Open call for artists! The Rochester Museum & Science Center (RMSC) is re-issuing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for artists or artist teams, in the medium/media of your choice, for an exhibit called *The Changemakers: Rochester Women Who Changed the World*.

**Parameters:**

- Open to all Artists and Artist Teams (visual arts, performance, music, etc.)
- In the medium/media of your choice
- Based on qualifications and experience + cultural competency
- $5000 commission
- Artists from the Rochester Region's historically underrepresented groups encouraged to submit (Haudenosaunee, African American, Latinx, refugees)

**Request for Qualifications:**

- Submit qualifications + experience rather than a proposal
- Experience may be formal/informal, individual/group or community-based
- Medium can be visual, performance-based, mixed media, literary, cultural or craft, etc.; *All media/mediums welcome*
- Responses should show how artist(s) qualifications reflect Diversity and Inclusion values and exhibit themes
- Demonstrate cultural competency relevant to featured groups (see RFQ for details)

Selected artists will work collaboratively with RMSC staff and Diversity and Inclusion consultants to develop original artwork(s) for the exhibit opening in Nov. 2020.

*See accompanying RFQ for further details: RMSC.org/RFQ*

*Submissions due September 14, 2020.*
Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

The Changemakers Exhibition:
Celebrating Rochester Women Who Changed the World

August 24, 2020

Seeking Artists to create original artworks that will enhance and diversify the Exhibition’s visual representation

Release Date: August 24, 2020
Response Deadline: September 14, 2020

Help us improve! Please provide feedback about the RFQ process and referrals to the Project Manager contact below:

Todd Stevenson
Grants & Government Relations Manager
Rochester Museum & Science Center
657 East Avenue
Rochester, NY 14607
tstevenson@rmsc.org

SECTION 1 – Invitation to Participate

1.1 Purpose and Objective

The Rochester Museum & Science Center (RMSC) is soliciting qualifications for Artists or Artist Teams (“the Artists”) to create works of art that will enhance and diversify the visual representation of a new exhibition, The Changemakers: Rochester Women Who Changed the World, opening at the RMSC on November 20, 2020.
This large-scale exhibition (approximately 7,000 square feet) is inspired by the centennial of the ratification of 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution and the women’s suffrage movement. Through compelling, authentic, and untold narratives, this groundbreaking exhibit presentation will celebrate historical and contemporary women visionaries, trailblazers, inventors, social innovators, and entrepreneurs of diverse backgrounds from the Rochester Region and sovereign Haudenosaunee Confederacy, which covers a wider geographical/territorial range. The RMSC is collaborating with a volunteer committee of community curators and three (3) diversity and inclusion consultants to develop the exhibit and insure authentic voice in the interpretation and presentation of the featured women.

The Changemakers exhibition is organized around four content areas—Advocating for Change, Enterprising Change, Inventing Change, and Organizing for Change—that highlight the achievements and contributions of regional and Haudenosaunee women through a series of thematic constellations (see Appendices for additional details describing content areas and examples of featured women). Each area will feature immersive, collections-rich spaces and interactive opportunities designed to reflect the experiences of diverse women, give visitors new access to insights from the past, encourage equity in the present, and inspire innovators of the future to continue to work toward change. The Changemakers will appeal to a diverse and inclusive public audience focused on families with children aged 5-12 and women and girls for whom access to role models is crucial.

The RMSC’s objective is to partner with up to two (2) individual Artists or Artist teams to create original artworks in their medium of choice (sculpture, painting, multi-media, textile, glass, music, dance, etc.) suitable for public display in The Changemakers exhibition and acquisition into a museum collection. Selected Artists must present a full body of work(s) that demonstrates cultural competence and authentic lens and perspective in African American, Latina, Haudenosaunee, and/or Asian/Pacific Islander communities to insure inclusive artistic representation in artistically interpreting the stories of individuals, groups, or movements that will be featured in the exhibition. Emerging artists and new voices from historically under represented communities are encouraged to apply.

Following the established convention for this community-curated exhibition process, a small team that includes RMSC staff and diversity and inclusion consultants will work collaboratively with the selected Artists to guide and complete design development for the project. Prospective Respondents must offer a proposal that will meet the scope of services, qualifications, and description of work activities identified in this Request for Qualifications (RFQ).

The Artists will:

1) work closely and collaboratively with RMSC staff and diversity and inclusion consultants to develop an original artistic concept that articulates the exhibit themes and aligns with project goals
2) execute the artistic vision to produce a physical installation (sculpture, painting, multimedia, etc.) that will be featured in the exhibition and related promotional media and acquired for the RMSC Collection
3) be profiled for inclusion in the exhibit
4) be available for promotional and media participation

The RMSC’s objective is to enter into two-month agreements with the selected Artists/Artist Teams.

1.2. Project Manager

The Project Manager, identified below, is the sole point of contact regarding this RFQ from the date of issuance until the selection of the successful Respondents.

