

**Request for Qualifications (RFQ):**

**Design and build an innovative, modular, multi-purpose platform for Philadelphia's City Hall Courtyard**

**Deadline for Qualifications Submission**

**January 13, 2017, 5:00 PM EST.**

**Request for Qualifications (RFQ) Summary:**

The Mayor's Fund for Philadelphia seeks qualifications from experienced local artisans, architects, designers, and makers who are interested in the design and fabrication of a modular, multi-purpose outdoor furniture element to be used in City Hall Courtyard, beginning in June 2017. The feature will be designed for outdoor use to support current and new programs and activities, last for a minimum of two years, and call attention to the historic relationship the site of City Hall has to water in Philadelphia.

This RFQ is the first of a two-phase process to select a team to design and fabricate the platform. The second phase will be a request for proposals (RFP) from a small number of teams (three to five) selected from the pool of those who submitted qualifications. The RFP phase will immediately follow the RFQ phase, and will include a nominal stipend for the teams asked to submit proposals.

**Background**

The City of Philadelphia, in a local partnership led by the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, Philadelphia Water, the Department of Public Property, and the Mayor's Fund for Philadelphia was awarded a grant from the Southwest Airlines Heart of the Community program to use creative "placemaking" and interactive programming to continue the transformation of Philadelphia's City Hall courtyard into a truly engaging civic commons that celebrates the City's rich history and sustainable future.

The Southwest Airlines Heart of the Community program focuses on community participation in the creation, design, and unique programming of public spaces. Southwest Airlines believes that public spaces, whether neighborhood parks, small plazas, or downtown squares, are the true hearts of communities, as the places where people gather, connect, and enjoy each other and the cities they live in. Through its multi-year partnership with Project for Public Spaces, the nation's pioneering placemaking organization, Southwest Airlines is leveraging the power of innovative and collaborative design to spur social, economic, and wellness benefits in communities across the U.S. and abroad.

The Philadelphia team, working in close collaboration with Project for Public Spaces, engaged in an extensive community outreach process including online and intercept surveys, interviews and focus groups, and pop-up interactions during recent events held in City Hall courtyard. As a

result of this process, and based on the team's collective professional knowledge and experience, we are proposing a series of short-term improvements to the courtyard to make it more inviting, dynamic, and people-friendly in 2017. The team intends to use this opportunity to highlight the history the site has with the water supply system in Philadelphia and Philadelphia Water's groundbreaking *Green City, Clean Waters* program.

This intervention seeks to build on recent investments in City Hall and to its surroundings, including the renovation of Dilworth Park and the JFK Plaza/LOVE Park Redesign to complete the vision for a cohesive network of public spaces from Fairmount Park to City Hall. While the focus of this grant is on short-term, low - to moderate-cost improvements, we also aim to spur interest in and attract additional funding commitments for a permanent redesign of City Hall courtyard. Please refer to the appendix for documentation showing existing conditions, photographs of City Hall courtyard sample events, concept schematics for the courtyard, and precedent images.

### **About City Hall Courtyard and Ongoing Improvement Efforts**

Philadelphia's City Hall was built over a 30-year period from 1871 to 1901 and is designated a National Historic Landmark. It was designed by Scottish-born architect John McArthur, Jr., in the Second-Empire style. It is located on the area designated by William Penn as Centre Square, at the physical center of the Philadelphia's downtown: the intersection of Broad and Market Streets.

At 548 feet, City Hall is the tallest masonry bearing-wall structure in the world, and with about one million square feet of space used by all three branches of government, is one of the largest municipal government buildings in the world. City Hall tower is topped by a 27-ton bronze statue of William Penn, one of 250 sculptures created by Alexander Milne Calder that adorn the building's exterior and interior. At 37 feet, the William Penn statue is the tallest atop any building in the world.

City Hall's nearly one-acre courtyard is completely surrounded by the building and accessed through four grand portals facing North and South Broad Street and East and West Market Street. There are also access points within the courtyard to Philadelphia's underground transit network, constructed during the first third of the 20th Century. For much of the first half of the 20th Century, the courtyard served as a functional space servicing the building and its occupants. It wasn't until the 1950's that landscape improvements were made to the courtyard, and it began to be used for public enjoyment and ceremonial purposes.

Ideas for improving and activating City Hall courtyard have been floated for years, most recently in *Philadelphia2035*, Philadelphia's award-winning comprehensive plan. *Philadelphia2035* consists of a *Citywide Vision* and a series of District Plans. City Hall and its environs are featured prominently in the *Central District Plan*. Activation of City Hall's courtyard with flexible, movable furniture is one of the recommendations of the "Unifying and Energizing City Hall Square" focus area.

