SHUNPIKE

STOREFRONTS & ARTIST RESIDENCIES

Shunpike Storefronts & Artist Residencies 2026 Application

Submission Guidelines

Application due Friday, May 8 at 11:59 PM

Program Overview

The Shunpike Storefronts & Artist Residencies program transforms empty commercial spaces into vibrant hubs for creativity and community engagement. Launched in response to the 2008 economic downturn and expanded as part of Seattle Restored (2021-2025), the program has a 15-year track record of revitalizing urban neighborhoods by turning vacant storefronts into public art exhibitions and artist residencies.

Today, the program supports artists and creative entrepreneurs by providing high-visibility locations, financial support, and business development workshops to grow their professional practice. Through partnerships—such as the ongoing collaboration with Amazon in the South Lake Union and Allen Family Philanthropies across Downtown neighborhoods—the Storefronts & Artist Residencies program hosts 50+ artists annually, breathing new life into the urban core while enriching the cultural and economic fabric of Seattle's downtown and surrounding communities.

About the Application

We are now accepting applications for Artist Residencies and Window Art Installations located in Downtown Seattle for the July 2026 – January 2027 cycle. Proposals will be reviewed by a panel of community members in partnership with Shunpike staff. Selected applicants will be invited to participate in a required interview. While we are primarily filling placements for this specific cycle, given the high demand for the program, we are also identifying a short-list of artists for potential opportunities in early 2027. Final matching of artists to available spaces is at Shunpike's sole discretion, and a waitlist may be established for future openings.

\Application Timeline *Dates are subject to change*

Virtual Info Session	April 27, 4:30 - 6:00 PM
Applications Due	**Friday, May 8 at 11:59 PM**
Virtual Interviews	June 10 - June 18
Acceptance/Decline	June 26
Business License & Insurance 101	July 8, 5:00 - 7:00 PM
Move in	July 29 - 31

Window Art Installations & Artist Residencies Opportunities

This application offers two participation opportunities. While you are welcome to apply for both, please note that **applicants will only be selected for one.** We encourage you to choose the pathway that best aligns with your current practice.

1. Window Art Installation

Transform a high-visibility, street-facing window into a public art display showcasing your work to the Downtown Seattle community.

- Duration: 6 months
- $1,500 participation stipend

Please note: *All installations and exhibited works must be suitable for the general public. Content should not contain depictions of violence or other mature themes, as these spaces are located in high-traffic public areas.*

2. Artist Residency

Jointly operate a studio and retail space with other artists for six months in a self-directed residency program. Each participant must be on-site and open to the public for at least 24 hours a week for the entire duration of the program. Participants are required to set up a shared shop area to sell artwork, merchandise, and products.

- Duration: 6 months
- $3,500 participation stipend

Please note: *This residency program is designed for visual artists and makers whose practice does not require heavy machinery (sewing machines are ok) . As these are shared creative environments, artists working with high heat, chemicals, equipment, or materials that produce excessive dust must be prepared to adjust their processes to accommodate a group setting without ventilation. This program is designed for artists making physical artwork, objects, and/or merchandise. Performing artists and musicians are encouraged to apply for the residency program, The Studio at 2+U.*

Participation Benefits

- **Expand Your Reach:** Connect with new audiences and customers.
- **Financial & Space Support:** Receive a participation stipend and access to no-cost retail and studio space.
- **Community Impact:** Contribute to the vitality of Downtown Seattle.
- **Professional Documentation:** Receive professional photography of your installation or residency for use in your portfolio.
- **Professional Development:** Access to creative entrepreneurial support, resources, and networking events tailored for artists. Learn through doing.
- **Network Building:** Build meaningful connections with a diverse cohort of local artists and creatives.
- **Public Engagement:** