CALL FOR ARTISTS:
Boston Urban Agriculture Community Events Activation

Release date: May 22, 2023
Due date for responses: June 18, 2023
Event Activations: August-September, 2023

I. OVERVIEW

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) invites Boston-area artists and artist teams to submit materials for consideration for a $10,000* grant award to create and execute interactive, engaging, and/or performance activations at four community events as part of the Boston Urban Agriculture Strategy. (* Award amounts may vary – please see Section II for anticipated award amounts based on scope of work.)

The Boston Urban Agriculture Strategy is a project in partnership between MAPC, GrowBoston (the City of Boston’s urban agriculture initiative), and the Urban Farming Institute (UFI). The project aims to increase urban agriculture, and specifically food production, in the City, with a particular focus on the neighborhoods of Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan, and East Boston.

A key goal of this project is to develop urban agriculture strategies with Boston residents living in neighborhoods that have historically been underinvested in. By enlisting representatives of these areas in Neighborhood Committees and working with them to host community events, the project aims to create a strategy that prioritizes local improvements. The project team from MAPC and GrowBoston is currently convening the Neighborhood Committees and working with them to co-design four community events in Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan, and East Boston.

Community Events Overview

The Community Events will serve as a venue for the Urban Agriculture Strategy team to gather input from residents in each of the neighborhoods in an inclusive manner, ensuring linguistic, physical, and cultural accessibility. Rather than asking community members to attend a traditional public meeting, the project team aims to meet people where they are through joyful and celebratory Community Events. In addition to gathering input for the Strategy, another goal of the events will be to build excitement, energy, and connections around urban agriculture opportunities, among neighbors, and with the GrowBoston initiative. While the project team will be developing inclusive and creative data/information collection tools, artistic activation at the events will help create a celebratory feel that attracts a greater, more diverse audience at the events. The desired participants for the events are residents in each of the neighborhoods where the events will be hosted, including residents of color, residents experiencing or who have experienced food insecurity, and residents with low economic opportunities. The events should also feel inclusive for residents with differing abilities and the residents in these neighborhoods who speak languages other than English.

The anticipated dates for the four community events are below. Please note that these tentative dates may change as planning with the Neighborhood Committees continues. The most up-to-date information can be found here: https://www.mapc.org/resource-library/boston-urban-ag-strategy

Saturday, August 12, 2023: Dorchester (Rain Date: August 13)
Saturday, August 26, 2023: East Boston (Rain Date: August 27)
Saturday, September 23, 2023: Mattapan (Rain Date: September 24)
Saturday, September 30, 2023: Roxbury (Rain Date: October 1)
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Community Event Goals

- **CELEBRATE & ACTIVATE GROWING SPACES** - Increase awareness and activation of urban growing spaces in the priority neighborhoods as places for social connection.
- **INCREASE ACCESS** - Involve a broader group of residents in this planning process than is typically seen in other planning processes, with a focus on residents of color and residents with low food access and economic opportunities.
- **BUILD RELATIONSHIPS** - Enable residents to build relationships with one another and build relationships between residents, attending organizations, GrowBoston, and MAPC.
- **COLLECT DATA** - Meaningfully hear from and capture residents’ interests and ideas on where and how they want to see urban agriculture in their neighborhood.

To enhance the Community Events and increase the feeling of neighborhood connection, MAPC will engage 2-4 artists or artist teams to develop concepts and then execute artistic activations as part of the events in Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan, and East Boston. These creative activations should make the events festive spaces within which neighborhood cultures are celebrated, all feel welcome, and the connection between community and food is highlighted.

The form and content of the artistic activations is left to the discretion of the selected artists or artist teams but could include performance, interactive artmaking, storytelling, cooking demonstration, or other creative ideas. Activation concepts should somehow highlight the connection between food, urban agriculture, culture, and/or sense of place.

II. AWARD

Awards to each selected artist or artist team may range from $5,000 - $30,000 dependent on the activation scope, team size, and number of community events included. The anticipated award for a single artist creating an activation at all four events is $10,000; smaller awards may be granted to an artist who chooses to focus on fewer than four events and larger awards may be granted to artist teams planning multiple artistic activations at each event.

The award must cover all services from development through final completion, including but not limited to artist fee, travel, community meetings, materials, creation, fabrication, transportation, project coordination, and activation during community events in August and September 2023.

MAPC will enter into grant agreements with individual artists and/or artist teams.

III. WHO CAN APPLY

The call is open to any resident of the United States of America aged 18 years or older.

Current or former residents of the Boston neighborhoods of Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan, and East Boston and artists with experience working with communities in these neighborhoods are strongly encouraged to apply. Artists and teams with experience in food systems, community arts, creative engagement, and outdoor activations are encouraged to apply.

Selected artists or artist teams must be able to attend (in person) the associated community events in August and September 2023 (see Section 1 for anticipated dates) and at least one Neighborhood
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Committee meeting per associated event in July-August 2023 (e.g. if the activation will be employed at the events in Roxbury and Dorchester, the selected artists or artist teams are required to attend at least one Roxbury Neighborhood Committee meeting and at least one Dorchester Neighborhood Committee meeting).

