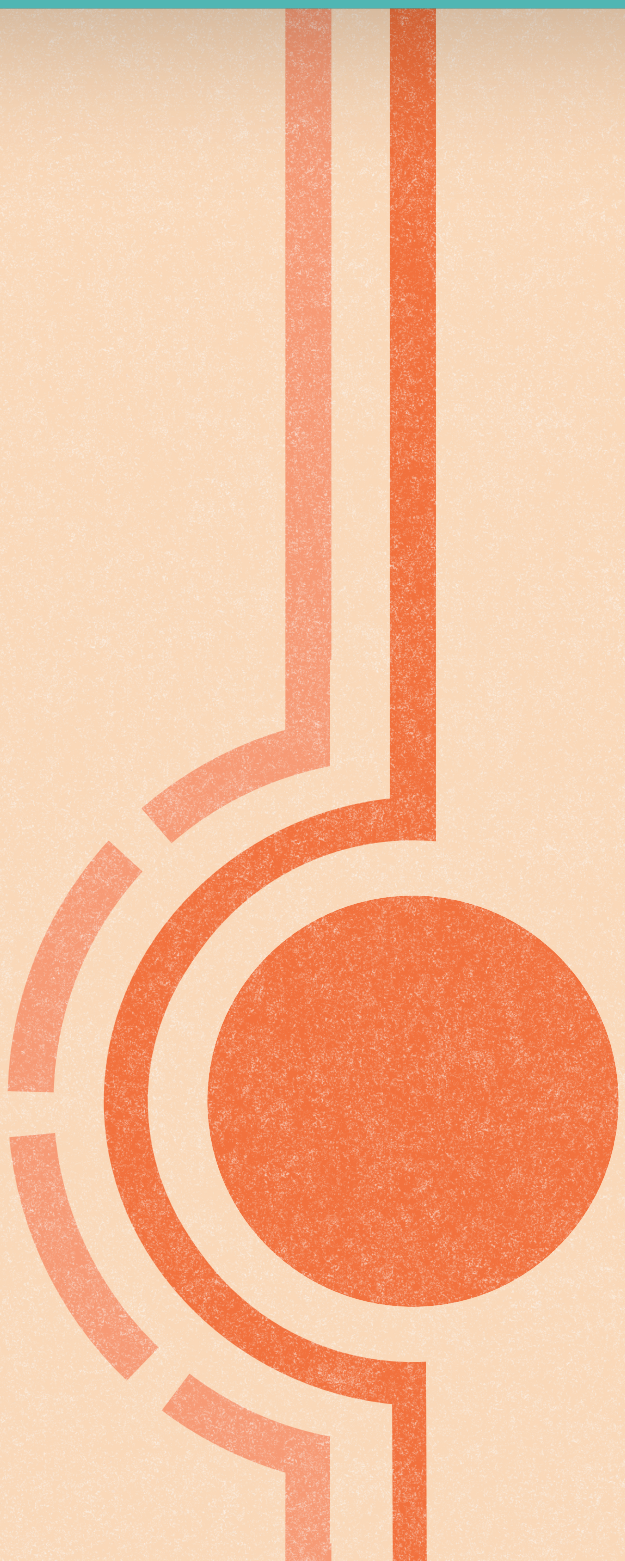
THE SCENIC ROUTE

A Guidebook to Civic Arts Practice



This belongs to...

LANESBORO ARTS

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This guide takes inspiration from Springboard for the Arts' "A Handbook for Artists Working in Community" and "Ready Go Toolkit"

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Reimagining Highway 250

With The Scenic Route: Reimagining Highway 250, Lanesboro Arts is re-igniting the intersection of civic engagement and arts programming in tandem with an upcoming large road construction project. Highway 250, which is the main street through downtown Lanesboro, will be the location for this construction in 2027-28. By supporting artist projects that celebrate downtown Lanesboro in new ways, Lanesboro Arts hopes to change the narrative from one of uncertainty to one of opportunity!

Lanesboro Arts invites artists and community members to apply to host their own artistic activation of the space, whether through installation, performance, or other creative programming.

Between 10 – 20 artist-led projects will be supported for $500 – $1500 each to address the the following criteria and goals:

- Create connection, beauty, and pride in downtown Lanesboro.
- Encourage visitors and residents to stop, shop, and linger downtown.
- Foster collaboration and relationship building across sectors despite, amid, and because of the disruptions of downtown construction.
- Spark conversation around construction, maintenance, and building for Lanesboro's future.

Project proposals will be evaluated by a panel of Lanesboro Arts Staff, local business owners, and working artists. Applications will be reviewed on the basis of potential for engagement or local residents and businesses, alignment with The Scenic Route's goals (as seen above), creativity, and feasibility.

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The Application

The project application will ask for a brief project proposal, including information about the intended location, audience, goals, and timeline. The first fifty applicants who submit a full, completed application will receive a $75 seed stipend, in recognition of the time, energy, and care that went into the application process. This is offered by Lanesboro Arts in good faith, and the organization trusts that applicants will respond in kind with the quality and thoughtfulness of their submissions.

Priority in reviewing applications will be given to residents of Fillmore County, as well as BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and/or disabled individuals. Priority will also be given to projects which engage with, promote, or otherwise uplift downtown Lanesboro businesses.

Eligibility

- Project applications may not come from non-profit organizations, businesses, or churches. However, these entities are encouraged to partner with an applying artist.
- Each individual or team may only apply once. Individuals involved in a team project submission may also submit one individual project submission.
- Applicants do not have to be based in Lanesboro or Fillmore County, Minnesota, however priority will be given to residents of Fillmore County.
- Lanesboro Arts welcomes applicants working in any creative discipline.
- Applicants must submit their application through the online webform on the Lanesboro Arts website.

