

Salt Lake City Public Art Program

A New Mural for *Out of the Blue*

Request for Qualifications

Applicant Info Session

Thursday, December 4th, 2025

12:00 pm (MT)

A recording of this info session and the slides covered today will be published on our website afterwards.



Introduction

Public art project located at the roundabout on 900 South and 1100 East, Salt Lake City, UT 84105 | [City Council District 5](#)

The Salt Lake City Arts Council's Public Art Program is seeking to commission a Salt Lake County-based artist or artist-led team to design and install a new mural for [Out of the Blue](#), a sculpture by Stephen Kesler.

The sculpture currently features the mural [Point of Reference](#) by Michael Murdock.

CALL FOR ARTISTS

Request for Qualifications

A New Mural for *Out of the Blue*

A Public Art Installation

Deadline to Apply:
Jan 2, 2026



apply today | publicart.slcc.gov



Eligibility



This Call for Artists is open to all professional artists and/or artist-led teams **residing in or with studios located in Salt Lake County, Utah**, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, religion, marital status, political opinion or affiliation, or mental or physical disability.

Artist-led team applications are welcome. **Each team must be led by a person with a demonstrated history of professional activity as an artist.** For this project, the team leader must have their primary residence or studio located in Salt Lake County; however, other team members are not required to reside in Salt Lake County. Teams may not substitute team members after submission unless the Public Art Program consents to any proposed substitution.

An artist may not apply as a member of more than one team and may not apply as an individual artist if already applying as a team – **one person/one application.**

Project Background

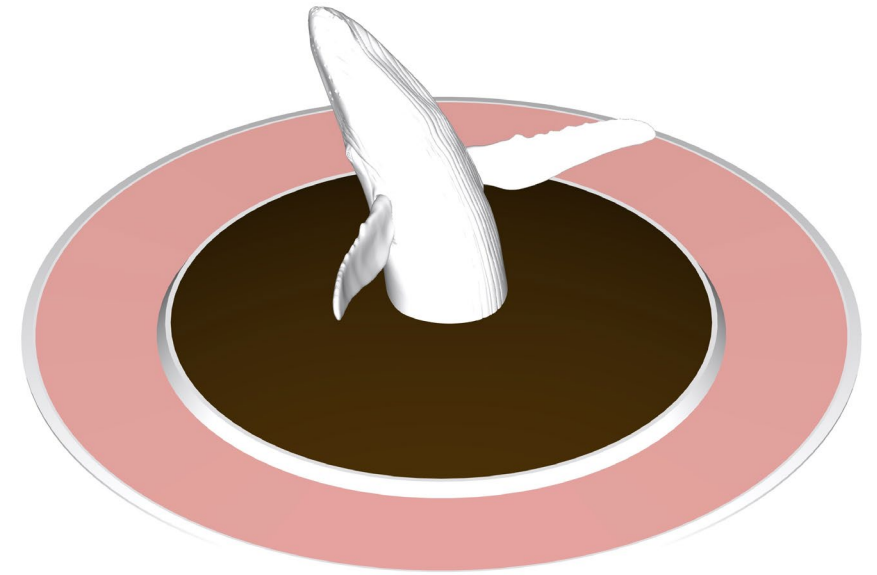
- In April 2022, the Salt Lake City Public Art Program installed [*Out of the Blue*](#), a 23' tall sculpture of a humpback whale affectionately known as "The Whale."
- Located in the roundabout where Harvey Milk Boulevard (900 South), 1100 East, and Gilmer Drive meet.
- The artwork is located along the 9-Line Corridor, a major east-west route that connects residential neighborhoods, commercial centers, and recreation sites.
- The sculpture has become an "icon" for Salt Lake City, serving as a gathering point that attracts local and national visitors.
- To reflect the neighborhood's vibrant and evolving character, a new mural for the sculpture is commissioned every three to five years through a rotating mural program.

Sculpture: Out of the Blue, Stephen Kesler, Mural: Point of Reference, Michael Murdock



Project Scope

- The selected Salt Lake County-based artist or team will create a mural that celebrates the neighborhood's creativity, inclusivity, and local character while deepening the artwork's connection to Salt Lake City's identity.
- The mural will be informed by insights gathered through the [*What's Next for the Whale? Shape SLC*](#) survey, conducted from August to October 2025, which received more than 1,700 community responses about *Out of the Blue* and the 9th & 9th neighborhood.
- Artists will be required to integrate this community input in their mural design approach.



