

**2022**

Architecture +  
Design

**Independent  
Projects Grants**

**A partnership program of NYSCA and The Architectural League**

**Program Guidelines**



**Council on  
the Arts**

**T H E A R C H I  
T E C T U R A L  
L E A G U E N Y**

The 2022 Architecture + Design Independent Projects Partnership  
is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts  
with the support of the Office of the Governor  
and the New York State Legislature.

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**Deadline for submissions:  
Wednesday, April 13, 2022  
11:59 p.m. EDT**

## Program Introduction 2022

The Architecture + Design Independent Projects grant program is a partnership between the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) and The Architectural League of New York. In 2022, the program will award 18 grants of \$10,000 for New York State-based individuals (or teams) to explore a design topic through creation or research. Relevant design fields include architecture, landscape architecture, historic preservation, community-centered design, fashion, graphic, industrial, and interior design.

The League and NYSCA are pleased to enter into this pilot partnership and to work in concert to administer the Independent Projects program for interested applicants. In prior years, NYSCA's Independent Projects program required applicants to submit requests through an intermediary sponsoring organization. This year's partnership will allow the League to directly receive all applications and evaluate them together with NYSCA to select projects for funding.

This guide provides an overview of the 2022 program, key dates and program contacts, prerequisites and eligibility requirements, and a complete walkthrough of the application submission process.

## Program Goals

Design is everywhere. Recognizing design as an art form that can enhance our quality of life, the Independent Projects program seeks proposals that emphasize artistry and design excellence, that may contribute to a broader understanding of design, and/or that advance a design discipline. Critically, design must be at the core of any proposal, and the outcome must be accessible to the public. Projects might create a design prototype, advance new ideas in community design, research a topic in design or architectural history, or engage in critical or theoretical analysis.

Below are some recent examples of topics that Independent Projects grants have addressed:

- The invasive Emerald Ash Borer, a beetle destroying ash trees across the United States, leaves behind wood that is considered unmarketable. Using 3D laser scanning and robotic-based fabrication technology, **architects Leslie Lok and Sasa Zivkovic of HANNAH** are exploring new ways to build with this waste wood, promoting sustainable design.
- **Designer Amy Sperber** created a unique, open-source, online portal offering fashion designers 3D avatars of realistic, diverse body types. With this tool, Sperber helps to push the world of fashion design towards greater inclusivity.
- For the women who gather daily at “The Corner,” on a highway overpass in Brooklyn, the location is critical to finding work, yet also unhealthy and unsafe. **Architectural designer Elsa Ponce Vargas** is engaging with these day laborers in design charrettes to explore how design can improve this public space for the people who rely on it.
- **Landscape Architect Julia Watson's** groundbreaking and award-winning publication *Lo—TEK. Design by Radical Indigenism* researches, analyzes and documents sustainable ecological technologies from the landscapes of the world's indigenous people. An Independent Projects award helped support writing, drawings, and image permissions.

For many years, both NYSCA and the League have supported diverse and creative explorations in design. Where can design go next? Through this partnership, we welcome proposals that seek to answer this question.

## Key Dates

<b>February 16, 2022:</b>	Independent Projects guidelines are posted and application portal opens.
<b>April 13, 2022:</b>	Deadline for submissions. Application portal closes at <b>11:59 PM EDT</b> . <i>Please note: Program staff may not be available to answer questions after 6:00 PM EDT.</i>
<b>May 2022:</b>	Review panel convenes and award decisions are made.
<b>June 2022:</b>	Applicants are notified of panel decisions
<b>July 1, 2022:</b>	Award period starts and project activity commences
<b>June 30, 2023:</b>	Award period ends and project activity concludes Project leads prepare reports on work carried out during the award period

## Program Contacts

You may communicate with either the League or NYSCA to ask questions about your proposal, your eligibility, or this program generally. Please do not send the same queries to both. However, specific questions about an in-progress or submitted proposal should first be directed to the League.

### Architectural League Program Contact

Daniel Cioffi  
Development & Membership Manager, The Architectural League  
cioffi@archleague.org  
Phone calls available on request

### New York State Council on the Arts Program Contact

Kristin Herron  
Program Director, Architecture + Design | Museums, NYSCA  
Kristin.Herron@arts.ny.gov  
(212) 459-8825

## Funding Restrictions and Ineligible Activities

Independent Projects awards may be used to compensate the artist's or team's time spent on project activities, as well as related project expenses, consumable materials, and travel expenses within New York State only. This is a competitive grant program and not all proposals will receive funding. Each successful proposal will be awarded \$10,000.

