



REQUEST FOR PRELIMINARY PROPOSALS

"Eye On Art" x Ion Prototyping Lab
Window Installations for Ion District

Artwork Commission Budget: \$15,000 per commission (2 total awarded)

Deadline: Wednesday, February 19, 2025, at 5:00 pm CST

Location: Ion, 4201 Main Street, Houston, TX 77004

Eligibility: Open to Artists or Artist Teams residing in the Greater Houston Area

Apply: <http://www.publicartist.org>

Contact: piper@piperfaustpublicart.com

Ion, Rice Real Estate Company and Ion Prototyping Lab (IPL) invite artists to submit qualifications and preliminary installation proposals for the Eye On Art x IPL collaboration. This is an opportunity for artists to partner on ideating, fabricating, and realizing a concept through mentorship with the prototyping lab onsite at the Ion. Our goal is to provide artists with the support and resources to develop new skills that help them take their practice to the next level.

The collaborative installations will be displayed in windows located at the Ion, the renovated historic Sears building that is the hub of Houston's innovation community. Two artists/teams will be selected to work directly with IPL to conceptualize and realize site-specific installations in each of the display window banks to be exhibited for six months.

Scope of Work

We are seeking two artists or artist teams to partner with IPL to concept and create site-specific art installations for two showcase display windows at Ion, facing Fannin and Main Streets, respectively. The displays are highly visible from the streets and will ideally engage and attract visitors from the community and beyond. Each installation will be on display for six months according to the following exhibition schedule and is subject to change:

Fannin Window Installation 1: September 2025 – April 2026

Main Street Window Installation 1: September 2025 – April 2026

Interdisciplinary teams, innovative partnerships, new media, digital art, and interactive installation concepts are all encouraged and welcome. Each art installation must be site-specific and created in partnership with IPL for the context of Ion District.

Power and lighting are available in the displays.

Elevations, dimensions, and site images can be found [here](#).

*Note: While the mentorship and resources from IPL are intended to be valuable, the core concept and execution of the installation or project should stand on its own. IPL's support is meant to



enhance the artist's vision, and integrating IPL's resources in meaningful ways is encouraged. However, the artist should remain the primary creator and leader of the work. The project should be self-sufficient and not reliant on this partnership to succeed. This ensures the work remains authentic, sustainable, and capable of thriving beyond IPL's involvement.

Budget

The commission budget is \$15,000.00 per window display inclusive of all work including, but not limited to, artists' fees, final design, insurance costs for the project, lighting (if necessary), software, studio and project administration, fabrication, all materials, installation, de-installation, and maintenance.

The artist will not be responsible for IPL's consultation or use of equipment.

Criteria

- Artwork should consider Ion and Ion District's vision and mission of accelerating innovation, connecting communities, and facilitating partnerships to create growth and opportunity in Houston.
- Artworks should be sensitive and/or responsive to the diverse history, culture, and identity of the surrounding community.
- Artworks should invite passersby to pause, reflect, play, and engage in unexpected and innovative ways. Thinking outside the box (figuratively and literally) is encouraged.
- Artworks must be family-friendly, suitable for public display, and free of safety hazards.
- Artworks should require minimal maintenance.

Eligibility

Open to artists and artist teams over 18 years of age residing and working in the Greater Houston Area, which encompasses Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Brazoria, Galveston, Liberty, Waller, Chambers, and Austin counties.

Ion District is committed to providing opportunities that advance Houston's economy by not only seeking to involve local businesses but also those who are racially and ethnically underrepresented. Creatives and artists are a vital part of a complete community, and it is our goal to foster inclusivity and diversity with all our partners. We encourage non-local applicants to team with local partners whenever possible.

Application Requirements

Please submit the following to <http://publicartist.org> by **Wednesday, February 19, 2025 at 5:00pm CST**:

1. Resume or CV (2 pages max)
2. A brief artist statement highlighting your practice (300 words max).
3. A letter of intent describing a method of approach, how you envision partnering with IPL, what skills you hope to learn from collaborating with IPL, a brief narrative, suggested materials, installation details, and any other relevant information.



4. Up to 5 sketches, mock-ups, illustrations, or other reference images demonstrating your preliminary design concept (PDF upload).
5. Two (2) academic or professional references

Selection Process

- Ion Prototyping Lab, Piper Faust Public Art, Rice Real Estate Company, and Ion District Art Advisory Council, consisting of art experts, community members, and stakeholders, will review the applications.
- Two artists will be awarded the commission.

Contracting

The final commissions for this project will be a professional services contract with Rice Real Estate Company. The selected artists must be able and willing to sign the contract for design and commission and will be provided the draft for review.

Timeline

All dates are subject to change.

RFP release: Monday, January 20, 2025

RFP deadline: Wednesday, February 19 at 5:00pm CST

Selected artists notified: Early March 2025

Contract finalized: March 2025

Project design, fabrication, and installation: April – August 2025

Final Completion: Late August 2025

Eye On Art Opening: September 2025

About

[Ion Prototyping Lab](#) is where ideas meet the designers, engineers, and fabricators that can make it a reality. Located at Ion, IPL's 6,500 sq ft site offers access to equipment, engineers, and technical training—a must for every inventor, innovator, and creator. In the IPL, artists will work with an experienced team that is excited to guide you through materials and techniques, ensuring low-cost solutions within your commission needs.

[Ion District](#) is a new kind of urban district to Houston initiated by Rice Real Estate Company that prioritizes street life, public space, and a mix of uses that embrace technology, community, and sustainability. It is centrally located at the heart of innovation activity in Houston, encompassing over 16 acres in the Midtown. At the center of the district is the Ion, a 266,000-square foot structure designed to bring Houston's entrepreneurial, corporate, and academic communities together into collaborative spaces and programs.

The "Eye On Art" program pays homage to the original department window store displays of the beloved Sears building on which Ion was built by engaging local artists to create site-specific art installations. Strategically placed as the entry points and eyes of the building, the two highly visible display windows facing Fannin and Main Streets serve as beacons to draw the community in. The



display windows are a unique opportunity to reimagine Sears' store windows and build on the collective memory of the space's past, present, and future through the lens of artistic and creative expression. Ion is committed to creating opportunities for Houston-based artists by providing long-term platforms to create, innovate, and collaborate.

Contact

For questions and/or more information, please contact:

Piper Faust

piper@piperfaustpublicart.com

