



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
Lawrence Cultural Arts Commission
Creation of 2026 Phoenix Awards

DESCRIPTION

The Lawrence Cultural Arts Commission is seeking a professional Lawrence artist or artist team to develop, design, and fabricate innovative, original art for the annual Phoenix Award to be presented in December 2026.

BACKGROUND

2026 will mark the 26th anniversary of the Phoenix Awards. The [Phoenix Awards](#), given annually by the [Lawrence Cultural Arts Commission](#), to recognize outstanding artistic achievements in the Lawrence community—particularly those who demonstrate extraordinary effort and have a lasting impact on the Lawrence Arts & Culture Community. Members of the public are invited to make nominations. Eligible nominees include emerging and established artists working in the visual, literary, musical, theatrical, and media arts. Arts educators, administrators, patrons, supportive entities, advocates, and volunteers are also eligible. Students are not eligible. At the discretion of the Lawrence Cultural Arts Commission, a nominee may be chosen for a special Exceptional Artistic Achievement award.

BUDGET/COMMISSION

The all-inclusive Phoenix Award art project budget is \$5,000 and the selected artist or team will be required to create six awards—one for each awardee and one for display in the Carnegie Building. Artwork for this project will be commissioned through the City of Lawrence Cultural Arts Commission. While creativity and innovation are encouraged, the awards must also be practically suitable for display and very well constructed to be able to survive handling and long-term display.

ELIGIBILITY

The opportunity to compete for this project is open to all professional artists residing in Lawrence or Douglas County.

The City of Lawrence does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability. Qualifications by City employees or their relatives, and members of the Artist Selection Panel or Cultural Art Commission or their relatives will not be considered. Experience with public art projects, especially in relation to capital projects, is preferred. Applicants must be able to work effectively within the project timeline and collaborate with the design team and multiple government agencies.



SELECTION PROCESS

The Lawrence Cultural Arts Commission will serve as the selection panel and may select a small group of finalists for interviews and to possibly develop proposals. Typically, 5-6 awards are granted.

The criteria used by the panel will include:

- Artistic quality, innovation, and originality
- Excellence in craftsmanship and construction
- Potential longevity of the piece
- Concept that visually articulates the spirit of the Phoenix Awards

The City of Lawrence is not required to make selections from these submissions, if, in their opinion, qualifications are not appropriate.

SUBMISSIONS

Interested artists should enter and submit their application materials, listed below, online by 11 p.m. Central Time, June 30, 2026. Applications will include the following:

1. **A letter of interest**, up to 500 words that discusses your interest in making art for this project; what you bring to the project as an artist; challenges and/or sources of inspiration presented by the project; what you would hope to gain from this experience; and any other comments that might help to differentiate you as a candidate for this opportunity. ***This is not a request for proposals but if you'd like to share your general concept for an award at this stage you may do so in the narrative of the letter and/or provide a concept sketch as a JPEG as one of your portfolio images.***
2. **A professional resume/CV** as a PDF
3. **Two professional references** with current contact information
4. **A link to your website if applicable**
5. **An annotated image list** of past works as a PDF that clearly indicates your name, the title, dimensions, materials, and date of work
6. **Up to 5 images of past work**

For further information, contact Porter Arneill, parneill@lawrenceks.gov or 785-832-3449

ANTICIPATED ART PROJECT SELECTION TIMELINE

Qualifications Due via online submission: August 4, 2026, by 11 p.m. Central Time

Cultural Arts Commission Review: August 4, 2026 – Note: The Cultural Arts Commission may seek proposals. Awards Delivered by: December 1, 2026.

The Lawrence Cultural Arts Commission (LCAC) was established by the City of Lawrence in December 1973, as the Lawrence Arts Commission. It was charged “to promote, encourage, and coordinate the artistic and cultural activities of the community through recommendations made to the Governing Body of the City and through coordinating endeavors of those groups and organizations which identify themselves as primarily concerned with the artistic environment of Lawrence.”