

## **Request for Proposals (RFP): Sculptural Installation Using Salvaged Architectural Materials**

**Issued by:** American Institute of Architects

**Submission Deadline:** June 1, 2025

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**Location:** 1735 New York Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20006

**Budget/Honorarium:** NTE \$25,000

### **Overview**

The American Institute of Architects invites proposals from visual artists or artist teams to create a sustainably designed, free-standing sculptural installation using architectural elements salvaged from the AIA national headquarters building renovation. This commission should be grounded in a deep commitment to environmental sustainability. We seek a work that not only reimagines discarded materials, but also embodies circular design principles, questioning the cycles of construction, demolition, and waste.

The work will be displayed in the newly renovated AIA Global Campus for Architecture & Design in the gallery space. <https://www.aia.org/about-aia/aia-global-campus-for-architecture-and-design>

### **Project intent**

This installation challenges artists to explore the untold histories embedded in building remnants — to reframe structures once meant to protect and enclose into something more porous, more reflective. It is an invitation to create a sculpture that doesn't reconstruct the past but reassembles it, giving new presence to what was once discarded.

### **Core Values & Conceptual Framework**

Proposals should align with the following guiding values:

- **Sustainability & circular design:**  
This project prioritizes sustainable art-making practices. The final work must be created primarily (preferably entirely) from building materials salvaged from the AIA renovation or repurposed building materials, avoiding the use of newly manufactured components. Emphasis will be placed on minimizing waste and considering material lifecycle and environmental impact.
- **Memory & material culture:**  
Architectural fragments are treated not only as form, but as narrative. Artists should use visual and tactile evidence of age — rust, weathering, markings, layers of paint — as expressive tools in the work.

- **Architecture as identity:**  
The sculpture should reflect on how our built environment shapes who we are — and how dismantling it can reveal deeper truths about legacy, labor, and belonging.
- **Audience interaction:**  
Viewers should be able to walk around the piece as it will be the centerpiece of the opening exhibition in the gallery space of the newly renovated AIA headquarters.
- **Urban archeology & storytelling:**  
Artists are encouraged to incorporate interpretive storytelling, such text or audio that highlights the origin of specific materials or processes.

### **Available materials**

Artists will have access to a curated inventory of salvaged architectural elements from the former AIA national headquarters, which may include:

- Structural wood beams and framing
- Drywall panels, flooring, and metal components
- Doors, window frames, and architectural hardware
- Unique fragments from historic or symbolic areas of the building

Additional salvaged or found materials from other sources may be incorporated, provided they adhere to the project's sustainability goals.

### **Eligibility**

- Open to individual artists and artist collectives
- Must demonstrate a track record in sculpture, installation, or site-responsive work
- Prior experience with sustainable practices or working with salvaged/recycled materials is strongly encouraged
- Must be able to oversee fabrication, transport, and installation

### **Submission requirements**

**Please submit the following (as a single PDF or ZIP file):**

1. Artist Statement (max 1 page)
2. Proposal Narrative (max 2 pages), including:
  - Artistic approach

- How sustainability will be embedded in your process
  - Use of available salvaged materials
  - Audience interaction and spatial engagement
3. Preliminary Budget (if applicable)
  4. Artist CV or Bio
  5. Portfolio (5–10 images of past projects)

Optional: References, letters of support, press coverage

### **Timeline**

- Proposal Deadline: June 1, 2025
- Notification of Selected Artist: July 1, 2025
- Fabrication Period: July 1, 2025–November 15, 2025
- Installation / Unveiling: Opening December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025

### **Budget & support**

The award is NTE \$25,000 and should include transportation and installation costs. Materials will be delivered to artists location at the expense of AIA.

### **Final thoughts**

This is a call for artists who build not just with materials, but with meaning. Through the language of reuse and transformation, we seek a sculptural work that brings history into the present — one that honors where we've been, questions where we're going, and models how art can actively participate in a more sustainable, intentional future.

## Examples of salvaged materials

