**Bloomberg Philanthropies Announces 14 U.S. Cities in the Running to Receive Up to**

**$1 Million in Funding for Public Art Projects that Address Civic Issues**

*Proposals Address a Range of Issues from Sustainability to Immigration* – *Selected Cities Span from Anchorage to Honolulu*

**NEW YORK** – **July 18, 2018** – Bloomberg Philanthropies today announced 14 finalists who could receive up to $1 million each as part of the 2018 Public Art Challenge, a program that aims to foster creative collaboration, address civic issues, and support local economies through public art. More than 200 cities applied with proposals addressing a range of pressing issues and social themes such as community development, environmental sustainability, and cultural identity. Many proposals also address issues like displacement, immigration, natural disaster recovery, and public health and safety. Additionally, the proposals reflect a diverse use of artistic mediums including augmented reality, light installations, murals, and performances.

"This year’s proposals focus on critical issues facing our country in exciting and creative ways,” said Michael R. Bloomberg, founder of Bloomberg Philanthropies and Mayor of New York City 2002-2013. “The Public Art Challenge helps to highlight the role that public art plays in provoking conversation, supporting collaboration, and building strong communities, and we’re looking forward to announcing the winners.”

In February, Bloomberg Philanthropies invited mayors of U.S. cities with 30,000 residents or more to submit proposals for temporary public art projects that address important civic issues, and demonstrate an ability to generate public-private collaborations, celebrate creativity and urban identity, and strengthen local economies. Bloomberg Philanthropies has selected the following 14 cities to advance to the next round for consideration by submitting more detailed plans on their projects.

**Anchorage, AK – Addressing Energy Policy and Economic Development: “SEED Community”**

The City of Anchorage proposes a partnership with the Anchorage Museum to address climate change. The partnership creates “SEED Lab,” a center bringing together artists, designers, engineers, and community members to embed energy efficient solutions into city planning. The partnership will turn a neglected downtown building in the city's nascent design district into a vibrant and vital civic center.

**Austin, TX – Promoting Cultural Equity: “Right to the City”**

The City of Austin proposes filling public parks in underserved communities with artwork to shine a light on cultural equity. The city seeks to encourage collaboration with artists by creating works that reflect the city’s unique cultural heritage and identities. The installations will come together through a partnership with the city, the Contemporary Austin Museum, and artist collective SUPERFLEX.

**Baltimore, MD – Enhancing Public Safety by Reducing Violence: “The Baltimore Resurgence Project”**

The City of Baltimore proposes creating a series of murals and sustainable landscape projects to address public safety in connection with Baltimore’s Violence Reduction Initiative. The proposed project will be a multi-sector collaboration between the Arts & Parks organization, the Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts, and Baltimore's Mayor's Office on Criminal Justice.

**Camden, NJ – Transforming Illegal Dumping Lots into Arts Spaces: “A New View”**

The City of Camden proposes transforming lots currently used for illegal dumping along major transportation highways into spaces with arts programming. Spaces located along the city's downtown transit hub will be converted into multi-purpose community forums to host art installations and provide a visual narrative to the more than 65,000 people who travel through Camden daily.

**Coral Springs, FL – Inspiring Community Healing After Gun Violence: “The Power of Art”**

The City of Coral Springs in partnership with the City of Parkland proposes developing five temporary installations to bring the community together in collective healing and reflection following the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting in February of 2018. The artworks will serve as the community's vision of change and hope for the future. The project will draw on and support Coral Springs Museum of Art's “Healing with Art,” an art therapy program which began as an immediate response to the shooting.

**El Paso, TX – Strengthening Cross-Border Relations between the U.S. and Mexico: “Border Tuner”**

The City of El Paso proposes the development of a large-scale light and sound installation that highlights connections between El Paso in the U.S. and Ciudad Juárez in Mexico. The piece will provide a platform for a wide range of local voices and will be an opportunity to draw international attention to the complexity and interdependence between the sister-cities which create the largest bi-national metropolitan area in the western hemisphere.

**Holyoke, MA – Celebrating Diverse Cultural Identities: “El Corazón de Holyoke/The Heart of Holyoke”**

The City of Holyoke proposes developing visual art, performances, and cultural programming that celebrates the cultural identities of Latinx neighborhoods surrounding the city’s main street. This project aims to use the arts to improve neighborhood perceptions, support cultural pride, and catalyze economic opportunity.

**Honolulu, HI – Shedding Light on Historical Narratives through Public Art: “Layers of Honolulu”**

The City of Honolulu proposes creating augmented reality art experiences layered on ten bronze statues to tell the stories of Hawaiian communities that have been displaced due to colonialism and urban development. The city will also create and add augmented reality to two new temporary statues that honor underrepresented communities.