**Todd Stevenson**
Grants & Government Relations Manager
Rochester Museum & Science Center
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Rochester, NY 14607
tstevenson@rmsc.org

1.3. Tentative Timeline

The schedule of events for this RFQ is anticipated to proceed as follows:

- **August 24, 2020**: RMSC releases RFQ
- **September 14, 2020**: Respondent proposals due to RMSC
- **September 15 – 23, 2020**: Selection committee interviews finalists, completes review and decision making process
- **September 24, 2020**: RMSC initiates work on agreements and Artists begin work with project team
- **November 16, 2020 (tentative)**: Artworks delivered for installation in exhibit and project is complete

Section 2 – Scope of Work

2.1 Background

The RMSC is committed to achieving institutional equity and making artistic, cultural, and educational resources accessible to all by insuring greater diversity and inclusion in all of its
exhibitions, programming, staff, and community partnerships. The RMSC and more than 15 community partners who are co-curating The Changemakers exhibition recognize the vital importance of featuring women representing all backgrounds, particularly those whose stories are unknown or untold. It is critical that all visitors to the exhibit are able to “see themselves” through dimensions of identity including race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, socioeconomic background, profession, and ability. The RMSC recognizes that outside assistance and expertise is needed to enhance and diversify the exhibit’s visual representation.

2.2 Responsibilities and Scope of Work

Task 1: Participate in meetings (estimated 3) of the project team either onsite or remotely to share additional project details, clarify project scope and scale, review work progression, collaborate in design development, and discuss technical details.

Task 2: Complete concept design rendering or treatment of artistic work and refine in collaboration with project team.

Task 3: Complete maquette or storyboard of artistic work and refine in collaboration with project team.

Task 4: Produce and deliver full-scale artistic installation per agreed upon specifications.

Task 5: Provide branding and media appropriate guidance to accurately and adequately represent them/their work

Section 3 – Specific Proposal Requirements

3.1 Submission of Respondent’s Proposal

- To be considered, Respondents must submit a complete response to this RFQ by providing all the requested information outlined in 3.2 below.

- Proposals should be presented simply and provide straightforward and concise information. Expensive bindings, color displays, promotional materials, etc. are not necessary or desired.

- Sealed proposals must be received by the Project Manager at the address listed in Section 1.2 on or before 5:00 PM on September 14, 2020. Alternatively, submissions may be transmitted electronically to tstevenson@rmsc.org. Contact the Project Manager to make special arrangements for transmitting large files.
• A confirmation of receipt will be issued by RMSC. The decision will be made and communicated to successful Respondents by September 24, 2020 followed by a public announcement. Please no inquiries or follow up communication regarding status of the review process.

3.2 Organization and Content of Proposal

This section outlines the information that must be included in your response. Please respond with your information in the same order as the items in the section. Contact the Project Manager listed in Part 1.2 with any questions or requests for guidance.

A. Letter of Introduction describing respondent’s understanding of the project and ability of the individual or team proposed for this work to complete the work within the project timeline.

B. Artist/Organizational Profile providing a profile of the respondent that demonstrates a background that aligns with the project goals and themes and includes all individuals who will be providing professional services for the project.

C. Resume(s) of the participating artist(s).

D. Project Examples (descriptions and images) documenting a maximum of five (5) projects, similar in scope, scale, and/or theme to the artwork for The Changemakers exhibition, that the respondent has completed. Examples must include a full body of work that demonstrates cultural competency and strong experiential ties to diverse communities.

E. Cost Proposal documenting the respondent’s understanding and agreement to provide the scope of services described in the RFQ between September - November 2020 for a project commission of $5,000, including all materials costs. Note that final scale and technical details of the physical installation will be determined in collaboration with RMSC exhibit design staff. The RMSC will pay a deposit of 50% with approval of the project concept and 50% at project completion.

F. References identifying the contact name, telephone number, and email address of a maximum of three (3) clients for whom the respondent has provided similar services on past projects.

3.3. Method of Evaluation

The RMSC will select qualified artists through this formal, public, and open Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process. The RFQ will be distributed to a short list of invited artists and broadcast through the RMSC’s, community curators’, and diversity consultants’ networks in the
community and nationally, including social media channels and the RMSC website. A selection committee comprised of RMSC art professionals, diversity and inclusion consultants, and content experts from The Changemakers project team will evaluate the respondents’ qualifications and make contract award decisions based upon criteria described below.

The evaluation of qualifications will be based on how well the submission demonstrates:

- **Background and similar experience** - Respondent has used the visual/performing arts to generate awareness of and discussion around social action issues, with special preference for the interpretation of women’s issues and historically under represented communities. Respondent has experience working and communicating collaboratively with institutions, subject matter experts, community partners, and the general public. Emerging artists and new voices are encouraged to apply.

