SUBMERSE

Call for Artists

Submerse NY: Public Art to Promote Flood Resilience in Jamaica Bay

Issued by: *The Waterfront Alliance and New York State Water Resources Institute (Cornell University), in partnership with New York Sea Grant and New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation with funding from the FEMA Cooperating Technical Partners (CTP) Program.*

Click here to submit your application online

Application Deadline: Feb. 25, 2026

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1. Project Overview: The project team invites proposals from artists or artist teams for a **temporary public art installation at Shirley Chisholm State Park (SCSP)** in East New York, Brooklyn. The installation will be installed on the large concrete planters located along Hendrix Creek Road and Penn Pier, two highly visited areas overlooking Jamaica Bay (See Appendix B).

This project aims to increase public awareness of flooding, sea-level rise, and climate resilience, while celebrating the ecological and cultural significance of Jamaica Bay. By transforming a linear series of planters into an immersive, narrative experience, the artwork will help park visitors better understand how climate change and sea level rise impact communities—and what we can do to adapt. The selected artwork must be installed prior to City of Water Day on July 25, 2026, and will remain on view until approximately Nov. 30, 2026.

3. Budget: The total grant amount available for this project is **up to $20,000**. This amount should cover the full scope of work, including the artist fee, concept development, materials and fabrication, transportation, installation, and deinstallation. An artist may combine this grant with other sources of funding to realize their piece.

2. Theme & Messaging: The theme *Living with Water: Community Awareness and Jamaica Bay's Changing Shoreline* invites artists to reflect on how flooding affects daily life for

neighborhoods around the bay and for the many people who visit Shirley Chisholm State Park. Jamaica Bay communities experience frequent challenges such as sunny day flooding during high tides, storm-driven flooding that varies from event to event, and visible changes along the shoreline that affect access, use, and habitat. These conditions influence local infrastructure, the movement of people and goods, and the ability of residents to reach homes, schools, and transit. They also affect birds, fish, marsh plants, and other coastal species that depend on predictable water levels and healthy shorelines. Artists are encouraged to explore how people notice and navigate these impacts, how flooding connects Jamaica Bay to broader patterns of water movement along the coast, and how residents and visitors can take simple steps to prepare for flooding and reduce risks in their own lives.

The installation should be visually compelling and offer layered meaning for people who walk or bike along an accessible SCSP trail lined with a series of large planters (See Appendix B). Proposals may use sequential or progressive storytelling across multiple planters or modular panels that reveal different aspects of the narrative. Artists may also choose to incorporate weather responsive elements or digital components such as QR codes that link to reliable information on flood safety, local observations, and community preparedness resources. All proposals must clearly address flooding or flood resilience in alignment with FEMA public education goals.

4. Location & Site Conditions: The artwork will be located along two waterfront areas of Shirley Chisholm State Park that are heavily used by visitors and well suited for a linear or multi-part installation. The primary location is Hendrix Creek Road, where a series of twenty large, square concrete planters line a paved trail with steady foot and bike traffic and consistent views of Hendrix Creek and Jamaica Bay. These planters form a continuous route that artists can use to build a narrative that unfolds as people move through the space.

A second area, Penn Pier, includes an additional nine planters arranged in three clusters along a popular overlook used for fishing, gathering, and taking in wide views of the water. Together, these planters offer more than one hundred surfaces that can support a sequence of visual panels or related sculptural elements.

Site photographs and dimensions are provided in Appendix B.

A site visit for applicants interested in viewing the site has been organized on: Friday, February 6th, 2026, at 1pm. Please meet at Hendrix Creek Patio on the Pennsylvania Ave side of the park, located at 1750 Pennsylvania Ave, Brooklyn NY 11239. Those unable to join may review the site via a video or by coming in person; please contact Ciara Scully, Deputy Park Director, Shirley Chisholm State Park (Ciara.Scully@parks.ny.gov) for further details.

5. Art Format & Material Requirements: Artists may propose a range of approaches that work within the constraints of the site and the conditions of an exposed waterfront

environment. Installations may include *mounted panels, sculptural or relief components, sequential imagery, or other designs that make use of the planters as a continuous or modular surface*. All four sides of a planter may be utilized. Weather responsive materials are welcome, as are designs that integrate QR codes or other digital elements that guide visitors to trusted preparedness resources. All work must be fabricated from materials that can endure salt spray, strong winds, direct sun, and heavy rain, and should be designed to remain safe for public circulation along the trail and pier.

Direct painting on the planters, ground penetration, or any alteration of park infrastructure is not permitted, and all attachments must be non-permanent and minimally impactful. Artists are responsible for the full installation and removal of their work, including labor, tools, and hardware. Detailed installation and deinstallation requirements, insurance requirements and all SCSP permitting rules are provided in *Appendix A*. Applicants may explore *this menu* to see examples of the kinds of projects that may be proposed.

