

COOL GARDENS 2025

StorefrontMB
Imagine the future of our shared spaces

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

DEADLINE: March 9, 2025, 11:59PM CST

COMPETITION: up to five (5) new garden installations

BUDGET: \$2,000 CAD Honorarium (per team) + up to \$10,000 CAD for materials/fabrication/installation (jointly managed with Storefront Manitoba)

ABOUT COOL GARDENS

Presented by Storefront Manitoba, **Cool Gardens** is a design competition and curated public exhibition of contemporary garden installations that takes place in various locations across Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. The 2025 exhibition will include sites across the City of Winnipeg, on Treaty 1 Territory and on the homeland of the Red River Métis.

For over 10 years, Cool Gardens has commissioned temporary installations by architects, landscape architects, designers, and artists that instigate curiosity and play, while promoting public engagement with designed landscapes. These temporary installations demonstrate how critical and poetic interventions in public space can meaningfully affect people's experiences of urban environments.

From its inception, Cool Gardens set out to mirror The Forks' internationally acclaimed *Warming Huts: Arts + Architecture Competition on Ice*, which sees winter warming huts installed along the frozen Red and Assiniboine Rivers. Cool Gardens considers the opposite for summer: exploring the concept of **COOL-ing** as its recurring theme.

Cool Gardens 2025 will officially run from **July 5th to September 28th**. Up to five (5) new competition winning garden installations will be selected and mounted alongside invited and returning installations. New partnerships with the Assiniboine Park Conservancy, the City of Winnipeg, and the Osborne Village Biz will enable Cool Gardens to expand its reach with a range of new competition sites for 2025.

Cool Gardens installations will be located on the traditional and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Ininiwak, Anishininiwak, Dakota Oyate, and Dene on Treaty 1 Territory, and on the homeland of the Red River Métis. With this in mind, we are committed to moving forward in the spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

Indigenous teachings provide a unique and invaluable perspective on how we relate to the land that offers solutions to many of the challenges we face in contemporary society including the climate crisis and widespread inequity. The era of reconciliation reminds us that the landscapes and projects we highlight in our work are sacred and contested grounds.



2025 SITES + LOCATIONS

Cool Gardens 2025 will include **up to five (5) new competition winning garden installations**, along with invited and returning gardens. New installation sites are planned to stretch along Graham Avenue, in Winnipeg's downtown core; into Osborne Village, the city's densest mixed-use neighbourhood; and all the way to Assiniboine Park, an expansive, picturesque landscape in the city's southwestern suburbs. Upon submission, entrants will be prompted to specify which site their proposal addresses and to note any other sites they would like to be considered for. In addition to the specific contexts and conditions of each site, artist/designer teams are invited to consider the following thematic prompts for Cool Gardens 2025:

2025 THEMATIC PROMPTS

- How might principles of circularity, sustainable material sourcing, waste diversion, and reuse be incorporated into your installation?
- How does your installation consider material and ecological lifecycles, as well as the labour practices of tending, care, maintenance, and upkeep?
- How will your installation encourage participation? Are there opportunities for creative interaction (dance/music/visual art etc.) in/on/around your proposed installation?
- How might your installation expand the idea of what a garden can be?

[CLICK HERE FOR FULL SITE DESCRIPTIONS](#)

• • • • • ASSINIBOINE PARK

Assiniboine Park is a large urban park with walking trails, gardens, a zoo, and cultural facilities. It's a cherished part of Winnipeg's urban greenspace.



The Leaf Indoor Garden is a bright, spacious indoor biome filled with plants and flowers under an arching glass roof. The space offers unique design opportunities with its high-ceiling structure.



Sensory Garden Knolls are elevated mounds with unique plantings and stepped paths. Popular with families, they offer spots for play and to look out over the garden landscape under open sky.

