

## FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions

### 2015 Environmental Art Program: Residency & Biennale

(1/19/15, rev. 7/15/15)

#### What is your definition of environmental art? What kinds of works are you looking for?

I-Park views environmental art as a multi-disciplinary, multi-sensory field and also encourages inter-disciplinary collaborations. In addition to ‘traditional’ (our terminology) sculptural installations on the land using natural materials, this program supports works developed by artists/practitioners (hereinafter, ‘artists’) from among the following creative disciplines: architecture, performance art, sound sculpture/design, the language arts, landscape/garden/ecological design, moving image and inter-disciplinary practice. A crucial element of a successful submission will be your ability to convince the selection/curatorial panel, through your previous works and the power of your project proposal, of your ability to intimately and engagingly respond to one or more of the key dimensions of the I-Park ‘environment,’ broadly construed: natural, built, narrative, social – or, perhaps, to its past or future. All works must be ephemeral in character.

#### What scale and intensity of physical intervention are you willing to consider?

All projects must be ephemeral in character. That is, we must have the ability to erase it, or allow natural forces to erase it, from existence at the appropriate time. Some installations will naturally disappear soon after the exhibition, others may survive for a few years thereafter. We also don’t want the piece to fundamentally alter the terrain or ecosystem, certainly not over the long term. And, when the decision is made to de-install (we take responsibility for de-installation), we want to be able to make this happen without great expense or effort. It is not the intention of I-Park to create a sculpture park at this time though certain projects could very well serve to inspire more permanent installations in the future. The general rule, to which we obviously make exceptions, is that we wipe the slate clean each spring to allow the land to recover – and to make it fresh for new eyes and ideas.

#### How will it work for those unable to fully participate in the September session?

Our strong desire is to have everyone on-site during the designated residency dates and for the exhibition. While we are open to the possibility of making one or two exceptions – because of personal or project considerations, we know from experience that such scheduling is highly problematic for many reasons. If you request Alternate Scheduling (to create the work prior to September) on your application form, we will contact you to see if something can be arranged. In any event, you will need to assure I-Park that your installation will survive in good condition through the Biennale and at least a month or two thereafter. Also, your attendance at the Biennale on September 20 is required.

#### Are there any eligibility requirements for the program?

Artists who participated in the Environmental Art Program in 2013 are not eligible for the 2015 program. Also, artists cannot participate in both the General Residency and Environmental Art Programs in 2015. While you may apply to both programs, you can only participate in one. If you happen to be selected to participate in both programs, you would need to choose one or the other. Also, all artists must be over the age of 21.

Am I able to apply as part of a collaborative group?

You may submit a group application but be aware that the artist's stipend will need to be shared among all the participants. The team leader will fill out the application form with his/her personal information as we need to have a single point of contact and one person with whom to coordinate the financial arrangements. We can accommodate 2-person, and possibly 3-person, teams. However, due to limited lodging facilities, collaborating team members might need to bunk together and/or accept 'alternative' lodging arrangements on or off site.

What are the financial arrangements for the participants?

I-Park is offering a Unified Artist' Stipend in 2015. There will be no separate reimbursement of travel or other out-of-pocket expenses associated with the program. In order to roughly adjust for travel costs, we have established 3 travel zones. Fees are denominated in U.S. dollars and payment will be made by check or by wire-transfer to your bank account.

- Local: \$2,200 – this refers to the following U.S. states and districts: Connecticut, New York, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Virginia, District of Columbia, West Virginia, Maryland.
- North America/Other: \$2,500 – this refers to all remaining U.S. states and districts in North America, except for Alaska, plus Mexico and Canada.
- International/Other: \$3,000 – this encompasses all other nations and the states of Hawaii and Alaska.

When will the payments to the artists be made?

I-Park will issue you a payment of \$1,000 against your stipend during the first week of the residency, subject to your completion of the tax form(s) required by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. The balance will be paid prior to departure assuming that all project, paperwork and financial (if any) obligations have been met.

Are artists required to participate in the residency program or can they simply come in advance of the Biennale to install their pieces?

The residency is an integral component of the Environmental Art Program. The residency was expanded to 3 from (previously) 2 weeks in order for the artists to have more time to study the land and to produce more intensely site-responsive pieces. It was also anticipated that by extending the shared experience, deeper inter-disciplinary exchanges, and perhaps even some collaborations, might be fostered. The residency element accrues to the benefit of the participants while enhancing the overall quality of the Biennale.

Are the artists required to be present for the Biennale and will they have any specific obligations on that day?

The artists are required to be present during the exhibition and may be asked to participate in a group panel presentation or some similar arrangement that will be decided upon, in consultation with all program constituents, at the beginning of the residency. They will also be honored guests at a fundraising dinner the night before the Biennale.

