

Artist Open Call

Rooted and Replicated: Artists Investigating Institutional Frameworks

Deadline to apply: MAY 17, 2023.

Project location and dates: NYC. MAY 24 - JUNE 28, 2023.

Process:

Initiated by artists, Yvonne Shortt, Daria Dorosh and Shelly Bahl.

The 3 project initiators will be joined by 5 additional NYC-based artists in this research and art production-based project. The final team of 8 multi-disciplinary artists will meet weekly and engage in conversation and art making over 6 weeks. We will meet twice in-person and four times via Zoom. Attendance at all six meetings is required, beginning Wednesday, May 24th, 6-8pm (location to be confirmed).

Artists must provide a short paragraph (250 words) about their interest in participating in this specific investigative project, *Rooted and Replicated: Artists Investigating Institutional Frameworks*, to ensure that each applicant understands and commits to the scope of the project. Please complete the short application form here: [[Application Form](#)]

A video version of this open call can be viewed here: www.regoparkgreenalliance.org

Project Partners/ Funders:

A.I.R. Gallery, Research and Development Program,

www.airgallery.org/research-and-development

RPGA Studio www.regoparkgreenalliance.org

South Asian Womxn's Creative Collective (SAWCC) www.sawcc.org

Project Overview:

Rooted and Replicated: artists Investigating Institutional frameworks will look at the existing frameworks that support a scarcity mindset. The method we are using to assemble the team is the Artist Open Call framework. Our practice will combine conversation for contemplating core questions and the creation of art to understand and perhaps demonstrate new ideas/concepts to dismantle scarcity for ourselves and within non-profit art institutions.

Non-profit arts leadership has changed over the years but some of the underlying hierarchical and patriarchal frameworks are still being used for interacting with artists and in programming. These frameworks are built on the scarcity mindset which results in damage to both artists and institutions.

The scarcity mindset believes there are few opportunities and therefore individuals must compete to be selected. This practice leaves little room for artists to interact with one another to

create new frameworks, leaves less time for art creation, and takes an inordinate amount of focus away from art practice.

The scarcity mindset has created more hierarchical structures and fewer innovative frameworks in which artists and institutions can engage collectively. The current institutional model of curated opportunities root and replicate a behavior of competition for galleries, studios, commissions, and grants.

At the top of this competitive hierarchical mindset is the non-profit arts institution, often struggling for funding, with the artists competing in a type of Hunger Games to be selected for participation in programming. The institution, from the perspective of the artist, has full control of the programming and resources. In addition, full financial transparency of project budgets is not made available to artists during program development, leading to more inequity.

A scarcity-minded traditional juried selection process relies on:

1. A cumbersome application, often with project proposal, artist statement, CV, and sometimes letters of reference.
2. Calls are valued on their competitiveness and exclusivity, and deadlines are sometimes extended to collect more applicants.
3. Some non-profit arts organizations use open calls as a form of fundraising, without transparency to artists.
4. Artists at all stages of their career, including some who only have very limited resources, are encouraged to regularly apply for exhibitions, residencies, and fellowships, leaving them exhausted and depleted. Often, artists must wait for up to 6 months to be notified of results, with little or no feedback for applicants.

The new framework developed for this Artist Open Call:

1. We will dispense with the judging of the quality of artists and their artwork, and will select participating artists via a Dada and Surrealist-inspired lottery system. We will quickly announce the selection online via video at: <http://www.rpgastudio.org>.
2. Artists will not have to apply using criteria such as project proposals, artist statements, documentation of their art, CVs or other cumbersome application materials.
3. Project budget (income & expenses) is fully transparent from the beginning and is distributed through a mutual generosity and trust framework in which the artist is paid for participation at the start of the project.
4. This is an artist lead initiative, first and foremost. The three project initiators have volunteered their time to create this call. This project will offer a \$375.00 participation fee to each of the 8 artists. Funding has been secured from three project partners (\$1000 each, with a total project budget of \$3000).
5. Artists will develop a set of artistic goals via consensus at the start of the project that will be transparent to everyone. At the end of the project artists will look back at their objectives and determine if they were met or not, and document any new objectives or thoughts around the project.

Project Outline:

1. Artists must self-identify as women, transgender, or gender non-conforming artists. We strongly encourage BIPOC artists to apply.
2. Artists must have a history of 2+ years of employment or artist participation in non-profit arts organizations in NYC.
3. Artists must be based in the 5 boroughs of NYC or vicinity, as we will be meeting twice in-person and four times via Zoom.
4. Artists must attend 6 meetings over a 6-week duration, beginning Wednesday, May 24th - 6-8 pm (in-person, venue TBC). The last meeting, Wednesday, June 28th, will also be in-person. The four meetings in-between will be on Zoom on Mondays, 6-8pm.
5. Artists must provide a short paragraph (250 words) about their interest and/or experience in participating in this specific investigative project. This paragraph will not be judged, and will only be used to ensure that each applicant clearly understands and commits to the scope of the project.
6. To avoid a hierarchical structure each person will be responsible for setting the agenda and leading one meeting. The first one will be created by the 3 initiators of the project. The five remaining meetings will be led by the other members of the project team.

APPLY ONLINE BY MAY 17, 2023.

[\[Application Form\]](#)

This Artist Open Call is based on an earlier framework developed by Yvonne Shortt and Daria Dorosh. This framework is open access and can be used to create any new open calls:
<https://www.airgallery.org/s/Artist-Open-Call-Framework.pdf>