Artwork Goals

The Salt Lake Art Design Board seeks to commission a site-specific artwork that meets some or all of the following goals:

- Serves as a welcoming entrance to the 9th South Corridor and 9th & 9th neighborhood;
- Celebrates the 9th & 9th neighborhood's vibrant, eclectic identity and Salt Lake City's spirit as a place that embraces difference and defies expectations;
- Evokes curiosity, delight, and imagination, reflecting Salt Lake City's unique balance of nature, creativity, and community;
- Embodies the whimsy and joy associated with *Out of the Blue* while connecting to Salt Lake City's natural and urban landscape.
- Is engaging from all angles as the roundabout provides an opportunity for viewers to view the object from 360 degrees;
- Is of the highest quality—creatively and technically, and exemplifies strong, imaginative design;
- Resists general wear and vandalism, offers easy, minimal, and low-cost maintenance;
- Meets all public safety and maintenance standards and complies with the Americans for Disabilities Act (ADA), Salt Lake City requirements, and all other applicable laws, codes, and regulations, including guidance from the Salt Lake City Transportation and Engineering Departments regarding pedestrian, cyclist, and vehicle visibility and safety.

Budget

This public art installation is possible through CIP/Percent-for-Art Funds

Commission Award

- **\$12,500** (total budget)
- Limit of 1 commission per artist or artist-led team

Commission is inclusive of:

- Artist's fees
- Supplies & materials
- Labor
- Insurance
- Transportation,

Additional considerations:

- Artist should include a **contingency of at least 10%** of the project's commission
 - The City will cover costs associated with:
 - lift rental (including delivery and setup)
 - Anti-graffiti protective coating materials
- *The selected artist is responsible for arranging the lift rental and for applying the anti-graffiti coating upon completion of the mural.

Insurance Requirements

General Liability

- Commercial General Liability Insurance (CGL) with **Salt Lake City Corporation** listed as additional insured (Minimums: \$1,000,000 per occurrence / \$2,000,000.00 aggregate)

Vehicle Insurance

- Commercial Auto Insurance with **Salt Lake City Corporation** listed as additional insured (Minimums: \$100,000.00 per person/\$300,000.00 per accident/\$50,000.00 property damage or single combined limit of \$1,000,000)

Worker's Compensation

- Proof of Worker's Compensation
OR
- Apply for a Worker's Compensation Coverage Waiver

Artist Qualifications

The Salt Lake Art Design Board, in consultation with project stakeholders, will choose up to four finalists for proposal development:

The selection of an artist or artist-led team is subject to, but not limited by, the following qualifications:

- Artist's professional experience represents a developed and successful body of public art projects of a similar scope and scale as demonstrated by visual documentation;
- Ability to meet deadlines, budget, and perform work in a timely, professional manner;
- Willingness of the artist to consult and work collaboratively with the Salt Lake Art Design Board and community stakeholders.
- Ability to understand sense of place and design in a context-sensitive manner as demonstrated by visual documentation;
- Artist demonstrates high investment in the project or demonstrates a relationship/connection to the content/community involved in the work;
- Artist has created works of lasting nature that do not require excessive maintenance or repair costs and meet public safety requirements (including transportation safety requirements), Salt Lake City requirements, and Americans for Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.

Finalist Process & Proposal Presentation

Finalist Expectations

- **Mid-February 2026:** Attend a finalist meeting to learn about the project and ask questions to project stakeholders
- Develop a **site-specific conceptual proposal** that includes:
 - Digital Renderings and painted 3D model of *Out of the Blue*
 - Written statement outlining intent, materials, installation, schedule, and budget
 - A description of how the artwork incorporates feedback included in the “[What’s Next for the Whale? 2025 Engagement Report](#)”

Presentation & Compensation

- **Wednesday, May 6, 2026:** Proposals presented to the **Salt Lake Art Design Board** and project partners.
 - ❑ **Proposal materials due:** Wednesday, April 29, 2026, by 5:00 PM MT.
- Each finalist receives a **\$200 stipend** (inclusive of artwork development, research, and meetings)

Project Schedule

Dates provided are estimates based upon current knowledge of preliminary project schedules and are only intended to assist artists in determining their own availability to participate. The dates below in no way represent final approved schedules and are subject to change through future iterations of design and construction phases.

