

Call for Exhibition Proposals 2025-2026

ArtsWorcester

44 Portland Street, Worcester MA

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For any questions not answered in this packet, please email alice@artsworcester.org or call the gallery at (508) 755-5142.

ArtsWorcester will host a virtual panel discussion on how to submit successful proposals in mid-March. Please stay tuned for this announcement, which will be shared on our website, email list, and social media.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Solo Exhibitions, Artist Shoeboxes, and Member-Curated Exhibitions

Submission Deadline: April 16, 2025

Notifications: by early June, 2025

ArtsWorcester invites proposals for solo shows for our 2025-2026 gallery season. With the exception of member-curated exhibitions, eligible proposals are evaluated by a panel of volunteers, all with extensive experience as curators, educators, collectors, and artists. All proposals are viewed anonymously.

Solo exhibitions may be placed in our galleries in the Printers Building, our partner space at the Davis Art Gallery, or recommended for our corporate art program. Multiple exhibitions may be produced in the same gallery space (for example, two solo exhibitions simultaneously in the West Gallery).

Artist Shoeboxes and Member-Curated Exhibitions are opportunities for artists who are looking to produce compact installations or highlight a limited number of artworks. Member-Curated Exhibitions offer experienced artists the chance to curate, install, and promote small exhibitions of two-dimensional work.

New and traditional media, fine craft, and site-specific installations are all welcome. Although you may not have seen something done at ArtsWorcester before, that doesn't mean it can't be done. Our space and staff are flexible, and we look forward to artists pushing the boundaries of our four walls. Contact alice@artsworcester.org with any questions.

Proposals should be specific regarding presentation and installation plans. During installations of selected exhibitions, artists have the opportunity to work with and learn from our exhibition designers. All installations take place during the work week during normal business hours.

As part of this year's call for solo exhibitions, we seek proposals eligible for the **Marlene and David Persky Present Tense Prize**, awarded to an artist whose work exemplifies new or innovative practices, conceptual strength, artistic risk-taking, and excellence in execution. In addition to a solo exhibition, the Marlene and David Persky Present Tense Prize winner receives an award of \$1,000.

Artists interested in exhibiting as a small group should contact the gallery for more information. All questions can be directed to alice@artsworcester.org.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS AND INFORMATION

- Current ArtsWorcester [membership](#) is required for *all artists involved in a proposal* at the time of submission. If membership fees are a financial obstacle to participation, please write alice@artsworcester.org or ask in the galleries about the Pay It Forward Fund.
- *All featured artists* must have exhibited in at least one members' or juried exhibition at ArtsWorcester in the past two calendar years prior to submitting an exhibition proposal.
- There is no geographic restriction on membership or for submitting a proposal, but artists must deliver and pick up all artwork in-person. Artists receiving solo shows must also be available to give an artist talk or equivalent public programming in-person.
- All submissions must be made electronically using Submittable. Hard-copy and email submissions will not be accepted.
- Artists may submit one proposal to each exhibition opportunity; however, artists will not receive both a solo exhibition and a shoebox exhibition in the same year.
- The committee prioritizes proposals from artists who have not had a solo exhibition at ArtsWorcester in the past three years, and proposals of work not exhibited recently in Central Massachusetts.
- Exhibited works must have been completed within the last five years at the time of submission (2020 onward) and not previously shown at ArtsWorcester.
- Artists under final consideration for solo exhibitions may be asked to bring in examples of proposed works for in-person viewing.
- Artists earn 60% on sales made through our galleries. Artwork does not have to be for sale, and your work's salability will not be considered by the committee.
- While on view through ArtsWorcester, all artwork is insured for its market value.

