

Request for Expressions of Interest for Artscape Weston Hub

AN OPEN CALL TO:

Individual Artists; Arts Groups; Not-for-profit Arts,
Cultural and Community Organizations



SUBMISSION
Friday
March 18th
5:00 PM
DEADLINE



*If you have questions or require
translation or accessibility support
for this document, contact us at:*
416-392-1038 x57
weston@artscape.ca

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Please submit responses online at:
artscapeweston.ca/reoi-submission-form

Or by hard copy (not by fax) to:
ARTSCAPE
ATTN: Gil Meslin
171 East Liberty Street, Suite 224
Toronto, Ontario M6K 3P6

1. Request for Expressions of Interest Overview

Slated to open in late 2018, Artscape Weston Hub will be a dynamic, publicly accessible space, enlivened and activated by arts and culture in the Weston community of Toronto. Artscape Weston Hub will be a community cultural hub composed of an indoor programming space, an outdoor programming space and affordable housing for artists. It will seek to maximize community benefit, providing a platform for arts programming that is accessible to the entire community, and that responds to the social and cultural diversity of the community.

Artscape is currently seeking expressions of interest from individual artists, arts groups and not-for-profit arts, cultural and community organizations that see themselves as potential *Program Providers* or *Tenants* at Artscape Weston Hub. We would like to understand your space needs, the scope of your operations and programming, and the ways in which you would anticipate contributing to Artscape Weston Hub and the Weston community.

Through this Request for Expressions of Interest, Artscape has two aims:

- ◆ **TO SHARE INFORMATION WITH YOU** – about the opportunity to be a part of realizing the vision for Artscape Weston Hub
- ◆ **TO LEARN FROM YOU** – how do you, as individual artists, arts groups and/or not-for-profit arts, cultural and community organizations, see yourself being a part of Artscape Weston Hub; what would you propose to do or offer and what type of space or facility would you need to make that happen?

We want to hear from both potential partners within the local community, as well as a broad range of individual artists, arts groups and not-for-profit arts, cultural and community organizations who provide programs from across Toronto's arts community.

Responses to this Request for Expressions of Interest will be used to:

- ◆ **IDENTIFY** both potential programming partners and tenants
- ◆ **DEVELOP** a refined vision, operating plan and physical building design for Artscape Weston Hub

Below, you will find a description of the two types of opportunities for which we are seeking interest. Individual artists, arts groups and not-for-profit arts, cultural and community organizations are invited to identify how they will fulfill any or a combination of these roles, by themselves or in partnership with others.

Opportunity 1: Program Providers

PROGRAM PROVIDERS will be individual artists, arts groups or not-for-profit arts, cultural or community organizations offering their own regular or occasional programs in the facility, but **will not** operate full-time from the building as a *Tenant*. We are interested in hearing from potential *Program Providers* for both the indoor programming space at Artscape Weston Hub, as well as the associated outdoor programming space.

A few examples of what a *Program Provider* might be include:

- ◆ An individual artist looking for space to run a workshop
- ◆ A community cultural group looking for a venue for a regular meet-up
- ◆ A community theatre group seeking a venue for a show
- ◆ An organization looking for a space from which to offer programming to the Weston community
- ◆ A community cultural group putting on a community festival or celebration

Opportunity 2: Tenants

TENANTS will be arts, cultural or community organizations who are leaseholders of space within the building, operating full-time from the building and also offering their own regular programs. *Tenants must be* registered not-for-profit or charitable organizations.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST IS NOT AN APPLICATION FOR SPACE.

We encourage you to respond so that you have the opportunity to get involved in the project at this early, ground-breaking stage. Responses will support Artscape in understanding the potential programmatic elements and further develop the vision for Artscape Weston Hub.

Schedule

It is expected that the Request for Expressions of Interest assessment process will be completed by the end of May 2016. The following milestones outline the process timeline as currently defined:

	Date	Time
Request for Expressions of Interest Release	February 4, 2016	
Information Session #1	Wednesday, February 24, 2016, York West Active Living Centre , 1901 Weston Road at Lawrence Ave W.	8:30 AM – 10:00 AM
Information Session #2	Thursday, March 3, 2016, York West Active Living Centre , 1901 Weston Road at Lawrence Ave W.	2:00 PM – 3:30 PM
Information Session #3	Tuesday, March 15, 2015, York West Active Living Centre , 1901 Weston Road at Lawrence Ave W.	6:30 PM – 8:00 PM
Submission Deadline	March 18, 2016	5:00 PM
Submission Review	March/April 2016	
Update Project Vision	April/May 2016	
Community Town Hall <i>(updated project vision shared with the community)</i>	Spring/Summer 2016	
Expected Occupancy	2018	

Next Steps

Following the submission review process, Artscape will notify all those who have submitted an expression of interest of the next steps, which will include an invited or open-call Request for Proposals process.

2.Artscape Weston Hub

Introduction – The Project

Artscape Weston Hub is an exciting component of a major redevelopment that is central to plans for Weston’s long-term renewal. The project will leverage the power of arts and culture to support and catalyze social, cultural and economic revitalization.

Artscape Weston Hub will transform ground floor space in the podium of an existing high-rise apartment building, located just east of Weston Road between King and John Streets, north of Lawrence Avenue West. The project also includes the redevelopment of a surplus parking lot as public outdoor programming space. Artscape Weston Hub is part of a larger development by the Rockport Group, which will also see the addition of approximately 350 new rental homes to the site.

The community cultural hub will consist of:

1. An **indoor programming space** of approximately 8,200 square feet that will be operated by Artscape. The community cultural hub’s indoor spaces will provide a venue for public arts programming and space for not-for-profit arts, cultural and community organizations.
2. An adjacent **outdoor programming space** of about 12,400 square feet that will be programmed by Artscape as well as its tenants and program partners. It will serve as a community gathering place, including for the organizers of the Weston Farmers’ Market and other groups planning community events/uses.
3. **26 affordable housing units** for artist-led families, and managed by Artscape.

This Request for Expressions of Interest focuses on the first two components of Artscape Weston Hub: the **indoor programming space** and the **outdoor programming space**. Tenanting of the 26 affordable housing units for artists will be completed through a separate process, beginning in 2017.

The Artscape Weston Hub website is at artscapeweston.ca. A gallery of images can be found at: <https://artscapeweston.ca/more-info/gallery/>.



Operating Model

The budget for Artscape Weston Hub is built on a social enterprise model and ongoing operations will not be City-funded. Artscape is fundraising to create an operating subsidy that will support making Artscape Weston Hub accessible to all community members.

Community Context

History

The development of a community cultural hub has been a longstanding ambition in the Weston community. In 2010 the City of Toronto retained Artscape to conduct a feasibility study for a community cultural hub in Weston and Mount Dennis. The engagement process found significant support in the community for new creative and cultural infrastructure, and in its 2011 report to the City, Artscape identified the Toronto Parking Authority lot at 22 John Street as a potential development site.

Subsequent research and initiatives, notably a community design session and a report by the Urban Land Institute's Technical Assistance Panel, as well as the City of Toronto's Weston 2021 Revitalization Strategy in 2012, revealed support for arts and culture playing a role in the revitalization of the Weston/Mount Dennis area.

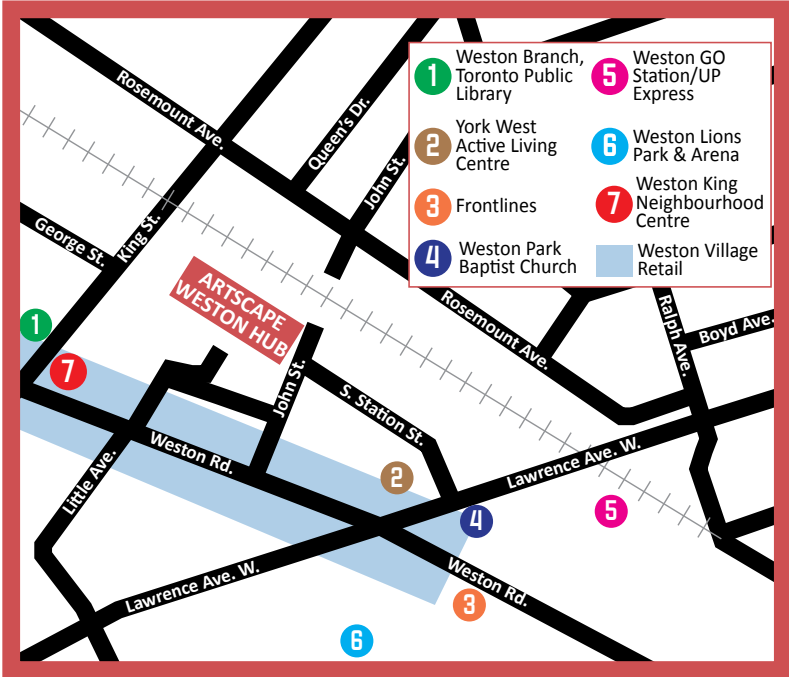
Community

Located in Toronto's northwest, near Weston Road and Lawrence Avenue West, Artscape Weston Hub will serve the communities of Weston and Mount Dennis, as well as the larger district of York South-Weston. The Weston neighbourhood, where Artscape Weston Hub will be located, is a community of close to 20,000 people. Weston has a rich history, dating back over 200 years, and historic Weston Village remains at the heart of the community. The neighbourhood is also well-connected, served by several TTC bus routes, the Weston GO Station and a stop for the Union Pearson Express.

