

# For immediate release The Architectural League of New York and the New York State Council on the Arts announces the 2025 Independent Projects Grants Recipients

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December 2, 2025, New York, NY—The Architectural League of New York and the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) are pleased to announce the 25 New York State-based recipients of Independent Projects grants in 2025. Encompassing a range of design disciplines and locales throughout New York State, these 25 proposals have been selected by a panel of design experts to receive grants of \$10,000 each for creative and research projects taking place now through September 2026.

Independent Projects is a competitive grant program open to New Yorkers who work in any of the design fields. Jointly administered by the League and NYSCA, Independent Projects supports self-generated work in design practice and research that seeks to answer the question: *Where can design go next?*

In the 2025 cycle, 176 applications were submitted for year-long creative and research projects. An interdisciplinary panel of 12 designers, educators, and advocates, who are active in the fields of architecture, landscape architecture, industrial design, fashion, biodesign, materials research and fabrication, history and preservation, urban design, and community-centered design, evaluated the proposals to select 25 projects for funding. Representing an array of places, disciplines, formats, and modes of practice, the selected projects demonstrate the potential for creative innovation and exemplify the program's goal of making design accessible to the communities of New York State.

A full list of funded proposals follows below. To read descriptions of each project and learn more about this program, visit [here](#).

The Independent Projects grant program will be offered again in 2026, with details to be announced.

### **2025 Independent Projects Grants Recipients**

*Visible/Invisible: Women's Constant Negotiation of Space in Mosques*

Aya Abdallah  
New York, NY and Statewide

*Shad3d*

Hannah Berkin-Harper and Tracey Weisman  
New York, NY

*Newburgh Tools: Forage & Fabrication Lab*

Zach Blaue and Anoushae Eirabie  
Newburgh, NY

*Overlooked Objects and Projects*

Celia Chaussabel and Ekin Bilal  
Buffalo and New York, NY

*Adopt, Foster, Share: Furniture as Social Practice*

Tien Chen, Siyang Dai, Shisi Huang, Lu Zhang, and Zijun Zhao  
New York, NY

*Hedge, Thicket, Snag: Designing Ecological Planting Typologies for Climate Resilient Public Parks in Upstate New York*

Matt Dallos  
Ithaca, NY

*Evolving with Plants*

Hermine Demael, Stephen Zimmerer, and Evelyn Beaury  
New York and Syracuse, NY

*What Does LAND BACK Really Mean in New York City?*

Kholisile Dhlwayo

New York, NY

*"Biometrics & Cartoons": Prioritizing Justice-Impacted Women and Gender Minorities*

Ar Ducao

New York, NY

*Exit Strategies: Rehearsing the Future Through Design*

Sara Duell

New York, NY

*The Peacock Chair: From Bilibid to Black Power*

Adaya Granberry

New York, NY

*Hattie: A Social Infrastructure for Urban Tree Care*

Ekene Ijeoma

New York, NY

*Lower Manhattan Prelude: Portrait of a Vanished Neighborhood*

Mary Kay Judy

New York, NY

*American Remediation*

Andy Lee and Matthew Hixon

New York, NY and Statewide

*Her Interior World*

Melissa Molinar

New York, NY

*The Valid Imaginary*

Chloe Munkenbeck

New York, NY

*Climate Stories*

Swati Piparsania

New York, NY

*Much Ado About Yam*

Sumayyah Raji

New York, NY

*Hyper Local Robotic Entanglements*

Dierdre Shea, Julian Goldman, Claire Moriarty, and Riley Studebaker

Troy, NY

*Constructing the Other: A Meditation on Diaspora, Reparations, and Fractured Belonging*

Kriti Shivagunde and Niriksha Shetty

New York, NY and Statewide

*Lingering Listening Pavilion: A System for Evolving Community Spaces*

Jin Young Song, Joyce Hwang, and Stephanie Cramer

Buffalo, NY

*You(th) Fab: A Mobile Community Design & Fabrication Lab for Youth in Flushing, Queens*

Hung Fai Tang and Vincent Wu

Nassau County and New York, NY

*A New Residential Grammar: Herman Jessor and Abraham Kazan's Housing Cooperatives and Shared Living Elements*

Mersiha Veledar and Kayla Montes de Oca

New York, NY

*The Design Turn: Unpacking Incentives, Values, and Impacts in New York City's Affordable Housing Architecture*

Laura Wainer

New York and Westchester County, NY

*Seeds of Diaspora: Plants, Migrations, Settlements, Cities*

Lynnette Widder, Wendy S. Walters, and Sam Van Aken

New York, Syracuse, and Westchester County, NY

**2025 Independent Projects Panelists**

Christianna Bennett

Landscape designer and researcher, and Assistant Professor for Architecture Science and Ecology and Director of Geofutures, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Troy, NY

Yvette Chaparro

Assistant Professor of Product and Industrial Design, School of Constructed Environments, Parsons School of Design

New York, NY

David Costanza

Principal, David Costanza Studio, and Assistant Professor of Architecture, Cornell University College of Architecture, Art, and Planning

Ithaca, NY

Azra Dawood  
Andrew W. Mellon Curator of Academic Programs, Vassar College  
Poughkeepsie, NY

Ivi Diamantopoulou  
Principal, New Affiliates, and Professor of Practice and New York City Architecture Program  
Director, Syracuse University School of Architecture  
New York, NY

Anna Dietzsch  
Partner, Arquitetura da Convivencia (ArC), and Visiting Associate Professor, Cornell University  
College of Architecture, Art, and Planning  
New York, NY

Cara Eckholm  
Urban policy advisor and Director, Pilot Pitchfest  
New York, NY

Farzana Gandhi  
Founder, Farzana Gandhi Design Studio, and Associate Professor of Architecture and Interior  
Design, New York Institute of Technology School of Architecture & Design  
New York, NY

Ruth Mandl  
Principal, CO Adaptive, and Adjunct Associate Professor, Columbia University Graduate School of  
Architecture, Planning and Preservation  
New York, NY

Jae Shin  
Partner, HECTOR  
New York, NY, Newark, NJ, and Philadelphia, PA

Amy Sperber  
Assistant Professor of Fashion Design, Fashion Institute of Technology  
New York, NY

Meredith TenHoor  
Architectural and urban historian, and Professor and Coordinator of Undergraduate Architectural  
History and Theory, Pratt Institute School of Architecture  
New York, NY

### **Support**

The 2025 Independent Projects grant program 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.



### **About the New York State Council on the Arts**

The mission of the New York State Council on the Arts is to foster and advance the full breadth of New York State's arts, culture, and creativity for all. To support the ongoing recovery of the arts across New York State, the Council on the Arts will award over \$161 million in FY 2026, serving organizations and artists across all 10 state regions. The Council on the Arts further advances New York's creative culture by convening leaders in the field and providing organizational and professional development opportunities and informational resources. Created by Governor Nelson Rockefeller in 1960 and continued with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature, the Council is an agency that is part of the Executive Branch. For more information on NYSCA, please visit [arts.ny.gov](https://arts.ny.gov), and follow NYSCA's [Facebook page](#), on X [@NYSCArts](#), and Instagram [@NYSCouncilontheArts](#).

### **About The Architectural League of New York**

The Architectural League of New York supports critically transformative work in the allied fields that shape the built environment. As a vital, independent forum, the League stimulates thinking, debate, and action on today's converging crises of racism, inequity, and climate change, in service of a more livable and just world.

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