6. Eligibility: This call is open to individual artists and designers as well as artist teams who live and work in New York City or New York State. We welcome proposals from both emerging and established practitioners, including students and those who may be new to public art. Artists who work across disciplines or who draw from community engagement, environmental storytelling, or site responsive practices are encouraged to apply. The selection panel is interested in artists who can bring a thoughtful perspective to flood awareness and resilience.

7. Insurance: Shirley Chisholm State Park requires artists to provide proof of insurance before any work begins. The artist or artist team must obtain **general liability insurance** that meets the standards of New York State Parks and must list the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation as an **additional insured**. If the artist will hire assistants or subcontractors for installation, removal, or fabrication activities, they must also carry **workers' compensation insurance** in accordance with New York State law. Insurance requirements are specified in Appendix C.

8. Submission Requirements

Applicants must submit:

1. **Artist statement / vision** (max 300 words)
2. **Concept sketches or renderings** (optional but encouraged)
3. **Examples of past work** (up to 10 images or website link)
4. **Proposed timeline, installation and maintenance plan**
5. **Budget** (with breakdown of major costs)
6. **CV or bio statement** for lead artist(s)

9. Selection Criteria

- Artistic merit, originality, and clarity of concept

- Alignment with project theme and regenerative message
- Feasibility and durability for outdoor installation
- Capacity to educate, engage, and inspire action
- Suitability for the park environment
- Demonstrated experience completing public or community-based projects.
- Preference will be given to projects that thoughtfully engage a significant portion of the available site. Proposals that focus on a smaller number or subset of planters will also be considered where the scale is appropriate to the concept.

10. Submission, Deadline & Contact

Submit your application online

The deadline to apply is February 25, 2026. The selected artist will be notified no later than March 25, 2026. The artwork must be installed prior to July 25, 2026, and taken down by November 30, 2026.

Questions may be directed to: **Rewa Phansalkar |** New York State Water Resources Institute at Cornell University **|** rp589@cornell.edu

APPENDIX A: Site Considerations

About Shirley Chisholm State Park: The park is in East New York, Brooklyn. Named after the trailblazing Shirley Chisholm—Brooklyn native, first African American Congresswoman, and the first woman and African American to run for President. The site rises 130 feet above sea level, surrounded by Jamaica Bay to the south. As the former Pennsylvania and Fountain Avenue landfills, the park has a rich history of transformation. Opened in 2019, the park quickly established itself as a cherished neighborhood sanctuary. Park visitors seek out the serene environment and fresh air along the trails and stay for the many ways to reconnect with nature. This landfill turned park offers 10 miles of hiking and biking trails, incredible views, and opportunities for passive recreation. Visitors to the park enjoy 407 acres of native grassland and coastal meadows, waterfront access, wildlife spotting, and free environmental education programming.

Installation Site: The public art installation will be featured on the Pennsylvania Avenue side of the park, with two possible sites along Hendrix Creek Road. The artwork will be temporarily fixed to the concrete planters lining the trail in between picnic tables, and at the Penn Pier. There are 30 concrete planters total, each 4ft by 3ft.: 20 planters along Hendrix Creek Road, resting on short grass; and 10 planters at Penn Pier, resting on concrete/asphalt. Please see Appendix B for further information and visuals. Hendrix Creek Road and Penn Pier are two of the most popular locations within the park. To the south and east, visitors have wonderful views of the waters of Hendrix Creek and Jamaica Bay. In the distance, the Fountain Avenue side of the park is visible. To the west, the grasses and trails of the Penn side of the park offer serene views and opportunities for bird spotting. The large planters are also visible from the trails on the Fountain Avenue side of the park, across the creek. Taken as a whole, the collection of planters along Hendrix Creek Road and at Penn Pier present an opportunity to tell a linear story through the artwork.

Site Specific Design Considerations: Artwork may be affixed to the planters themselves or inserted into the soil of the planters, but nothing may be inserted into the ground surrounding the planters. Artwork must be attached securely to planters. The artist may incorporate artworks on some or across all the planter sides. Installation methods and fixtures may not cause permanent damage or lasting impacts to the concrete planters. Paint and other directly applied materials will not be considered.

Artists are responsible for choosing materials and installation methods that are appropriate for the outdoors. The materials and installation method must be able to withstand the harsh salty air, high speed wind, and severe rain and weather conditions of the New York City coastal climate. Artists must include their outline of any anticipated maintenance of the artwork in their proposals. Ideally, all proposed artwork will not require maintenance during the exhibition period. Materials may not obstruct passersby and therefore must not protrude out from the Planters.

The selected artist will be responsible for the full installation and deinstallation of their work. They must provide all materials needed for installation and deinstallation. Shirley Chisholm State Park will provide a place on site to store materials overnight and while work is in progress; however, the park cannot provide any labor, tools, or equipment. The selected artist must be willing to work with all requirements presented by NYS Parks - Shirley Chisholm State Park pertaining to the scope of the

project and site management restrictions. Before installation, the selected artist must submit a detailed installation plan, including schematic drawings, for review by NYS Parks - Shirley Chisholm State Park.

