

# Request for Qualifications: The Soulsville USA Social Practice Artist Residency

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Summer/Fall Residency 2017  
Residency Open Call RFQ

Residency Period: June-August  
Memphis, TN// Soulsville USA Artist Residency Program //  
Residence Term 3 months  
APPLICATION DEADLINE: // 30 April 2017

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# The Soulsville USA Social Practice Artist Residency

Community LIFT is pleased to announce the launch of our pilot residency program in Social Practice Art. Social practice art is a form of artwork that focuses on collaboration and outreach to individuals, communities, and institutions. The success of the artwork is based on the relationship built between the community, its members, and the artwork. Each piece responds to the needs of the community and attempts to help solve problems by community involvement. Social practice art fosters creative thinking and provokes positive social change by amplifying the already rich culture of the community and reaching out to its members for new, innovative ideas. The value of the artwork created resides, not only in the finished product, but in the experiences the participants have during the process and the creation of a stronger community.

We are now accepting applications for two social practice artists: one muralist and the other is open to all types of artistic practices. We will be hosting the two artists with stipends and studio space to support the development of their work with community members in producing a community engaged work of art. In February we begin an in-depth neighborhood planning process led by Soulsville Neighborhood Association.

Selected Artist receives the following package:

- **ARTISTIC STIPEND OF \$10,000 FOR 3 MONTHS**
- **Public Artist Talk and Open Studio Visit**
- **Published catalog, video, and web based media for documentation and distribution purposes**

We work closely with artists in the community engagement process to craft engaging and intimate moments of reflection on the cultural history within the Soulsville neighborhood and to further ideas and concepts being explored while in residence. Artists should be able to work with community residents to organize specific creative interventions that have the potential to catalyze a persuasive vision for enhancing the livability of the community.

## Artists Activities and responsibilities include:

- Coordinate volunteer projects with residents and community stakeholders to support neighborhood creative placemaking and activating vacant spaces
- Respond to requests for information from residents, property owners, businesses, community stakeholders and other members of the public;
- Facilitate discussions, formal and informal, in line with the proposed project, corresponding research, or general area of expertise
- For the muralist: The completion of one outdoor mural project with the support of the community from its conception to the finished product
- Participate in an educational training on community organizing, allowing visitors to participate in the spirit of the work. The residency aims to provide working artistic professionals with a skill set in leadership and activism, one that may lead to expanded possibilities, collaboration, a broader network, and new works. Resident artists will also be introduced to the Soulsville community at large and neighborhood organizations and assets.
- Participants are expected to document the community engagement process and complete an evaluation to present their findings when the residency program concludes. Artists are given the flexibility to choose which form of presentation suits their findings best (i.e. exhibition, lecture, panel and/or forum). They will be expected to document the process, not just an end product. Even photos of meetings that seem boring can be helpful in telling the story of the collaboration later on. Everyone connected to the residency should be empowered to document his or her experience with the collaboration. Use any method that can help to tell the story of the project: images, video, journals, sketchbooks, even a blog or newsletter. The information collected will become an important tool in conveying the process of the residency, from initiation until completion. At the conclusion of the residency program, artists must complete a self-evaluation of how the residency program has advanced their creative pursuits.

# PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY:

The residency is open to artists living and working in the US who have expressed interest/expressed commitment to social practice art and community engagement initiatives. The program is not available to students. We ask that artists have at least 2-5 years of applied work in proposed area of interest and proven ability to take ideas from concept to completion. Experience in teaching, speaking, and/or workshop facilitation is a plus. Candidates must have demonstrated ability to engage in active listening and collaboration. We are seeking artists who show exemplarily self-directed and motivated work ethic and are comfortable showing leadership and direction among community groups. The artist should be more than simply comfortable working with the community and should be deeply committed to the collaborative process. Artists located in the Mid-South region are preferred and strongly encouraged to apply as they may be more likely to stay involved in Soulsville beyond their residency term. A selection committee will review applications and select candidates. The selection process is based on the merits and quality of artistic practice and the ability to complete the proposed scope of work. Final acceptance is at the discretion of the committee. Once the selection process is over, we will notify the artists who have been chosen, as well as the artists who were not selected via phone or email.