New York State law and NYSCA policy restrict the types of activities and expenditures that NYSCA funds may support. For Independent Projects awards, the following types of expenditures are not allowed:

- Debt reductions
- Competitions and contests
- Projects or activities that occur outside of New York State
- Entertainment costs for receptions, openings, and fundraising benefits/events
- Expenditures for the establishment of a new organization
- Administrative overhead or fees charged by an affiliated institution or university
- Operating expenses of privately-owned facilities (such as homes and studios)
- Out-of-state travel expenses
- Projects led by public school districts, or their components or affiliates
- Projects that are part of a university curriculum or that are required for a degree-granting program
- Projects that are essentially recreational, rehabilitative, or therapeutic
- Projects of New York State agencies or departments

## Applicant Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for Independent Projects support, the **applying individual or team** must meet the following criteria:

- The applicant(s) must be current residents of New York State and must remain so throughout the award period. They must be prepared to show proof of residency upon request if selected for an award. For more information on this requirement see the following section, **Proof of New York State residency**.
- The applicant(s) must be a professional in their related design field. Architectural and design historians, journalists, and critics qualify. Visual artists whose work references the built environment are not eligible for support.
- The project must emphasize design and the ways that the creative process can make an impact on the topic or problem the applicant seeks to explore.
- Design fields include architecture, landscape architecture, historic preservation, community-centered design, graphic design, fashion design, industrial design and interior design.
- This category cannot support past work or current commissioned work for a client. It is intended to support creative exploration that furthers the evolution of relevant design fields and is self-generated by an individual or team.
- Applicants may be associated with only one project request per year. If individuals appear on more than one request, both requests will be deemed ineligible for support.
- Faculty in architecture or design schools are welcome to apply. However, their proposed projects **cannot** be part of a course curriculum.
- Student projects are ineligible for support. Currently matriculated students must demonstrate that their project is not related to the completion of a degree.
- Current NYSCA and Architectural League staff are not eligible for this program.
- **Please Note:** This Program does not support restoration or preservation of buildings, landscapes, or objects.
- **Please Note:** Applicants seeking support for theater production-related set design, costume design, and lighting design should refer to NYSCA's Support for Artists category.

## Proof of New York State residency

Each applicant, and each team member, must have their primary residence within New York State at the time of submission **and** throughout the award period, if their proposal is selected for funding. Failure to adhere to this requirement will result in forfeiture of award funds.

Proof of New York State residency requires two of the documents **per individual** from the list below. Both documents must contain that individual's name and **exactly matching** home address. Documents showing the same building address but different unit numbers are not acceptable as matches. Documentation must be issued/dated no earlier than 2020, but more recent documents are encouraged.

You should block out personal information from these documents, particularly sensitive information such as financial details or Social Security Number; name and address are all that is needed.

You will be asked to present this documentation if your proposal is selected for funding, but you should prepare your documents prior to submission to ensure that you meet the requirements. The League and NYSCA reserve the right to request additional documentation, if necessary, to verify New York State residency.

The following documents are acceptable as proof of residency:

- Home utility bill
- Credit card statement (Name and address page only; financial and account information should be blocked)
- Bank statement (Name and address page only; financial and account information should be blocked)
- New York State or Federal Tax Form (First page only; social security and financial information should be blocked)

- Current lease or mortgage agreement for a home residence showing the individual’s name and a New York State address.
- New York State Driver’s license or New York State ID card (License number should be blocked)
- Voter Registration card

## Submission Checklist

You will submit your proposal from within your own account on The Architectural League’s award management platform, Award Force. Instructions for creating an Award Force account and starting an entry are given in the **Walkthrough** section of this guide below.

This checklist shows the components of the submission form in Award Force. Each of these pieces is described in more detail in the appropriate area of the walkthrough.

- Certifications of eligibility and New York State residency (proof of residency documents will be requested when projects are selected for funding)
- Contact information, team, and project overview
- Project narrative: 10,000 characters maximum, responding to the 6 areas of the project narrative prompt
- Required supporting materials, combined into a single PDF file of no more than 30 MB:
  - 1-page résumé or CV for each team member
  - Visuals: Up to 12 pages of sample images
  - Optional for proposed publications: A 1-page outline and up to 5 pages of sample text
- Additional supporting details for projects that require commitment or permission from another party, such as publications, installations, and exhibitions

## Evaluation Criteria

Each proposal will be evaluated according to how fully it responds to the three program criteria: Impact and Creativity, Project Execution, and Audience and Accessibility. These criteria should inform every part of your materials. Successful submissions will make the case for a project that advances a new idea or creative approach to a problem in design; can realistically be accomplished during the grant period; utilizes the specific expertise of the individual or team; and presents a clear plan to reach and benefit the public.