APPENDIX B: Planter Images and Dimensions

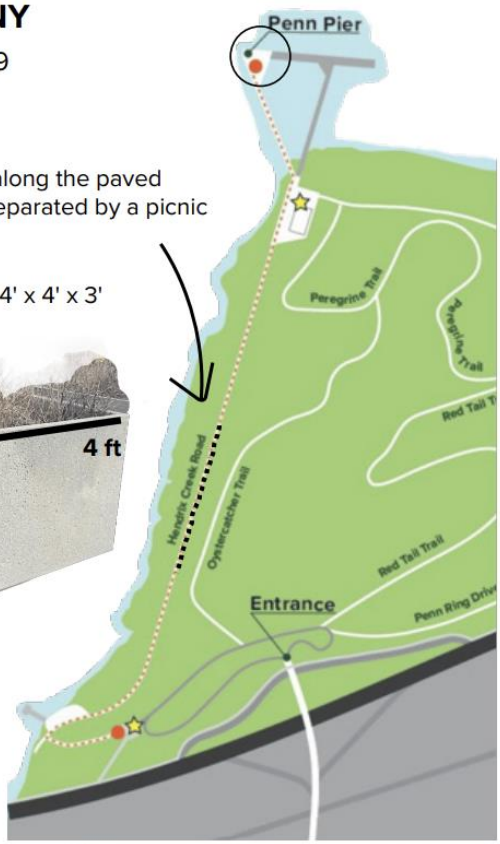
Shirley Chisholm State Park - Submerse NY

- Location: 1750 Pennsylvania Ave, Brooklyn NY 11239

Planters Along Hendrix Creek Road - 20 planters

20 planters along the paved road, each separated by a picnic table

Dimensions: 4' x 4' x 3'



Penn Pier - 10 planters

Three clusters of planters, circled on the aerial image

APPENDIX C: Insurance Requirements

Insurance

Commercial General Liability

Insurance shall be endorsed to name the "State of New York, Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, and their officers, employees, and agents" as an additional insured. Said policy shall cover the liability of the Contractor for bodily injury, property damage, premises liability and personal/advertising injury from all work and operations under any contract resulting from this procurement.

The limits under such policy shall not be less than the following:

- Each Occurrence limit $1,000,000.00
- General Aggregate $2,000,000.00
- Products/Completed Operations $2,000,000.00
- Personal Advertising Injury $1,000,000.00
- Damage to Rented Premises $50,000.00
- Medical Expense $5,000.00

The following ISO forms must be endorsed to the policy:

a. CG 00 01 01 96 or an equivalent – Commercial General Liability Coverage Form
b. CG 20 10 11 85 or an equivalent – Additional Insured – Owner, Lessees or Contractors (Form B)
c. Waiver of Subrogation

Comprehensive Business Automobile Liability Insurance

Such policy shall have a combined single limit for Bodily Injury and Property Damage of at least $1,000,000 each accident. Said policy shall cover liability arising out of any automobile used in connection with performance under this Agreement including owned, leased, hired, and non-owned automobiles bearing or, under the circumstances under which they are being used, required by the Motor Vehicles Law of the State of New York to bear license plates.

If the Contractor does not own, lease, or hire any automobiles used in connection with performance under this Agreement, the Contractor is not required to obtain Comprehensive Business Automobile Liability Insurance.

Workers' Compensation and Disability Benefits Insurance

Provide OPRHP with proof of Workers' Compensation Insurance and Disability Benefits Insurance. The following are the only acceptable means of proof; ***ACORD*** forms are ***NOT*** acceptable proof of coverage.

Acceptable Proof of Workers' Compensation	
CE-200	Certificate of Attestation of Exemption from NYS Workers' Compensation and/or Disability Benefits Coverage
C-105.2	Certificate of Workers' Compensation Insurance
U-26.3	NYS Insurance Fund Certificate
GSI-105.2	Certificate of Participation in Workers' Compensation Group Board - approved self-insurance
SI-12	Certificate of Workers' Compensation Self-Insurance
Acceptable Proof of Disability Benefits	
CE-200	Certificate of Attestation of Exemption from NYS Workers' Compensation and/or Disability Benefits Coverage
DB-120.1	Certificate of Disability Benefits Insurance
DB-120.2	Certificate of Participation in Disability Benefits Group Self Insurance
DB-155	Certificate of Disability Benefits Self-Insurance

For more information about Workers' Compensation and Disability insurance, log onto the Workers Compensation Board website at www.wcb.state.ny.us or call them toll-free at 1-866-546-9322.

For exemptions: https://www.wcb.ny.gov/content/ebiz/wc_db_exemptions/requestExemptionOverview.jsp

For additional information, please contact Soleyl Ovalle at 212-866-2462 / 212-866-3100 / mailto:soleyl.ovalle@parks.ny.gov.