The Weston community is socially and culturally diverse, and has been a receiving and settling area for immigrants from across the globe. It is a community with many young people – there are close to 3,200 children and 2,400 youth living here. Weston has also been identified by the City of Toronto as a Neighbourhood Improvement Area, where many residents face inequities in terms of access and opportunity, and local vulnerable populations include single parent families, seniors 65+ and living alone, and households on social assistance.

The Weston community possesses a strong sense of identity and pride, and seeks opportunity and revitalization. The community needs more access to spaces that can house events, performances, exhibitions, classes, art studios and more. By attracting and anchoring a critical mass of creative people, organizations and activity, Artscape Weston Hub will play an important role in catalyzing the expected revitalization of the Weston community.

The following map illustrates some of the organizational and community assets near the location of Artscape Weston Hub.



Evolving Project Vision

Artscape has been developing Artscape Weston Hub's vision in response to the needs, dreams and aspirations of Weston's community stakeholders since the vision for a community cultural hub took root in 2010.

Through these conversations, **three clear themes** about the potential and vision for Artscape Weston Hub have begun to emerge. These themes provide an expression of the community's key interests and so should inform your submission:

Themes

- ✦ *Artscape Weston Hub is a gathering place that welcomes and is open to the whole of this community.*
- ✦ *Artscape Weston Hub is a platform for creative talent and participation, a supportive home for creative people and organizations and a place that celebrates and reflects this diverse community's histories, cultures and traditions.*
- ✦ *Artscape Weston Hub is a vibrant creative community that stimulates economic revitalization and builds community pride and confidence.*

The submissions received through this Request for Expressions of Interest process will further refine Artscape Weston Hub's evolving vision.

Spaces and Uses

Spaces

The indoor programming space component of Artscape Weston Hub will be approximately 8,200 square feet. It is likely that the types of spaces will include:

TENANT SPACES: leased space from which not-for-profit arts, cultural and community organizations could be based and operate

FLEXIBLE SPACES: multi-purpose spaces adaptable to a range of arts and community program delivery needs

PROGRAMMING AND RELATED SPACES: multi-purpose spaces suited to exhibitions, rehearsals, performances, events and festivals

In addition to the indoor programming space, the outdoor programming space will be equipped for a variety of programming, including outdoor markets, performances, community events, festivals and outdoor art exhibitions.

Responses to this Request for Expressions of Interest will help us determine and finalize the exact balance, type and size of spaces within the indoor programming space.

Uses

A recent community visioning survey assessed some of the potential uses, listed below, that might take place in Artscape Weston Hub. These proposed uses should not deter you from developing other potential ideas for arts programming at Artscape Weston Hub:

- ◆ Community events and festivals
- ◆ Workshops and classes
- ◆ Performances (music, dance, theatre, spoken word, etc.)
- ◆ Training for young people wanting to work in music, film, fashion, photography, etc.
- ◆ Arts exhibitions and showings
- ◆ Meetings and other activities in bookable rooms
- ◆ Assistance/incubation for people wanting to start new cultural businesses

A fuller discussion of outcomes from the community visioning survey can be found on the project website:

<http://j.mp/weston-survey-results>

3. Roles

Operator

Artscape

Artscape is a not-for-profit urban development organization that makes space for creativity and transforms communities. Artscape will be the facility operator, and will have legal and financial responsibility for the operations of Artscape Weston Hub. artscape.ca

Project Partners

Rockport Group

The Rockport Group is the development partner for Artscape Weston Hub, having enlisted Artscape to lead the community cultural hub component of the larger redevelopment taking place on John Street. rockportgroup.net

City of Toronto, Affordable Housing Office

The Affordable Housing Office expedites affordable housing development, facilitates policy development and partners with the federal and provincial governments and the private and voluntary sectors on a range of initiatives. toronto.ca/affordablehousing

The Weston Community

Local residents, organizations, businesses and community leaders have been directly involved in the development of the community cultural hub concept since the origins of the project in 2010. Artscape will continue to develop the vision for Artscape Weston Hub with the local community. The Weston community will eventually contribute to guiding the operations of the hub through participation in advisory and steering committees, the details of which will be established in a community stewardship plan.

