



CITY of **BOSTON**



CALL TO ARTISTS

PaintBox 2023

LED BY
THE MAYOR'S OFFICE OF
ARTS AND CULTURE

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THE BASICS

The Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture, in partnership with the Public Works and Transportation Departments, invites artists to apply to the PaintBox Program for 2023. Every year, Boston-based artists are selected to paint utility boxes located in neighborhoods across the city. These painted boxes contribute to the vitality of the urban streetscape and reflect the diverse people, ideas, histories, and futures of everyday Bostonians.

- **Budget:** \$500 per artist
- **Call released:** Tuesday, June 13, 2023
- **Virtual Q&A session:** Wednesday, June 21, 2023 at noon and 6 p.m. ET
- **Call closes:** Friday, July 7, 2023 at 5 p.m. ET
- **Eligibility:** This Call is open to all artists at least 18 years of age, with a strong preference for artists that currently live, work, or organize in Boston.

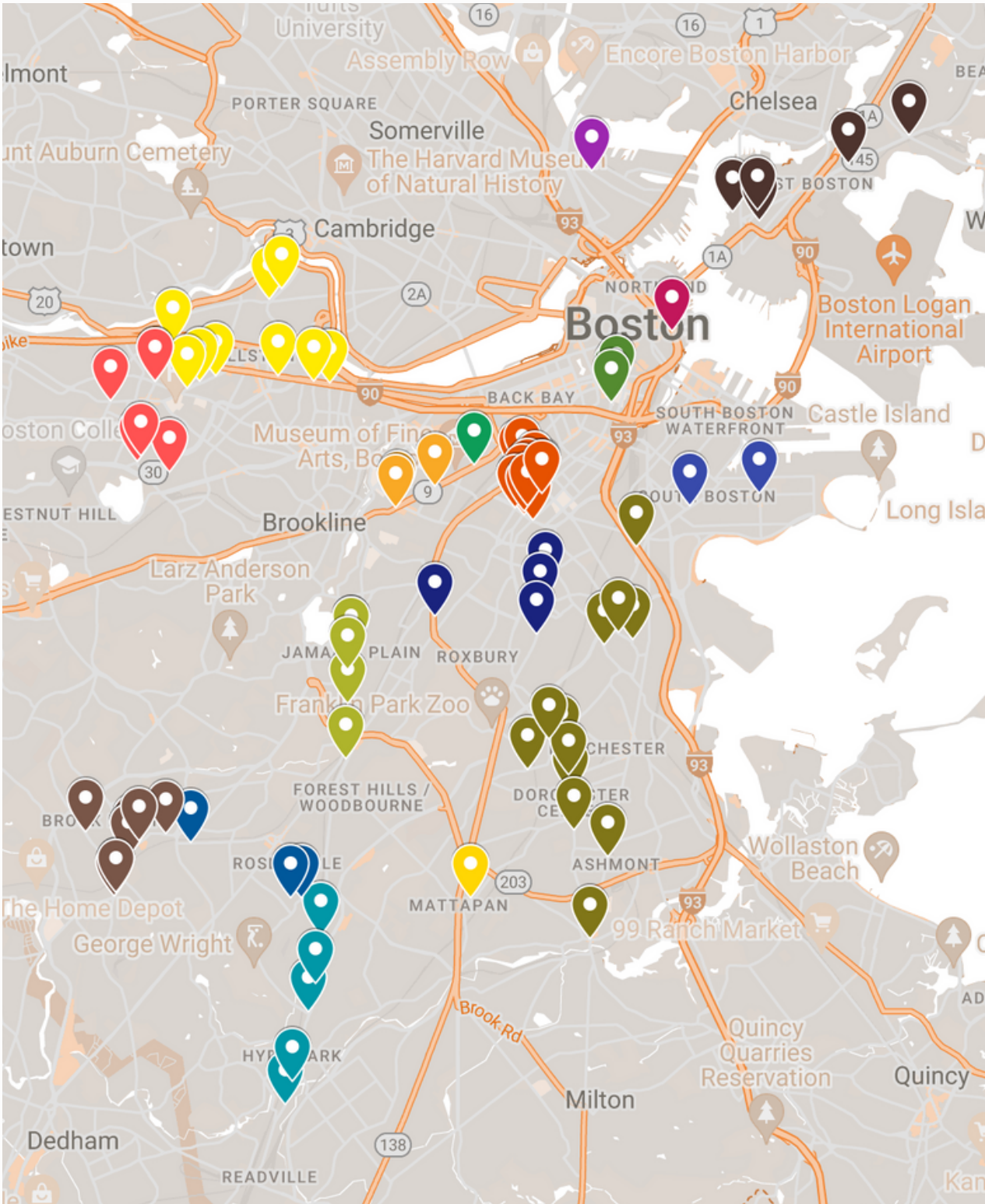
We will select multiple artists for this commission and each artist will be assigned one box.

