

City of Knoxville Public Arts Committee

Request for Qualifications: Public Art at Cal Johnson Recreation Center

The City of Knoxville's Public Arts Committee invites you to submit qualifications for a permanent work of art to be located in Cal Johnson Recreation Center, 507 South Hall of Fame Drive, Knoxville, TN 37915 in downtown Knoxville. The Committee seeks artists to create a significant, site-specific work of art for this important location in downtown Knoxville. Works that have previously been created for other spaces are discouraged. Works that have been previously exhibited in other locales are disqualified.

DEADLINE: 4:30 PM EST, Friday, November 15, 2024

SELECTION PROCESS: Artists and artist teams are asked to submit qualifications to Liza Zenni, Executive Director, Arts & Culture Alliance of Greater Knoxville. Out of these submissions, up to five (5) artists will be selected as finalists to prepare and present a proposal design to be considered for the site. An honorarium of \$250 will be provided to each finalist/team to create and present a design proposal, as required. While all artists are welcome to respond, local artists are especially encouraged.

PROJECT BUDGET: The budget for this project is \$25,000: \$20,000 of the budget includes artist fees, design fees, travel expenses, all materials and fabrication cost, lighting, insurance costs, site-preparation costs (if any), traffic control costs (if any), engineering expenses, shipping and transportation to the site (if any), installation, any applicable permit fees and taxes, any costs associated with the development of site-specific concept(s), and any other expenses related to the design including fabrication and installation. The artwork and all rights to it shall be owned by the City. If necessary, the remaining \$5,000 of the budget may be used to negotiate for either: securing a mentor to assist selected artist in converting their design to the exceptionally large scale of the site, OR funding stipends for local artist(s) to learn about the mural making process from selected artist.

PROJECT DETAILS:

Context: Built in 1957, the 10,760-square-foot Cal Johnson Family Recreation Center offers after-school and camp youth programs, adult and youth basketball leagues and open weight room. The popular Parks and Recreation Center recently received a \$550,000 upgrade. New electrical, HVAC and mechanical systems were installed, and architectural renovations resulted in a redesign of the center's kitchen, including new cabinets and workspaces. Smaller rooms throughout were opened up to create a roomy gathering space in the lobby.

The committee seeks to enliven this well-used recreation center with mural in the gym on the north wall behind the backboard measuring approximately 45' wide and 12' tall. The committee seeks an artist who can envision a mural that is lively, colorful, inspiring; viewable day and

night; inviting to children and adults; well-integrated with the existing interior design; and considers the historic nature of the building and surrounding neighborhood.

Caldonia Fackler Johnson (1844-1925) A former Knoxville slave made rags-to-riches history in the early 1900s, becoming Knoxville's first African-American millionaire.

Cal Johnson thrived as a businessman, especially known for saloons, and he owned several around town, in both predominantly black and white parts of town. Johnson opened his first saloon in 1879 on the corner of Gay Street and Wall Avenue. That same year, he ran unsuccessfully for the 5th Ward seat on the Board of Aldermen. But he ran again in 1883 and 1884, winning both times. He was involved in horse-racing, both as an owner and jockey, and as a sponsor of racetracks.

The oval-shaped roadway in Burlington, Speedway Circle, was once a Cal Johnson racetrack. The first airplane to travel to Knoxville is said to have landed on Johnson's Burlington racetrack on April 13, 1911.

As an old man, Cal Johnson became known to both races as a friendly presence on State Street. He had a green lawn, and often sat on his broad front porch, calling out to friends and strangers alike, tipping his hat, inviting them to come up and sit with him, even occasionally to share a meal.

Cal Johnson fell ill in the late winter of early 1925, and the newspapers followed his health closely, as doctors examined him at his home at 307 State Street, next door to the industrial building he'd built more than a quarter-century before. On April 7, he died there, at age 81.

Please see site photographs on page 3.

TIMELINE:

Technical Assistance Zoom (call 865-523-7543 for link) 6:00 PM, Monday, October 28, 2024

Submission deadline: November 15, 2024

Finalists (up to 5) are notified: December 4, 2024

Proposed designs to selection committee: January 31, 2025

Winning artist/team is notified: February 14, 2025

Final design review: March 4, 2025

Installation: Spring 2025

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

Completed application form (see page 4)

Current CV/resume

Letter of interest (1 page maximum): applicants should briefly describe their interest in the project and include a description of their approach and proposed design for the project.

4-6 images of previously completed work. Images of artwork demonstrating an ability to design,

create and install large-scale, mural artwork is preferred but not necessary.
Description of each image, including title, date, size, material, and location if a public artwork.
3 professional references with current contact information

Please note: submitted materials will not be returned and incomplete applications will not be considered.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2024. All materials must be received no later than 4:30 PM. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.

Mail or e-mail complete applications to:
Liza Zenni, Executive Director
Arts & Culture Alliance of Greater Knoxville
100 South Gay Street, Suite 201
Knoxville, TN 37902
LZ@knoxalliance.com

For more information:
Call (865) 523-7543 or email LZ@knoxalliance.com

Site Photographs







City of Knoxville Public Arts Committee

**Permanent Art Installation at the Cal Johnson Recreation Center
507 South Hall of Fame Drive, Knoxville, TN 37915**

APPLICATION FORM

APPLICANT NAME: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ **STATE:** _____ **ZIPCODE:** _____

PHONE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

WEBSITE (OPTIONAL): _____

DEADLINE: Submissions must be received by 4:30 PM on November 15, 2024

APPLICATION CHECKLIST:

___ Application Form

___ CV/Resume

___ Letter of Interest

___ 4-6 Images of Previous Work

___ Description of each image; title, date, size, material, and location if a public artwork.

___ 3 Professional References

MAIL OR E-MAIL APPLICATION TO:

Liza Zenni, Executive Director
Arts & Culture Alliance, 100 S. Gay Street, Suite 201
Knoxville, TN 37902
LZ@knoxalliance.com