

## **OPEN CALL:** NaturePLACE Arts Residency– NYC

**Deadline : 28 Feb 2025**

The NaturePLACE: Collaborative Arts Program, formerly the Urban Field Station Collaborative Arts Program, is currently accepting applications for the 2025 cohort of its Arts Residency Program. Artists working in all forms of artistic expression (visual, writing, social practice, music, performance, film, etc.,) are welcome to apply.

### **About NaturePLACE**

NaturePLACE (**P**eople, **L**andscapes, **A**rts, **C**reativity, **E**cologies) is a hybrid virtual, community-centered residency program hosted by the USDA Forest Service in partnership with [The Nature of Cities](#). A collaborative transdisciplinary program where artists are paired with natural and or social scientists, land managers, or practitioners to work together, drawing on knowledge from their disciplines respectively to explore social-ecological systems. Works of art may result, but the aim of this program is to foster transdisciplinary collaboration, mutual understanding, diverse representation, and enhanced communication, above the production of a final work or project. (See Program Aims for more information)

\*\*\* For NYC, there is an opportunity to join a physical residency with housing provided to the resident.

### **Theme: Nature Connects Us: NYC & Nature**

- *Why does nature matter to you?*
- *Where do you find nature?*
- *What place in nature feels like home?*
- *How do you care for nature and how does nature care for you?*

We are seeking an artist interested in collaborating with the [NYC Urban Field Station](#) around these questions, tied to exploring and understanding people's relationship to and with nature. This call for artists is inspired by the USDA Forest Service's Campaign "[Nature Connects Us](#)," which centers individuals and their unique experiences with national forests and grasslands by exploring a sense of place. We aim to apply these exploratory questions about relationships to urban nature in NYC to further build relationships with communities in a way meaningful to them. See more about the "Nature Connects Us" campaign [here](#).

### **Science/Practice Collaborators:**

Lead collaborator for the NaturePLACE in Residence Program based in NYC is **Tina Cuevas**, Natural Areas Outreach Coordinator with the NYC Parks Stewardship & Conservation Teams.

Read more about the science/practice teams below:

### ***Stewardship Team- NYC Parks Environment and Planning Division***

The NYC Parks Stewardship Team works with volunteers across the city to help with forest and wetland restoration, caring for street trees, harvesting and propagating native seed and monitoring local wildlife. They host public events that bring together New Yorkers from every walk of life to get their hands dirty making the city better. The Stewardship Team also runs the Super Steward program, which provides training and resources for individuals to work independently to make an impact on their own. A large focus of the Stewardship team's work for the next fiscal year will be on natural areas parks focused in [CJEST areas](#) and Southeast Queens.

### ***Conservation Team - NYC Parks Environment and Planning Division***

The NYC Parks Conservation Team is a group of researchers with expertise in different areas (e.g., conservation biology, wetland ecology, botany, wildlife biology, soil science, social science). Their role is to guide and conduct monitoring and research to inform planning, protection, design & construction, maintenance, and adaptive management of natural resources in NYC. Their projects include monitoring rare species (e.g., mountain mint in Staten Island, seabeach amaranth in Queens); outcomes of forest, grassland, and wetland restoration; benefits of natural areas (forests, wetlands, grasslands) and parkland in general in NYC; and more. The Conservation Team also manages the research permits program, which connects external researchers and educators who are interested in conducting research on NYC Parks properties to NYC Parks staff.

### ***NYC Urban Field Station, STEW-MAP Team - USDA Forest Service***

The [Stewardship Mapping and Assessment Project \(STEW-MAP\)](#) is a national Forest Service research program that answers the question: who takes care of our environment? STEW-MAP surveys civic groups who work to conserve, manage, monitor, transform, educate on and/or advocate for the environment across a defined city, region, or landscape. It is both a study of a region's civic environmental stewardship resource and a publicly available online database and visualization tool that allow land managers, community organizations, non-profits, and the public to see where hundreds of environmental stewardship groups are working in a particular landscape of interest. This community organizing tool can be applied to strengthen capacity, promote engagement with on-the-ground projects, and build more effective partnerships among stakeholders. STEW-MAP was developed first in NYC and has since spread to a dozen different locations across the country and world. Artists would be invited to learn more about our methods, datasets, and collaborators by being embedded with our NYC-based team, who are also the global leads for the growing STEW-MAP network.