There will be a virtual Question and Answer session on Wednesday, June 21, 2023 at noon and 6 p.m. ET.

We welcome written questions until Wednesday, June 21, 2023 at 5 p.m. ET. (See page 12)

THE NEIGHBORHOODS

PaintBox is a citywide program that aims to involve every neighborhood in Boston. In 2022, the City commissioned 83 utility boxes across 17 of 23 Boston neighborhoods. In an effort to expand the reach of the program, many boxes this year will be sited in Hyde Park, Mattapan, and Roslindale.



CALL TO ARTISTS: PAINTBOX 2023



THE THEME

Placekeeping

We are looking for designs that reflect the people, ideas, histories, and futures of Boston, engage communities, and directly respond to, enrich, and enliven the urban environment.

Please, do not feel pressured to respond to this theme literally. We encourage you to find creative ways to represent your neighborhood!

THE PROGRAM

The goal of the PaintBox program, first launched in 2008, is to beautify Boston's neighborhoods, introduce residents to the artists that live among them, and provide an opportunity for artists looking to enter the field of public art.

As the City continues to make big investments in public art, PaintBox contributes to the vitality of Boston's public art landscape in a small but impactful way and reflects the diverse people, ideas, histories, and futures of everyday Bostonians.

THE SITES

What is a utility box?

Utility boxes are metal structures that can be found in many locations on sidewalks around the city of Boston, often near street lights and traffic signals. Some are managed by the Public Works Department and others by the Boston Transportation Department, depending on what type of mechanical equipment is housed inside the box. The equipment inside the boxes are integral to ensuring Boston's streetlights and traffic signals remain operational. PaintBoxes are short-term installations due to the frequency at which utility boxes are damaged and replaced.

Utility boxes vary in style and size, so designs must be flexible to accommodate for these differences. The seam to open the utility box door cannot be painted over, nor can the keyhole to unlock the boxes. Designs cannot be wholly black as this may cause the utility box to overheat.

We cannot approve PaintBox projects for historic districts or on private property.



Left: PaintBox artist Amanda Garcia, Right: PaintBox artist Erica Imosi

ARTIST COMMISSIONING PROCESS

- Call to Artists opens
- Application is accepting submissions; this is also the Question + Answer Period
- Call to Artists closes
- City Staff reviews submissions for completion and alignment with the Curatorial Vision
- Artist Recommendation Committee reviews submissions independently and select finalists
- Artists are notified
- Selected artists are commissioned



Photos: PaintBoxes by (Left) Andres Giraldo, (Center) Yuko Okabe, (Right) Kaitlyn Ripaldi

PROJECT SCHEDULE*

STEP 1 (JULY 2023)

Artist and City contract for the artwork, \$200 processed

STEP 2 (AUG. - SEPT. 30)

PaintBoxes in progress

STEP 3 (SEPT. 30)

PaintBox completion deadline

STEP 4 (OCT. 12)

Tentative PaintBox celebration

STEP 5 (OCT. 30)

Final payment of \$300 processed

STEP 6 (NOV. 14)

Boston Art Commission accessions the artwork by vote

**All dates are subject to change.*



WHAT YOU NEED TO APPLY

To respond to the Call to Artists, prepare the materials listed below and submit through our online application page, found [HERE \[link\]](#).

