

CALL TO ARTISTS – Expression of Interest (EOI)

Public Art Mentorship for Park 540

Submission deadline: December 16, 2024, 11:59 PM EST

Budget: \$25,000.00 CAD

Complete your application at mississaugapublicart.smapply.ca

As part of the development of a new downtown park, the City of Mississauga (the “City”) has commissioned SOFTlab to create a permanent public artwork for Park 540 (505 Webb Drive, the “Site”).

As part of this public art project, the City, together with SOFTlab (“Mentor Artist”), is offering a paid public art mentorship opportunity, for artists with an interest in gaining knowledge and experience in designing site specific public art, planning for public art projects, and the associated fabrication, coordination and installation process. The successful candidate will be mentored by SOFTlab.



Spectral Grove, SOFTlab, 2019. Philadelphia, PA.

1. Eligibility

This is a public competition open to individual emerging* and mid-career** artists residing in Canada. Students, including art, design and architecture students, and established gallery artists looking to expand their practice into public art, are encouraged to apply. Preference will be given to artists that have a connection to the Mississauga area, including a connection to the land, and/or a current or former Mississauga resident.

**The City defines an emerging artist as an artist in the early stage of their professional career who may have specialized training (not necessarily gained in an academic institution) and has created a modest independent body of work that may include professional exhibitions, commissions, presentations and/or installations.*

***The City defines a mid-career artist as an artist who has been actively creating and exhibiting work for at least 7 or more years. This artist exhibits more regionally to where they are located and has built up a larger body of work.*



Mirror Mirror, SOFTlab, 2019. Alexandria, VA.

2. Submission Requirements

Please read all components of the EOI prior to completing your submission. To submit your application, please go to: mississaugapublicart.smapply.ca. In this online submission form, you will be asked to provide the following:

Section 1: Artist Information

Other than your name, this information will not be visible to the Art Selection Committee.

- “**Artist Information**” including your name, pronouns, contact information and links to your website and social media, if applicable.
- “**Artist Reference Information**” includes information for two references who can speak to your artistic practice and interest and/or experience in public art projects. If contacted, information provided by a reference may be shared with the Art Selection Committee, however their contact information will remain confidential.

Section 2: Artist Statement

- Artist Statement** You can submit a written statement (1000 words maximum) or a recorded video/voice note (an MP4 file or online link, max 20 MB). The statement should include a description of:
 - ✓ Your artistic practice
 - ✓ Your connection to Mississauga
 - ✓ Why you are interested in the field of public art
 - ✓ How you feel this mentorship opportunity would support your growth as an artist
 - ✓ How you envision your participation in this mentorship project, both in terms of potentially working on-site at SOFTlab’s New York City office and serving as a local project liaison in Mississauga
 - ✓ Your experience collaborating with others (i.e. community members, artists, designers, architects, or others) on past projects

Section 3: Artist Portfolio

- Artist portfolio (no more than 10 images, pages or videos of past work).** The images should illustrate your artistic practice and interest in this project. Each image should include: title, year, media, location, project budget, dimensions, and collaborators and/or commissioning agencies.

Section 4: Anonymous Survey Completion

- Upload a screenshot of the completion page of the [anonymous Submission Survey](#). The information collected on this form is anonymous and confidential.
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Artist(s) will retain copyright over their proposals. However, the proposals may be used by the City of Mississauga in meetings with stakeholders and staff. Please note that the proposals will not be returned.

Accessibility: The City will provide accommodations, including reading and writing support, throughout the selection process to applicants with disabilities and/or English as a second language. Please notify Philippa French, Public Art Curator at 905-615-3200 ext. 4675 or philippa.french@mississauga.ca of the nature of any accommodation(s) that you may require in respect of any materials or processes used to ensure your equal participation.

Technical Assistance: If you experience any technical challenges or need assistance using the application software, please reach out to public.art@mississauga.ca. If you have feedback on this application process and platform, we invite you to complete a quick and anonymous survey [here](#).

3. Project Brief

About the Project: As part of the M City Development at Burnhamthorpe Road and Confederation Parkway, the City is building a [new park](#) for residents and visitors in Downtown Mississauga. Within this park, the City has commissioned a permanent public artwork through a formal art selection process.

Through an open call to artists in 2022, the Public Art Program invited professional artists and artist teams to submit credentials and expressions of interest for the project. Submissions were evaluated by an arms-length art selection committee and four applicants were shortlisted and invited to develop proposals.

The City of Mississauga heard from almost 300 local residents and visitors who provided their input on these four public art proposals, with “Zaagaasige” receiving the highest amount of positive feedback. The art selection committee, comprised of individuals with expertise in public art, arts education, curatorial practice, architecture, and knowledge of the local neighbourhood, selected “Zaagaasige” based on the selection criteria and survey feedback.