GRAHAM AVENUE

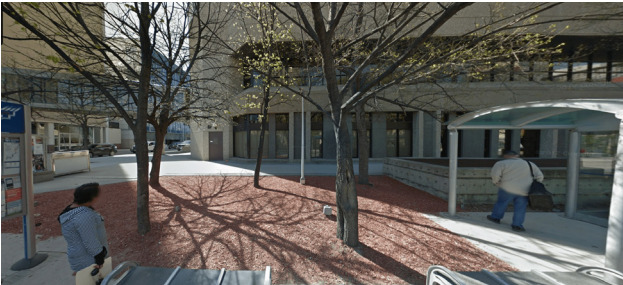
This June, Graham Avenue’s former bus lane will transform into a pedestrian plaza as part of a summer 2025 pilot program. All Graham Avenue sites are located between Smith Street and Donald Street in front of the Millennium Library.



Reimagined Bus Stop is located at the northeast corner of Donald Street and Graham Avenue, on the site of a soon-to-be decommissioned downtown bus stop.



Garden Alcove is a setback sidewalk zone with sunny southern exposure and a towering mature tree canopy.



Tree Grove and Ventilation Platform is a site that includes a low grove-like tree canopy and a curious raised ventilation platform.



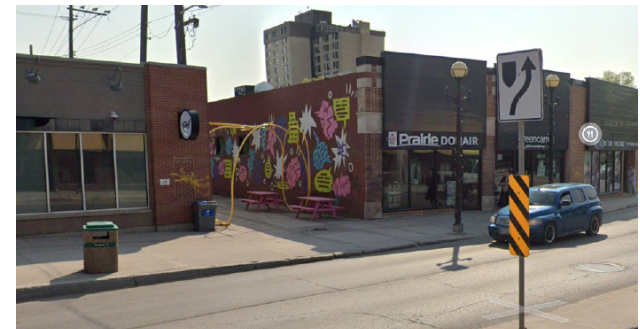
Corner Plaza is located at the southwest corner of Smith Street and Graham Avenue, and offers wrap-around circulation paths, prominent views, and proximity to existing public artworks.

OSBORNE VILLAGE

Located south of downtown Winnipeg, Osborne Village is a celebrated vibrant neighborhood known for its youthful energy, diverse businesses, and lively atmosphere.



Osborne Village Green - 514 Stradbrook Ave. Osborne Village Green is a quiet community park nestled between residential areas.



Community Patio - 120 Osborne St. is a pedestrian lane between two buildings, often used for installations and busy with foot traffic.

