



SUMMARY

The **Northfield Downtown Development Corporation (NDDC)** is thrilled to offer the 3rd year of the Artists on Main Street (AOMS) program, a community development initiative exploring the intersection of arts and culture, downtown revitalization, and historic preservation by investing in “creative placemaking” projects. Originally designed and funded by Rethos: Places Reimagined, Springboard for the Arts, and the Bush Foundation, the 2021 program is made possible thanks to the support of the Minnesota State Arts Board.¹

Creative placemaking has many different definitions, but could be simply described as using art and other creative activities to make positive physical, economic, and social impacts within a particular community or space. The overarching goals of Northfield’s program include:

- Providing art and creative placemaking experiences that draw people to shop, dine and connect in Downtown Northfield;
- Enhancing the downtown’s aesthetics through the creativity of our local artists;
- Utilizing the arts as a springboard for improving diversity and inclusiveness in Downtown Northfield across all cultures.

Our first two years of AOMS funded twelve unique projects, including musical performances, poetry readings, interactive sculpture, spoken word events, pop-up installations, and one large cement shark.

Despite the interruptions and challenges caused by the global pandemic, we are grateful for the opportunity to support our creative community and improve our downtown again this year. The NDDC, in partnership with the **City of Northfield’s Arts & Culture Commission** and the **Northfield Arts Guild**, encourages all local artists, creatives, and makers to submit a proposal and get involved in this exciting initiative.

FAQS – MORE DETAILS, PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS, SUGGESTIONS, ETC.

What is this year’s theme? *Building a Post-Pandemic Community*

In addition to the general goals listed above, each year of AOMS highlights a specific theme, prompting applicants to shape their proposals based on relevant or emerging issues within the community. In 2021, after all the difficulties of the past year, we want to focus on the positive undercurrents that have always made Northfield special and will continue to sustain us through and beyond the current pandemic. We hope that your creative placemaking projects will highlight the importance of “*Building a Post-Pandemic Community*” by embodying values and actions such as unity, togetherness, welcoming, gathering, and empathy. We encourage all applicants to think broadly and make a case for *your* vision of a healthy post-pandemic community. In accordance with the principles of creative placemaking, you should also consider how your project interacts with the physical space where it will take place and the community as a whole – think of adjectives such as delightful, whimsical, surprising, thought-provoking, and so on.

¹ This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

Who is eligible to apply? Everyone! Northfield residency is not required, and you don't have to be an established "artist" or creative professional. Anyone with a good idea and a plan to see it through will be considered. If you do not currently reside in Northfield (or even if you do), it will be helpful for your application to describe your connection to the community and how it would influence your proposed project. Collaborating with other organizations such as businesses, nonprofits, schools, etc. is also encouraged and can help maximize the reach and impact of your project.

What kinds of projects are eligible for funding? As mentioned above, there are no restrictions as to what kind of "art" or "creativity" might receive funding. Visual art, performances, interactive events, residencies, etc. are all fair game, and no idea is too big or too small. Proposals for both temporary and permanent installations are acceptable. For examples of previous projects, please visit www.nddc.org/aoms.

Where can projects be located? Projects may take place anywhere within downtown Northfield, which is roughly defined as the area bordered by Washington Street on the east, 2nd street on the north, Highway 3 on the west, and 7th Street on the south. We encourage applicants to find the 'hidden gems' or overlooked spaces that might not otherwise receive a lot of attention or traffic. If you are concerned about getting the proper permissions from property/business owners or the City to pursue your projects, please reach out to any of the program leaders at the NDDC, ACC, or Guild prior to applying. If the location of your project is flexible, note that on your application as well.

How much funding is available? Applicants can request up to \$2,000 to support their work. The number of projects selected for funding will ultimately depend on the quality of the proposals and the amounts requested. Larger budgets are not necessarily better, as we seek to support a variety of different placemaking projects. Selected projects will receive 80% of their funding up front and the remaining 20% upon completion.

How will proposals be evaluated? The City of Northfield will establish an independent Public Art Review Committee (PARC) comprised of local artists and arts enthusiasts to recommend proposals based on several criteria, including:

- Potential impact of the project and the extent to which the Northfield community will be involved in the project (as co-creators, participants, consumers, or any combination of those things). Community engagement is a critical part of creative placemaking.
- Strength of proposal's connection to this year's theme and the overall goals of the AOMS program (see above).
- A detailed project timeline and budget describing the cost for necessary materials, artist time/expertise, promotions/advertising, and so on.

Complete details and proposal requirements are available on the application document (attached separately, or found on the NDDC website).

When are the proposals due? Proposals must be submitted by 5:00 pm on Friday, May 28th. Applicants will be notified of the PARC's decisions on or before June 11th.

How long will I have to complete my project? Projects must be completed by October 31st, 2021, including a public dedication or event associated with your project. Please consider this deadline when formulating your proposal. Final reports will be due by November 30th, 2021. Incomplete projects will forfeit the final 20% of their grant award.

How can I learn more? Please join us for a virtual workshop on Friday May 7th from 11am-1pm to learn more about creative placemaking and ask any questions you might have. Registration details will be announced on the NDDC website (nddc.org). The workshop is interactive so please plan to participate if you are able, however a partial recording will be made available for those who cannot attend.

Program organizers are also happy to provide information and examples about creative placemaking, past successful projects, and answer questions at any time. Please reach out to Greg Siems (greg@nddc.org) or Heather Lawrenz (heather@northfieldartsguild.org).

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And special thanks to the original designers and funders of the Artists on Main Street program:

