Release date: October 2, 2019

**Lake Champlain Basin Program Announcement**

**Request for Pre-Proposals**

*Lake Champlain Basin**Artist-in-Residence Programs*

The Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP), in cooperation with the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC), is pleased to announce this Request for Pre-Proposals (RFPP) for Artist-in-Residence (AiR) programs in the Lake Champlain Basin. This opportunity will support development of sustainable Artist-in-Residence programs that will recruit artists to obtain and use scientific data, cultural trends, or historical facts to increase interpretation of natural resources within the Lake Champlain basin.

**Overview**

In American history, artists were the vanguard of environmental stewardship. Thomas Cole, the father of the Hudson River School, believed that art was an agent of transformation: moral and spiritual change. He and other painters brought to life landscapes that inspired. Great paintings—from the Adirondacks to Yosemite—created a sense of awe and an urgency to protect beautiful, fragile and threatened places.

The writings of Cole’s friend, James Fenimore Cooper, and others like Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau also contributed to our appreciation of America’s natural treasures. It was this appreciation that led the way for the preservation work of John Muir, Theodore Roosevelt, Aldo Leopold Rachael Carson, and many others.

Today, artists continue to inspire and inform us about the environment and our natural heritage. Beyond their works—the photographs, paintings, videos, writing, crafts, and others—artists now share their processes in AiR programs. The LCBP is soliciting pre-proposals from partners to establish and maintain an AiR program in the Lake Champlain Basin. AiR projects that utilize and interpret scientific data, environmental trends, and social concerns associated with the Lake Champlain watershed are encouraged. More information on the environmental state, trends and threats to Lake Champlain Basin can be found in the [LCBP State of the Lake](https://www.lcbp.org/media-center/publications-library/state-of-the-lake/) report.

The pre-proposal should be a two-page document to introduce the project, adhering to the format requirements located below and online at: <http://www.lcbp.org/grants>. After review of the submitted pre-proposals, a subset of applicants will be asked to submit a full proposal for funding consideration for **projects to begin** **in the spring of 2021 and finish in the fall of 2022**.

These projects will be supported with funds awarded to NEIWPCC on behalf of the LCBP by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC).

**PRE-PROPOSAL DEADLINE NOTICE:** Only electronic pre-proposals in MS Word or compatible formats will be accepted and must be received by jbrangan@lcbp.org AND grants@lcbp.org by **November 25, 2019.**

LATE OR INCOMPLETE PRE-PROPOSALS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

**Request for Artist-in-Residence Pre-Proposal**

**Overview of the LCBP and NEIWPCC**

The U.S. Congress designated Lake Champlain as a resource of national significance with the Lake Champlain Special Designation Act of 1990. The Special Designation Act also established the LCBP and authorized it to receive direct support from the U.S. EPA under the Clean Water Act. The LCBP coordinates and funds efforts that benefit the Lake Champlain Basin’s water quality, fisheries, economy, wetlands, wildlife, recreation, and cultural resources, and works in partnership with government agencies, private organizations, local communities, and individuals from New York, Vermont, and Québec. These efforts are guided by the comprehensive management plan [*Opportunities for Action: An Evolving Plan for the Future of the Lake Champlain Basin*](https://www.lcbp.org/about-us/opportunities-for-action/), recently updated in June 2017.

Since 1992, the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC) has served as the primary program administrator of LCBP at the request of the Lake Champlain Steering Committee, and administers the program’s personnel and finances. NEIWPCC is a congressionally authorized not-for-profit interstate organization whose membership includes all six New England states and New York State. The NEIWPCC mission is to help its member states to realize their individual and collective clean water program goals.

1. **Grant Award Process**

The LCBP issues this request for two-page pre-proposals that address the priorities listed below for Artist-in-Residence programs. Pre-proposals will be evaluated through a competitive process; a subset of pre-proposal applicants will be asked to submit a full proposal, with a developed budget and anticipated project outputs and outcomes. Grant award recipients will be selected from the pool of full proposals and successful projects may begin on October 1, 2020. The aim of this process is to invite a wide range of innovative and effective projects and further the goals of [*Opportunities for Action: An Evolving Plan for the Future of the Lake Champlain Basin*](https://www.lcbp.org/about-us/opportunities-for-action/).

Requests up to $40,000 will be accepted. More than one grant may be awarded from this competition. Please visit <http://lcbp.org/grants> or contact LCBP for information on other grant opportunities. Successful applicants should be aware of the additional requirements as described in Appendix A of this Request for Pre-proposals.

Please contact LCBP Cultural Heritage Coordinator Jim Brangan via email: jbrangan@lcbp.org, or via telephone: 802-372-3213 with questions or for additional information.

1. **Program Priorities**

Projects that address these priorities will likely be more competitive in the review process:

* **Inspiration:** The pre-proposal should detail where the AiR program will concentrate its efforts and where the artist(s) will focus their talents (i.e. a river in the Lake Champlain Basin, a bay, the Adirondacks, etc.). Programs that encompass broader geographic areas across the Lake Champlain basin will be more competitive.
* **Learning:** Describe your organization’s education focus and how you will use the AiR program to further this focus.
* **Interpretation:** Describe how your organization and the artist(s) can obtain and use scientific data, cultural trends, or historical facts to better interpret the natural resource.
* **Medium:** All types of art will be considered.
* **Facility:** The proposal should describe the workspace(s) for the artist(s) and their audience.
* **Sustainability:** The strategies your organization employ to create a sustainable, multi-year AiR program beyond 2022 if awarded up to $40,000.
1. **Eligibility**

Eligible organizations include nonprofit organizations, colleges, universities, and municipalities within the Lake Champlain Basin.

1. **Timeframe for Proposals**

The pre-proposal to project initiation process will require approximately 12 months. Please note that this schedule is **subject to change**:

* **September 27, 2019:** LCBP Releases Request for AiR Pre-proposals for projects to begin in Spring 2021.
* **October 30, 2019:** Staff conducts workshop on the Pre-proposal process at LCBP offices in Grand Isle, Vermont at 6:30 p.m.
* **November 25, 2019:** Pre-proposals due.
* **January 23, 2020:** Lake Champlain Executive Committee considers AiR Review Committee’s recommendations and identifies concepts that will proceed to the full-proposal stage of the selection process.
* **April 13, 2020:** Full proposals due.
* **June 2020:** Lake Champlain Steering Committee considers record of decision by the AiR Review Committee and names award recipient(s).
* **Summer 2020:** AiR workplan and memorandum of agreement (MOA) between NEIWPCC and the grant recipient(s) are developed.
* **October 1, 2020:** Project work—including recruiting and jurying artists—may begin with execution of the MOA.
* **Spring 2021:** AiR Program begins and runs throughout the summers of 2021 and 2022.
1. **Pre-Proposal Evaluation and Selection Criteria**

Submitted pre-proposals for AiR Program will be judged according to the following criteria:

1. (20 Points) Overview of your organization, including its history, mission and association with the Lake Champlain basin. How does the proposed program address goals, desired outcomes and priority tasks described in [*Opportunities for Action: An Evolving Plan for the Future of the Lake Champlain Basin*](https://www.lcbp.org/about-us/opportunities-for-action/)*?*
2. (20 Points) The proposed AiR’s job description with tangible outcomes, outputs and deliverables associated with the AiR Program.
3. (15 Points) Knowledge and experience of the AiR program’s supervisor in developing art programs, working with artists, and displaying their works and description of how that knowledge and experience will be integrated into the AiR program.
4. (15 Points) Professional background and organization affiliation of project partners and how those partners will collaborate and contribute to the interpretation of scientific data, cultural trends, or historical facts associated with the Lake Champlain Basin.
5. (10 Points) Organization’s plan to sustain the program beyond 2022.
6. (10 Points) Appropriateness and clarity of the project timeline, deliverables and proposed budget, relative to project objectives. The total funding request must not exceed $40,000. *While matching funds and in-kind support are not required, proposals that include match and in-kind support often are considered more competitive in the grant review process*. Vague or inflated budgets will not be competitive.
7. (10 Points) Merit of the project, including clarity and conciseness of the proposal, adherence to format, and relevance to RFP. If applicable, the applicant’s past performance on similar projects also will be considered.

**VI. Available Funds and Match Requirements**Funds are anticipated to be available for projects to begin on October 1, 2020. All awards are subject to available funding and LCBP is not obligated to issue any funds under this request. *While matching funds and in-kind support are not required, proposals that include match or in-kind support often are considered more competitive in the grant review process*. Cost share or match can be satisfied with cash or in-kind services, or a combination of both. Cash contributions are those funds used to purchase goods or services associated with the project. In-kind contributions represent the value of non-cash contributions provided by the applicant. Any contributions must be clearly explained in the proposal and must be documented. Applicants should be aware that because optimal matching support may make a proposal more competitive, any match proposed will be embedded in the contractual agreement with NEIWPCC.

**VII. Period of Performance**

Work is expected to begin no earlier than **October 1, 2020** and should be completed by **December 31, 2022.**

**VIII. Schedule and Requirements for Pre-Proposal Submission**

1. Please follow the format outlined in the following LCBP Pre-Proposal Format Requirements.
2. Only editable electronic copies will be accepted and must be received via email in Microsoft Word, or Word-compatible format by **November 25, 2019** to (jbrangan@lcbp.org) and (grants@lcbp.org). **Note:** Pre-proposals in a PDF format will be rejected.

**Pre-Proposal Format Requirements**

Pre-proposals should be sent electronically in MS Word (or equivalent) format to jbrangan@lcbp.org AND grants@lcbp.org. Pre-proposals must adhere to the following guidelines: 12-point Times New Roman font (or equivalent), minimum 1-inch margin on all sides, and should not exceed a **2-page maximum length.**

**TITLE:** Please include a concise and descriptive title.

**ONE SENTENCE ABSTRACT:** This very brief description of your project should be understandable to a non-technical audience.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** Name, position, organization, address, telephone, email of the person who will be the point of contact, and brief summary of project team qualifications. The listed organization should be the group that will ultimately enter a contractual agreement with NEIWPCC if the project is successful (see Eligibility requirements in Section III above).

**DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT SCOPE, OUTPUTS, OUTCOMES, PARTNERS, AND TIMEFRAME:** Use this space as you see fit to briefly describe your project and explain how it will contribute toward addressing the Program Priorities as described above: Inspiration, Learning, Interpretation, Medium, Facility, Sustainability**.**

**TOTAL REQUEST AMOUNT:** List in US dollars. Other anticipated sources and amounts of funding may also be included. Please note that if your pre-proposal is selected for a full proposal, the total funding request in the full proposal cannot be greater than the total request in the pre-proposal without written permission from LCBP.

**BRIEF BUDGET EXPLANATION:** Briefly explain the major components of the budget. List the percentage of the budget that may be spent on the following elements: personnel and fringe, travel, supplies, professional services, indirect costs, and any other major category (specify). More details and full budget explanation will be required at the full proposal stage. Relative percentages of budget components may change in the full proposal as necessary.

**Appendix A: Summary of Requirements for Selected Projects**

If selected for funding, successful applicants should be aware of these additional requirements for all LCBP-funded projects:

1. Following initial notification of the award, a workplan must be approved by LCBP before a contract agreement can be executed and the work begun. Compensation cannot begin until the workplan is approved and a contract is executed. The workplan will detail the logistical elements of the project, including deliverables and project timeline. Information about the LCBP grant process, workplan development guidelines, and reporting requirements can be found on the LCBP website at: <http://www.lcbp.org/about-us/grants-rfps/grant-toolkit/>. The successful applicant will enter into a MOA with NEIWPCC in order to complete the work and will be compensated upon completion of workplan deliverables.
2. Quarterly reports must be filed electronically by January 1, April 1, July 1 and October 1 during the period of the MOA.
3. All project work must be completed with final reports and invoices received by the LCBP **by December 31, 2022.**
4. All materials and work products, regardless of physical form or characteristics, produced as a result of this project shall be made available to LCBP, NEIWPCC, and appropriate funding agencies in a suitable file format. The LCBP, NEIWPCC, and Great Lakes Fishery Commission shall have non-exclusive right to use any artwork, materials, software, maps, studies, reports, and other products or data in print and digital media for outreach and other communications of the organizations’ missions and work. The contractor shall not obtain, attempt to obtain, or file for a patent, copyright, trademark or any other interest in any such materials, or work products without the expressed, written consent of the LCBP and NEIWPCC, and subject to any other approvals required by state or federal law. Reports and other deliverables will credit LCBP, Great Lakes Fishery Commission, and NEIWPCC as funding partners for any work completed under the project contract.
5. The LCBP and NEIWPCC require its contractors to maintain workers compensation and liability insurance. More details will be provided to the successful applicant at the time of contracting.
6. If a project includes collection of any primary or secondary data or involves a modeling effort, it will require a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). Once the grant agreement has been executed, the contractor must develop a QAPP to be approved before the beginning of any data collection or secondary data analyses. More information about LCBP Quality Assurance Plans can be found at: <http://www.lcbp.org/about-us/grants-rfps/grant-toolkit/qapp/>. A QAPP generally takes four weeks for approval following submission.
7. The LCBP encourages applicants to budget costs that are associated with the project as direct expenses, including personnel costs, travel, project supplies, mailings, phone costs, office supplies, etc. Use of some grant funds for indirect costs is also allowable, subject to both the provisions of OMB Circular A-87 and LCBP approval. If you need further guidance, contact the LCBP or refer to [OMB Circular A-87 (Revised)](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/omb/circulars_a087_2004/#atta). Sections D, E, and F of Attachment A provide an overview of direct and indirect costs. For projects in response to this RFP, the indirect budget should not exceed 10% of the direct project budget, and indirect offered as match should similarly not exceed 10% of direct match contributed, unless a higher federally negotiated indirect rate is in place. The LCBP Indirect Policy can be found here: <http://www.lcbp.org/about-us/grants-rfps/grant-toolkit/>
8. The following procurement procedure is applicable to proposals submitted in response to this request if the primary applicant is not a for-profit organization. The purpose is to ensure fair and open competition for purchases supported by the funding. These federal procurement regulations must be followed if LCBP grant funding is to be used to obtain supplies, equipment, or contractual services to complete the proposed workplan:
	* + - Procurement of supplies and services that do not exceed $10,000 may be made without soliciting competitive quotes if the price is considered reasonable.
			- Procurement of supplies, equipment and services that are greater than $10,000 require that the recipient obtain multiple price quotes through a documented competitive process. Good faith efforts to obtain services from disadvantaged business enterprises should also be made, including contacting the Small Business Administration and Minority Business Development Agency to inform them about the opportunity to submit price quotes as part of the competitive process. At least three price quotes for the contract work must be secured. The selected item or service does not need to be the lowest cost if it does not meet your requirements or you can otherwise demonstrate that the higher price offers the “best value.” Justification must be provided for the outcome of the bid process. This process may take place prior to the submission of a proposal for federal funds.