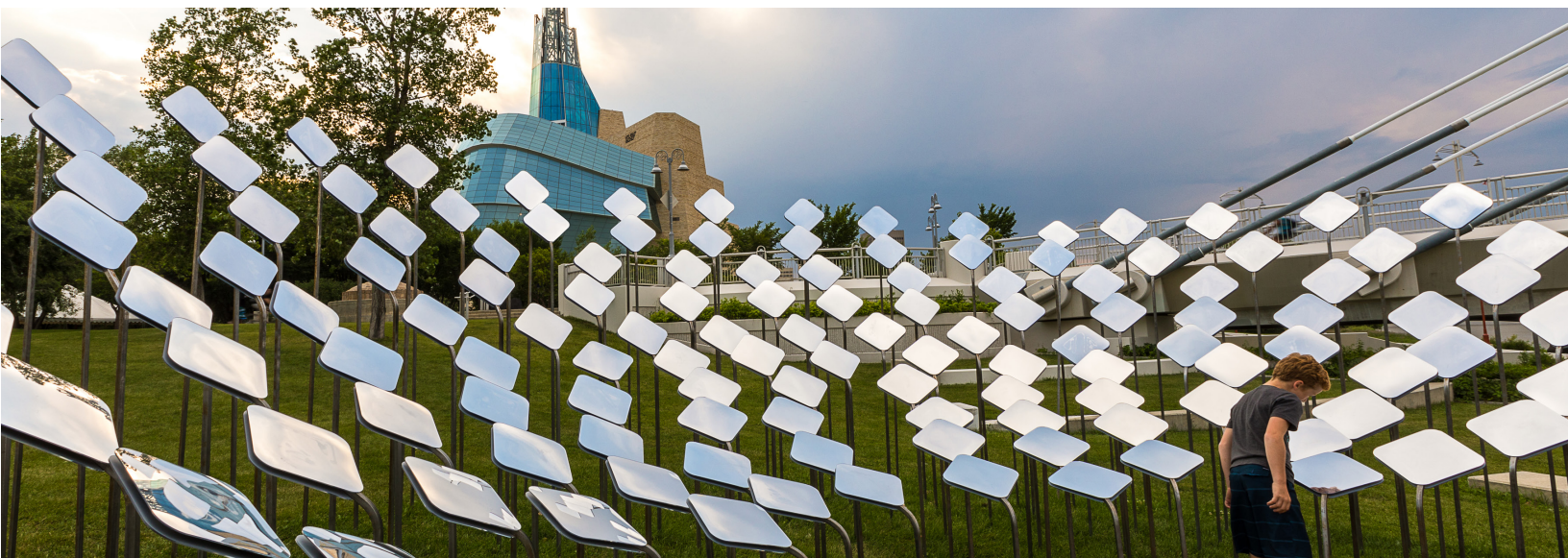
ELIGIBILITY

This Call for Submissions is open to local, national, and international teams and individuals consisting of designers, architects, landscape architects, and/or visual artists. Individuals may be students, interns, or practitioners. Multiple submissions are permitted.

Storefront Manitoba is committed to representing the diversity of people living in our region. We welcome applications and self-declaration from underrepresented groups including Indigenous Peoples, Women, Racialized Peoples, Persons Living with Disabilities, 2SLGBTQQIA+ Peoples, and Newcomers.

INSTALLATION REQUIREMENT + CONDITIONS

- Installations must be resilient to weather conditions for five (5) months from June-October 2025;
- Installations shall not require significant excavation, sub-surface foundations or permanent damage to existing infrastructure;
- Installations must consider the unique logistical constraints outlined in each site information package (i.e. anchor points, sources of electricity, pedestrian rights-of-way);
- Winning teams/individuals must manage installation and deinstallation within the allotted timeframes and account for associated labour, decommissioning and site restoration costs within their budgets;
- At least one member of each winning team must be in Winnipeg during the June 2025 Installation Period (exact dates will depend on the site);
- Winning teams must coordinate with and observe the requirements of Storefront Manitoba partners and site hosts, Assiniboine Park Conservancy, the City of Winnipeg, and the Osborne Village BIZ.



SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Please [click here to fill out the online Submission Form](#) and upload two (2) separate Submission Documents, in English.

DOCUMENT 1 DESIGN PROPOSAL

Upload a 2-page PDF proposal in landscape format (11 x 17" / 279mm x 432mm) including the information outlined below. Do not include identifying information (names, logos, contact etc.). File size shall not exceed 10MB and must follow the naming convention: *"ProposedInstallationName_DesignProposal.pdf"*

Page 1: Project Summary

- One primary conceptual sketch or 3D rendering of proposed project;
- A maximum 150-word description of overall design idea and visitor experience/interactivity;
- A maximum 150-word description of technical considerations including: constructability, sustainability, design circularity, and accessibility.

Page 2: Design Details

- As appropriate, relevant main views, plan, and elevation drawing(s); indicating scale and proposed materials;
- Select diagrams or detail drawing(s) showing methods of assembly and construction;
- Provide a breakdown estimate of project costs (materials, fabrication, install and deinstall labour, and site restoration);
- Provide a high-level plan for maintenance and decommissioning as well as considerations regarding the installation's lifecycle (potential for permanency or re-mounting in subsequent years, strategies for repurposing or recycling components and materials).

DOCUMENT 2 TEAM INFORMATION

Upload a 10-page (max) PDF (8.5 x 11" / 216mm x 279mm) including all information specified below. File size shall not exceed 10MB and must follow the naming convention: *"ProposedInstallationName_TeamInformation.pdf"*

- CV for each team member;
- Four (4) pages of relevant work samples with short descriptions of team members' contributions to these projects.