Besides creating a new piece for the exhibition and the above, what other responsibilities will I have?

Of course, the staff would appreciate your respect and cooperation, your adherence to our policies and as much advance planning and communication as needed so that our support can be as organized, efficient and pleasantly delivered as possible. We will look to you for gentle treatment of the facility and considerate regard for the I-Park grounds. We will expect that you bring with you a mature and flexible frame of mind. Although we will do everything within reason to support you in executing your installation just as you imagine it, there may be the need, for any number of reasons (site/safety/environmental constraints, lack of time or resources, etc.), for you to reduce the scale, or otherwise modify the implementation, of your plan. We expect that you will, within reason, cooperate with our documentation initiatives (video, audio, photos) and that you will share your own documentation with us. There is a short questionnaire that we'll ask you complete at the end of the residency. Finally, we request that, whenever practical, you credit the I-Park Foundation in future presentations of the work product you created for the Biennale.

Will there be a written agreement associated with the program?

Yes, the agreement defines the artist's obligations as well as the obligations of I-Park. The office can send you a copy of the agreement form from 2013 if you would like to review it prior to making your application. The 2015 agreement will be similar in nature.

How many artists will be involved in the program?

We expect that there will be between 12 and 15 participants.

Will there be an approval process before work can begin on the installations?

The approval process is quite informal. We will be looking at location/accessibility, the amount of land/space that will be disturbed, the extent of the proposed disturbance, any environmental or safety issues that might arise during installation or afterwards, conformance with applicable local ordinances and ease of disassembly, disposal and reclamation. Our primary goal, within program guidelines, is to help remove obstacles and otherwise facilitate the realization of your installation.

Will I be able to change my project after it's been approved?

Yes. However, you will need to re-submit your plan to the Project Manager for approval prior to starting, or re-starting, work at your site.

What happens to the work after the Biennale?

There will be a series of public and private showings/walks for the remainder of the year. We are hopeful that many of the installations will survive the winter and be presentable for appreciation in the springtime. Any post-Biennale maintenance will be performed only with the artist's permission. In deference to the integrity of the artist's vision, I-Park commits that it will not modify or re-locate any installation without the artist's express permission. De-installation will be at the sole discretion of I-Park management, though you will be invited to contribute any re-usable materials to I-Park's recycling Junk Trail.

What kind of staff support will be available during the Environmental Art residency?

I-Park has an Executive Director, a Residency Program Manager and a groundskeeper. For part-time staff, we have a handy-man, a chef and housekeeping personnel. The Environmental Art Program will have a designated Project Manager. We plan to have extra staff on hand for the first week or so to help with orientation and coordination. There will be minimal staff support on the weekends, however, so participants will need to plan accordingly. Since there will be no other active programs during the September time frame, all staff will be focused on support for the Environmental Art Program.

What kinds of materials, tools, equipment and utilities will be available?

There is, as you can imagine, an abundance of natural materials on the site that is available for your use. There is also a decent selection of metal and organic ‘junk,’ concrete masonry elements, odd lots of lumber and an array of construction/building materials that can generally be shared at no cost to the artist. As for tools, we have the basic ladders, wheelbarrows, chain saws, hand trucks and dollies as well as power, hand, gardening and maintenance tools. We will have a pickup and/or a small dump truck as well as an all-terrain vehicle reserved for the session, though the vehicles will need to be operated by I-Park personnel. Some sites presently have electrical power – some could have power extended to them. None of the sites on the land will have permanent access to 220-volt demand. I-Park has become known for its resourcefulness and generosity in terms of making specialized equipment available for artists’ needs. Please check with the office in advance if you have any unusual equipment requests.

Are tool purchases reimbursable?

If you have a need for tools beyond what we have to offer, we will simply purchase them ourselves if they are common items that we should have thought to provide – or items that would likely be useful to others in the future. To the extent possible, you should anticipate and communicate your tool and equipment needs, in particular specialized items, well in advance of the residency so that these requests can be discussed/coordinated and the items, if approved, acquired. If your project requires the purchase of specialized tools, you would need to purchase them yourself.

What sites will be available for the program?

I-Park intends to mark out a looping trail on which the installations will be sited. The trail will offer a variety of environmental features and settings and will be designed to be reasonably accessible for visitors. At this time, the 2015 trail has not mapped out. We will either do so a month or two prior to the program, and will be happy to share this information to you if you are scheduled to participate – or the trail will be developed in the course of the residency in consultation with the artists. We’ve done it both ways in the past. To get a general feel for the landscape, you’re invited to peruse the videos on our [Sense of Place](#) web page and to review the documentation on our website of previous Environmental Art programs. You are also welcome to visit I-Park and see for yourself. But please call the office well in advance and make an appointment as we are not open to the general public.