### Impact and Creativity

“Impact and Creativity” prioritizes support for innovative ideas that push a given design field forward and demonstrate the outcome of the creative process. In addressing this criterion, make sure your project is described clearly, providing details and avoiding jargon. It should be framed within your design field and demonstrate awareness of existing work or research that is relevant to your project area. If you are in a research or prototyping phase, make sure to describe the questions/approaches you will explore in 2022.

### Project Execution

“Project Execution” asks you to demonstrate how you have designed your project to best use your own expertise. The strongest requests make clear that the applicants are specifically qualified to pursue this work and have a viable plan to meet the stated goals within the award period. If the work proposed requires more than \$10,000, requests should clearly show how these outside funds will be raised.

### Audience and Accessibility

As NYSCA is a public funder, public dissemination of work produced with these awards is crucial. The “Audience and Accessibility” criterion requires that your project has a life outside of your office or studio. Clearly identify for whom the work is intended and describe a realistic plan and means to disseminate it. All areas of your application should support this: for example, don't propose an exhibition if you have not demonstrated any experience in this work. If the public dimension will occur outside of the award year (July 2022–June 2023), please explain.

## Application Walkthrough

For the 2022 application cycle, The Architectural League will accept all submissions through our Award Force platform. Applicants should begin by registering for an account at [archleague.awardsplatform.com](https://archleague.awardsplatform.com). Creating an account will give you or your team access to the Independent Projects application form. The platform will permit you to save your progress and return later, upload your supporting materials, view your submission history, and more.

For team submissions, only one team member should complete and submit the proposal. The application form provides a section to list additional team members and their contact information.

Only one submission per individual or team is permitted. Multiple or duplicate submissions will be automatically disqualified from consideration.

### **STEP 1: Register an account at [archleague.awardsplatform.com](https://archleague.awardsplatform.com)**

Begin by creating an account on The Architectural League's Award Force platform here. You will create your own username and password. To register, you must accept the Award Force cookie policy and terms of service, and give the League permission to send you emails through Award Force for important notifications about your application.

Returning users who have already created an Award Force account with the League do not need to create a new account.

Once you have created an account, check your inbox for a verification link. You will need to verify your email before you can start an application.

### **STEP 2: Start a new Architecture + Design Independent Projects entry**

When your account is successfully created and verified, you can log into the platform landing page. Click the **Start new entry** button to begin a new application.

#### **Competition**

From the dropdown list, select Architecture + Design Independent Projects.

*Be sure to select the right program. If you create an entry for a different competition by mistake, you'll see the wrong application form and your submission will not be reviewed.*

#### **Applicant Name**

This field is auto-populated with your name.

***Tip:** When you have completed this section, and for each section following, click the "Save + next" button to continue to the next page. You can select "Save + close" to save your work and log out or return later.*

***Tip:** Text areas in this application form will automatically limit your responses to a given number of characters (not words). Character limits are indicated next to each question. Special formatting is not supported in these fields and will be removed from responses that are copied and pasted from other text editors.*

### **STEP 3: Verify and confirm your eligibility**

On this page, you must certify your eligibility for this program by checking the boxes, indicating agreement.

#### **Certification of eligibility**

Here, you certify that you have read the eligibility requirements on pages 4-6 of these guidelines, and that you, your team members, and your project meet all the criteria for eligibility.

### **Certification of New York State residency**

Here, you certify that you and your team members are current residents of New York State, and that you intend to remain so for the duration of the award period (July 2022–June 2023). You also acknowledge that you and your team will be required to show proof of residency if selected for funding. Grant recipients who relocate out of New York State during the grant period are required to notify the League immediately.

*Proceed to the next section.*

### **STEP 4: Applicant Information**

This section asks you to provide general information about yourself, your team members, and your project.

#### **First and Last Name of Applicant**

Enter your first and last name. If you are applying as a team, provide information for the project lead or primary contact.

#### **Applicant Email**

Enter the email address for the primary contact.

*We will communicate primarily through email about the status of your submission, so be sure to use an email address you check frequently.*

#### **Applicant Phone Number**

Enter the phone number for the primary contact.

*We may call you regarding your submission if we cannot reach you by email or we have time-sensitive questions.*

#### **Additional Team Members**

Provide names and contact information for your team members, if applicable. Team members listed here are considered core project members. You should plan to provide a résumé for each individual and they will each be required to demonstrate proof of New York State residency.