PAINTBOX DESIGN

Artists may use the PaintBox template. Artists must agree that the Paintbox can be painted over at any time by the City of Boston.

ARTIST DESCRIPTION

A few sentences that describe your artistic style, including the themes and materials that you explore in your artwork. You may also add your bio, resume, CV, or other documents that describe your background and experience. Five files maximum. PDF, DOC, or DOCX.

RELEVANT WORK SAMPLES

Up to ten images of completed past work that you feel is relevant to this site. One image per file; jpg, tiff, or MP4 file types; limit videos to two minutes or less.

WORK SAMPLE DESCRIPTIONS

An Annotated image list with title, media, dimensions, location, date, brief description, your role in the project (lead, assistant, etc.) and any other information that might be relevant. PDF, Doc, or DOCX.

STATEMENT OF INTEREST AND INITIAL PROJECT CONCEPT (500 WORDS OR LESS)

- Initial artistic concept for this site
- Why you're interested in this opportunity
- What connection you have to the site and/ or neighborhood
- Any specific or unique processes you might use for the project

THE CRITERIA

YES, PLEASE!

- We want submissions from artists that have a strong, original, artistic vision
- You have to live, work, or organize in Boston
- You have to be at least 18 years of age
- You can only submit one design
- You should show consideration of the neighborhood, site, and theme.
- Designs should discreetly incorporate the artist's signature and the text "City of Boston"
- Designs should cover the entire utility box, except for hinges and locks
- Your design should align with the City of Boston's Curatorial Vision.

The Curatorial Vision for the City of Boston is to foster the creation and collection of artworks that reflect the people, ideas, histories, and futures of Boston, the traditional homeland of the Massachusetts people and the home of the neighboring Wampanoag and Nipmuc peoples. We aim to commission and approve artworks that engage communities and directly respond to, enrich, and enliven the urban environment. We seek public art that is driven by an artistically strong vision, enhances the diversity and equity of the existing collection, and possess durability appropriate to the lifespan of the work. They should also show consideration of the neighborhood, site, and theme.





THE CRITERIA (CONT.)

NO, THANK YOU!

- We cannot approve PaintBox projects for historic districts.
- The City will not approve any design that includes logos or advertisements.
- The City will not approve any imagery that may be confused for directional signage.
- Designs may not incorporate text.
- We may reject submissions that contain images of other artists' creative works without crediting them or clearly identifying the submitters' role.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, ancestry, or disability, nor will it fund projects that discriminate on these attributes.

MORE INFORMATION



Program Partners

- Public Works
- Boston Transportation Department

Learn more about the program at boston.gov/paintbox.

Public Meetings and the Boston Art Commission

Artworks proposed for City of Boston property are reviewed at public meetings held by the

Boston Art Commission (BAC). The BAC is the commissioning body for the City of Boston. Housed in the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture, the BAC also holds contracts with artists, approves artwork on City land, and conserves the City of Boston's collection of art and historical artifacts. The Boston Art Commission, staffed by the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture, is an independent board composed of two ex-officio and seven appointed volunteer art and design professionals that typically holds public meetings on the second Tuesday of each month to review and vote on matters concerning the City's art collection.

About the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture

The Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture is a City agency that enhances the quality of life, the economy, and the design of the City through the arts. The role of the arts in all aspects of life in Boston is reinforced through equitable access to arts and culture in every community, its public institutions, and public places. Key areas of work include support to the cultural sector through grants and programs, support of cultural facilities and artist workspace, as well as the commissioning and care of art in public places.

STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?

Join us for an online Question and Answer session on Wednesday, June 21, 2023 at noon and 6 p.m. ET.

Fill out this form with comments and questions before Wednesday, June 21.

Technical questions about the Submittable application are welcome until the Call deadline on Friday, July 7, 2023.

Send emails to amber.torres@boston.gov.



Photos: Left - PaintBox by Alicia Drumm, Right - PaintBox by Stacey B. Rizoli