**Selected artists will be notified by May 21st and must be ready to start residency program by June 5th.**

## PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS/CHECKLIST

- Artist Statement
- Current CV
- Two letters of recommendation from professionals in the field that have direct knowledge of past or present projects underway
- 20 work samples by Dropbox Link. Images should be in JPEG form and/or URL links to any video, new media, or performance based work
- Image spreadsheet listing of all images which includes title, medium, dimension, year
- 1-2-page letter of intent. Please detail why you are interested in working within the Soulsville neighborhood in your letter of intent and how you will engage directly with the community. List any experience in working with diverse populations, creative placemaking work, etc.
- Selected applicants will be expected to pass a background check
- A proposed residency budget that specifies the costs associated with your living expenses and/or materials you may need for the development of a project. Applications that do not include a budget estimate will not be considered. How will you use your stipend during the duration of the residency? Your stipend is to also cover the cost of supplies and materials. Additional funding for supplies and project costs is available but limited. ***Please note that travel and relocation costs must be covered out of pocket and cannot expect reimbursement or payment of stipend upfront.***
- \*\* Currently we are looking for out of town living space for the duration of the residency \*\*.

# SUBMISSIONS & ENQUIRIES:

For questions regarding applications instructions or requirement can be sent to [leni@communitylift.org](mailto:leni@communitylift.org). The Application Form and all applicable attachments must be submitted via dropbox folder. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

## WORKING ENVIRONMENT:

The Soulsville USA Artist Residency program will arrange functionally-appropriate studio space in a community gathering space throughout the course of the residency. The workspace will be located within a studio setting shared by other artists and working professionals but will require work outdoors in the neighborhood of Soulsville USA. The environment will allow participants to engage in public conversations and cultivate dialogue with residents and community stakeholder. Residents will activate the neighborhood through large-scale town halls, cultural programming and community improvement projects. SNA holds monthly membership meetings in a consensus-building format. The projects we have proposed for funding from NEA will work in concert with this yearlong effort in Soulsville USA.

## ABOUT THE HOST ORGANIZATION:

We believe that community stakeholders must benefit foremost from the amenities and opportunities that our efforts yield. LIFT has a community engagement team of five, including a Site Director and Community Organizer for Soulsville. Our Creative Placemaking Coordinator, and programming consultant are also working solely in Soulsville. Collectively, they get residents, merchants, institutions and students to take ownership of their community's revitalization.

Community LIFT Corp also known as LIFT (Leveraging Investments for Transformation), emerged out of a citywide planning process called Greater Memphis Neighborhoods (GMN). The organization's goals are to: revitalize distressed neighborhoods, build human capacity, improve economic conditions, and improve quality of life. For more information, please visit [communitylift.org](http://communitylift.org).

## About the NEA Our Town Grants

The Our Town grant program supports creative placemaking projects that help to transform communities into lively, beautiful, and resilient places with the arts at their core. Creative placemaking is when artists, arts organizations, and community development practitioners deliberately integrate arts and culture into community revitalization work - placing arts at the table with land-use, transportation, economic development, education, housing, infrastructure, and public safety strategies. This funding supports local efforts to enhance quality of life and opportunity for existing residents, increase creative activity, and create a distinct sense of place. Through Our Town, subject to the availability of funding, the National Endowment for the Arts will provide a limited number of grants for creative placemaking. Our Town requires partnerships between arts organizations and government, other nonprofit organizations, and private entities to achieve livability goals for communities.

# About the Memphis Music Magnet Plan

The Memphis Music Magnet (MMM) is an innovative, arts-based neighborhood revitalization plan with a twist – designed to augment the redevelopment of the Soulsville USA neighborhood by making it a community of choice for musicians, music-related creatives, and other artists. A well-known recommendation from the plan includes the Community LIFT's renovation of the home of Memphis Slim, an internationally known bluesman, into a musician rehearsal and workshop space and training recording studio called the Memphis Slim Collaboratory.

Goals and Impact – The Memphis Music Magnet concept is designed to achieve the following overlapping goals:

- Promote neighborhood revitalization through physical and cultural renovation
- Support an economic development target industry through an alternative approach
- Infuse and sustain creativity in Memphis
- Create a catalyst for development and growth in the Soulsville USA neighborhood
- Targeted homeownership incentives and housing programs for musicians, professionals in the music industry, families of aspiring musicians, and other artists who support the overall vision
- Place-based neighborhood amenities achieved through the restoration and reuse of empty buildings, that would appeal to musicians, broadly support creativity, and contribute to the revitalization of the neighborhood.