- **Capacity and capability to perform the work** - Respondent has demonstrated artistic excellence, technical competence, and the completion of work of a similar scope and scale. Respondent has demonstrated achievement in creating artworks for public display, including accomplishments in an institutional or community setting, with success in completing high quality work while controlling costs and meeting deadlines.

- **Sensitivity to the project content and goals** - Respondent has demonstrated cultural competence, authentic lenses and perspective, and a network of connections in communities not already well represented by RMSC staff. Respondent demonstrates knowledge of the Rochester region context and history.

All finalists will be invited to participate in a video chat or telephone interview with the selection committee and provided with additional project details upon request. Finalists will not be asked to develop design proposals for the interviews, but they should be prepared to discuss how they would approach the project and answer questions from the selection committee. The selection committee will commission up to two (2) artists or Artist Teams, each ideally representing a different community of interest relevant to the project, to create a work of art that enhances the visual representation of the exhibit. The project team will work with the artists to develop their ideas in a way that is congruent with the exhibit aesthetics and design, and to plan for and complete the installation of the resulting works.

**Section 4 - General Information for the Respondent**

**4.1. Reservation of Rights**

- The RMSC reserves the right to make selections based solely on the proposals or negotiate further with one or more Respondents. The Respondents selected will be chosen on the basis of greatest benefit to the RMSC according to the intent stated in this RFQ as determined by the evaluation committee.
• The RMSC reserves the right to negotiate contracts with the selected Respondents. The RMSC reserves the right to award a contract to more than one (1) Respondent and is not committed, by virtue of this solicitation, to award a contract, or to procure or contract for services.

4.2. Acceptance of Proposal Content

The contents of the proposals of the successful Respondents may become contractual obligations, should a contract ensue. Failure of a respondent to accept these obligations may result in a cancellation of the award.

4.3. Property Rights

The Respondent shall have no rights in or ownership of the work or products created under a contract resulting from a response to this RFQ. The selected Artist or Artist Teams may include the artwork created under the project in their portfolio and other rights may be negotiated as part of the contract process.

4.4. Contract Payment

Actual terms of payment will be the result of agreements reached between the RMSC and the Respondents selected. The RMSC is not liable for any costs incurred by the Respondent prior to the effective date of the contract.

Section 5 – Appendices

5.1 The Changemakers Exhibit Content Areas

5.2 Examples of Featured Women
**5.1 The Changemakers Exhibit Content Areas**

**Advocating for Change** involves activism—being a voice for others, standing up for the oppressed, and telling stories of one’s own or other communities. There are three types of advocates represented in this exhibit: “intentional advocates” who clearly identify as being a voice for others; “accidental advocates” who did not set forth to be trailblazers, but are propelled by a need and at some point found themselves in the spotlight; and “unintentional advocates” who may not consider their efforts at the time to be activism, but are viewed as champions through the lens of history and the impact of their actions.

**Enterprising Change** begins with identifying an unmet need in one’s community or surroundings, thinking outside the box to develop a solution, and then taking a risk to make that solution available in a way that positively impacts others. Enterprising Change, and success with enterprising, does not necessarily imply making money, and also includes social entrepreneurship and the investment in solving social problems.

**Inventing Change** is a creative process, whether in science or art (STEAM), and results in something new, unique, or novel. Inventing Change requires persistence—making mistakes and trying again. There are many contributions to Inventing Change that have not been recognized historically—contributions that in the past and present may not fit within the Western/dominant definitions of “science” or “art.” In this exhibit, we seek to acknowledge ALL contributions—the obvious and the hidden.

**Organizing for Change** begins with collective action and those who bring people together for a common cause. It involves getting people to show up, unite, stand up together, thereby creating power in numbers. Organizing for Change has no limits and encompasses activists, artists, philanthropists, writers, philosophers, political and religious leaders, and every day people.
5. 2 Examples of Featured Women in *The Changemakers* exhibition

- **Jikonsaseh** - played a key role in uniting warring nations to form the Haudenosaunee Confederacy
- **Tekatsitsiakawa “Katsi” Cook** - a contemporary Native American Mohawk midwife, women’s health and environmental health advocate
- **Martha Matilda Harper** – a beauty product and equipment inventor who pioneered the retail franchise system and a social entrepreneur who empowered women to gain economic independence.
- **Rebeca Gerschman** – an Argentinian biologist and physiologist who first discovered the damaging effects of free radicals at University of Rochester
- **Nancy Gong** - a world-recognized contemporary artist working with architectural glass
- **Mara Ahmed** - a Pakistani American artist and filmmaker who uses the medium to create a platform for people and communities without voice
- **Anna Murray Douglass** - a key station master on Rochester’s Underground Railroad
- **Aesha Ash** - a former ballerina with the New York City ballet who uses movement to break barriers and build community
- **Mayor Lovely Warren** - Rochester’s first female and youngest mayor in modern times
- **Maria Lopez** - whose court case following her denial to vote resulted in the extension of the Voting Rights Act to protect those who speak a language other than that of the majority