



**Kansas Children's Discovery Center
Native American Public Art Installation Series
Request for Proposals**

Kansas Children's Discovery Center Overview

The Kansas Children's Discovery Center is a hands-on children's museum with a mission to enhance the lives of children and enrich the communities it serves. Since opening in 2011 in Topeka, Kansas, the Discovery Center has become a special place where children can explore, create, discover and learn through play. The museum has hosted visitors from all 50 states and 23 countries.

The Discovery Center features 15,000 square feet of indoor exhibits exploring science, careers, art, building and more, special space for babies and toddlers, and a 4.5-acre certified Nature Explore Outdoor Classroom. Daily programs, field trips, birthday parties and other special events provide additional opportunities for serious fun. Outreach programs bring quality, hands-on experiences into our community to inspire a lifelong love of learning for every child. Learn more about Kansas Children's Discovery Center at <https://kansasdiscovery.org/about/>.

Native American Public Art Installation Series Overview

The Native American Public Art Installation Series is a multi-year project where, over the next three summers from 2024-2026, we will annually select Native American artists to install artworks that help bring the community into Kansas' prairie landscape via our Native Prairie Grass and Wildflower Habitat. The goals of this project are multi-faceted. As our volunteers worked diligently to turn our habitat back into a home for Native grasses and pollinators, we want to reinforce our commitment by using this space to elevate Native American artists. Human beings are in an important relationship with the Earth, nature, and all of its accompanying species, and it is through this art series that we hope to magnify its importance for the communities we serve. Learn more about our Native Prairie Grass and Wildflower Habitat here: <https://kansasdiscovery.org/prairie/>.

Project Details

We are seeking experienced Native American artists with a mixed-media background to create a work of art to be installed in our Native Prairie Grass and Wildflower Habitat, located at Kansas Children’s Discovery Center. Native American artist collectives are also welcome and encouraged to apply. We invite artists and artwork that can:

- **Amplify the habitat as a vital and vibrant ecosystem of plants, pollinators, and wildlife**
- **Build meaningful associations between Earth, nature, and humanity**
- **Articulate the connection between Native Americans and the land**
- **Expose our audience to Native American artmaking traditions and interactive learning opportunities**

Artist Commitments

- **Work on-site in the Native Prairie Grass and Wildflower Habitat**

Selected artists will spend time - no less than a total of 40 hours over a 12-week period from March 4, 2024 to May 27, 2024 - in the habitat itself, gaining familiarity with the ecosystem while also identifying how and where artwork will exist in the habitat’s landscape. We invite selected artists to visit and spend time in the habitat before and after that period as well. Staff and volunteers will be available to offer guidance when artists are on-site as requested.

- **Create an artwork for installation in the Native Prairie Grass and Wildflower Habitat**

Selected artists will create a work of art to be installed within the habitat for a designated time period in 2024. Our habitat is fully accessible to the public - final artwork will need to have resistance and durability to both weather conditions and potential tampering. Kansas Children’s Discovery Center will communicate with selected artists regarding any damage their installed artwork incurs about its repair and reinstallation as these challenges arise.

Artist Commitments (cont.)

- **Participate in our launch event in Summer 2023**

Selected artists will participate in an on-site launch event on a forthcoming date in the summer of 2023. This event is an opportunity for:

- **Kansas Children's Discovery Center to celebrate the completion and installation of the selected artists' artwork**
- **To elevate the selected artists and their contribution to our art series**
- **To announce ongoing programming from selected artists and other programming partners**
- **To invite our audience to share and participate in the celebration through day-of, on-site opportunities in conjunction with the launch event**
- **Offer programming opportunities to our audience**

Selected artists will also be invited to provide programming between the launch event and the following 12-month period. Programming will be delivered on-site at Kansas Children's Discovery Center. Programming can be delivered in a variety of mediums and the schedule is negotiable per selected artists' availability within the 12-month period.

Budget Description

The selected artist(s) will receive a stipend of \$1,500 for participation in two equal installments of \$750. The first installment will be delivered once artist selection is confirmed by all parties involved including the selected artist(s). The second installment of \$750 will be delivered upon completion and installation of the artist's proposed project. There will also be a project budget for materials limited to a maximum of \$1,000.

Submission Materials

We welcome any materials you have that will help us get to know you better as an artist, including but not limited to the following:

- **Name and contact information**
- **Artist bio**
- **Working project title**
- **A written project description**
- **A list of required materials**
- **A projected timeline from inception to completion**

Submission Materials (cont.)

Please include images that reflect your written proposal. We do not require completed concepts but ask that your proposal and images are thoughtfully tied to our project details above. You may submit them as individual images (png, jpg, or pdf) or as a PowerPoint presentation with each image or slide titled for clarity and accuracy.

Resume/CV

Please provide 1-2 pages that outline your artist history. Include previous projects, experience, education, training, and other related credentials.

Portfolio

Please submit a portfolio with a minimum of 10 high-resolution images that showcase the following:

- **Completed artwork that you've previously shared with an audience**
- **Details about each completed work of art, including process, tools, and materials used**

Selection Process

Proposals will be evaluated for, but not limited to, the following:

- **Artists must be enrolled in a Federally-recognized tribe, or qualify under the requirements of the [Indian Arts and Crafts Act](#)**
- **Artist's experience as documented on their resume**
- **Relevance to the project and its requests**
- **Accessibility for the children and families that Kansas Children's Discovery Center serves**
- **Resilience and durability in an outdoor, publicly available environment**
- **Resistance to moderate, if not extreme, weather conditions**

Proposals will also be evaluated in alignment with Kansas Children's Discovery Center's mission, vision, and diversity statement, which are as follows:

Mission

The Kansas Children's Discovery Center enhances the lives of children and enriches the communities it serves.

Vision

Kansas Children's Discovery Center strives to offer a safe, welcoming environment offering high quality hands-on experiences that inspire a lifelong love of learning for every child. We aspire to be a community anchor and a statewide leader among supporters of all children.

Diversity Statement

The Kansas Children's Discovery Center believes every child deserves rich and diverse museum experiences. We are committed to ensuring accessibility for every family. We strive to remove barriers that prevent play at our children's museum, including financial, medical and developmental. We are proud to serve as a community anchor where all families are celebrated. Our guests are all welcomed to visit without regard to age, race, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender expression, sexual identity, ability, language, family circumstances and cultural backgrounds.

Submission Requirements

In addition to your proposal, you may submit a resume, CV, portfolio, or a combination thereof via email. A CDIB card or tribal enrollment is also required for submission. Please upload all files to Google Drive and share a link to the folder. Please submit to:

Marty Hillard

Director of Community Engagement, Kansas Children's Discovery Center

(785) 783-8300

mhillard@kansasdiscovery.org

All proposals must be submitted by Friday, January 26 at 5:00 pm CST.

Any inquiries may be submitted to mhillard@kansasdiscovery.org. Please allow 2-3 business days for a response.

Please refer to the photo appendix below for photos of our Native Prairie Grass and Wildflower Habitat.

[Pollinator Pavilion](#)

Native Prairie Grass and Wildflower Habitat Entrance



Native Prairie Grass and Wildflower Habitat
Top view facing southeast