Submission Guidelines: What we need from you

- 5 images/videos of artwork.
- Optional: 5 detail images or alternate views.
- An exhibition proposal, not to exceed 175 words, that describes the scope of your proposed exhibition.
- Answers, each not to exceed 100 words, to the following questions: *How complete is your proposed exhibition? What one to three ideas, concepts, or experiences does this body of work communicate? What inspirations or traditions guided or influenced this body of work? How are the methods or techniques used important to this body of work? Does your proposal require any special installation needs?*
- A CV or artist resume. [Click here for examples of artist CVs.](#)

It is important for all artists to be able to communicate their vision not only through artwork itself, but in writing. We cannot effectively promote or produce your exhibition without hearing your words.

We suggest writing your answers in advance, and showing them to a friend who isn't as involved in your work as you are. Ask them what makes sense and what needs more clarity.

The committee looks for the ability of an artist to talk about their work to an audience, not great writing skills. Your proposal will be edited for grammar and punctuation, not content, by ArtsWorcester before the committee sees it.

After submitting your proposal, you will receive a confirmation email from Submittable. If you do not receive an email please contact the gallery to confirm receipt: alice@artsworcester.org or (508) 755-5142

OPPORTUNITY DETAILS

Solo Exhibitions

Solo exhibitions feature the artwork of one artist. They may be placed in our main galleries in the Printers Building, at our partner space at the Davis Art Gallery, or may be recommended for our corporate art program. Multiple exhibitions may be produced in the same gallery space (for example, two solo exhibitions simultaneously in the West Gallery). Any and all media are welcome, including site-specific installations.

Submit here!

Artist Shoeboxes

Help us make use of our moveable walls, or take over our “window gallery!” These walls can be used to section off a gallery into 3-5 smaller “shoebox” spaces each dedicated to one artist’s work. This opportunity is perfect for a site-specific installation or series that may not be large enough to fill an entire gallery space.

Though these shows occupy a small area of a gallery and invite the creation of a unique environment, they are reviewed by the same committee with the same standards as solo exhibitions.

If you plan to apply for a solo exhibition at ArtsWorcester in the future, bear in mind any work shown in a shoebox show may not be shown here again. Our policy is, as always, never to show the same work twice. Please be mindful of future opportunities!

Submit here!

Member-Curated Exhibitions

Member-Curated Exhibitions are an opportunity for artists to use their curatorial skills and gain independent, hands-on experience producing an exhibition. Located in ArtsWorcester’s Central Corridor, these shows include at least 3-4 artist members’ work, chosen by one curator. The curator may include their own artwork in the proposal. All participating artists must be ArtsWorcester members.

Curators are responsible for communicating with participating artists, collecting, delivering, and retrieving artwork, providing an exhibition statement, and installing the exhibition in the Central Corridor. ArtsWorcester staff will be available for input on layout and to train the curator on the Arakawa hanging system. All installations happen between Monday and Friday, 9-5.

Successful proposals should clearly state a curatorial vision for the space and the artists to be included. Curators should have experience working with ArtsWorcester and must demonstrate their capacity to fulfill this leadership role. Proposals are welcome on a rolling basis, and will be evaluated by ArtsWorcester staff and volunteers.

All work must be wall-hanging and may not extend more than 12" from the wall. Artworks are hung on a secured Arakawa hanging system (track and wire) and D-rings. This space cannot accommodate free-standing or pedestal artwork. Further questions about what type of artwork is feasible in this space may be directed to alice@artsworcester.org.

Submit here!

OPPORTUNITIES AT A GLANCE

	Solo Exhibitions	Artist Shoebox	Member-Curated Exhibitions
Gallery hours, free and open to the public	✔	✔	✔
Exhibition card design and printing	✔	✔ Shared card with other highlighted artists	⊘
Exhibition website	✔	✔	⊘
Public Reception	✔	✔	⊘ If scheduling allows, a member-curated exhibition may overlap with the opening of shows in the main galleries. Otherwise, artists may organize their own reception. AW provides free gallery rental for those events.
Artist talk or similar programming required	✔	⊘	⊘
Artist required to install non-site-specific artwork	⊘ Artists may participate as desired	⊘ Artists may participate as desired	✔
Artist required to install site-specific artwork	✔	✔	⊘ (not feasible for this space)
Miscellaneous			All artwork must be wall-hanging and mountable by D-rings

ARTIST AND GALLERY RESPONSIBILITIES

Feeling nervous about deciding on an exhibition layout? Not sure if you need experience hanging artwork? Here's a look behind-the-scenes at some of the things ArtsWorcester does to produce your exhibitions, and what the artist is expected to provide.