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Research Component

The Minnesota Department of Transportation, in collaboration with Lanesboro Arts and the Humphrey School of Public Affairs, is conducting the Arts and Culture for Construction Mitigation project. This project aims to explore how to leverage community strengths to mitigate the impacts of highway construction. In Lanesboro, in particular, this project explores whether actively engaging arts and cultural initiatives can help reduce the negative impacts of Highway 250 construction, which begins in 2027. Researchers at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs are evaluating this project.

The purpose of this survey is to gather feedback from participants who submit project proposals to better understand its effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. Findings from this evaluation will help inform adjustments to the current project and the potential replication of similar projects in other communities experiencing construction.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

HUMPHREY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

PROJECT TIMELINE

Last Creative Idea Development Roundtable — DEC 13, 2027

Project Application Priority Deadline — JAN 15, 2027

(Accepting rolling applications until fund depletion)

Project stipends are distributed — MARCH 2027

Time frame for projects to take place — APRIL 2027

NOV 2027

Frequently Asked Questions
Answers for Artists

What is Lanesboro Arts' role in The Scenic Route?

Lanesboro Arts acts as a funder, logistical partner, marketer, and limited project supporter for Scenic Route project artists/creators. Projects must be able to be self-motivated and completed by the applicant. Need more support? Lanesboro Arts will be hosting a series of roundtables while applications are open and as they are being implemented. Refer to the calendar at lanesboroarts.org.

Should projects be long-term or one-time engagements?

Either! For proposals thinking of more than a one-time engagement, ensure your requested project support is sustainable for such.

Can the project be mobile? Flexible? Event-based?

Yes!

Can Lanesboro Arts provide space in the gallery or the St. Mane Theatre?

Lanesboro Arts plans the schedule for the gallery and the St. Mane Theatre several months (often a year) in advance. Lanesboro Arts cannot guarantee space at either of these locations to artists. Artists are welcome to coordinate with Lanesboro Arts staff to work within the existing calendar and programs.

What are unallowable expense for the project stipend?

Activities that violate state, federal, or local law; capital improvement or construction; alcoholic beverages or THC; fundraising; out-of-state travel; activities that are essentially for the religious socialization of the participants or audience.

I want to partner with a local business, but don't know where to start. What should I do?

Lanesboro Arts is happy to help foster connections between artists and local businesses though tending to this relationship is an artist's responsibility. Please reach out to Leah at leah@lanesboroarts.org.

Frequently Asked Questions
Answers for Businesses & Partners

Do project events have to take place at my business?

No, partnerships take many forms and do not rely on you providing a venue.

Do I have to be a part of the application process?

No, but you can! It is up to the artist(s) and you to decide the extent of your collaboration.

Who is my go-to contact during project planning? Lanesboro Arts or the artist(s)?

Project-specific questions can be directed to the artist(s). Questions about The Scenic Route as a whole can be directed to Lanesboro Arts staff.

How many projects can I partner with for The Scenic Route?

You are the best judge of your bandwidth, but we recommend focusing on projects that excite you, motivate you, or seem particularly aligned with your needs and interests.

How do we certify an agreement between my business/ organization and the artist(s)?

Lanesboro Arts can provide a basic contract upon request. Email Leah at leah@lanesboroarts.org in order to receive the contract PDF.

Am I guaranteed part of the project stipend as a partner?

No, but business partners are not required to provide resources for free.

I am a part of a business or organization that wants to collaborate with an artist. How can I connect with artists?

To get connected with artists, please reach out to Leah at leah@lanesboroarts.org

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Project Formation

OPPORTUNITY

In relation to the construction of Highway 250, what specific challenge or need will you address in your project?

PURPOSE

What do you hope to achieve? How will you measure your success? Is it qualifiable or quantifiable?

CONTEXT

How does it relate to other projects, programs, and plans in Lanesboro? Does it fill any gaps or create new connections?

WHAT?

What is the action or activity?

WHO?

Who leads? Who participates?

WHERE?

Where will it take place? Are you collaborating with a local business?

WHEN?

What time of day, and for how long? What time of year?

WHY?

How does it address your project goals?

YOUR TOOLKIT

Fill in each ring of the circle according to the three categories: you (your skills, passions, and internal resources), close circle (resources from your friends, family, coworkers), and community (public resources, local businesses, local government)



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Budget Planning

REQUESTED PROJECT SUPPORT ($500 – $1,500) $_____

Labor: consider all involved (artists, contractors, facilitators) $

Art Materials: paint, brushes, fabric, wood, etc. $

Equipment: purchased or rented $

Food & Refreshments: water, granola bars, coffee, etc. $

Marketing: social media posts, posters, postcards $

Miscellaneous: venue rentals, mileage, etc. $

+

TOTAL BUDGETED:

COLLABORATIVE CRITIQUE

Asking for Feedback

Find a fellow artist, community member, or someone totally blind to the project. Set a timer for 60 seconds, and give an "elevator pitch" for your proposal. Afterwards, ask the following questions.

What stood out during the pitch?

Record answers below.

What needs more clarity?

Record answers below.

Is this project plausible? Can it be done in the given capacity, time, and budget?

Record answers below

QUICK LINKS

General Project Page

Project Application Page

Application PDF

About Construction - City of Lanesboro

Handbook for Artists Working in Community - Springboard for the Arts

Ready Go Toolkit - Springboard for the Arts