In response to the outbreak of COVID-19, the Regional Arts & Culture Council (RACC) announces Support Beam, an initiative to further emerging visual artists making work in Oregon and Southwest Washington. Support Beam is intended to strengthen artists towards the production of new work over a period of three to six months. The overall budget for this initiative is $70,000. Selected artists will receive between $3,000 and $5,000.

We know that artists have been uniquely impacted by the limits on public gatherings, group size, and physical distancing requirements. The resulting loss of income for artists and galleries has been staggering. We are streamlining our public art application processes and working to make our Public Art Collection more truly representative of our region’s residents and diversity. See also call for The Visual Chronicle of Portland.

Consistent with RACC’s equity framework, the selection panel will prioritize applications from artists not well represented in the Portable Works Public Art Collection*, including Black artists, Indigenous artists, and artists of color.

The new work created during Support Beam is artist-defined and can utilize any discipline or media that can ultimately be wall mounted. At the conclusion of the artist’s work time, RACC will work with the artist to select completed work. This work will then be accessioned into the collection, which includes more than 1,500 artworks displayed in a variety of publicly accessible civic buildings.

*The Portable Works Public Art Collection contains small scale works that rotate through city and county buildings. View the Portable Works Collection here.

Deadline for applications is Wednesday, June 3, 2020 at 5 p.m. PST.
ABOUT SUPPORT BEAM

Support Beam encourages artists to uphold their artistic practice during this time while contributing to the collection of artwork that is commonly shared by our community. We recognize the adaptive and inventive qualities of artists working however and wherever you can – whether it be in a kitchen, garage, bedroom, closet, or studio. With “shelter in place” and other physical distancing requirements, we are supporting artists, wherever they are, however they are, as they persist in this challenging time through the sanctuary of artistic practice.

This opportunity serves emerging visual artists working in Oregon and Southern Washington, who have no more than two (2) art works within the current collection. Priority will be given to submissions from Black artists, Indigenous artists, and artists of color who meet the eligibility criteria. In an effort to extend support as widely as possible, all artistic disciplines that can be wall mounted and publicly displayed are accepted. Artists may use traditional art materials as well as textiles, assemblage, new media and video works. Support Beam has no required prompts or themes, artists define their own concepts for new work.

This is a project of the Multnomah County Percent for Art program, administered by the Regional Arts & Culture Council using pooled 2% for Art funds from various capital improvement projects.

VIRTUAL PRESENCE

Increasingly, public engagement takes place in virtual spaces. At RACC, we are redefining how we think about Public Art as we consider presenting the region’s dynamic contemporary art within the expansive venue of the internet. Artists selected for Support Beam are required to have a public aspect for sharing work-in-progress. This public aspect can occur in whatever form the artist prefers, such as a virtual “studio” visit, online interview, blog post, or “studio” diary. In an effort to maintain connection with the community at large, these virtual contributions will be published on our website and shared via the organization’s social media accounts. We believe that by sharing small windows into artists’ processes, we can further inspire curiosity, reflect the changes of the world, and invigorate culture beyond the Pacific Northwest.
SELECTION PROCESS

A panel of artists, administrators, Multnomah County staff and curators will select artists for this opportunity. Artists will be selected for this opportunity based on their ability to demonstrate originality of vision, dedication to their artistic practice and their works’ overall suitability for public display using RACC’s equity lens.

Once selected, artists will develop a plan for what they intend to generate during this time. At the conclusion of the artist’s work period, the panel will work with the artist to select at least one work made during that time for acquisition into the collection. The specific work acquired is flexible.

To the extent possible, considering the current availability of art supplies, artwork should be on archival paper and rendered in archival media. In compliance with ADA Standards, selected artwork depth must be no greater than 4”. The final artwork acquired should fit within the following dimensions: 60” X 60” X 4” or smaller.

*Note: Artworks of a larger scale will be considered if the content is suitable for public display.

The panel reserves the right to select an artist who does not directly apply to this call, if appropriate.

ELIGIBILITY

This opportunity is designed to serve emerging visual artists based in Oregon and Southwest Washington. Recognizing the disparities of the health, social and economic impacts of COVID-19 on communities of color, the panel will prioritize submissions from Black artists, Indigenous artists, and artists of color. For more information on RACC’s commitment to equity: https://racc.org/about/equity/

Because one of our goals for this opportunity is to diversify the Public Art Collection and strengthen artists who are not well represented in the collection, artists with 2 or more pieces within the collection are not eligible for this opportunity.

Artists who receive a grant from RACC’s Emergency Relief Fund remain eligible for this opportunity.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

All applications must be submitted through RACC’s Opportunity Portal: racc.org/apply.

Applicants must create an account, or log into their existing account. Instructions in the application portal will guide you through the process. Incomplete applications cannot be considered.

Once you have started your application, you can save after each step and sign out. Your application will be saved as a draft you can continue to work on as needed. Once you hit “Submit,” your application is final. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions during the process.
Please include the following application materials:

- **Up to eight (8) images of past work:** Your portfolio will give the panel a sense of your work’s overall artistic quality and suitability for public engagement and display. File size should be no larger than 5 megabytes and the .jpg format is required. Provide no more than two images per artwork. For each artwork, please provide title, media, dimensions, year produced, budget, and location. Brief conceptual information is optional but recommended.

- **Résumé or bio:** Upload a PDF that outlines artistic accomplishments and activities (no more than two pages).

- **Statement of Interest** (3000 characters or less): Your response will provide the panel with a sense of how you embody and maintain your artistic practice, and how single projects can affect longer-term artistic trajectories. Please address the following:
  
  - **Originality & Dedication:** How does your past artwork inform your current artistic direction?
  
  - **Impact:** In what ways would SUPPORT BEAM propel your practice forward in this direction?
  
  - **Public Visibility:** Knowing that this can evolve as the project evolves, what might your virtual share-out be?

**QUESTIONS?**

We're Here to Help! Talk with the Program Staff. The earlier you contact us the better.

If you have questions about the overall opportunity, please email project manager Morgan Ritter with questions or to set up a time for a phone call: mriter@racc.org.

If you have questions about the RACC application portal or if using the application portal presents a barrier to applying, contact Salvador Mayoral: smayoral@racc.org.

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE**

Wednesday, June 3, 2020, 5 p.m. PST. No late entries will be reviewed.

Use RACC’s Opportunity Portal to apply racc.org/apply

**FIND OUT MORE – VIRTUAL INFO SESSION:**

5:30 to 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, May 12 (Via Zoom)

For more information about Support Beam, preparing digital images, or the application process, join us on Zoom for an online information session. (A recording will be available if you can’t make the live meeting).