The courtyard lies equidistant from the Delaware and Schuylkill Rivers at the convergence of these watersheds, reflecting the location of the City's first waterworks from 1801 to 1821, at Centre Square. This historic connection to the water supply system links the site to Philadelphia Water's innovative stormwater management plan: *Green City, Clean Waters*. In 2016, Philadelphia celebrated its 5th year of implementing *Green City, Clean Waters*, a nationally recognized plan for environmentally friendly stormwater management. To date, Philadelphia is keeping more than 600 million gallons of polluted water out of our rivers each year while helping to green our neighborhoods.

## **PROJECT FUNCTION**

The innovative, well-designed modular seating/platform installation is envisioned to:

- Accommodate programmed and spontaneous outdoor social gatherings such as: people having lunch, relaxing, attending programs and events (theater, music and dance performances, spoken word, seasonal programs, etc.), working and meeting in small groups, and attending talks, classes or workshops.
- Transform into a stage/multi-purpose platform for performances of different scales and types. The platform components must be appropriate to be used separately or together, with ability to fit within a particular area of the courtyard when fully assembled.
- Be durable enough to last for a minimum of two years in the courtyard.
- Be movable within the space, have modular sections or components that interlock, and support the programs and activities in the courtyard.
- Be able to be dismantled during special events once or twice a year and then be reconstructed after the event has concluded.
- Through its physical design, support and promote a brand of programs and activities that occur exclusively in City Hall courtyard, and coordinate with other promotional materials such as signage, web presence, fliers, posters, etc.
- Feature some aspect of water distribution/stormwater collection, either through a symbolic gesture, educational component and/or the actual management of rainwater.

## **PROJECT REQUIREMENTS**

In general, the seating/platform element will offer the following (more-detailed specifications and materials illustrating existing conditions in the courtyard will be available for the teams selected to submit proposals in phase two of this process):

- Seating for up to 25 people in small groups, including up to 60 chairs that the platform could accommodate.
- Stage area for performance when fully assembled to be 28'x 24' or approximately 650 sf
- Modular design with three or more portable, break-apart components to be used independently in different areas of the courtyard, based on activities
- Platform Height: under 24"
- ADA compliance
- Design that meets applicable building codes
- Use of fire retardant materials
- Stormwater management education element may include a demonstration, interpretation of or visible stormwater management, including vegetation in planters, a green wall or other components that hold, filter and utilize stormwater runoff.
- Electrical needs should be integrated into the design.
- Other desirable elements such as shade, lockable storage, and wifi will be considered a plus.

## **TEAM QUALIFICATIONS**

Each submission must come from an integrated team, that include the following skills:

Project Management  
Architectural, industrial, and landscape design  
Conceptual and fabrication drawings  
Fabrication  
Permitting and structural assessment

The team can offer these skills in any combination of disciplines including artists, architects, landscape architect, fabricators, and a licensed engineer who can seal documents. For integrated electrical components a Philadelphia licensed electrician will be required. The project partners may assist with connecting professionals across disciplines.

## **SELECTION CRITERIA**

Criteria that will be considered in the selection process include, but are not limited to:

- Local talent/team members based in Philadelphia
- Merit of past comparable work as demonstrated in a portfolio of images
- Quality and innovation of proposed design
- Quality of proposal and presentation
- Materials cost and fee
- Ability to work with project team and the stated schedule
- List of three references with contact information

## **SELECTION COMMITTEE**

Selection of the short-listed teams based on qualifications (phase one) and the ultimate winning team (phase two) will be made by a small committee of City of Philadelphia representatives, including the partners below, and outside experts.

**The Mayor's Fund for Philadelphia (the Fund)** works in close partnership with the City of Philadelphia and private sector partners to develop and run initiatives that reflect Mayoral priorities and seek to improve the quality of life for all Philadelphians. The Fund will serve as the fiscal administrator for this contract opportunity.

The **Department of Public Property (DPP)** is responsible for the acquisition, care, maintenance, design and construction management of much of City government's physical plant. DPP serves multiple City departments, agencies and commissions in various capacities by ensuring a habitable and clean work environment for employees and the public, managing capital projects, and handling lease negotiations and property purchases.

The **Philadelphia Water Department (PWD)** serves the Greater Philadelphia region by providing integrated water, wastewater, and stormwater services. One of the utility's primary missions is to sustain and enhance the region's watersheds and quality of life by managing wastewater and stormwater effectively. [phillywatersheds.org](http://phillywatersheds.org)

The **Philadelphia City Planning Commission (PCPC)** guides the development efforts of the fifth largest city in the U.S. The staff of the Commission handles daily zoning, environmental and design reviews, conducts research, and provides planning education to the public. In addition, the staff is working on its new comprehensive plan: Philadelphia2035. The plan is bringing together the public, city agencies, elected officials and major institutions to discuss a vision for the city for the next 25 years.

The **Project for Public Spaces (PPS)** is a nonprofit planning, design and educational organization dedicated to helping people create and sustain public spaces that build stronger communities. Our pioneering Placemaking approach helps citizens transform their public spaces into vital places that highlight local assets, spur rejuvenation and serve common needs.

