

AIA New Orleans



A Chapter of The American
Institute of Architects

DesCours 2010 - Request for Proposals

Overview

Thank you for your interest in participating in DesCours 2010, the fourth year of this annual event held in New Orleans the second week of December. DesCours is a week-long, contemporary architecture and art event that looks towards the future in showcasing experimental, cutting-edge new media and interactive installations while embracing New Orleans rich cultural heritage. During DesCours, internationally recognized architects, designers and artists transform unique, hidden spaces within the French Quarter and Central Business District into destination places for visitors and locals alike.

There are a total of 11 artists and architects (individuals and teams) that will be selected through invitation and this proposal process to participate by creating installations for French Quarter courtyards, downtown building lobbies, rooftops, walkways and other 'hidden' New Orleans spaces. Overall, we are seeking installations that react and respond both to the historic nature of the sites, and to the public audience that views them.

There are two primary conditions for installation sites, being indoors or outdoors. The outdoor locations consist of either open courtyards or building rooftops. The interior locations include building lobbies, unoccupied building floors, and covered walkways. All of the locations are 'hidden' from public view, in that they are private, normally closed and/or inaccessible to the public. All of the locations will be viewed at night, thus the proposals should respond to this condition. For the outdoor locations we are seeking installations that are viable when exposed to the elements (rain, moisture, etc.) and also respond to the dark (illuminated or otherwise).

The exact locations of projects will be determined upon receipt of all proposals in order to provide the most suitable match of site to project. Examples of past sites can be found within the event images at the end of this document. Images of past installations can be found on the DesCours website at www.descours.us.

Project selection will be done through a two-phase process over a two-month period. This process strives to determine true feasibility, and also to create the best pairings of potential projects to sites.

We are asking all potential participants to submit a proposal that will assist in the site selection, and provide information and images for PR purposes. Please review the 'Criteria to Consider' section of this RFP closely before submitting your proposal.

Submission requirements are listed on the following page. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to send inquiries to descours@aianeworleans.org.

Submittal Requirements

All artists and/or teams responding to the RFP must submit complete responses to the information requested and must note any exceptions to any information required by the RFP. Applicants shall present information in a clear and concise manner following the format listed below:

A. Proposal to include the following:

1. Concept. Describe your overall concept.

Explain the proposed schedule, process, medium and method. If your piece is interactive, please explain how. Identify where you think the work will best fit, outdoors, indoors, courtyard, lobby or otherwise. Please ensure that you have addressed the conditions (public, outdoors or indoors, etc.) in the concept. Proposals that directly react and respond to both site and audience will have first consideration. While not a requirement, pieces that are interactive in some means (be it through advanced technologies and materials, or a direct physical interaction) will be given priority during the reviewing process. The work should engage both the site and viewer – the opposite of a static sculpture or ‘plop art’.

2. Specifications. Please include all specifics about your piece, including but not limited to the following:

- How much space will be needed for your work, (both the actual installation and area around it);
- How much time is required for installation and de-installation;
- If electricity is needed, and at what level; monitoring/maintenance of the piece and how this will be managed (will you be staying to ensure it is working, if not, who is and how is this arrangement handled?);
- If technology/electronic components are involved, please specify how this will be addressed (if computers are involved, are you bringing your own and how will it be stored/protected?);
- How is piece secured to the ground and/or walls/ceiling? How is piece protected from wind and rain elements (it is important to note that most locations will not allow for any permanent securing into the ground or walls, thus most installations need to be self-supporting structures and your specifications should support this).

3. Illustrations/photos. Additional visual support material and/or illustrations to show the proposal.

4. Proposed Budget. Projects will be awarded budgets between \$500.00 and \$4000.00. This amount is intended to cover all costs for the installation, including materials, shipping, travel, installation and de-installation. We need to ensure that your proposed budget is feasible for your project. It is imperative that installation and de-installation, as well as maintenance during the exhibition are considered in your budget proposal. If your budget exceeds the limits above, please include how you will cover the additional costs. The majority of awards fall within the \$1000 - \$2500 range. All travel costs that you hope to be reimbursed, including hotel, flight, rental car, etc. should be considered when creating your budget.

