



CALL FOR ARTISTS

Semi-Quincentennial Public Art Contest & Exhibit

June 2026

Call for Art: Semi-Quincentennial Public Art Contest & Exhibit

Presented by the Los Alamos Art in Public Places Board (APPB) in partnership with Step Up Gallery

Where: Step Up Gallery, Mesa Public Library, Los Alamos, NM

When: Exhibit opens June XX 2026

What: Community voting & possible art acquisition by APPB

Celebrate 250 Years of the Nation with Your Art!

To commemorate the 250th anniversary of the United States, the Los Alamos Art in Public Places Board (APPB) is teaming up with Step Up Gallery to host a community-centered public art contest and exhibit and we want *you* to be part of it!

This informal and fun exhibit is a great opportunity to showcase your original work in a public gallery, connect with the community, and potentially have your piece acquired as part of the County's public art collection.

Theme:

- Works should reflect a Semi-Quincentennial spirit—a celebration of 250 years of the United States.
- Consider how history, heritage, community, and hope shape our shared story and inspire the future. Artists are encouraged to explore personal or regional narratives, symbols of resilience, or moments of connection that capture the meaning of this milestone.
- For inspiration, check out the New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs Semi-Quincentennial Commission's web page at: <https://www.nm1776.org/>

Key Dates:

- **Submission Deadline:** April 20, 2026; 5:00 pm
- **Jury Selections Announced:** May 11, 2026
- **Opening Reception:** Saturday, June 20, 2026 from 2:00–4:00 p.m. Open to all!
- **Exhibit Dates:** June 19–July 23, 2026
- **Public Voting Ends:** June 27, 2026 ??
- **Possible Acquisition by APPB:** July 2026 (Not guaranteed; if selected for acquisition, the artist and Los Alamos County will enter into a formal purchase agreement prior to payment)

Process:

1. Submit images of your original, gallery-ready artwork digitally for initial jury review.
2. A “double-blind” jury of 3–7 community members (not professional art jurors) will review submissions and select works for the exhibition in Step Up Gallery.

3. All pieces will be reviewed for quality, appropriateness, and value.
4. Selected works will be displayed at Step Up Gallery for public voting.
5. Based on community votes and APPB review, up to two works may receive acquisition offers of \$2,500 each. Please note however, final acquisition decisions rest with the Los Alamos County Council.

Artwork Criteria:

- Original work only
- Artists must represent their own work
- 2D and 3D work welcome
- Size limit: 48" in any dimension (including frame)
- Max weight: 35 pounds
- Must be ready to hang or display and safe for public viewing
- Family-friendly content only
- Artwork will be evaluated based on the following APPB standards:
 - Permanence (at least 20-year expected life)
 - Public visibility and impact
 - Quality, safety, and minimal maintenance
 - Appropriateness for public display
 - Relevance to theme

Submission Format:

To be considered for inclusion in the exhibition, artists must submit the following by 5:00 pm April 20, 2026:

1. Digital Images of Artwork

- File type: JPEG or PNG
- Resolution: High-quality (300 DPI recommended)
- File size: Max 5MB per image
- File name format: LastName_Title_Medium_Size.jpg
 - Example: Garcia_FreedomFlight_Acrylic_24x36.jpg

2. Artwork Details

- Artist name
- Title of work
- Medium
- Dimensions (H x W x D)
- Year created
- Valuation (must be \$2,500 or more to be considered for acquisition)
- Brief statement about the piece

3. Submission Method

- Complete and email the entry form to: **[Step Up or Chelsea??]**
- Add your last name to the beginning of the file name when submitting.
- Forms and full guidelines will be available at:

- Step Up Gallery website: [\[Insert Link\]](#)
- Los Alamos County website: [\[Insert Link\]](#)

Note: Art must be valued at \$2,500 or more as determined by the artist and jury. No formal appraisals will be conducted.

Legal & Liability Info:

By submitting artwork, you agree to the following:

- You allow Los Alamos County, APPB, and Step Up Gallery to use images of your artwork for promotional purposes.
- You release the County (including all members of APPB), library staff, and gallery managers from liability in the event of theft or damage to your artwork.
- You understand and accept that the jury, APPB, and gallery staff may reject any submission without explanation.

Selling Your Work:

Artists may choose to list their work for sale to the public (separate from any potential County acquisition).

- All sales must be handled directly by the artist
- Artist's contact info will appear on the wall tag (email and cell recommended)
- Sold pieces should remain on display through the end of the exhibit
- Artists are responsible for collecting and reporting their own sales tax

Selected Artwork Delivery & Pick-Up:

Delivery:

- Date: June 13, 2026 and June 15, 2026
- Time: Between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.
- Location: Step Up Gallery, Mesa Public Library 2400 Central Ave., Los Alamos
 - Label back of artwork with: artist's name, phone number, and artwork title.

Pick-up:

- Date: July 25, 2026 and July 26, 2026
- Time: Between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

Questions

Please direct any questions to:

Chelsea Ashcraft

(505) 662-8261

chelsea.ashcraft@lacnm.us

The Los Alamos County Art in Public Places Board serves in an advisory capacity and makes recommendations to the County Council, who has the authority to accept or reject the APP Board's recommendations.