Can we expect to be working in a raw, natural environment or will some preparation of the sites be done in advance?

I-Park will mainly be responsible for delineating and preparing the trail(s). If there are fallen trees or major obstructions in your proposed location, we can remove them. Small scale, fussy-type grooming and cleanup is the artist's responsibility. However, we may have volunteers available who would be willing to help with that sort of thing.

How much physical and mechanical assistance can I expect? What about running around for materials and supplies?

We are prepared to offer assistance at times when you need an extra pair of hands, a lift or technical advice. However, we do not provide long-term or ongoing support. It may be that, with advance discussion, we can coordinate with volunteers for longer-term assistance. We are excited about the increased interest in volunteer involvement at I-Park and this can be a real benefit to the artists. There are, of course, some limitations to this kind of support. As for running around, we expect to be doing a fair amount of it in the first week of the residency, though we hope to get as much input as possible in advance so we can have things ready before your arrival. At that, we will want to coordinate and consolidate requests to minimize waste and inefficiency. After the first few days, we will likely be looking to venture off site, at most, every other day.

Are there any limitations on the types of materials that can be used? How extensively can we disturb the grounds (e.g., tree-cutting, excavations)?

We balance environmental sensitivity, safety and the artist's aesthetic and practical needs. You'll find that we enjoy being challenged. Please just ask for permission before taking or disturbing things. Unless what you're proposing is exceptionally aggressive, you'll get a quick and fair response so you can keep moving.

What are the living conditions like at I-Park?

You will be assigned sleeping quarters either in the main residency facility or in one of the private artists' studios. This is the only way we can accommodate all the participants. We will use our best judgment in terms of making these arrangements. We provide bedding, towels, laundry facilities, internet access and a small library. If you would like more details on life at I-Park, you are welcome to read the FAQ for the [General Residency Program](#). However, for the Environmental Art Program, the rules are somewhat relaxed, some of the artists' support services are modified and there will be less emphasis on social functions. If there is a conflict between what is described in the FAQ for the General Residency Program and information provided here and/or on the website relating to the Environmental Art Program, it is the latter that will apply.

Will there be workshop and/or studio spaces available?

Although artists will not, except in certain circumstances, be assigned private studio spaces, we will set-up and make available some studios as shared workshop spaces. We are expecting to have a new, well-equipped artists' workshop coming on line prior to this program. But even if this doesn't come to pass, one of the barns will be outfitted as a general workshop. If the need arises, we are prepared to set up one or more tents/canopies to create temporary work spaces out on the land.

What is the situation with respect to meals?

On Monday through Friday, we will provide the ingredients for a continental breakfast and for a lunch that will generally consist of sandwiches, salads, soups or other light fare – available on a help-yourself basis. Artists are welcome to come in at their convenience and eat at the house or take their food out to their site. A sit down meal will be prepared at the end of the day. To the extent practical, we will take into consideration dietary restrictions and preferences. We are, for example, prepared to accommodate requests for vegetarian meals. However, if you have more exotic dietary restrictions, you may need to purchase and/or prepare your own dishes, though we will make reasonable efforts to assist you. Please make us aware of your health and dietary circumstances well in advance of the residency so we can discuss. For Saturdays and Sundays, you will be responsible for your own meal preparation and cleanup. We will stock the refrigerators and pantries with food supplies, including the week’s leftovers, so there will be an ample reserve. I-Park provides the above meal plan (common food) at no cost to the participants. Those who would prefer something different than, or in addition to, these offerings will need to purchase their own provisions at their own expense. We will make one weekly trip to the grocery store and you are welcome to come along and do personal shopping. Note that this is the meal program as we presently envision it. The plan will be reviewed and fine-tuned approximately 60 days prior to the start of the residency. If there are significant changes (not likely), you will be advised.

Am I permitted to invite guests during the residency?

Certainly, guests are most welcome at the Biennale – the more the merrier. Short, day-time visits during the course of the residency are generally permitted. However, in that we are very protective of the privacy and security of our residents, and since the facility will be at full capacity, overnight guests are not allowed.

What kind of program and audience do you anticipate for the Biennale?

Promotion of the Biennale will be targeted primarily to the regional cultural and academic communities. Typically, the Biennale, which doubles as I-Park’s annual open house, will consist of a site walk highlighting the various installations – as well as music, and perhaps some other, project-related, performances or presentations. It is anticipated that there will also be a festive evening element.

Will there be communications with the invited artists prior to the start of the residency?

Yes, several updates will be sent to the invitees and there will be at least one one-on-one phone conversation prior to the start of the residency session. Of course, the office will be available at all times to field inquiries. There will also be an in-depth orientation meeting and site walk at the beginning of the residency.