwork but must agree to grant HoCo Arts and participating site a royalty-free, world-wide, perpetual license to use any depictions of the work for educational, documentary and non-commercial promotional purposes.

## Prospective Sites

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HoCo Art's goal is to place sculptures at sites throughout the county. All community, commercial and public sites in Howard County are eligible to apply. A selection committee will make final decisions on participating sites. Sites that have courtyards, appropriate lawn sites, or are willing to install concrete pads will be given preference.

## Selection Process

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A selection panel made up of HoCo Arts representatives, public art professionals, and at least one professional with expertise in planning and zoning, architecture and design, or construction, will be convened to review the applications and select the finalists and sites.

The panel will provide final selections to representatives from participating sites who will then choose the sculptures for their sites.

Artwork selection criteria include:

- Quality of work and originality as evidenced by the entry images or, for proposed work, concept drawings and representations of past public works
- Ability of the artist to successfully complete the work based on comparable experience
- Durability of work with regard to structural and surface soundness and resistance to weather, vandalism, etc.
- Public safety (review panel will not consider works that have been declined for safety reasons in the previous year)
- Technical feasibility
- Appropriateness of the work to a public venue

The selection will be based on the application materials. The panel's proceedings will be limited to panel members in order to ensure confidentiality of the selection process and open discussion of the merits of the applicants.

NOTE: HoCo Arts reserves the right to refuse any or all submissions, substituted artwork, and any finalists; to waive informalities in proposals or procedures; to withhold the award should it be determined that artwork or submissions are not adequate, or for any other reason prior to a written contractual arrangement. HoCo Arts also reserves the right to re-issue the call for entry, which may revise selection timeline, or ask artists to submit proposals for review. HoCo Arts reserves the right to accept or reject, at any time, any or all proposals or any part thereof submitted in connection with this call for entry, to waive any defect or technicality, and to advertise

for new proposals, where the acceptance, rejection, waiver or advertisement would be in the best interest of HoCo Arts or to terminate the selection process at any time for any project. If, regardless of the reason, the contract for the project is not executed within thirty days after submittal to the artist, HoCo Arts reserves the right to withdraw the selection of the artist. HoCo Arts reserves the right to negotiate unacceptable provisions incorporated within an otherwise acceptable proposal. A proposal which is late, incomplete, unclear, conditional, or which contains irregularities of any kind may be rejected without evaluation. Submission of an application constitutes an understanding and agreement of the conditions set forth herein.

## Timeline

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Artist and Site RFPs posted	December 2025
Proposals due at HoCo Arts	March 2, 2026
Sites notified	April 2026
Artists notified	April 2026
Contracts due	May 2026
Artwork installed	August 1-15, 2026
Artwork de-installed	July 15-30, 2027

## Submission Guidelines and Checklist

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Only complete and properly formatted applications will be forwarded to the selection panel for consideration. HoCo Arts reserves the right to refuse incomplete or improperly formatted applications. Handwritten statements will not be accepted. Every effort will be made to ensure the safe handling of materials submitted; however, the selection panel and HoCo Arts assume no responsibility for any loss or damage to materials.

To apply, please submit the following:

- Contact information: Name, address, telephone, email, and website
- Statement of interest and relevant experience** including a brief artist statement, your interest in and/or commitment to public art, and any relevant experience.
- Current resume highlighting experience with site-specific work and public art.
- Contact information for two references familiar with your work.
- Digital images** of up to 6 works available for consideration.
  - o For existent work: up to 3 images for each; for proposed work: up to 6 images of models or concept drawings for each (if only submitting proposed work, include at least 3 images of previous work that demonstrate public art experience).
  - o Do not present your work as a collection of images (i.e. in a PowerPoint file or pdf); each image must be a separate JPG file.
  - o Digital images should be saved as JPG files, each file not to exceed 1MB. If the sculpture is kinetic or interactive, images may be accompanied by a video file.

- Each image file should be named using the “LastName\_FirstName\_01” format, where the numbers directly correspond to the image identification list described below.
- **Numbered image identification list** indicating:
  - Title
  - Year created
  - Materials
  - Dimensions
  - Approximate weight
  - Sale price (or insurance value if not for sale)
- Brief **description** of each submitted artwork, including all pertinent information (materials used, interactive or kinetic elements, presentation details, maintenance needed, etc.), as well as description of installation method and requirements for each piece, including:
  - Timeline
  - Installation procedure
  - Anchoring mechanisms
  - Sculpture footprint dimensions
  - Minimum dimensions, including depth of concrete pad, if required
  - Machinery and equipment needed (crane, forklift, drill, etc.) for installation and whether you can provide it. *Sites **will not** provide machinery or equipment.*

All application materials must be submitted online at  
[ARTsites 2026: Artist Application](#)  
by **11:59PM on March 2, 2026.**

For questions, contact us at [exhibits@hocoarts.org](mailto:exhibits@hocoarts.org) or (410) 313-2787.