If you're concerned about your capacity to tackle any step of the exhibition process, or are unsure of expectations, please reach out at any time. We are here to demystify the process and help you understand if this is the right opportunity for you, or if you might need a little more time to prepare.

- ArtsWorcester provides solo and shoebox artists with a production schedule, including all deadlines, shortly after notifications go out.
- ArtsWorcester designs and prints exhibition cards using images provided by the artist. Based on our mailing packet schedule, we may ask for initial images up to six months before an exhibition.
- ArtsWorcester hires a professional preparator to lay out and install all exhibitions, with the exception of site-specific installations. Artists are welcome to participate in the layout and installation to whatever degree they wish. The preparator takes care of all lighting.
- All installations, including site-specific work installed by the artist, take place during normal business hours, Monday – Friday, 9 AM – 5 PM. Installations do not occur on weekends or after 5 PM.
- ArtsWorcester writes all exhibition text and labels based on statements provided by the artist.
- Artists are responsible for framing their work as appropriate. Frames should be cohesive and do their job of enhancing and protecting the artwork. Other hanging methods for two-dimensional work (example: magnets, grommets) need to be approved by ArtsWorcester in advance of the exhibition.
- Artists who have a solo show are required to have an artist talk or equivalent programming during the run of their show. Artists may be asked to participate in additional special viewings for major donors.
- Artists may be asked to provide quotes or interviews to press.
- Artists are not required to gallery sit during their exhibition, but are welcome to come to the gallery as much as they'd like during our open hours.
- ArtsWorcester reserves the right to modify, reschedule, or cancel exhibitions if production deadlines are not met.

EXHIBITION VENUES

Images and floor plans of all venues available on page 11

ArtsWorcester

East and West Galleries

44 Portland Street, Worcester

Our galleries are a state-of-the-art venue in a historic building, with nearly 2,000 square feet of exhibition space. We offer complete physical accessibility and professional installation materials including museum-quality lighting, audio visual capacity, and plywood wall backings allowing for heavy works. Moveable walls and full-length window treatments radically transform the space for each show. Exhibitions in this space are celebrated with a public opening reception, and gallery hours are open to the public Thursdays - Sundays, 12-5 PM.

What's available here:

- Moveable walls
- Video projector pedestal level or suspended from ceiling
- Custom painted walls (see page 10 for painting details)
- Outlets
- Pedestals

ArtsWorcester at the Davis Art Gallery

44 Portland Street, Third Floor, Worcester

The Davis Art Gallery is located on the third floor of the Printers Building. ArtsWorcester proudly programs exhibitions bi-annually in this space operated by Davis Publications. Flooded with natural light, its hardwood floors, pristine walls, and lighting system are ideal for new and traditional media, craft, performance, and site-specific installations. Exhibitions in this space are celebrated with a public opening reception as public health permits, and gallery hours are open to the public Thursdays - Sundays, 12-5 PM.

What's available here:

- Video projector on floor/pedestal level
- Outlets
- Pedestals

Central Corridor, Printers Building

44 Portland Street, Worcester

Connecting ArtsWorcester's main galleries and WICN, the Central Corridor is also seen by Printers Building tenants and visitors. This space is available for Member-Curated Exhibitions and Shoeboxes, and is complete with gallery lighting and an Arakawa hanging system (track and wire).