B. Statement of Qualifications to Include the Following:

1. Bio. Information on the architect, artist or team, including a brief resume.
2. References. Three professional references (particularly include completed public art projects or work with public art programs).

Criteria to Consider

Please consider the following criteria of the project when creating your proposals.

a) **Functionality and Durability.** These are PUBLIC projects. This event is open and free to the public. Thus, a clear understanding of the public's impact on your proposal, both through wear, use, touching, climbing, damage potential, theft and reparability should be considered.

b) **Weather Conditions.** The installation and components should be designed to withstand outdoor conditions; including cold weather and/or rainy climate (heavy rains should be considered). If electronic elements are involved, please include technical specifications for how it will perform in the rain if necessary. If your project will not work in the outdoors, you must specify that your work requires a covered, interior site.

c) **Time of Year.** This relates to both the weather (it will likely rain at least one night and it can also snow here –rare but possible) and the lower sunlight conditions. We have had two prior projects that relied on solar power to function that failed to work for most public exhibition nights. If you are going to include solar power in your design, you **MUST** have a back up option for the piece to work. The time of year has proven difficult for even the most robust solar powered equipment.

c) **Installation Restrictions.** As most of these sites are historic, you will not be able to drill, nail, or otherwise permanently secure the installations. Thus, you will need to ensure that the proposal specifies a self-supporting structure. If it is not self-supporting, please be very specific for how you intend to mount and secure your work.

d) **Appropriateness to the Site Location.** These installations are open to the general public, and located in historic locations that require a 'light touch' for installation. Drilling, painting, modifying the historic fabric will not be allowed. Furthermore, as public piece, content should be appropriate for all ages, and should be accessible to a diverse audience.

e) **Nighttime Exhibition Hours.** All of the installations will be seen at night, generally from 6pm – 10pm nightly – and most will not be viewed by the public during the day. Lighting needs to be considered and addressed in the proposals. This should be included in the proposal specifications as listed above.

Proposal Format

Proposals are to be submitted as a PDF file. PDF files should be under 8MB in size.

Proposals are to be emailed to descours@aianeworleans.org. If your files exceed 8MB, please ensure you contact the offices before the due date to make special arrangements.

Proposals will be reviewed by July 16, 2010. Projects that are selected to move onto the second phase may be required to submit a separate set of documents to further determine feasibility and most suitable location. This requirement is dependant on the extent of details provided in the initial proposal, and may not be required for all submissions. It is important that all submissions include as much information and details as possible. Final determinations will be made by the first week of August 2009.

Proposals Due – June 14, 2010 no later than 5:00 pm.

New Orleans DesCours - Summary

New Orleans fourth annual, free, week-long architecture, visual arts, and entertainment festival

- DATES:** Second Week of December, 2010
- TIMES:** Open 6pm – 10pm nightly.
- LOCATION:** New Orleans courtyards, rooftops, walkways, and building lobbies within the French Quarter and historic Central Business District.
- FEATURES:** Architecture, visual art and cultural entertainment – 11 sites, 11 bands, 4 parties, 50 blocks.
- ATTENDANCE:** Projected attendance is estimated between 12,000 and 16,000 people over the course of the event. This figure is based on 2007, 2008 and 2009 DesCours attendance numbers, and includes expected growth figures due to increased marketing and awareness efforts.
- PRESENTED BY:** AIA New Orleans, a 501 (c) 6 not-for-profit corporation, in partnership with the City of New Orleans, the Downtown Development District (DDD), the Vieux Carré Commission (VCC) and numerous civic and private organizations and entities.
- COST:** FREE to the public.
- ATTRACTIONS:** An eclectic variety of contemporary architecture and art installations from both invited and selected internationally recognized artists and designers including new media projects and installations. Nightly changing, entertainment by local musicians in conjunction with the exhibitions. VIP/Press event and party, opening night party and closing night special event including a second line parade through the French Quarter with a tour of the installation sites.

Images of Past Sites

These images provide a general overview of potential sites to assist in developing proposals. These images are intended to provide a visual for the basic set of conditions and constraints for the sites. While images may be used in proposals, we are not seeking or requiring proposals to respond to a specific site. The images below represent a sampling of potential sites, and not all of the 2009 DesCours sites.

