



# CALL TO ARTISTS

## REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS J2017-03

### Metro Parks Tacoma Public Art Program

#### **Glass Artwork, Tacoma, WA**

#### **Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, New Aquarium Project**

#### **BUDGET**

\$30,000, all-inclusive

#### **DEADLINE**

March 6, 2017, 11:59pm

#### **SUMMARY**

Metro Parks Tacoma is seeking an artist or artist team to create a unique, suspended glass artwork that is inspired by jellyfish. The artwork will be permanently displayed in the Social Action Gallery of the new Pacific Seas Aquarium at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium (PDZA), scheduled to open in summer 2018.

#### **ELIGIBILITY**

- Applicant(s) must live in Washington State.
- Applicant(s) can apply as a single artist or as an artist team.
- Applicant(s) must be 18 years or older and not a full-time student.
- Applicant(s) cannot be an employee, board member, or council member of Metro Parks Tacoma.
- People who are members of historically disenfranchised racial, ethnic, cultural, and other identity groups are encouraged to apply.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The existing 52-year-old North Pacific Aquarium at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium is failing, weakened by decades of salt-water corrosion, and its life support systems are increasingly fragile. The new aquarium, set to open in summer 2018, will continue a longstanding tradition of highlighting Puget Sound marine life while showcasing some exciting new species. This project is made possible by voters' approval in 2014 of a \$198 million Metro Parks Tacoma bond issue, with more than \$65 million earmarked for capital improvements at the Zoo. In October 2014, the architectural firm EHDD was selected to design the new aquarium. The public art installation created through this call will help tell the story of the ocean and our responsibility to protect it, and contribute to a beautiful and thoughtful environment for visitors.

#### **AQUARIUM CONCEPT**

The site of the new aquarium sits tucked amid the trees on a steep hillside facing Puget Sound. The building takes advantage of the topography, submerging visitors as they pass through various galleries, wrapped around two large aquarium tanks, and arrive under the scalloped hammerhead sharks of the Gulf of California exhibit. Before exiting, visitors pass through the social action gallery where they are

given a chance to engage with the aquarium's main interpretive theme: **We share the ocean and the responsibility to protect it.**

#### **ABOUT POINT DEFIANCE ZOO & AQUARIUM**

Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium is a facility of Metro Parks Tacoma and is the only combined zoo and aquarium in the Pacific Northwest. The 29-acre zoological park attracts over 700,000 visitors annually.

**Mission:** Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium practices and promotes effective conservation on behalf of the world's wildlife.

**Vision:** We envision a world where people and wildlife share the Earth in harmony.

Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium sits within Point Defiance Park, a 760-acre regional park that draws more than 3.1 million visitors annually and includes natural forest, saltwater beaches, and spectacular views of Mount Rainier, the Olympic Mountains, and Puget Sound. The park is home to a diverse array of attractions and facilities, including eight established gardens; Fort Nisqually Living History Museum; extensive walking, hiking, and biking trails; waterfront and marina with kayak and boat rentals; and Tacoma Public Schools' Science And Math Institute (SAMI), a public high school that is dedicated to integrating science and math into everyday learning.

#### **ABOUT METRO PARKS TACOMA**

Metro Parks Tacoma is an award-winning park district in Tacoma, Washington. Incorporated in 1907, the park district is one of only a handful in the country that exists as a separate municipal corporation with the ability to collect property taxes for support.

Metro Parks Tacoma believes that good parks, open space, and program services contribute to economic development by fostering economic benefits and promoting tourism. Environmentally, they provide green infrastructure and help manage climate change. Socially, they revitalize communities, create safer neighborhoods, help children learn and grow, improve public and environmental health, and support smart growth. Culturally, open space and program services can nurture a sense of place in the community, and provide opportunities to engage the public of diverse backgrounds.

**Mission:** Creating healthy opportunities to play, learn and grow.

**Vision:** Metro Parks Tacoma envisions a vibrant, active and engaged community.

#### **ARTWORK OPPORTUNITY**

The selected artist or team will create a suspended artwork that references jellyfish, using glass as a primary medium. The artist will have an area of 11' x 8.5' space to work within. The artwork does not need to fill the entire space, but should hold the space. Once hung, the artwork must not exceed 25 pounds per square foot. The artist will be responsible for all design, fabrication, and installation of the artwork. Proposed artwork must:

- Work with building systems and structures
- Be inspired by jellyfish
- Use glass as a primary medium
- Fit within the given parameters, including weight and size limits
- Contribute to an engaging environment in the space
- Be installed no later than April 1, 2018

## SELECTION CRITERIA

Selection criteria on which artists/artist teams will be judged:

- Artistic quality as exemplified in past work
- Ability to create a glass artwork that references jellyfish
- Ability to create an artwork that is relatively durable and low-maintenance
- Ability to think and work in a scale appropriate to the site
- Experience working with architects, engineers, and clients
- Ability to complete the project by April 1, 2018

## TIMELINE\*

January 23, 2017	Applications available
March 6, 2017, 11:59pm	Deadline for submissions
Week of April 3, 2017	Finalist Selection
Week of April 17, 2017	Finalist interviews
April 1, 2018	Artwork installation deadline

*\*All dates subject to change.*

## SUBMISSION PROCESS

Eligible artists and artist teams interested in this opportunity must submit the following three items via Submittable (<https://tacomaarts.submittable.com/submit>):

### 1. Short Responses

Responses to the following questions in 200 words or less each:

- Why are you interested in this project?
- What is your approach to creating artwork for a public space?
- Do you typically fabricate your own work, or work with a fabricator?

### 2. Work Samples with Descriptions

10 digital images of past work with concise descriptions. If available, work samples should include documentation of similar past public projects. Artist teams are encouraged to submit work that was previously completed as a team.

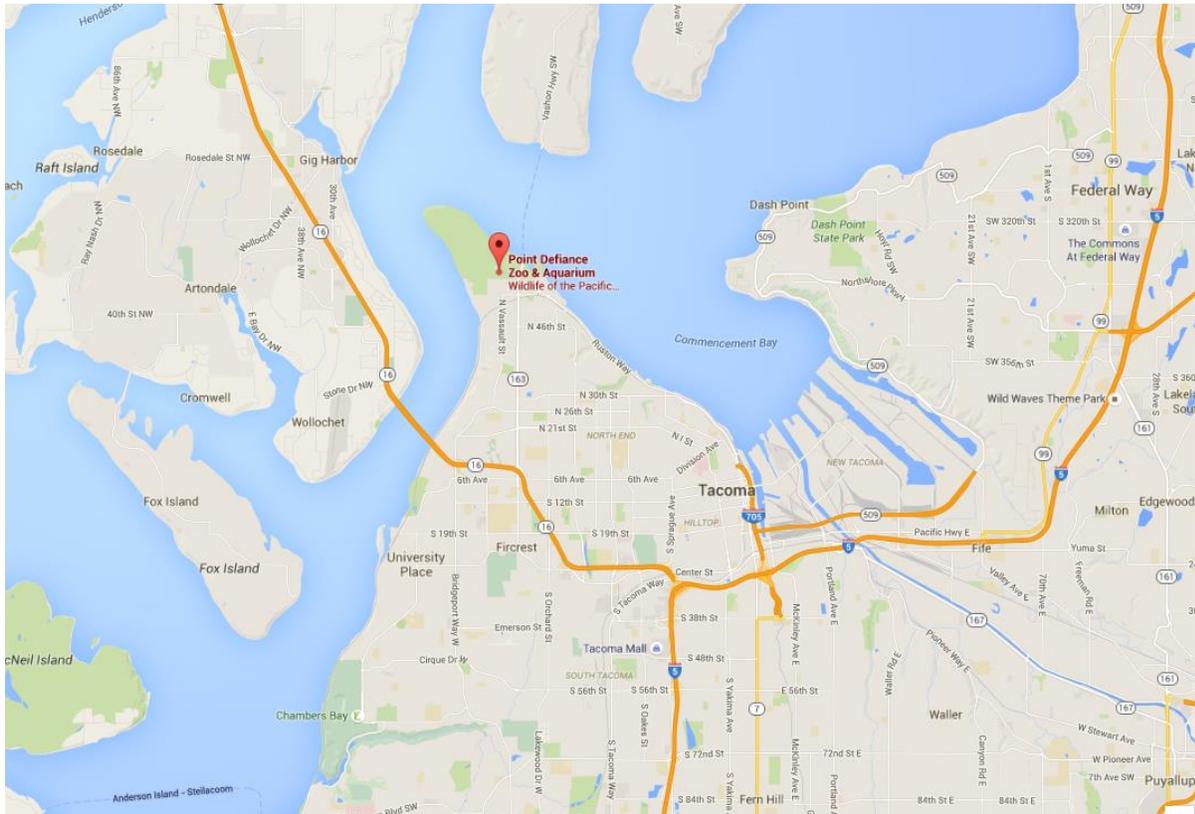
### 3. Resume & References

Three pages or less, including three professional references. Artist teams without a joint resume should submit a resume for each artist.

## QUESTIONS?

Contact Rebecca Solverson, Public Art Specialist, 253-591-5564, [rebecca.solverson@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:rebecca.solverson@cityoftacoma.org).

## Point Defiance Park



## New Aquarium Site

