Introduction
The Vermont Arts Council is offering a special funding opportunity to communities that are poised to integrate works of public art into upcoming infrastructure projects. The Council seeks proposals for projects that provide opportunities for artists to engage with community in the design of public art for an interior or exterior site that is accessible to the public. The design may be for temporary or permanent works of art.

The Animating Infrastructure program is designed to foster partnerships between communities and artists. The intent is to enhance a sense of community pride and identity, foster social connections, and to improve the livability and vibrancy of Vermont downtowns, villages, and neighborhoods. Through the development and installation of site-specific works of public art, Vermont communities are able to reflect their vision, values, and creative spirit.

For the purposes of this program, the Vermont Arts Council’s definition of infrastructure is broad and includes community facilities and services such as buildings, trails, water or sewer systems, roads, power systems, parks, and more. Functional components of infrastructure such as sidewalks, railings, benches, walls, signs, stairs, sidewalks, tree grates, and more in the built and/or natural environment have the potential for artistic enhancement that creates unique places where people want to live, work, visit, and play.

Who May Apply or Receive Funding
Vermont nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, and municipalities are eligible to apply. Community groups without tax-exempt status may apply using a fiscal agent. A fiscal agent must be a charitable nonprofit organization incorporated in Vermont. All applicants (or the fiscal agent) must have a D-U-N-S Number. Proposals from Vermont designated downtowns, village centers, or neighborhood development areas are encouraged.

Who May Not Apply
- past recipients of Animating Infrastructure Grants
- organizations that have received any other Arts Council grant in the same fiscal year to support the same project
- organizations with outstanding or incomplete reporting for any Vermont Arts Council grant
- individual artists
Use of Funds
The funding must be used to conduct a process to select an artist and to engage the artist with the community in the development of the design of artwork. At the end of the grant period, the grantee should have a final design that includes a budget, drawings or models, and details about specific materials. It should also include a timeline and information on fabrication, installation, site preparations, and maintenance requirements for the proposed artwork. Final designs may then be used by the community to raise the necessary funds to compensate the artist(s) for fabrication and installation of the designed artwork. This could include future Animating Infrastructure implementation grants, crowdfunding opportunities, and/or other funding sources. (Successful completion of a final design grant does not guarantee that the project will be funded through a future Animating Infrastructure grant.)

What We Do Not Fund
• the purchase, lease, or exhibition of pre-existing artwork or editions
• any ongoing operational expenses of the applicant organization or partner
• capital improvements not directly related to the public artwork
• the purchase of land or property
• design of artwork that will not be publicly accessible or visible

Grant Amounts and Matching Requirements
The Council will select up to three communities to receive $5,000 each. Grants will not require a match, but grantees will be responsible for any additional expenses above the grant amount. At least 80% of grant funds must be used to support artist honorariums and design fees. The remaining 20% of the funds may be used to support project management, community engagement activities, online application/software fees, space rentals, and/or community outreach.

For the selected projects, the Council will provide guidance to the grantee in the artist selection process, as well as assistance in outreach to Vermont artists.

Selection Criteria
A successful application will demonstrate a unique opportunity for the integration of public art into infrastructure and will relate the community to the place. Competitive proposals will have high potential for success by demonstrating:
• a clearly defined place and proposed infrastructure project that has high community visibility (15 points)
• clearly identified project goals and outcomes (15 points)
• strong and supportive community leadership and collaborating organizations (15 points)
• diverse, cross-sector representation on a local review committee that includes at least one member of the arts community (10 points)
• potential for community engagement that fosters connections among people, cultures, and/or organizations (15 points)
• potential to celebrate what is unique and special about the community/place (10 points)
• an appropriate and realistic scope and scale with well thought-out fundraising ideas (10 points)
• importance to the community at this time (10 points)
Grantee Requirements

Grantees will be expected to sign a contract agreeing to specific funding requirements. The Council shares success stories with other communities and continues to support creative placemaking efforts. Therefore, a final report with a narrative, final budget, visual documentation (e.g. photos, drawings, video) of the process and final design will be required at the end of your project. The report will be due no later than thirty days after the completion of the final design.

Application and Deadline

Application deadline March 10, 2020. Notification will occur by April 30, 2020. The artist selection and development of the final design must be completed between May 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020. Applications must be submitted through the Council’s online granting system. The Council welcomes conversations well in advance of your application. Our role is to help you prepare the strongest application possible and support your process.

Access and Nondiscrimination Policy

The Vermont Arts Council is committed to supporting entities that maintain an environment free from discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, creed, national origin, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic bias, disability, citizenship, veteran status, or other category protected by applicable state or federal law. Arts Council grant recipients who receive federal or state funds must be in compliance with the requirements of Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the ADA Amendment Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-325) which became effective on January 1, 2009.

Questions?

Inquiries about the Animating Infrastructure program should be made by sending an email to Michele Bailey or by calling 802.828.3294. Inquiries about using the online application system should be made by sending an email to Meredith Bell or by calling 802.828.3292.