



Howard County Arts Council

ARTsites 2026

A Public Art Competition & Exhibit



Private Sites Application

Deadline: March 2, 2026

Howard County Arts Council
8360 Court Avenue, Ellicott City, MD 21043
410-313-ARTS (2787) • info@hocoarts.org
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.



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 SITE SELECTION

Project Description

The Howard County Arts Council (HoCo Arts) is seeking up to 12 publicly accessible sites to host sculpture for a temporary outdoor exhibit from August 2026–July 2027 as part of ARTsites, HoCo Art's annual juried public art competition. Selected sites can be public or privately owned and will choose and display one sculpture each. HoCo Art's goal is to make art more accessible to the entire community by placing sculptures at sites throughout Howard County. The sculpture will serve as major visual anchor points that will enhance and activate community spaces and generate interest in public art.

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 artist finalists and sites. The panel will provide a pool of selected sculptures to representatives from participating sites; those representatives will choose the sculptures for their sites from the pool.

The competition is open to all professional artists, aged 18 and older, with public art experience that is commensurate with this project's scope. HoCo Arts will provide a grant to each selected artist to cover the temporary loan, installation and de-installation of the sculpture.

HoCo Arts will provide a name plaque for each work and publicity materials. HoCo Arts staff will serve as a liaison with artists and site administrators. Sale of installed works 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 entire duration of the exhibit.

Eligibility

- All community, commercial and public sites in Howard County are eligible; HoCo Art's goal is to place sculptures at sites throughout the county.
- Sites that experience high levels of pedestrian traffic are recommended.
- Sites must be visible and accessible to the public.
- Sites that have courtyards or other paved pedestrian spaces conducive to the display of outdoor sculpture or sites willing to install a concrete pad will be given preference; some work may be appropriate to place on lawns.
- Sites should be publicly accessible 24 hours per day or, if they are sited in a park or similar site, be accessible during normal hours of that site's operation.
- Sites that contain commercial or political advertising (other than the name and location of the business), or would impede pedestrian traffic, or create a safety or traffic issue will not be considered.

Private Site Responsibilities

Sites selected to exhibit sculpture will be required to:

- Privately owned sites must carry General Liability Insurance in the amount of \$2,000,000, personal property insurance covering vandalism or theft, and provide proof thereof.
- Appoint a site administrator who will provide logistical and administrative support for the duration of the exhibit, including installation and de-installation.
- Monitor the work and notify HoCo Arts immediately of any damage or vandalism.
- Install a concrete pad or other anchoring construction if the sculpture the site selects requires it.
- Install the name plaque provided by HoCo Arts in the area that the sculpture is sited.
- Enter into an agreement with HoCo Arts regarding these requirements and willingness to host the sculpture for the duration of the exhibit.
- Have representatives available to attend meetings as necessary and be available for publicity purposes.

Guidelines for Sites to Consider

Public art should ideally

- Be placed at a site where it will enhance and activate the space or at least not detract from it (e.g. creating a “blind” spot).
- Be sited where it will be highly visible, in a location that experiences high levels of pedestrian traffic or creates a place to congregate.
- Be placed at a site where it is not overwhelmed by, nor competing with, the scale of the site or adjacent architecture, large retail signage, billboards, etc.
- Not block windows or entrances, nor obstruct normal pedestrian circulation in and out of a building, nor be a safety hazard.
- Not be placed at a site if the landscaping and maintenance requirements of that site cannot be met.

Artist Responsibilities

Artists selected to exhibit their sculpture will be responsible for:

- Signing a contract with HoCo Arts and site.
- Transportation and installation of the sculpture.
- Maintaining general liability insurance during the installation process and any applicable insurance limits for themselves or any subcontractors including, but not limited to, worker’s compensation, automobile, etc. during the installation of the artwork.
- Being available for public information, interviews, etc.
- Removing work promptly at the end of the exhibit.

Copyright

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.

Timeline

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

*This meeting date will be set by HoCo Arts and all sites will be notified of the date and time after the proposal deadline. Accepted sites will need to send a representative to this meeting to select the artwork for their site.

NOTE: HoCo Arts reserves the right to refuse any or all submissions, sites, and any finalists; to waive informalities in proposals or procedures; to withhold the selection award should it be determined that the site 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 sites 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 site, HoCo Arts reserves the right to withdraw the selection of the site. 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.

Application

Complete applications will be forwarded to the selection panel for consideration. Handwritten statements will not be accepted.

All application materials must be submitted online at by **11:59PM on March 2, 2026.**

[Click Here to Apply](#)

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