Painting gallery walls

Some exhibitions benefit from having a gallery wall, or walls, painted a different color than white. Artists who think their exhibition would be best produced with color on the walls should include that information in the exhibition proposal, and explain why the artwork, or the exhibition as a whole, would benefit from that significant investment. An artist could have an exhibition proposal accepted for production, but ArtsWorcester may not be able to also fund their plans for painted walls.

Due to the quick exhibition turnover at ArtsWorcester, the default wall color is always white.

All paint products used on gallery walls must be acrylic-based and flat (matte).

The following products cannot be used on gallery walls:

- Aerosol paint of any kind
- Oil-based paint, in liquid, aerosol, or stick form
- Gloss or semi-gloss paint
- Sharpie or permanent marker
- Sealant, aerosol or liquid

Artists must provide:

- Acrylic-based paint
- Brushes and rollers
- Paint trays
- Stir sticks

ArtsWorcester will provide:

- 2" painters' tape for floorboards and outlet covers
- Drop cloth
- White paint for touch-ups and repainting

FLOORPLANS AND VENUE IMAGES

ArtsWorcester- West Gallery



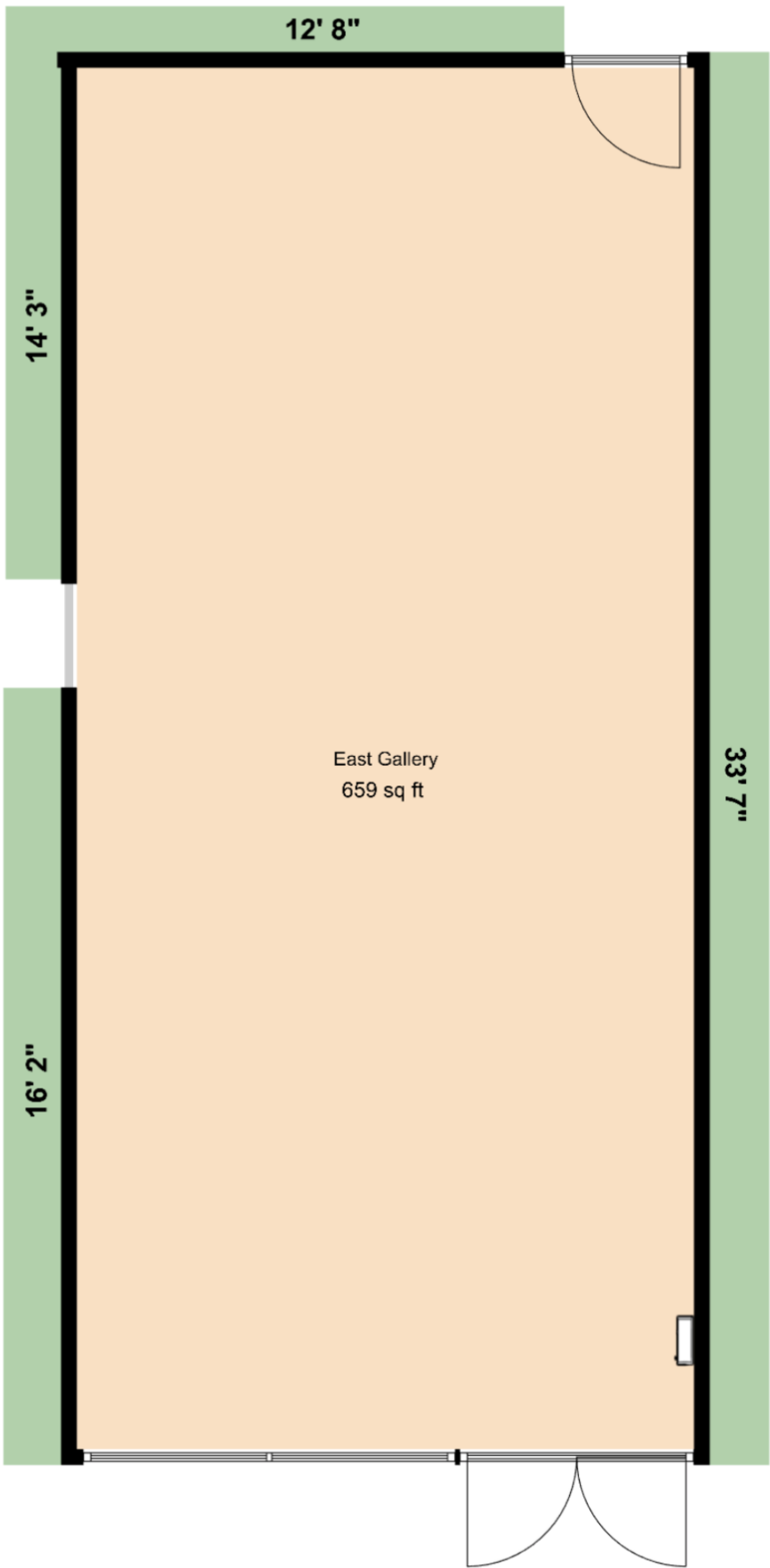


**ArtsWorcester
West Gallery Key**


- Available Wall Space
- Windowsill
- Pillar
- Desk

ArtsWorcester- East Gallery



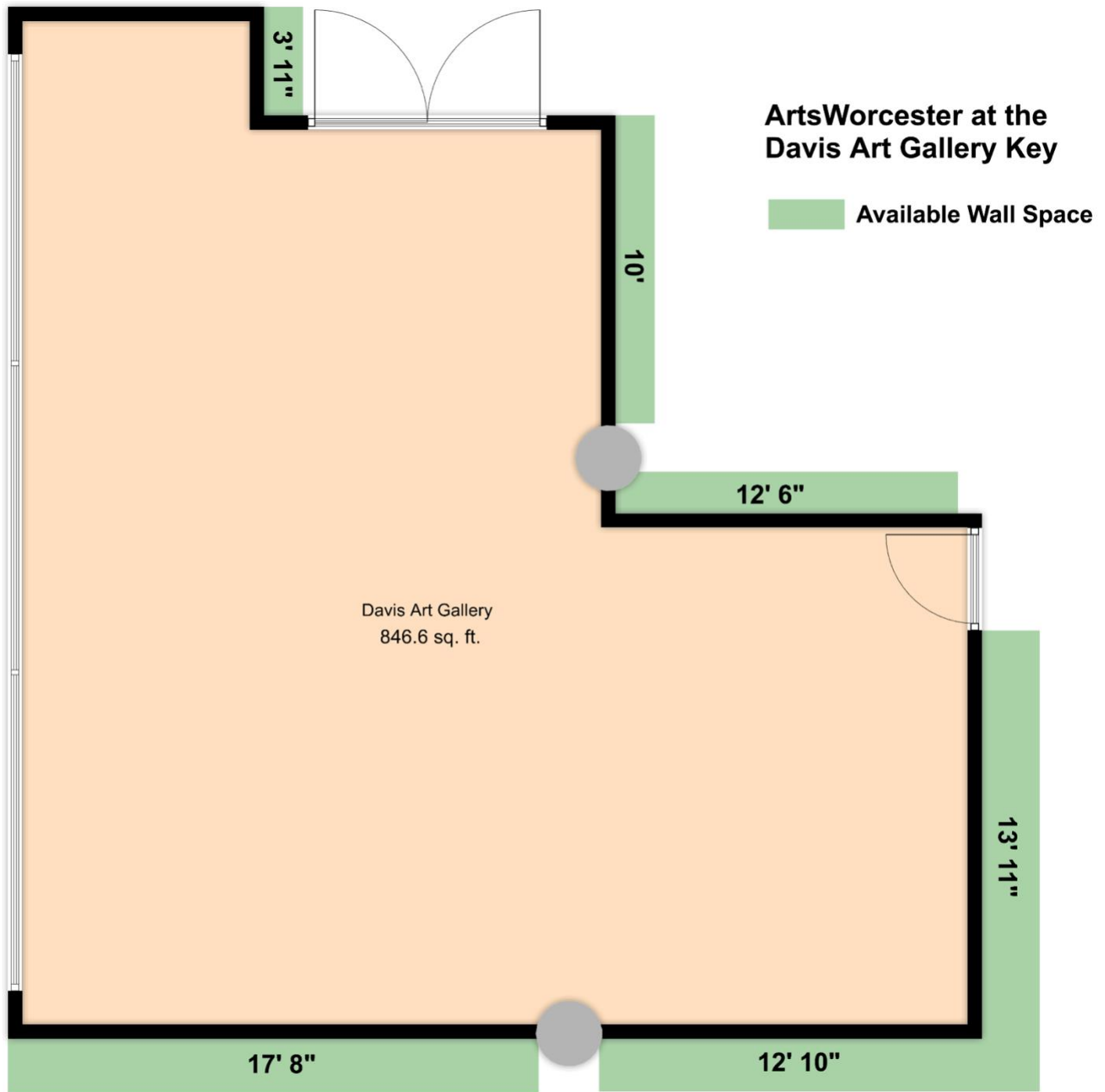


**ArtsWorcester
East Gallery Key**

 Available Wall Space

ArtsWorcester at the Davis Art Gallery





