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MBTA to artists: Leave your mark on new stations

The MBTA is inviting area painters, sculptors and designers to add their work to new and updated stops.

[Spencer Buell](#)

Reporter



Rendering of new stop planned for Chelsea. Artists were being invited to submit ideas for the station.

Photo: MBTA

1 / 7

Art in MBTA stations has become a part of life for commuters in the city. Whether it's the "Celebration of the Underground" mural in Park Street Station or the iconic red parachutes of "Gift of the Wind" in Porter Square, artworks define the highly trafficked public spaces.

These days, there are plenty of opportunities for local painters to leave a mark on the MBTA. The service is sending out calls to area creatives to submit their ideas for “integral art” projects, the city’s effort to spruce up new stations set to be completed or updated in the coming years.

The goal for the locations is “placemaking,” said Christina Lanzl, public art consultant for the MBTA.

“It’s really meant to improve the rider experience and to also help with stimulating local communities,” Lanzl told Metro. “It’s a great opportunity for the artists, and also for the cultural identity within the MBTA, an integral part of what Boston is all about.”

For the new [Chelsea Commuter Rail Station](#), across the street from the new bus rapid transit stop in the neighborhood, the MBTA seeks artists to decorate porcelain panels with up to 22 designs. Up to four artists could be selected to take part, she said, each of whom would take home an anticipated \$17,500 design fee. The deadline for applications is Aug. 24 at 11:59 p.m.

At the [Blue Hill Ave stop](#) planned for Mattapan on the Fairmount Line, the MBTA is inviting artists to work with architects and design 12 porcelain panels however they can imagine them. The MBTA could pick up to four artists, who would also be paid a \$17,500 stipend. (Deadline: Aug. 17.)

At [Wollaston Station](#), the MBTA is asking artists to take part in the design process, collaborating with architects for a rehab project at the existing Red Line stop in Quincy. Approximately \$125,000 is included in the budget for the project for artwork, including a \$25,000 design fee for the artist whose work is selected. (Deadline: Aug. 31.)

The projects are supported by an ordinance that sets aside 0.5 percent of construction projects on state property for artistic flair. Former Gov. Deval Patrick ordered that slice of funding in capital projects be set aside [in an executive order late last year](#).

It’s all part of something special happening in the Boston culture scene, Lanzl said, among developments that have seen the city hire Julie Burros, [its first chief of arts and culture in more than 20 years](#) in September and begin drafting a culture plan with public input, called [Boston Creates](#).

“We’re definitely in a Renaissance when it comes to the arts right now,” Lanzl said.