**Richard H. Driehaus Built Environment Initiative**

**Please confirm the organization and primary contacts for this request.**

**Organization:**

Chicago Public Art Group

**Will your request have a fiscal sponsor?**

No

**Contact Person:**

Chantal Healey

**Signatory Contact:**

Chantal Healey

**Note: To edit any of the organization background information below, please do so by clicking "Organization" to the left in the Grantee Portal.**

Organization Background

**Year Established:**                            1972

**Fiscal Year Start Date:** 2021-01-01

**Fiscal Year End Date:**2021-12-31

**Address:**                                         3314 S. Morgan St. Unit 1  
                                                                  
                                                         Chicago, Illinois 60608

**Phone Number:**                              (312) 427-2724

**Email:**                                              chantal@chicagopublicartgroup.org

**Website:**                                          www.chicagopublicartgroup.org

**Last Year's Actual Expenses:**        $592,8919

**Racial/Cultural Equity Organization:**   Yes

REQUEST SUMMARY

**Amount of this Request:**

$50,000.00

**Requested Duration in Months (NOTE: the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation only grants in full years. Please enter in 12 month increments: 12, 24, 36, etc.):**

24

**Request Summary:**

REQUEST DETAILS

**Background:**

The Chicago Public Art Group unites artists and communities. Our goal is to expand the tradition of giving voice to residents through art that represents their history, aspirations, and challenges. This vision has never been more relevant.

CPAG’s history begins in 1967 at the Wall of Respect. William Walker, and 14 other African American artists and activists, painted a mural on the side of a South Chicago grocery.

Walker saw murals as a collective voice for the oppressed. His work was both an expression of their struggles and a call to action. The Wall of Respect recognized 50 African American heroes. The portraits reflected the richness of Black culture and placed images of accomplishment and leadership where they would inspire daily life.

Motivated by an expanding revolutionary art movement, in 1972 Walker and John Weber formed the Chicago Mural Group, renamed the Chicago Public Art Group. Their goal was to forge partnerships between artists and communities and provoke social change.

Today, CPAG’s work dignifies public spaces and promotes citizen engagement throughout the city. The organization is grounded in these principles: Every Chicago resident deserves to experience great art; every community should have a voice; and public art and its creation encourage community investment and engagement.

CPAG has produced nearly 1,000 murals, sculptures, mosaics, playgrounds, and earthworks across the city. Neighborhoods as diverse as Roseland, Hyde Park, Bronzeville, Pilsen, Chinatown, and Pullman are represented in our portfolio. The installations run an aesthetic gamut from provocative to courageous and beautiful. Above all, they are emblematic of their place and time in the life of the city.

We are grateful for the previous support from the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation and appreciate this opportunity to apply for general operating funds from the Built Environment initiative.

**Capacity:**

CPAG’s staff includes three full-time positions. The executive director facilitates the activities of the board; oversees finances; leads fundraising and external relations; hires and evaluates the staff, and supervises public art projects. A program manager carries out daily administrative responsibilities and project management. A project coordinator assists with additional duties. Consultants and freelance employees are contracted as needed to support a variety of functions including bookkeeping, auditing, technology, marketing, and development.

A strong working board includes demographically, economically, and professionally diverse representation. Two seats are designated for artists. The organization is focused on recruiting leaders who reflect the communities we serve.

CPAG’s roster of talent represents both mature and emerging artists. The team is experienced at meeting the demands of outdoor as well as indoor public art installations. They are accustomed to working with architects, landscape designers, and urban planners to maximize the potential of each space and to meet the social and cultural goals of every client. Dialogues, design workshops, visual research, oral histories, and problem-solving sessions encourage collaboration. This intense interaction strengthens community bonds and results in shared goals and achievements.

Our artists are also accomplished facilitators who understand how to help groups come to consensus and actualize a vision. Younger artists are frequently paired with more seasoned professionals to advance their skills and development. Visit the CPAG website to review artists’ profiles and see samples of their work.

**Previous Outcomes:**

Installations across the city are testimony to CPAG’s ability to produce successful results. After 50 years of service, the organization continues to be invited to create public art and supported by a variety of corporate, government, foundation, and individual funders.

**Audience and/or Constituency:**

CPAG’s audience includes residents from across the city of Chicago. We engage the public in the design and fabrication of art that reflects their interests and concerns. The primary focus is on underserved and underrepresented areas with limited access to public artmaking resources. The majority of sites are low-income. Some, such as Lincoln Park, represent a broader economic base. Others, such as Woodlawn, are struggling to turn around an ailing economy with inadequate social support systems.