**Eligibility:**

- Applicants must be 18 years of age or older
- Applicants can be established in any discipline
- Proposals must address the theme; we are open to diverse interpretations.
- Applicants must reside in or have a strong and active connection to the location upon which they are basing their proposal.

**Residence Program Overview:**

- 12 months residence, commencing in June 2025.
- Virtual residency, but on-site in-person work is encouraged
- Honorarium of \$3,000 USD + project development support from the NaturePLACE team
- Featured content opportunities on [The Nature of Cities](#) website, if desired

**Artist's Contribution:**

- Work collaboratively with the selected partner team member throughout the artistic process. Will include meeting with a point person from this team regularly, as needed.
- Check-in periodically with the NaturePLACE organizers as needed to support your progress.
- Create a piece of virtual content (essay, photo series, blog, etc., as suits the ideas) for The Nature of Cities exploring the ideas embedded in any resulting artistic work that resulted from the collaborative efforts during the residence. This content can be authored in collaboration with Agency Teams.
- Participate in a joint exhibition of work with other resident artists, if mutually agreed.
  - Works shown may be from any period in the artist's career that relate to the key ideas explored in the residency. The creation of new work during the residency is welcome but not a requirement.

**How to apply:**

Submit a complete application to the [NaturePLACE Program Portal](#) by **28 February 2025**. Please follow the prompts in the online application form carefully to ensure you select the desired location you are applying for. Applicants will be notified of decisions in May. With the program beginning June 2025.

**Program Aims:**

- Build understanding of and engagement with social-ecological systems through arts.
- Facilitate trans-disciplinary collaboration between artists, scientists, and land managers.

- Curate events and public programs that explore ideas emerging from these collaborations.

Our Artist Residency program exists in collaboration with (1) a network of Urban Field Stations and other locations supported by the USDA Forest Service and in collaboration with municipal, state, nonprofit, and academic partners across the United States and internationally; and (2) a group of global collaborators with USDA Forest Service International Program. These networks, in partnership with [The Nature of Cities](#) and others, aim to bring new perspectives, unique planning and design ideas, and creative problem solving from the arts and humanities to advance our collective understanding and management of social-ecological systems.

### **Application Checklist:**

- Letter of interest** – 800 words max.
  - Include a statement that describes your proposed topic or approach for the duration of the residency.
  - Tell us what attracts you to a collaborative residency like this, and what guided your selection of Participating Agency Teams
- Examples of previous work**
  - Please label the submission file with last name, date (dd-mm-yy), in a format that suits the artistic work (e.g. up to 5 images, up to 5 pages of text, or a link to up to 5 minutes of audio/video)
- The names and contact information for at least one reference** of people familiar with your work.
- Resume or CV**

### **Application Review Criteria:**

- Demonstrate artistic merit
- Propose an innovative perspective on the theme
- Align with the program's goal, which is to explore new knowledge and perspectives about social-ecological systems and natural resources management
- Reveal new possibilities for collaboration between artists, scientists, and land managers
- Have a solid connection to the physical locations of the call
- Support our diversity, equity, and inclusion goals. See our [DEI Fact Sheet](#).

**Rights and Responsibilities:**

- Artists retain all intellectual and moral property rights over any artwork created during the residence.
- Any artwork created by a resident artist (including copyright and intellectual property) are fully retained by the artist (with the exception of the next item).
- Residency artists provide NaturePLACE and collaborating partners with an unlimited royalty free license in perpetuity to use artworks and images of art works for any non-commercial purposes related to the program.
- All intellectual property rights of the research and data of the agency teams is held by the teams.
- Co-created work will be credited to all participating team members.

Please email [NaturePLACE@thenatureofcities.com](mailto:NaturePLACE@thenatureofcities.com) with any questions or comments.

Check out [our website](#) to see the work of past cohorts and learn more about the program.