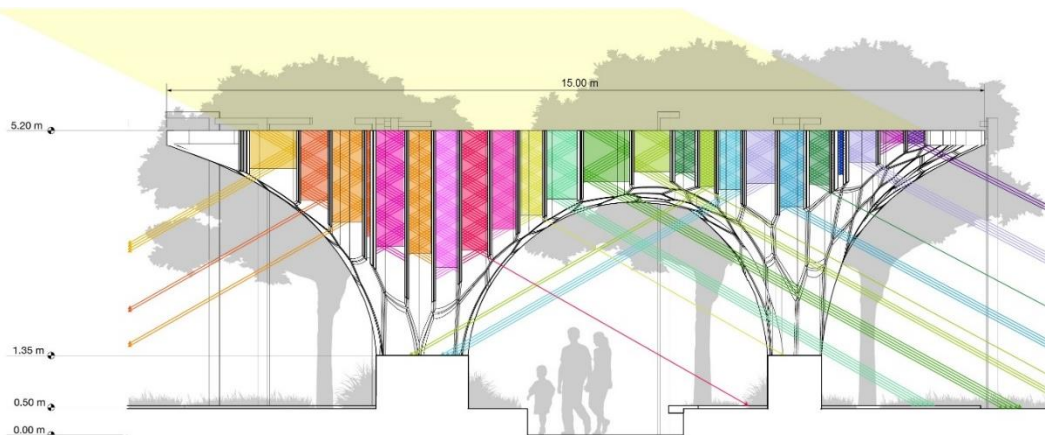
Proposed artwork for Park 540, “Zaagaasige”, view from the east.

About the Artwork: Inspired by the Ojibwe word “Zaagaasige”, the sun shines between and out of, the selected proposal is a sculptural canopy created by an organic cellular structure of structural wood that filters sunlight into a landscape of color below. The lily pad-like canopy creates a gateway for the park and a new horizon giving visitors the sense that they are immersed in a magical atmosphere created from light and color.

Zaagaasige is made of modular elements that are fabricated using the latest digital fabrication technology. The main visible structure uses marine grade structural timber/plywood. Timber is a sustainable building material and the choice of this material for the canopy is inspired by Ontario’s rich history of birchbark and white cedar canoe craftsmanship. The CNC cut timber modules will be assembled on site with custom laser cut and bent stainless steel brackets. The inside of the cellular chamber will be clad with mirrored aluminum composite panels that are both light weight and typically used as exterior building cladding.

About the Mentor Artist: SOFTlab is a design studio based in New York City led by Michael Szivos. The studio combines a research-based design practice with an interest in how technology, craft, and materials come together in ways that explore the boundaries between art, architecture, other disciplines, and the public.

SOFTlab works at a wide range of scales and for many types of clients from cities to corporations to civic institutions and arts organizations. Their interests lie less in defined project categories, and more in those projects that straddle disciplines, industries, and mediums. While design is a big part of what they do, it does not end when production begins. SOFTlab produces most aspects of their work from programming to fabrication to installation. Learn more about SOFTlab [here](#).



Rendering of how light will be reflect through the honeycomb structure.



View from below the canopy of Zaagaasige.

Mentorship Goals: The intention is for the Mentee artist to be an integral part of the SOFTlab team that develops the project. The overarching goals for the mentorship are to:

- ✓ Attract new and emerging public artists to participate in the City of Mississauga's public art program
- ✓ Create an opportunity for local artists to gain more technical and administrative expertise in public art, including how to take a public art project from initial renderings all the way through the process to installation of the final artwork
- ✓ Grow the City of Mississauga's public artist talent pool, creating more solid foundations for Mississauga public artists as they apply for public art projects locally and internationally
- ✓ Facilitate collaborative relationships and experiences that can lead to more innovative public art projects

Mentor Artist Responsibilities: the Mentor Artist will commit to collaborating with the selected artist to support their growth as a public artist by:

- ✓ Maintaining open communication with the Mentee Artist and the City on the project throughout the length of the agreement
- ✓ Engaging the Mentee Artist in work that will provide benefits to the public art project as well as support furthering the Mentee Artist's career in public art
- ✓ Scheduling and fully participating in virtual meetings, studio visits and site visits with the Mentee Artist, during design and/or fabrication
- ✓ Providing feedback for the final report to the Mentee Artist regarding the process and the Mentee Artist's participation in the overall project.

Duration: The duration of the mentorship is flexible depending on the deliverables and work undertaken. The mentoring scope will be developed based on the selected mentees availability and area of focus.

Location: The location of the mentorship is flexible, with a majority of the tasks being able to take place remotely. Should the Mentee wish, they may allocate some of the budget to visit New York City and connect with the larger SOFTlab team in a hands-on way during various phases of this project and other projects that the studio is working on. This travel could be for a longer period of time or intermittently in alignment with the various project phases. Any international

travel will be an optional component of this project and the selected artist will be responsible for obtaining any visas that may be required.