Since a variety of communities are served, the needs vary greatly from one group to another. However, these expectations are consistent: art that reflects the traditions and history of the neighborhood, is compatible with cultural norms, represents meaningful issues, instills pride of place, and is the product of collaboration and dialogue between the artists and the residents.

CPAG has established partnering relationships with the communities we serve. Our activities are promoted by word-of-mouth, the internet, social media, print publications, and news media, and outreach to organizations and individuals.

Constituents include volunteers, donors, and a growing community of 37 Illinois artists. We provide the management, and communications expertise that allows artists to participate in large-scale projects they would not have the resources to manage independently. We offer a fair wage, workman's compensation insurance, studio space, publicity, recognition, and mentorship.

**Programming/Project:**

CPAG grounds its programming in the social and spiritual needs of the community and in the physical world of appropriate materials, ease of maintenance, and functional design. The organization has a national reputation for engaging citizens in every step of the artmaking process.

Programming centers around the following broad areas: 1) Collaborations that are requested by community members, nonprofits, corporate philanthropies, healthcare institutions, or artists. These typically involve cultural and social themes that reflect their surroundings, uplift neighborhoods, and can serve as catalysts for change. 2) Restoring or reinterpreting public art. 3) Installations that engage young people and center on educational or recreational facilities.

2022 was a highly productive year for CPAG. Activities included:

* Organizing and cataloging CPAG’s extensive archives. CPAG is the guardian of a rich history of art, activism, and achievement. Our archives include 50 years of photographs, video, communications, records, artifacts, and memorabilia from the early days of the community mural movement up to the present. With support from the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation and the Fay Slover Fund, we were able to hire Sepia Archival Management to catalog and create systems for managing this material.

Many residents of Chicago are unaware of the wealth of art that surrounds them or its significance to the communities where it was created. Our archives are a tool for educating people of all races, cultures, and age groups about public art’s unique role in society.

The physical portion of this project is complete, and we are moving ahead to create the virtual component of the archive.

* A 50th Anniversary gala and exhibition. The exhibition was organized around archival material and featured works from each decade of CPAG’s history.
* Two additional exhibitions at CPAG’s gallery.
* Five unveilings of these completed projects: mosaics at Decatur Classical School and Friends Health Center, Restoration of the history of the Packing House Worker, a sculpture for the Underline Project in South Chicago, a mural for Lululemon and the Southeast Chicago Commission.
* A lecture at the Evanston Art Center on the history of race and the Chicago Shoreline.
* Documentary screenings of the films, Pioneer Women Muralists of Hyde Park and a Bronzeville Mural Tour.

**Evaluation:**

CPAG regularly evaluates both completed art installations and the organization’s progress toward strategic goals. Artists and staff assess the success of each project by reviewing 1) Narrative final reports, 2) Visual documentation, 3) Partner evaluation, and 4) Finances.

These are among the questions considered: Did the project engage the public in the creative process? Was the space transformed? Were new mediums used?

Progress toward the organization’s strategic goals is assessed at each board meeting.

**Impact:**

CPAG fulfills an expansive mission with limited human and financial resources. Public art is focused on having a positive and significant impact on its audience and its environment. Residents request art for their communities because an aesthetic that reflects their unique identities humanizes the urban landscape. Making spaces feel safe and inviting also brings interest and investment to underserved neighborhoods. Art that highlights or challenges assumptions creates a social and cultural dialogue that infuses its surroundings with relevance and purpose. The impact of public art is as multifaceted and important as the people it engages and the stories it tells.

This grant will provide critical support that brings communities together through art and allows CPAG to maximize our stewardship of talent, creativity, and innovation.

**Looking to the Future:**

CPAG will continue to prioritize involving greater numbers of young artists to continue our legacy. We will seek to support talent working in new mediums including using technology in innovative formats. We will also be investigating strategies to diversify revenue streams, with special emphasis on engaging more individual donors. Exploring how to use our archives to educate and entertain the public is another significant goal.

**Organizational Debt:**

CPAG has no organizational debt.

**Other remarks?**

REQUEST DOCUMENTS

Please click the blue **+** in the section below and upload the following documents:

* Last Year’s Budget
* Last Year’s Actual Expenses
* Current Year Budget
* Current Year to Date Expenses
* A list of all foundation, government, and corporate donors to your organization with funding amount for the current and previous fiscal year
* Key staff bios

**By checking this box I confirm I have uploaded the requested documents:**

No

Documents