RFQ SUBMISSION DEADLINE

Friday, January 2nd, 2026 by 11:59 pm MT

No late applications will be accepted.
No exceptions!

ARTWORK PROPOSAL PRESENTATION

Artwork Proposal Presentation to Art Design Board – Weds. May 6, 2026, 5 – 7 pm

Recommendation to Mayor for commission – **May/June 2026**

Artist contracting – **Summer 2026**

ARTWORK PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT

3-4 finalists will be selected

If selected as a finalist, you will be notified in **early February 2026**

Required finalists meeting in **mid-February 2026**

Artwork Proposal Development: **Winter – Early Spring 2026**

ARTWORK FABRICATION & INSTALLATION

Artwork installation – **August/September 2026**

Installation completion & Ribbon-Cutting – **Late Summer 2026**

Artist Agreements & Project Assumptions

- If selected, you will enter into two agreements with Salt Lake City:
 - The **first agreement** will be to artwork proposal development, including any additional community engagement
 - The **second agreement (Artist Commissioned Work Agreement)** will be for artwork fabrication and installation, including any additional community engagement
- The selected artist/team must carry general liability and auto insurance and must either provide proof of Workers' Compensation Coverage or apply for a Workers' Compensation Coverage Waiver.
- Salt Lake City will retain the right to remove or relocate the artwork as may be deemed necessary in the future. The selected artist/team will retain copyright to their work but will grant Salt Lake City right to reproduction.
- In the performance of this project under agreement with Salt Lake City, artist/team shall comply with all applicable Salt Lake City requirements, laws, codes, ordinances, and regulations. .
- View a sample of [an Artist Commissioned Work Agreement](#) here.

CALL FOR ARTISTS

Request for Qualifications

**A New Mural for
*Out of the Blue***

A Public Art Installation

How to Apply



CaFÉ (CallforEntry.org)

- All applications must be submitted through the CaFÉ website
- There is no application fee
- Give yourself enough time to become familiar with the site if it's your first time applying (*we recommend a minimum 48 hrs. prior to deadline*)
- All application materials will be uploaded in the corresponding fields through the provided CaFÉ application linked on our website/RFQ and in this presentation
- **Any materials not specifically requested as part of this application or exceeding the maximum page length or format requirements will not be considered or reviewed by the Art Design Board and may result in disqualification. Notifications of disqualifications will not be made.**

Submission Requirements

- Artists may apply individually or as a team. Submissions that arrive on or before **11:59 pm MT on Friday, January 2, 2026**, and meet all the application requirements will be reviewed.
- **The applicant's full name and contact information must appear on all submitted materials.** If applying as a team, indicate the name and contact information of the team's representative. An artist may not apply as a member of more than one team and may not apply as an individual artist if already applying as a team – one person/one application.
- To be considered for this project, applicants must submit all the required materials via the [CaFÉ \(www.callforentry.org\)](https://www.callforentry.org) website. There is no application fee. No other method of submission will be accepted. Assistance using CaFÉ is available [online](#), by [email](#), or by calling 303-629-1166 during business hours.
- **DO NOT SUBMIT A PROPOSAL FOR A NEW COMMISSION AT THIS TIME.**

[SUBMISSION LINK](#)

Application Materials

*only one application per artist/artist-led team

Proof of Residence

Proof of primary residence or studio located in Salt Lake County is required

- Acceptable forms of documentation may include:
 - lease agreement
 - utility bill
 - bank statement
 - other official document showing the individual's name and current address.
- Submit one document as a PDF
- If applying as a team, only the team leader is required to submit proof of residence.

Application Materials

*only one application per artist/artist-led team

Pay attention to Minimums/Maximums + other format requirements before submitting!