#### **Project Title**

Enter a descriptive title for your proposed project. The field will automatically limit text to 255 typed characters.

#### **Project Description**

Provide a short summary of your proposed topic and activities. This information will be used to identify your submission; you will have the opportunity to describe your project in more detail in the following sections. The field will automatically limit text to 500 typed characters (including spaces and returns).

*Proceed to the next section.*

### **STEP 5: Project narrative**

In this section, you will respond to the questions below in a single narrative of no more than 10,000 characters. You may organize your response however you choose, and you may devote as much or as little space to each question as you feel necessary. However, your response must adequately address each question to provide a full sense of your proposal. We encourage responses that present a single coherent narrative, rather than numbered or bulleted short answers. *Note: The character limit for this section has been increased from 5,000.*

- a. **Project Overview:** Describe the project, emphasizing the role of design.
- b. **Project Context:** Provide specific context to show how this project builds on existing work in your design field, addresses a need, or tackles a topic or problem in the field in a new way. Discuss how the project will advance and contribute to its field.
- c. **Project Lead or Team:** Highlight the qualifications of the individual or team, demonstrating the necessary experience and qualifications to carry out this project.
- d. **Project Activities:** What work do you plan to do during the grant period (July 1, 2022–June 30, 2023)? If more than one person is involved, describe how the work will be delegated or coordinated.

- e. **Project Budget:** Please explain how you will spend the \$10,000 award to execute this project. If your project necessitates more funding, where will that come from?
- f. **Project Audience and Accessibility:** Define the project's intended audience and how this project will be made accessible to that audience during the award period. If the project's impact will also extend beyond June 30, 2023, please describe.

### **Project Narrative**

Enter your response in the field below. The field will automatically limit text to 10,000 typed characters (including spaces and returns).

*Proceed to the next section.*

### **STEP 6: Supporting materials**

In this section, you will upload supporting materials for your proposal, compiled into a single PDF file. Your upload should be formatted according to the following specifications:

- A single PDF file
- Maximum 30 MB file size
- Your name and project title on each page
- PDF optimization for faster loading and performance is strongly encouraged

Your upload must contain the following items:

- Résumés or biographical statements: These should be no more than 1 page per person. For book projects brief bios of contributors may also be included.
- Visuals: Up to 12 pages representative of your proposed project or recent work that can support your application. Images should demonstrate your design skills and your ability to accomplish what you have proposed. Be sure to briefly identify each image.
- Optional for proposed publications: You may include a 1-page outline and up to 5 pages maximum of sample text.

### **Attachment upload module**

This module allows you to either drag and drop a file to upload or open a file explorer window to select the file on your computer. The module will only accept a single file in PDF format, up to 30 MB.

*Proceed to the next section*

### **STEP 7: Additional supporting materials for certain project types**

Certain projects that require an outside commitment or permission to proceed, such as publications, exhibitions, and installations, are much more likely to receive funding if there is demonstrated interest from a publisher, a site owner, or another necessary authority. However, we recognize that this is not always feasible, and that outside circumstances may not always align with the Independent Projects program timeline. The below questions provide additional space for you to document an existing agreement, or to describe the current state of outside arrangements for your project that may be in progress. This information will be used by the review panel to assess the likelihood that your proposal can take place as described.

#### **Does your proposed project include a publication, exhibition, or installation?**

Select Yes or No. If you select Yes, new optional fields will display allowing you to provide further details:

##### **Documentation of permission or commitment**

This module allows you to upload documentation of outside arrangements for your project, such as a commitment letter or email from a publisher or exhibition space. The module will only accept a single file in PDF format, up to 2 MB.

### **Status update for publications, exhibitions, and installations**

If you cannot provide formal documentation of support from an outside authority, this question allows you to describe the current level of outside interest or commitment to your proposed project. If you have not yet approached or heard from any outside authority about your proposal, please indicate that here. The field will automatically limit text to 500 typed characters (including spaces and returns).

### **STEP 8: Review and submit**

Your proposal is ready to submit once all required fields have been completed, optional fields are filled where relevant, supporting materials are uploaded, and you are satisfied with your responses.

At this stage, you can save your work and return to submit later, preview your entry, or submit your entry.

#### **Save + close**

Your work is saved but your proposal is not yet submitted for consideration.

#### **Preview**

Your responses are previewed on a single web page so that you can review them and return to places where you wish to make changes.

#### **Submit entry**

Your proposal is submitted.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

Visit the [2022 Independent Projects Frequently Asked Questions](#) page on [archleague.org](http://archleague.org) regularly for the most up-to-date information and answers to common questions.