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Illustrators and comic artists sought for downtown Pittsburgh handwashing stations
“Pittsburgh Creative Corps” effort to fight the spread of COVID-19, support local artists

PITTSBURGH- Riverlife and the Office of Public Art (OPA) are looking for illustrators and/or comic artists to create illustrations to accompany handwashing stations to be located in Downtown areas and riverfront open spaces this summer. The project partners released a Call for Artists today with an application deadline of Monday, August 24, 2020.

The handwashing stations are the first projects of **Pittsburgh Creative Corps**, a collaborative program between Riverlife, OPA, and the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Pittsburgh Creative Corps will mobilize to provide temporary, easy-to-deploy amenities to keep people informed of COVID-19 preventative practices in outdoor public spaces.

“Pittsburgh Creative Corps is a way to support local artists and fabricators during this challenging time,” said Matthew Galluzzo, Riverlife president and CEO. “The program hires local artists and creative workers to develop temporary amenities, like these hand washing stations, through Downtown and spaces near the rivers. These projects boost public health awareness, and they’re also intended to help public spaces adapt to changing conditions during the pandemic.”

Riverlife and OPA seek 2-3 illustrators and/or comic artists for the handwashing station project. Each artist will receive a \$2,000 fee to create original artwork to be reproduced on panels and graphics accompanying the stations.

“Artists and their creative practices are a vital component of building resilience for our city and region, and through Pittsburgh Creative Corps projects we will engage artists to dynamic interventions in the public realm that respond to the COVID-19 crisis.” said Sallyann Kluz, Director of the Office of Public Art. “The handwashing kiosks are one of several projects that will be launching in the coming months, and we look forward to finding new ways to support both artists and communities in this critical time.”

Outdoor public open spaces have been essential for Pittsburghers during the COVID-19 pandemic, with more people than ever turning to the city’s public plazas and riverfront parks and trails as safer alternatives for recreation, dining, and commuting. This month, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources cited a 62% increase in trail users throughout the commonwealth from Spring 2019 to Spring 2020¹.

¹ PA DCNR Newsletter, <https://t.e2ma.net/message/j6phfh/zaghtej>



Many of Pittsburgh's public trails and parks do not have easy access to facilities for handwashing, which the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention cite as one of the best ways to remove germs, avoid getting sick, and preventing the spread of germs to others.²

Funding and resources for Pittsburgh Creative Corps are provided by the Richard King Mellon Foundation, Riverlife, Office of Public Art, and Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership. Interested artists must complete an application via Submittable, the Office of Public Art's online submission platform. **To access the Call for Artists and application, visit:**

<https://pittsburghartscouncil.submittable.com/submit>.

About Riverlife

Since 1999, Riverlife has worked to create, activate, and celebrate Pittsburgh's riverfronts, connecting people through exceptional places and experiences. Riverlife has been a leader in building a community vision for over 15 miles and 880 acres of Downtown riverfront parks, trails, and public open space. For more information, visit riverlifepgh.org.

About the Office of Public Art

The Office of Public Art (OPA) envisions a region in which the creative practices of artists are fully engaged to collaboratively shape the public realm and catalyze community-led change. OPA builds capacity for this work through technical assistance, public programming, artist resources, and civically engaged public art projects. Located at the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council, OPA serves the thirteen county region of Southwestern Pennsylvania. Learn more at publicartpittsburgh.org.

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² Center for Disease Control website, <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/index.html>