



## Creative Signifier for the Lowell National Historical Park Visitor Center in Lowell, MA

### CALL FOR ENTRIES – REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

Release date: Monday, February 6, 2012

Deadline: Friday, March 9, 2012

**Eligibility:** This project is open to U.S. artists. Artists from Lowell and surrounding communities are strongly encouraged to apply.

**Budget:** \$100,000- \$125,000. Finalists will receive a \$1,000 proposal development fee.

#### Project Description and Background

Lowell National Historical Park (LNHP), the Cultural Organization of Lowell (COOL) and the City of Lowell invite artists to forward qualifications for a creative signifier public art project at the NPS Visitor Orientation Center at Market Mills. Market Mills is the former Bigelow Carpet Company complex, located on the site of one of the city's original textile mills.

Lowell National Historical Park is a unique park concept that provides for an historical/cultural park in a living, working urban environment. LNHP preserves and interprets the history of the American Industrial Revolution in Lowell. Park resources include historic cotton textile mills, 5.6 miles of canals, operating gatehouses, and worker housing. The Park preserves and celebrates the Lowell's historical and cultural traditions rooted in the city's rich industrial past. Dozens of museums and galleries, along with a rich array of cultural organizations populate this diverse city, whose economic revival has been attributed to a strong dedication to historic preservation and cultural development. To further foment this vision, the City of Lowell, Cultural Organization of Lowell (COOL) and Lowell National Historical Park (LNHP) worked in partnership with the Urban Arts Institute at Massachusetts College of Art and Design (UrbanArts) to develop a public art master plan. The impetus for the plan are two concurrent public art initiatives:

- Lowell National Historical Park Visitor Center creative signifier
- Point Park creative entranceway feature

The public art master plan offers background on both projects, now underway concurrently. The plan and both RFQs can be downloaded from the "Projects" page at [www.urbanartsinstitute.org](http://www.urbanartsinstitute.org). UrbanArts is facilitating the artist selection process.

#### Market Mills Visitor Center

The Park's visitor orientation center is located in the Market Mills complex, known historically as the Lowell Manufacturing Company. The complex includes two buildings, one dating from 1882; the other from 1902. Opened in 1982, the Lowell National Historical Park Visitor Center serves as the primary point of contact and orientation to the Lowell story and to the City's historic and cultural resources and attractions. Visitors are directed to the Visitor Center along Dutton and Thorndike Street, the historic gateway to the City. Although located in a signature historic building at the entranceway to the city, the Visitor Center lacks a sense of distinction and presence creating an obstacle for visitors in locating the facility. A prominent artistic element is desired at this site to enhance the public profile and visibility of the visitor center. While Lowell Historic Board guidelines do not allow for installation of artwork on the building, there are several potential options for installation of a public art feature at and adjacent to the

site. The narrow face of the building on Dutton Street could be utilized as well as the planned new trolley platform on the abandoned RR trestle over the Merrimack Canal. Another solution is to anchor the project on a proposed bump-out of the sidewalk at the main entrance to the mill complex.

### Schedule

Wed, Feb. 6, 2012	Release Call for Entries/RFQ
Fri, March 9, 2012	RFQ deadline (received)
Week of March 19, 2012	Art Selection Committee review of applicant pool
Mon, March 26, 2012	3 finalists announced
Week of April 2, 2012	RFP released
Week of April 30/May 7, 2012	Finalist proposal presentations to Committee
Week of May 7/May14, 2012	Proposals exhibited
By Tuesday, May 22, 2012	Competition winner announced

### How to Apply

If you are an artist already represented in the Urban Arts Institute's Artist Registry, you may send an email to be considered or send a selection of slides as outlined below. If you have not previously entered your work in a competition managed by UrbanArts, please send the following by email:

1. Résumé with current contact information, including address, phone, email and website(s).
2. Up to 6 clearly labeled digital images of relevant past work. Please send information formatted as follows:
  - ◆ JPGs formatted to read in Adobe Photoshop
  - ◆ 72-300dpi image resolution
  - ◆ Maximum file size per image – approx. 500 KB
  - ◆ Name each image: LastName FirstName ImageNumber Title.jpg
3. A corresponding, numbered, annotated image list with your name, title of works, media, dimensions, location, brief description and date of the work, project budget, and project partners, if applicable.

**Email completed entries – up to 5MB per email only! – with the subject line “Visitor Center” to [christina.lanzl@massart.edu](mailto:christina.lanzl@massart.edu)**

Please do not send proposals at this stage. Participants are solely responsible for the timely arrival of their entries. Participants, by virtue of entering the competition, agree to save harmless the organizers, sponsors and anyone else involved with the competition for any delay, damage or loss, real or perceived.

**Contact:** Christina Lanzl, Urban Arts Institute at Massachusetts College of Art and Design  
[christina.lanzl@massart.edu](mailto:christina.lanzl@massart.edu)  
 617.879.7973

<http://www.urbanartsinstitute.org> - Call for Entries and Hamilton Canal District Public Art Plan are posted on the OPPORTUNITIES page