Letter of Interest

- No more than one page or **500 words**
- Keep narrative relevant and aim to connect to the project's goals for describing previous body of work
- If applicable, please provide specific examples of your previous experience for projects of similar site, scope, themes, and/or scale

Resume / CV

- 2 pages MAX per artist,
 - *Artist Teams must submit one resume per artist, combined into one PDF*
- Current, brief, and relevant
- Try to avoid fancy fonts, colors, and pictures
- **Include two professional references**
 - *References will only be contacted during the interview process for the finalists*

Images of Work

- MINIMUM of 5 images, MAXIMUM of 10 images, up to 2 videos
- Good quality, straightforward, and are just of the artwork itself
- Title, year, medium, dimensions, location, budget, and brief description of the work
- Do NOT submit multiple images of different works in one image
- Previous proposals not realized cannot be more than 3 of the 10 images
- **Images are the primary way the quality of your work is judged**

Assistance

If you do not have access to a computer or WiFi to apply, the [Salt Lake City Public Library branches](#) offer free computer and WiFi access.

If you require further resources or accommodations to complete the application materials, such as translation and interpretation services to other languages, please email publicartprogram@slc.gov for assistance.



Resources

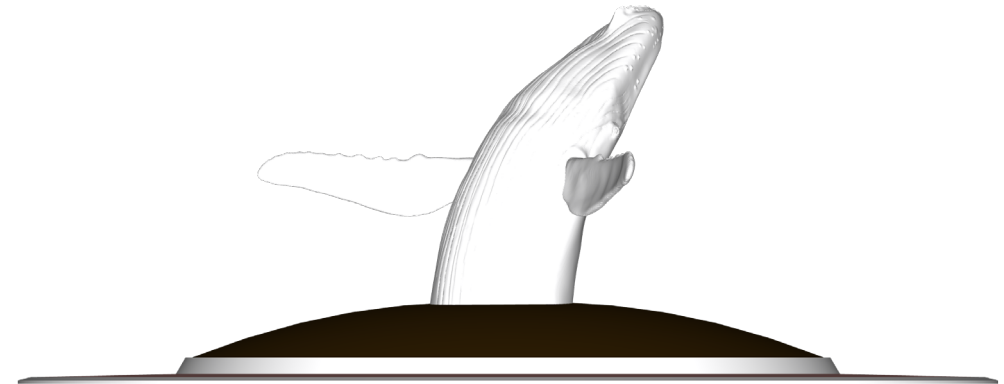
[Out of the Blue](#) - Full-size sculpture of a humpback whale breaching out from the roundabout created by Stephen Kessler, designed to complement and augment the unique and welcoming identity of the 9th & 9th area.

[What's Next for the Whale? 2025 Community Engagement Report](#) –

Developed by Salt Lake City Arts Council and Civic Engagement team, this document presents the data and stories collected throughout the summer 2025 round of engagement.

[Out of the Blue Renderings](#)

- http://saltlakepublicart.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/IMG_0247.png
- http://saltlakepublicart.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/IMG_0248.png
- http://saltlakepublicart.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/IMG_0250.png
- http://saltlakepublicart.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/IMG_0253.png
- http://saltlakepublicart.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/IMG_0255.png
- http://saltlakepublicart.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/IMG_0256.png



Questions?



All questions regarding this *Requests for Qualifications (RFQ)* may only be directed to Salt Lake City Public Art Program staff at the email address listed below. Artists may be disqualified if any unsolicited contact related to this *RFQ* is made with a member of the Art Design Board or project stakeholders other than the Public Art Program staff during the selection process.

We do our best to respond to inquiries quickly, however we may not be able to respond in a timely manner during the final days prior to deadlines stated above. **Please give yourself ample time to consider your participation in this project and reach out to our staff, at any stage in the process, with any questions or concerns.**

Amy Childress/ Salt Lake City Public Art Program

Amy.Childress@slc.gov

publicartprogram@slc.gov



Thank you!

For a recording of this info session, to access these slides, and review entire RFQ, please visit:

- **Application page:** <https://publicart.slc.gov/new-mural-for-out-of-the-blue-2026/>
- **PDF:** https://publicart.slc.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/PDF_Out-of-the-Blue-RFQ-1.pdf
- **Direct link to application:** https://artist.callforentry.org/festivals_unique_info.php?ID=16515

