

# REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

**PROJECT TITLE: 80 Audubon Street Renovation Plan**

**ISSUING ENTITY: Creative Arts Workshop**

**RELEASE DATE: 6/05/2026**

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 7/10/2026**

**Contact / Submission Email: [lbubello@creativeartsworkshop.org](mailto:lbubello@creativeartsworkshop.org)**

**Contact Person: Leslie Bubello**

**Phone: (203) 641 6899**

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## **1. PROJECT OVERVIEW & BACKGROUND**

### **1.1 Creative Arts Workshop**

Creative Arts Workshop, founded in 1961, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit community arts organization located in New Haven's Audubon Arts District. CAW's mission is to foster creativity through the visual arts and to make arts education accessible to all. Our motto, *"To create freely is to live fully,"* guides our commitment to serving diverse communities.

CAW serves residents of the Greater New Haven area through a wide range of accessible arts programming. We offer over 200 classes and workshops for all ages, including painting, drawing, sculpture, ceramics, book arts, weaving, jewelry, metalworking, and photography. CAW also runs public programs that promote cultural engagement and lifelong learning. These include free art-making activities at festivals such as New Haven's Night Market and Cherry Blossom Festival, family workshops, open studio events, and artist talks.

Our Hilles Gallery, open to the public free of charge, hosts exhibitions that showcase emerging and established artists, who live and work in Greater New Haven communities. The gallery serves as a vibrant anchor for community connection and dialogue through the arts.

We are requesting Statements of Qualifications (SOQ) from licensed architectural firms to provide design services for the complete redesign and renovation of the building.

This Request for Qualification is the first step in our selection process with the goal of ensuring fairness, transparency, and equal opportunity while securing the highest quality professional service for a fair and reasonable fee. This project is funded through the Community Investment Fund and administered by the CT Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD). Respondents are expected to comply with all CT State bidding requirements. Creative Arts Workshop actively seeks and encourages the participation of certified Small, Minority, and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (SMWBEs) in this bidding process.

## **1.2 Project Description**

- **Location: 80 Audubon Street, New Haven**
- **Estimated Budget: \$200,000**
- **Square Footage: 22,000**
- **Key Constraints: Must meet SHPO requirements as a historic building. Design within the current building envelope.**

The 22,000-square-foot facility, built in 1972, is a cornerstone of New Haven's Audubon Arts District and the last remaining community art school in the city. Most of the systems are original, hence the functionality of the building is compromised by decades of deferred maintenance and legacy technology. While a thorough and complete assessment is required, previous surveys have identified several major systems and structural areas in need of immediate and long-term attention.

These identified priorities include:

- Electrical upgrades, including the main service, branch circuitry, and end-use capacity.
- Complete remediation of the failing roof including insulation, membrane, and flashing around skylights.
- Installation of a new air conditioning and ventilation system and improved user controls and energy efficiency.
- Replacement of the original circa 1972 elevator, now at the end of its functional life.
- Modernization of the front door assembly and ADA-compliant entryway systems.
- Implementation of a secure lock and key system to enhance access control and building safety.
- Updates to an outdated plumbing system, many parts of which are original to the building's 1970s-era construction.
- Repairs to the exterior masonry, stone wall cap, sidewalk, and patio.

Additional interior work will be essential, including reconfiguration of space for effective programming and replacement of the building's single-pane windows that lack thermal insulation and must be replaced to improve both energy efficiency and comfort for artists and students throughout the year.

In tandem with the building assessment and redesign, Creative Arts Workshop is undertaking a comprehensive market assessment surveying the Greater New Haven community. The results of this

qualitative and quantitative study will be used to prioritize and potentially reconfigure the final building design to align CAW's physical infrastructure to programming and community needs. The culmination of these two assessments will be the creation of a Master Plan for CAW which is responsive to the needs of the community and makes a compelling case for both DECD grants and future capital campaigns.

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## *2. SCOPE OF SERVICES*

*The selected architectural firm will conduct a comprehensive review of:*

- *Roof*
- *HVAC systems*
- *Elevator*
- *Electrical and Plumbing systems*
- *Energy Efficiency*
- *Accessibility*
- *Structural Stability*
- *Building Envelope*

*The selected architectural firm will manage all phases of design. Areas to be reimaged based on a thorough needs assessment include:*

- *The main entrance*
- *Galleries, administrative offices and other public spaces*
- *Potentially create a flexible performance space*
- *Studio space planning & reconfiguration*

*Deliverables*

- *Comprehensive Conditions Report*
- *Schematic design and donor-facing 3D renderings for fundraising support*
- *Local permitting, and historical/zoning compliance*
- *Cost estimates*
- *Grant compliance documentation*
- *Timeline of construction*

### 3. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Submissions must not exceed 20 pages and must include:

- **Cover Letter and statement of interest.**
- **Firm Profile: Overview of the firm's history with community, educational, or cultural projects.**
- **Relevant Project Experience: 3 to 5 past projects showcasing arts education spaces, community centers, or creative adaptive reuse completed within the last 7 years.**
- **Team Qualifications: Resumes of key staff**
- **Availability and projected timeline for building assessment and redesign**
- **Value-Engineering Approach: A narrative detailing how the firm designs cost-effective, high-impact spaces within tight non-profit budgets.**
- **References: Contact information for at least three non-profit or institutional clients.**

Each responding firm shall submit one complete electronic package with all required materials via email to [lbubello@creativeartsworkshop.org](mailto:lbubello@creativeartsworkshop.org).

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### 4. TIMELINE

- **RFQ Issuance Date: June 5, 2026**
  - **Submission Deadline: July 10**
  - **Interviews with Shortlisted Firms: Week of 7/20/2026**
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## 5. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Our selection committee and Board of Directors will evaluate submissions based on the following weighted criteria:

<b><i>Evaluation Factor</i></b>	<b><i>Weight</i></b>
<b><i>Previous experience with Connecticut state funded grants (DECD/CIF)</i></b>	<b><i>35%</i></b>
<b><i>Previous experience with nonprofit organizations and those in the arts</i></b>	<b><i>25%</i></b>
<b><i>Experience with Historic Buildings and SHPO compliance</i></b>	<b><i>20%</i></b>
<b><i>Interviews with references</i></b>	<b><i>10%</i></b>
<b><i>Fundraising Support: Experience creating high-quality visual renderings to help secure donor funding.</i></b>	<b><i>10%</i></b>

The top 3 scoring RFQ's will be selected for formal interviews. Following interviews, the committee will ask selected firms to prepare a Proposal.

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## 6. INSTRUCTIONS & CONTACT INFORMATION

*All questions regarding this RFQ must be submitted in writing via email.*

- **Contact Person: Leslie Bubello, Project Manager**
- **Email Address: [lbubello@creativeartsworkshop.org](mailto:lbubello@creativeartsworkshop.org)**
- **Phone Number: (203) 641 6899**

*Creative Arts Workshop reserves the right to reject any or all submissions and to select the firm that best aligns with our community mission and financial parameters.*