Preference will be given to applicants who identify with and/or demonstrate experience working with community-based organizations, BIPOC communities, and other segments of the population that are underrepresented in the public realm. Artists at all levels of experience – including individuals who are currently enrolled in school – are encouraged to apply.

IV. PROJECT PARAMETERS

- Selected artists will create and execute activations at community events in Boston, either at all four events or fewer community events if concepts are neighborhood-specific.
- Activations are not required to be, but may be, adapted or customized for each of the four neighborhoods/events.
- Creative activations are not intended to serve as the primary data collection activities listed in the Community Event Goals (Section 1) but may, at the discretion of the artist, garner feedback from attendees.
- Community events will be hosted in Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan, and East Boston in August and September 2023 (see Section 1 for anticipated dates).
- Activations will be outdoors.
- Activations may engage adults, children or all ages.
- As event locations are not yet confirmed, access to shade, electricity, water supply, or other infrastructure is not guaranteed.
- Each community event will be four hours and activations should be “active” throughout the events.
- Selected artists will attend a minimum of one Neighborhood Committee meeting for each community event they will program.

V. HOW TO APPLY

- Apply here: [https://mapc.ma/urban-ag-artist-form](https://mapc.ma/urban-ag-artist-form)
  - If you have technical issues with the submission form, please contact Hannah Gathman, MAPC Senior Regional Arts and Culture Planner, at hgathman@mapc.org.
- Application Elements:
  1. **Artist information** including:
     a. Contact information: Lead applicant name, mailing address, email address, and phone number. If applying on behalf of a team, please list the full names of all team members.
     b. Artist statement (up to 1000 characters).
     c. Availability to execute activations in August and September 2023 (see Section 1 for anticipated dates).
  2. An **overview** of your background and experience:
     a. Brief biography or simplified resume.
     b. Names, phone numbers, and email addresses for two (2) references who will vouch for the applicant’s ability to meet deadlines, to understand complex information, to work within editorial constraints, and to modify artwork according to feedback.
     c. Link/s to your portfolio that is exemplary of your artistic media (pdf or website).
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3. **A concept description** including:
   a. Why this project resonates with you (up to 1000 characters).
   b. A brief overview of your concept for creative activation(s), including whether the concept is intended for all four or fewer community events (up to 3000 characters).
   c. An explanation of how this concept helps achieve the goals of the community events (referenced in Section I) (up to 1500 characters).
   d. If applicable, a description of how this activation highlights the connection between food, urban agriculture, local culture, and sense of place (up to 1,500 characters).
   e. A list of any technical or infrastructure considerations needed to execute your concept.

4. A **project budget**, including all services from development through final completion, e.g. artist fee, travel, community meetings, materials, creation, fabrication, transportation, project coordination, and event activation.

VI. KEY DATES

1. Call for Artists Application Release Date: **May 22, 2023**
2. Call for Artists Virtual Information Session and Q&A: **June 6, 2023, 4:30 – 6:00PM**
   Register here: [https://mapc.ma/urban-ag-artists](https://mapc.ma/urban-ag-artists)
3. Question Submission Deadline: **June 6, 2023 at 11:59PM**
   • Send questions to: hgathman@mapc.org
4. Responses to all questions received via email and during info sessions will be posted online by **June 8, 2023 at 5:00PM**.
5. Application Due Date: **June 16, 2023 at 11:59PM EDT**
   • All materials can be submitted here: [https://mapc.ma/urban-ag-artist-form](https://mapc.ma/urban-ag-artist-form)
6. Awards announced on or before: **June 23, 2023**
7. Grant agreement signed on or before: **July 1, 2023**
8. Completed and approved activation plan due: **August 1, 2023**
9. Creative activations executed on (anticipated date/anticipated rain date):
   - August 12/13, August 26/27, September 23/24, September 30/October 1.

VII. SELECTION PROCESS & CRITERIA

A review panel consisting of project partners and Neighborhood Committee members will evaluate the proposals received. Panel members will review submissions in accordance with the criteria listed below. The review panel may seek outside expertise, including, but not limited to, input from technical and subject matter advisors to assist in evaluating proposals.

**Selection Criteria:**

**Required:**
- Demonstrated experience creating and executing creative, interactive activations;
- Ability to create artwork that is sensitive to social, cultural, environmental, and/or historical contexts;
- Explanation of how concepts will advance the Community Events goals;
- Experience meeting project deadlines within budget;
- Completeness of application.

**Preferred:**
- Activation concepts that highlight connections among food, urban agriculture, local culture, and sense of place.
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- Experience working in the intersection of community art and food systems and/or urban agriculture;
- Experience working with communities in Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan, and/or East Boston;
- Language skills in one or more of the following languages:
  - Spanish
  - Vietnamese
  - Haitian Creole
  - Arabic
  - Cape Verdean Creole
  - Portuguese

VIII. COPYRIGHT

MAPC and grantee each reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to reproduce, publish, and otherwise use, and authorize others to use any artworks/deliverables developed under this agreement with attribution. Grantee retains all ownership and copyright of any ancillary materials developed under the Grant Agreement and will grant MAPC a royalty-free, nonexclusive, limited right to reproduce, publish, and otherwise use any such ancillary materials on a case-by-case basis with the written permission of Grantee.

LEARN MORE: https://www.mapc.org/resource-library/boston-urban-ag-strategy