## **SCHEDULE AND SELECTION PROCESS**

**December 19, 2016:** Request for Qualifications announcement

**January 13, 2017:** Qualifications due

**January 20, 2017:** Short-listed teams (three to five anticipated) invited to submit proposals; more-detailed project specifications. A \$500 stipend will be offered to each team.

**Late January, 2017** (exact date to be determined): Pre-Proposal Site visit and Q&A session

**March 3, 2017:** Proposals due

**Week of March 6, 2017** (exact date(s) to be determined): Presentation of proposals by teams

**March 13, 2017:** Design/fabrication team selected based on proposal and presentation

**Week of March 13, 2017:** Winning team meets with City steering committee

**Through May 19, 2017:** Fabrication; secure necessary building permits and Art Commission approval

**Week of May 22, 2017:** Installation

**Early June, 2017:** Launch event

\* Attendance at the Pre-Proposal Site Visit Session and Proposal Presentation is required.

## **PROPOSAL BACKGROUND, BUDGET AND RESOURCES**

After the qualifications phase, each of the chosen teams are required to prepare a proposal including, at a minimum, the following:

- One two-dimensional plan drawing and one three-dimensional drawing (up to 10 images are acceptable)
- Cover letter, with narrative explaining the submission and how it addresses the Project Function and Requirements described above.
- Material cost and fee proposal, detailed by furniture category or by piece, and including costs to move items to site, demonstrating ability to keep within stated budget.

The total budget for the multi-purpose platform is anticipated to be \$70,000, including but not limited to design fees, materials, fabrication, installation, permit fees, travel and all other project related expenses.

A number of resources will also be provided to each chosen team including the following base information for components of the project:

**Design:** A number of documents will be provided including:

- A scaled base plan and aerial photograph of the City Hall courtyard and City Hall
- Previous studies of City Hall
- Summary of survey results
- Additional precedent images
- Any other relevant documentation/information

**Branding:** A branding strategy for the City Hall courtyard, including the multipurpose platform, and the programs and activities supported by it, will be partially developed by the project partners and will continue to be refined in collaboration with the chosen teams, so that appropriate aspects of it can be coordinated across all site elements. Each chosen team will be provided with the project partners' creative brief that will include target audiences, style precedents, as well as the projects' overarching message, or 'big idea', to inform any potential messaging associated with the project.

## **RFQ APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

Application materials must be submitted via a file sharing program, such as Dropbox, to [mayorsfund@phila.gov](mailto:mayorsfund@phila.gov), and [ian.litwin@phila.gov](mailto:ian.litwin@phila.gov). In addition, applicants must also email to [mayorsfund@phila.gov](mailto:mayorsfund@phila.gov), and [ian.litwin@phila.gov](mailto:ian.litwin@phila.gov) to indicate that their application materials have been shared and include contact information should there be any technical difficulties.

Submit eight (8) digital work samples of your or your team members' work:

- Images should be labeled as last name, first name, and number; for example:  
Smith\_Jane\_01
- Images should be saved as JPGs, GIFs, or PNGs at 150 dpi with 1200 pixels as the widest dimension

Submit the following information as A SINGLE PDF document:

- General Info: Name, Address, Phone, Email, Website, how you heard about the call (optional)
- Statement of Interest: This brief cover letter may include related experience, artistic ambitions, and/or a description of your vision for the project; you may include proposed images, if applicable (One text page maximum, including images).
- Resume or Bio (Two-page maximum for each team member)
- Image Identification Sheet: These must correspond to the numbers of your submitted images. List your images as: Title. Year. Materials. Dimensions. Location (if applicable). Project Budget (if applicable).
- Title your document as last name\_first name\_Info; for example: Smith\_Jane\_Info

General application guidelines:

- Submit what you believe is your strongest work, in the context of this commission opportunity.
- Submit your work samples in the order you would like them to be reviewed.
- For images with details: show the overall image first, followed by detail images.
- Do not send additional catalogs, reviews, promotional items, or original artworks; they will not be reviewed.
- Incomplete or ineligible submissions will not be reviewed; it is the applicant's responsibility to verify the completeness of their application.

### **NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS**

All applicants will receive notification by email. Please do not call the Mayor's Fund for Philadelphia, or any members of the project team directly for the RFQ results.

The Mayor's Fund for Philadelphia reserves the right to change, modify, or revise the Request for Qualifications, in part or whole, at any time without prior notice. The Mayor's Fund for Philadelphia reserves the right to make no selection for this call for qualifications.

### **CONTRACT AWARD**

The team selected after the proposal phase 2 of the process, will be required to enter into an agreement with the Mayor's Fund for Philadelphia prior to commencing. No selection shall be deemed final until a proposal has been fully approved and an agreement properly executed by the team and the Fund. If a finalist is not selected from the original finalist group, the Fund reserves the right to return to the original group who responded to this call for qualifications or otherwise solicit proposals.