Mentorship Details: Working closely alongside the Mentor Artist, the Mentee artist will provide support services to advance the project's development and learn from other projects the Mentor Artist is working on, including but not limited to:

- ✓ *Design Development* - learn how to use software tools to optimize and plan projects for production.
- ✓ *Engage with Engineers* - exposure to how to work with engineers and other collaborators.
- ✓ *Estimating and Prototypes* - get an understanding of the back-and-forth process between full scale mock-ups and final production cost estimation.
- ✓ *Detail Development* - work with the larger team on how to finalize details through drawings and prepare files for fabricators.
- ✓ *Project Planning and Scheduling* - learn how to phase and plan complex projects.
- ✓ *Fabrication and Production Management* - how to select, work with, and manage various fabricators and vendors.
- ✓ *Installation* - planning and creating drawings for a phased installation along with the daily schedule management.

4. Anticipated Budget

The total budget for all artist fees and expenses related to the mentorship is **\$25,000 Canadian Dollars.***

The selected artist will be required to execute an agreement with the Mentor artist for their services. The artist fee will be divided into phased payments that align with the artwork's development and the mentee's scope of work, as outlined in the agreement.

** This fee includes (but is not limited to): artist fees, technical consultation, travel to the site and project meetings, travel and accommodation for studio and fabricator visits, costs associated with international travel, visas, and visa support services, purchase of relevant materials and equipment (including technology and software), on-site liaison work, insurance and/or other fees as required by SOFTlab, the City of Mississauga and/or any visa related insurance costs, documentation, and attendance at unveiling of the completed artwork. The fee is inclusive of HST.*

5. Anticipated Schedule

It is expected that the selected artist will comply with the project’s general timeline dates, as highlighted below:

Date*	Project Phase
December 16, 2024	Deadline for this Call to Artists for Expressions of Interest
January 13, 2025	Art Selection Committee shortlists up to five artists
Week of January 20, 2025	Art Selection Committee interviews shortlisted artists
January 27, 2025	Art Selection Committee selects artist; Agreement between Mentor Artist and selected artist is executed
February 2025-January 2026	Mentorship takes place
Spring 2026	Artwork Fabrication, Installation and Unveiling
Spring 2026	Mentorship completion and debrief

* Schedule subject to change

6. Selection Process and Criteria

An art selection committee comprised of representatives from SOFTlab, the City of Mississauga’s Public Art Program and/or other arts professionals will score submissions against an evaluation matrix. The committee will select up to three artists to participate in virtual interviews, based on the following criteria:

- ✓ Expressed interest in pursuing a public art career and interest working with the Mentor artist.
- ✓ Potential to successfully collaborate as a Mentee Artist and ability to meet the project deadlines, within the set timeline and budget.
- ✓ Artistic merit, including quality of work, originality, and artistic excellence in the field of contemporary art.

Up to five artists may be shortlisted for a virtual interview, to take place the week of January 20, 2025, between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm EST. Interviews will take place virtually and will be recorded

and shared with the Art Selection Committee. Artists must be prepared to speak to their interest in the project, public art career aspirations, how they envision participating in this mentorship, and past artistic experience, but will not need to present a formal proposal.

Our public art program accepts informal training and community/peer recognition, and recognizes artists, creators, and storytellers from a diverse range of disciplines. **Please do not hesitate to reach out to our team or send a submission, even if you are unsure if your credentials are suitable for the opportunity.**

The City of Mississauga reserves the right to select and retain the artist deemed most appropriate for the project at its sole discretion.

7. Commitment to Equity

The City's Public Art Program is committed to continually improving our application processes to ensure equitable and inclusive opportunities for all. If you have feedback on this application process, particularly if you are a racialized individual or individual facing systemic barriers that limit your full participation within the public art industry, we invite you to complete a quick and anonymous survey here: <https://app.keysurvey.com/f/41590907/afa0>

8. Reserved Rights of the City of Mississauga

The City of Mississauga (the "City"), at its sole discretion, may request clarifications or request additional information, as deemed necessary to evaluate the submissions. The City retains the sole discretion to determine whether a submission is responsive and if the prospective Artist or Artist Team is capable of performing the Work. The City reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to determine the number of pre-qualified Artists or Artist Teams. The City reserves the right to not proceed with awarding a contract.

9. Publication of Competition Information

The City of Mississauga shall have the exclusive right to issue all public announcements regarding the competition.

10. Additional Information

For additional information or questions please contact: Philippa French, Public Art Curator at philippa.french@mississauga.ca or public.art@mississauga.ca.

For more information about the City's public art program visit: mississauga.ca/publicart

