



Call for Curators
The Gallery at the Attucks
Proposal Deadline: December 8, 2026
First Exhibition Installed: April 2027

Norfolk Arts invites proposals from independent and emerging curators for exhibitions at The Gallery at the Attucks, now entering its second year of programming.

The primary goal for the upcoming exhibition cycle is to significantly increase audience attendance. We are seeking curators who can create dynamic, relevant, and culturally resonant exhibitions that attract large, diverse audiences, activate the gallery, and strengthen the Attucks as a vibrant cultural destination.

At the same time, Norfolk Arts is committed to supporting curators and their professional growth. We welcome curators at all stages of their careers — including emerging curators — who want to expand their portfolios, develop new ideas, and gain hands-on experience working with artists, municipal arts staff, and the public.

About the Gallery at The Attucks

The historic Attucks Theatre, built in 1919, is the oldest remaining Black-owned and Black-built theater in the U.S. Known as the “Apollo of the South,” it hosted legendary performers including Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald, Nat King Cole, and Bessie Smith. Today, the Attucks remains a living monument to Black creativity, excellence, and resilience.

In 2025, Norfolk Arts launched The Gallery at the Attucks, presenting two highly attended group exhibitions. We are now expanding this initiative by inviting curators to shape the next phase of programming — with a strong emphasis on audience growth, community impact, and curatorial development.

What We’re Looking For

Norfolk Arts seeks curated group exhibitions that:

- Feature 7 or more artists with strong ties to Hampton Roads
- Present contemporary work that resonates with the Attucks’ cultural legacy
- Demonstrate a clear strategy for attracting large, diverse audiences
- Include at least one public program beyond the opening (talks, workshops, performances, etc.)
- Strengthen the gallery’s visibility, reputation, and community relevance
- Offer curators a meaningful opportunity to advance their practice and build their careers

Because the Attucks Theatre is a nationally significant Black-built and Black-led cultural landmark, we warmly encourage Black curators — along with curators whose work centers culturally diverse art, history, and creative expression — to apply. Our goal is to fully integrate art exhibitions into the Attucks in ways that *honor, preserve, and uplift* the cultural legacy of the space. This aligns with the Attucks’ historic mission and ensures the gallery remains rooted in the community it serves.

We especially welcome proposals that include partnerships, cross-disciplinary ideas, or programming designed to bring new audiences into the Attucks while deepening its cultural resonance.

Timeline

- Proposal Deadline: December 8, 2026, 11:59 PM
- Notification: By January 8, 2027
- Installation: First exhibition in mid-April 2027
- Next exhibitions scheduled every 6 months

Exhibition Structure

- Norfolk Arts will select one or more proposals for exhibitions lasting 6 months.
- Preference will be given to proposals that include programs to help grow the gallery’s visibility and community engagement.

Budget & Curator Responsibilities

- Curator Stipend: \$1,500
- Up to \$3,500 will be divided between seven or more artists in the exhibition
- Norfolk Arts will manage general exhibition costs and opening celebration
- No other funding is available for travel or shipping
- Norfolk Arts staff and contractors will handle physical installation; curators will collaborate on final placement.
- Selected curators must provide:
 - A finalized exhibition checklist
 - A draft floor plan
 - A 300-word introductory exhibition text
 - A 200-word text for each participating artist

Proposal Guidelines

Curators who are also practicing artists are welcome to apply but may not include their own artwork in the exhibition.

Submit all materials to karen.rudd@norfolk.gov

- CV (3 pages max, PDF or DOC)
- Artist bios (approx. 200 words each, PDF or DOC)
- Exhibition proposal (2 pages max, PDF or DOC)
- Work sample index listing artist name, title, year, media, and dimensions
 - (Works listed do not need to be the final exhibited pieces)

Installation & Presentation Requirements

- All works must be exhibition-ready with secure hanging hardware (no sawtooth hangers).
- There is no space for 3D artwork. 2D works must weigh under 50 lbs.
- Video/digital work must include all required display equipment. A flat screen monitor TV is available.
- Artists are responsible for delivery, pickup, and shipping costs.
- Norfolk Arts reserves the right to exclude works that do not meet professional standards or differ significantly from submitted materials.

Insurance & Liability

While reasonable care will be taken, The Attucks Theatre and its partners are not responsible for damage or loss during shipping, delivery, installation, or exhibition. Artists are encouraged to carry their own insurance.

Additional Programming

We welcome ideas for artist talks, workshops, performances, or community engagement events. Please include any programming concepts in your proposal. You must include at least one public program beyond the opening.

Sale of Artwork

- Works may be for sale or not for sale (NFS).
- All works must remain on view for the full exhibition period.
- Sales inquiries will be forwarded directly to the artist.
- Norfolk Arts does not take a commission.

Questions? Karen Rudd Phone: 757-284-8445 Email: karen.rudd@norfolk.gov