Central Corridor
Arakawa tracks are 15' 10" and 17' 6"



2025-2026 EXHIBITION COMMITTEE

Terry Jenoure: artist, educator, musician, former director of the Augusta Savage Gallery at UMass Amherst; graduate faculty, Lesley University

Ari Montford: artist; curator; educator; faculty, Montserrat College of Art; former director, Edward Mitchell Bannister Gallery at Rhode Island College and faculty at the RISD Museum

Victor Pacheco: artist; educator; faculty, College of the Holy Cross; Art Matters fellowship recipient

Marlene Persky: member, ICA collection committee; board member and collection committee chair, Rose Art Museum; member, MFA Contemporary Art Advisory Committee; artist

Jessica Roscio: Director and Curator, Danforth Art Museum

Toby Sisson: artist; Associate Professor of Studio Art, Clark University

Lauren Szumita: Gallery Director, Cantor Art Gallery

Kristina Wilson: Professor of Art History, Clark University; author; curator

HELPFUL LINKS AND TIPS

[Stay tuned for the announcement of our virtual panel discussion on submitting proposals.](#)

[Examples of artist CVs.](#)

[Examples of successful proposals.](#)

- Spend time on getting clear images of your artwork. They are what the committee will see first. Because this is such a competitive opportunity, poor lighting or blurry pictures can and have been deciding factors between two proposals. This interferes with the committee's ability to see and understand your work.
- Cohesion is essential- Your artworks should make sense together and alongside the written proposal.
- The top question committee members ask while evaluating proposals is "why?" Why should we choose this proposal over another? Why is this work important? Why should it be seen? Ensure your proposal clearly makes the case for your exhibition.
- Sketches and floorplans are helpful to express your ideas to the committee, but they are most interested in finished artworks that speak to your ability to complete the exhibition.
- If you are proposing a site-specific installation, previous experience with site-specific work is preferable, but not required. In this case, the committee hopes to see some type of sketch or floorplan, along with images of elements you plan to use in your installation.
- Don't try to show the committee the full range of what you can do in different media or styles. Choose a focused group of works that relate as closely as possible to the work you are proposing.
- Work on your proposal well before the deadline. We cannot do anything about tech difficulties at 11:30 PM the night of.
- Have a friend look over your proposal for clarity. At the very least, spend a few days away from your writing before you submit.
- If you do not receive an exhibition, request feedback! Feedback is an artist's best friend and can help you develop your concepts for future opportunities.
- Prepare your written responses in a separate document. Submittable may not automatically save your draft, and ArtsWorcester has no way of recovering your draft.