**Jackson, MS – Inspiring Dialogue about Food Access: “Fertile Ground”**

The City of Jackson proposes a city-wide exhibition with installations and performances to promote dialogue and inform policy related to food access. Installations and performances that explore food sovereignty, nutrition, domestic hunger, and the agrarian landscape will be deployed across areas of the city experiencing food access issues.

**Miami-Dade County, FL – Raising Awareness about Climate Change through Public Art: “Climate Sync Miami”**

Miami-Dade County’s proposal explores the urgent issue of rising seas and its impact on Miami through a series of site-specific temporary public art interventions. The Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs, through its Art in Public Places Program, will commission 8-12 art works. The pieces, by internationally renowned artists and outstanding Miami-based artists, will be placed in 10 neighborhoods throughout Miami and Miami Beach at parks, libraries, and transportation locations.

**Santa Rosa, CA – Exploring Resiliency and Natural Disaster Recovery: “Home”**

The City of Santa Rosa proposes an artist residency program to explore concepts of home and resiliency in the aftermath of the recent and unprecedented wildfire disaster. Artists will be “residents” in active city agencies and have access to historical archives, community programs, and gallery space through a partnership with the Museums of Sonoma County. The residency will conclude with a public art exhibition and installations.

**Seattle, WA – Illuminating Gentrification and Celebrating Identity: “Growing Home”**

The City of Seattle proposes a series of public art installations that celebrate the cultural identities of the city’s Africatown to spark conversation about gentrification. Each structure would represent familiar places that together create a community – a barbershop, a library, a church, a café, and a restaurant. Each site will be formed in partnership with existing or displaced businesses and institutions. To amplify each physical installation, the Young Geniuses, Africatown's youth tech group, will develop a digital platform to crowdsource ideas about the future development on each site.

**St. Louis, MO – Exploring the Legacy of Displacement: “Facing Mill Creek Valley”**

The City of St. Louis proposes a public art exhibition to address displacement. The project will explore the legacy of Mill Creek Valley, a predominantly African-American neighborhood established in the late 19th Century and razed in the 1950s and 60s to make way for the construction of a freeway. Artists will engage with local historians, community leaders, and historical materials to create artworks along a newly developed pedestrian corridor under the freeway.

**Tulsa, OK – Reclaiming History through Public Art*:* “Greenwood Art Project”**

The City of Tulsa proposes a public art project that celebrates a vibrant community in the Historic Greenwood District known as Black Wall Street. Comprised of black-owned businesses that emerged in the early 20th century, in 1921, Black Wall Street was subject to both racially motivated attacks and destructive urban renewal projects in the 1950s. A team of artists will develop artwork that deepens the collective understanding of the Greenwood story.

“This year’s applications reflect a diversity of creativity and exciting experimentation for the public to experience, and the willingness of civic leaders to embrace artists in addressing complex urban challenges.” said Kate D. Levin, head of Bloomberg Philanthropies arts team. “We are grateful to the cities that applied to this year’s Public Art Challenge, and look forward to learning more about our finalist projects.”

Bloomberg Philanthropies will select at least three winners from among these 14 finalists in the fall to execute their projects over a maximum of 24 months. The grant is intended to provide catalytic funds as part of a strong, committed consortium of supporters. As such, the Bloomberg Philanthropies grants will cover project-related expenditures including development, execution, and marketing, but will not fund 100 percent of the total project costs.

The Public Art Challenge is a part of Mike Bloomberg’s American Cities Initiative, an effort to help U.S. cities generate innovation and advance policy. The Public Art Challenge allows mayors and artists to join forces to elevate the value of including the creative sector when developing solutions to significant urban issues.

Bloomberg Philanthropies has a proven track record of supporting creative and innovative public art. Over 400 cities have submitted proposals for consideration in the Public Art Challenge since 2014. The foundation’s inaugural Public Art Challenge catalyzed $13 million for local economies across the four winning regions and illuminated civic issues including economic decline, vacancy, water conservation and police-community relations.

More information about the Public Art Challenge can be found on

<http://publicartchallenge.bloomberg.org>.

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**About Bloomberg Philanthropies**

Bloomberg Philanthropies works in 480 cities in more than 120 countries around the world to ensure better, longer lives for the greatest number of people. The organization focuses on five key areas for creating lasting change: Arts, Education, Environment, Government Innovation, and Public Health. Bloomberg Philanthropies encompasses all of Michael R. Bloomberg’s charitable activities, including his foundation and his personal giving. In 2017, Bloomberg Philanthropies distributed $702 million. For more information, please visit [www.bloomberg.org](http://www.bloomberg.org/) or follow us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/bloombergdotorg), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/bloombergdotorg/), [Snapchat](http://www.apple.com/), and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/bloombergdotorg).

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