Artscape Weston Hub Steering Committee

The Artscape Weston Hub Steering Committee guides our community consultations process. The members of this committee are:

Laura Alderson (*Vice-chair, Weston Village Residents' Association; community member*)

Debra Baptiste (*Artscape Board member; arts administrator*)

Mike Fenton (*Executive Director, ACG*)

Rosa Fracassa (*Professor, George Brown College; community member*)

Marlene McKintosh (*Executive Director, UrbanArts*)

Suri Weinberg-Linsky (*Local business owner; community member*)

Shadya Yasin (*Coordinator, York Youth Coalition; community member*)

4. Submission Process

Step 1: Attend an Information Session

Information sessions will take place at York West Active Living Centre, 1901 Weston Rd, Toronto, and will be held on three dates:

- 1. Wednesday, February 24th, 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM**
- 2. Thursday, March 3rd, 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM**
- 3. Tuesday, March 15th, 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM**

Sessions will consist of a 30-minute presentation on the project context and vision for Artscape Weston Hub, a question-and-answer period about the Request for Expressions of Interest process and a guided tour of the future site of the facility and outdoor space.

It isn't necessary to RSVP. If you have any questions, please email Gil Meslin, Research and Development Manager at Weston@Artscape.ca or call **416-392-1038 x57**.

If you are planning to respond to the Request for Expressions of Interest, we strongly recommend that you attend an information session. If you are unable to attend an information session, please note that all questions received at the information sessions will be posted, along with their responses, at <http://artscapeweston.ca/reoi-information-sessions-faq>.

Step 2: Prepare and Submit an Expression of Interest

1. **COMPLETE THE INFORMATION FORM HERE:** artscapeweston.ca/reoi-submission-form (questions are outlined on the online submission platform)

2. **PREPARE AND ATTACH YOUR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

Attach your expression of interest to the online information form. A submission from a Program Provider would not be expected to have the same level of detail as a submission from an organization interested in becoming a Tenant. A suggested structure for your submission is provided below:

FOR NOT-FOR-PROFIT/CHARITABLE ARTS, CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

(4 pages maximum):

- ◆ A description of what role you think you could play at Artscape Weston Hub: what will you do/offer; how will this add value to the facility and vision; how do you propose to interact with other users/tenants; what leadership roles can you play
- ◆ A description of the program(s) you propose to offer at Artscape Weston Hub: how frequently will your program be offered; who are your target audiences/participants
- ◆ An outline of your space requirements, including how many square feet you might require and any technical specifications and needs for the space (e.g., lighting, sound, plumbing, ventilation, etc.)
- ◆ A description of how you will use the space, providing detail on the nature of your arts programming or artistic practice
- ◆ Your approach to this project, and how you are responding to the evolving community vision for Artscape Weston Hub ([see page 5](#))
- ◆ A description of your organization: what is your vision, mandate and mission
- ◆ A description of your not-for-profit or charitable status
- ◆ A history of your organization, including years of operation, range of project types/programs offered, awards, prizes and any other relevant information
- ◆ Description of your specific experience with the Weston community, if any

FOR INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS AND ARTS GROUPS *(2 pages maximum):*

- ◆ A description of the program(s) you propose to offer at Artscape Weston Hub: what will you do/offer; how frequently will your program be offered; who are your target audiences/participants; what leadership roles can you play
- ◆ An outline of your space requirements, including how many square feet you might require and any technical specifications and needs for the space (e.g., lighting, sound, etc.)
- ◆ A description of your background, with respect to your program offering(s) and your area of artistic or cultural practice
- ◆ History on your program(s) – how long has it been offered, how has it grown or changed, and any other relevant information
- ◆ Description of your specific experience with the Weston community, if any

5. Submission Review

Following the deadline, the Artscape Weston Hub Steering Committee will review your ideas for programs and tenancy in the context of the emerging project vision and the potential for local impact:

Vision

Is the submission consistent with the emerging vision for the community cultural hub?

Local Impact

Does the submission respond to the social and cultural diversity of the community and the wider city in relation to its operations, program activities and approaches to community development/outreach?

In particular, would the submission make a substantial contribution towards:

- ◆ Providing and/or facilitating excellence in a wide range of arts forms and artistic/cultural expression
- ◆ Supporting a platform for local expressions of artistic and cultural practice
- ◆ Fostering a community gathering/connecting place
- ◆ Celebrating and learning about Weston's history and diverse communities
- ◆ Contributing to a socially inclusive Weston community
- ◆ Nurturing exchange and dialogue among individuals exploring creativity

Submissions should attempt to address these areas (Vision and Local Impact) in their expressions of interest, in relation to their proposed role at Artscape Weston Hub.

The Steering Committee will organize submissions according to their fit with Artscape Weston Hub's vision and operating model, and will then identify and organize the implications of those submissions, in terms of space and facility requirements. The updated project vision will be shared with the community at a Community Town Hall in Spring/Summer 2016.

6. Limitations

A submission to this Request for Expressions of Interest does not represent an agreement or contract between the individual artist, arts group or not-for-profit organization and Artscape, or vice versa, in relation to subsequent processes related to programming partnerships or tenancy at Artscape Weston Hub.

For further information, the full limitations can be found at this link: <http://artscapeweston.ca/reoi-full-limitations>