Identifying information will be withheld from the selection committee during initial evaluation. During the technical review, team information will be used to verify eligibility and assess whether teams have the capacity and expertise required to manage the design and construction of the installation.

**BUDGET
+ HONORARIA**

Garden installations will be executed and/or managed by the winning teams in consultation with Cool Gardens and Storefront Manitoba. The jointly managed budget for the design fabrication and installation will be up to \$10,000 CAD and must cover ALL related expenses, including (but not limited to) site preparation and restoration, technical consultation, fabrication, materials, installation and deinstallation labour, shipping, decommissioning, and all applicable taxes, etc. Teams will be responsible for any cost exceeding this budget.

Winning submissions will receive \$2,000 CAD honorarium (per team) disbursed in two installments: upon submission of the Detailed Design and upon decommissioning of installation.

Up to \$1,000 CAD will be provided at our discretion to help offset transport and accommodation costs for winning teams from outside Manitoba. Out-of-province teams are encouraged to seek travel grants from their own jurisdictions, which Storefront Manitoba can support with letters confirming participation. Teams are also encouraged to source additional funding or in-kind contributions for their installations.

**ESTIMATED
SCHEDULE**
subject to change

January 28, 2025	Call for Proposals released
March 9, 2025	Deadline for submissions
March 24-30, 2025	Timeframe to contact winners
April 15, 2025	Detailed design documents submission + review
May 2025	Fabrication period
June 2025	Installation – Osborne Village (TBC exact dates)
June 2-4, 2025	Installation – Assiniboine Park
July 2-4, 2025	Installation – Graham Avenue
July 5, 2025	Media Event and Launch Party
September 8, 2025	Decommissioning The Leaf Indoor Garden site
October 2025	Closing and decommissioning

**SELECTION
CRITERIA**

Submissions will be evaluated based on:

- Artistic merit (creativity, originality, clarity, and cultural integrity);
- Relevance to 2025 site context and thematic prompts;
- Ease of fabrication, installation, maintenance, and decommissioning;
- Potential for interactive public engagement and programming;
- Durability, safety, and barrier-free accessibility;
- Budget feasibility.

SELECTION PROCESS

The selection committee will include design professionals, community members, and representatives from Cool Gardens 2025 partner organizations. Storefront Manitoba will facilitate the selection process, while the final decisions will be determined by the selection committee.

Recommended submissions will be reviewed by technical advisors who will assess financial feasibility, durability, structural integrity, safety, maintenance, sustainability, and accessibility.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

- Cool Gardens reserve the agreement to reject any or all submissions.
- The scope of Cool Gardens 2025 installations is contingent upon funding.
- Completed installations will be the property of Storefront Manitoba, while the moral and copy rights remain with each individual/team.
- Cool Gardens may consider remounting an installation in future years, in consultation with the individual/team.
- Cool Gardens reserves the right to re-use, re-purpose or sell any or all components of the installations after de-commissioning.
- Cool Gardens and partnering organizations reserve the right to publish submissions for marketing purposes (and will always credit the artist/designer) and to include winning submissions' documentation & images in future publications unless an individual/team specifies otherwise.

For questions, please contact: coolgardens@storefrontmb.ca

ABOUT STOREFRONT MANITOBA



Storefront Manitoba was established in 2010 to foster Design Culture in Manitoba. Since its inception, Storefront Manitoba has coordinated a host of events, including: forums, film series, the Winnipeg Design Festival, CommerceDesignWinnipeg, the Architecture Fringe Festival, and TableFor1200. Storefront Manitoba has also published a number of books on architecture, design, and urbanism including 'Cool Gardens – An Exhibition of Temporary Installations', celebrating the first five years of the project. The organization is overseen by a board of directors that draws from all spatial disciplines: Landscape, Architecture, Interior Design, and Planning.