

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Neighborhood-Based, Cleveland Branded Public Art Design & Installation

Issued by: Destination Cleveland

Contact: Alex Harnocz, Director of Destination Development at aharnocz@destinationcle.org.

Issue Date: October 20, 2025

Proposal Due Date: November 21, 2025

Initial Project Sites: Playhouse Square Plaza, CentroVilla25

PROJECT VISION

Cleveland is a city that never backs down. Win or lose, we're never defeated—and our neighborhood public spaces should reflect that spirit. Destination Cleveland invites bold, unapologetic creatives to propose designs for the next photo-worthy physical expression of the Destination Cleveland's brand with a featured place for neighborhood customization. These photo-worthy pieces will serve as visual anchors and storytelling tools - celebrating the grit, joy, and pride that define our city. This initiative builds on the success of Destination Cleveland's iconic [Cleveland Script signs](#) and the temporary "window" signs which occasionally appear alongside them. It aims to pilot a scalable model for future neighborhood-based installations.

About Destination Cleveland

Destination Cleveland is the non-profit destination marketing and management organization for Cuyahoga County. As unapologetic promoters of Cleveland, we work to fulfill our mission to stimulate economic growth by attracting people from outside the region to Cleveland and connecting them to experiences that illustrate our diversity, creativity and contagious passion. These pieces should give residents and visitors another way to share their love of The Land and connect their experiences in our neighborhoods.

GOALS

1. Celebrate Cleveland's brand identity through neighborhood-based public art that's clever, proud, and rooted in place.
2. Create social media-friendly landmarks that encourage visitation to Cleveland neighborhoods and invite interaction, storytelling and place-building.
3. Celebrate local artists & engage local communities.
4. Pilot a replicable design which can be repeated across other neighborhood public spaces, ensuring scalability of production and maintenance.

Scope of Work

- **Design:** Develop a concept for a piece of street furniture which represents the Cleveland brand. The piece itself should be able to be reproduced across Cleveland neighborhoods at the same size and specification. It should contain an element or area which can be customized with a design that reflects its particular location.
- **Fabrication:** Produce durable, weather-resistant installations suitable for high-traffic public spaces that can be replicated across neighborhoods.
- **Installation:** Coordinate with local partners for site preparation and placement.
- **Collaboration:** Work closely with stakeholders including Destination Cleveland, Playhouse Square, CentroVilla25, Assembly for the Arts, City of Cleveland, Cleveland Neighborhood Progress, Downtown Cleveland Alliance and MetroWest Community Development Organization.

Narrative Description

Two successful past installations which should be instructive in this process are the Cleveland Script signs and the acrylic “window” signs which are occasionally placed in front of them. At 16’ wide, 6’ high, and 18” deep, the original Cleveland Script signs require a significant footprint as well as a sweeping backdrop.

The piece sought in this proposal should be similar in that it is large-scale, robustly constructed, and appropriate for a person or group to take a photograph with it. However, it should fit into a more compact footprint (maximum 10’ wide) and be more focused on the immediate environment rather than a broad skyline backdrop.



In anticipation of major events or celebrations, Destination Cleveland often deploys an acrylic “window” sign with a steel base in front of the Cleveland Script signs. Large-format printed vinyl is applied to the “window” to call attention to the event and anchor photos shared from the sign in a particular time and place. Similarly, the second “O” in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame’s “LONG LIVE ROCK” sign serves as a change-able canvass for events and special exhibits.

The proposed piece should incorporate some area or element which can be changed quickly and cost-effectively using window vinyl or some other cost-effective means for event, neighborhood, or other customization.



Design inspiration can be drawn from Destination Cleveland’s [Brand Bible](#) and should reflect Cleveland’s Unapologetic, Proud, Bold, Clever, and Passionate identity.

Design Guidelines

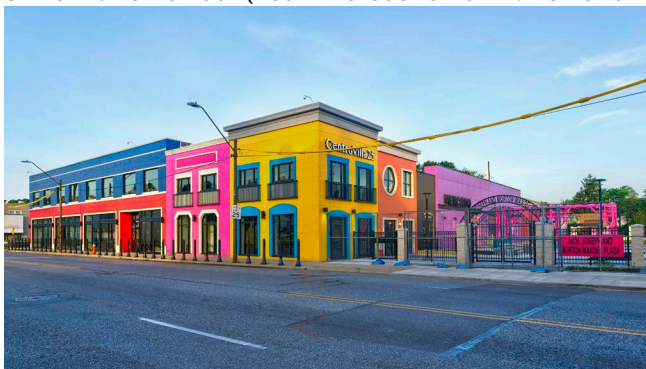
- ✓ Should reflect Cleveland's brand essence (win or lose, never defeated), values (determined, fun, connecting, creative, unpretentious and promise that Cleveland inspires all of us by showing what's possible if you never give up, no matter the odds.
- ✓ Sculpture design(s) should incorporate an element or area which is changeable / customizable to reflect the neighborhood or location of a specific piece. The design of these 'local elements' will sourced through a separate call for artists.
- ✓ Must be safe, accessible, and compliant with city regulations.
- ✓ Inspired by previous initiatives like Cleveland Script signs, Murals Across the City project, and LONG LIVE ROCK sign.
- ✓ Must speak in our brand voice: Unapologetic. Proud. Bold. Clever. Passionate.

Proposed Sites Under Study

- 1) Downtown's Playhouse Square District at [Playhouse Square Plaza](#)
1501lid Avenue (near intersection of E. 14th and Euclid)



- 2) Clark Fulton Neighborhood's La Villa Hispana at [CentroVilla25](#)
3140 W. 25th Street (near intersection of W. 25th and Buckeye Ct.)



Proposal Requirements

This call is open to any artist at any stage of their artistic career. Destination Cleveland strongly encourages submissions from artists residing in the City of Cleveland and elsewhere in Northeast Ohio. **PLEASE NOTE:** Design proposals will not be accepted at this point in the process.

- ✓ Name of Artist / Artist Team with contact information (email, phone, and mailing address)
- ✓ Website and Social Media Handles
- ✓ Artist / Artist Team Biography
- ✓ Artist Statement of Interest (1 page maximum, double spaced)
- ✓ Resume / CV (if a team, one for each member)
- ✓ A PDF document containing images of past work including up to 15 images of previous work alongside a corresponding, numbered, annotated image list with title, media, dimensions, location, brief description, date of work, and project partners, if applicable.
- ✓ Optional: Professional References from past projects

Evaluation Criteria

Artists will be selected from this call as a pool of eligible artists/teams. Selected artists/teams will be paid a \$1,000 stipend to develop a project proposal for a design that could be applied to both sites. Information will be sent to the selected artists/teams with details of the proposal process and contracts. Design proposals will only be considered after the selection of artists/teams.

- ✓ October 10, 2025: Call to Artists released
- ✓ November 21, 2025: Responses due
- ✓ December 12, 2025: Artists selected to produce project-specific designs
- ✓ January 30, 2026: Project-specific designs due
- ✓ February 20, 2026: Final Artist selected
- ✓ March & April 2026: City review processes
- ✓ Summer 2026: Fabrication and Installation