



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: Public Art Collection Inventory & Condition Assessment Services

Release Date: Monday, June 2, 2025

Proposal Deadline: Sunday, June 29, 2025, 11:59pm CT

Information Session: Monday, June 16, 2025 | 12pm CT

Zoom Meeting ID: 860 9364 8754

Zoom Passcode: 124929

SUMMARY

Thanks to generous funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) seeks proposals from qualified consultants or firms to conduct a comprehensive inventory, documentation, and condition assessment of the City of Chicago's public art collection. The selected consultant or firm will be responsible for conducting site surveys, preparing artwork assessments, electronically cataloging condition reports, creating a digital database, and performing other related tasks. The primary goal is to enhance the long-term preservation of the City's diverse collection, which includes sculptures, murals, monuments, memorials, installations, and other works located across 143 municipal facilities throughout Chicago.

PROJECT TIMELINE

- **Proposal Submission Deadline: Sunday June 29th, 2025 at 11:59pm CT**
- **Selection and Award: Q3 2025**
- **Work Commences: Q3 2025**
- **Project Completion: Q4 2026**

BACKGROUND AND PROJECT OBJECTIVES

This Request for Proposals (RFP) seeks qualified consultants to carry out a comprehensive inventory, documentation, and condition assessment of the public art collection. By engaging in this comprehensive inventory, assessment, and documentation, DCASE aims to further its commitment to the long-term care of public art in Chicago.

The City of Chicago is home to one of the most dynamic and diverse public art collections in the United States, showcasing the city's commitment to fostering creativity, engaging the public, and enriching its urban landscape. The Chicago Public Art Collection, which DCASE maintains, includes nearly 700 works of art exhibited in 143 municipal facilities around the city, such as airports, libraries, police stations, and parks. The Collection provides the citizens and guests of Chicago with an improved public environment and enhances City buildings and spaces with works by professional artists.

These consultant services are part of the larger Chicago Monuments Project initiative, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, to address the City's collection of monuments and memorials, ensuring responsible stewardship and providing greater access for public engagement and education. Consultants responding to this RFP will play a critical role in preserving and promoting the city's artistic heritage while ensuring that the collection remains both accessible and appreciated by the public.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

1. ! Project Initiation & Kickoff

- Review and become familiar with DCASE's current public art collection.
- Meet with DCASE staff to refine and finalize goals, expected outcomes, and identify suitable methodologies for data collection and determine metadata categories.
- Develop a comprehensive project plan detailing timelines, deliverables, and key milestones.

2. ! Inventory

- Conduct a thorough, on-site inventory of all artworks (permanent and temporary) in the City of Chicago's public art collection, which will include visits to 143 facilities, including sites where works are in storage.
- Asset Tagging: Implement an asset registry protocol for identification and tracking.
- For each artwork, document information including, but not limited to:
 - Title, artist, year of creation, and provenance.
 - Description of the artwork (medium, dimensions, etc.).
 - Artist information (life dates, nationality, contact information, etc.).
 - GPS location and site-specific details.
 - Photograph each artwork from multiple angles (high-resolution, condition-specific, but not expected to be conducted by a professional photographer).

3. ' Condition Assessment

- Perform a detailed physical assessment of each artwork using a rating system based on industry standards and as mutually agreed to by DCASE and Proposer, examining:
 - Structural integrity and material degradation.
 - Environmental or external factors impacting the condition.
 - Maintenance or conservation needs categorized by urgency

4. ' Archival Document Compilation and Filing

- Materials, methods, processes and/or techniques (including product specifications, cut sheets, etc.)
- Fabricator (name, contact info)
- Installer (name, contact info)
- Historic conservation reports (including dates, conservator info, materials, methods, costs)
- Other historical and contextual material

5. ' Data Storage & Transfer

- Store and organize data in a digital platform (to be mutually agreed upon between contractor and City) that can be easily transferred to the City upon project completion for integration in a to-be-determined collection management system. Develop a comprehensive, user-friendly digital database to house all collected data.
- Ensure the data is accessible to DCASE staff and scalable for future updates.

6. ' Final Report & Recommendations

- Deliver a comprehensive final report summarizing the inventory and condition assessments.
- Provide recommendations for preservation, repair, and maintenance, with a prioritization strategy. This should include a comprehensive timetable of routine intervals for inspections and scheduled maintenance.

7. Valuation:

- Estimate/assign insurance value or replacement value to each artwork in our collection, subcontracting to specialist with appropriate credentials as needed.

8. ' Project Closeout

- Deliver all project materials, including the digital database, final report, and documentation (photos, condition reports).
- Participate in a project debrief to review findings and future steps with DCASE staff.

MILESTONE TIMELINE

Milestone	Date	Deliverables
Kickoff Meeting	Q3 2025	Project plan, timeline, and approach document.
Inventory & Documentation Complete	Q2 2026	Completed inventory data and documentation for all artworks.
Condition Assessment Complete	Q3 2026	Condition assessment report, including grading system.
Final Report & Recommendations	Q3 2026	Comprehensive final report, including preservation strategies.
Project Closeout	Q4 2026	Final deliverables (database, reports, photographs, etc.).

ELIGIBILITY

Due to the highly localized nature of the work, the City will prioritize teams that are based in Chicago and the surrounding region. Firms and interested parties located outside this geographic area are welcome to apply, but must identify local staffing support as airfare and lodging are not eligible expenses.

HOW TO APPLY

Applicants must submit a digital application via CaFÉ:

https://artist.callforentry.org/festivals_unique_info.php?ID=15602 by the following deadline:

Sunday June 29th by 11:59pm CT. Applications should include:

- **Letter of Interest** (2-3 pages): Introduction of your firm, your qualifications, and why you are well-suited for this project.
- **Project Approach**: Detailed description of your approach to inventory, assessment, and report development.
- **Timeline & Deliverables**: A detailed project timeline with milestones.
- **Budget Proposal**: Detailed breakdown of costs, including personnel, local travel (eg ground transportation), insurance and materials; not to exceed \$500,000.
- **Key Personnel**: Provide resumes or CVs for all key personnel who will be directly involved in the project, their intended role in project management, highlighting relevant experience and qualifications.
- **References**: At least three professional references from similar public art documentation or assessment projects, including **Samples of Previous Work** for each reference. If material is privileged and confidential, please provide summary of past projects including client, scope, location, and budget.



EVALUATION CRITERIA

Complete proposals will be evaluated based on the following:

- **Experience and Expertise:** Demonstrated success in art collection inventory, documentation, and condition reporting.
 - **Familiarity with digital archiving technologies** relevant to public art collection management.
 - **Knowledge of industry-standard** museum registration and collection management methods.
- **Project Approach:** Clear, actionable methodology and timeline for inventory and assessment.
- **Budget:** Competitive, realistic budget within the \$500,000 limit.
- **Timeline:** Feasibility of meeting milestones and deadlines.
- **Work Samples & References:** Relevance and quality of previous work.

DEADLINE TO SUBMIT QUESTIONS

For questions regarding this RFP, please submit questions to lydia.ross@cityofchicago.org by **Wednesday June 11, 2025** at 11:59pm CST subject: "RFP: Collection Inventory"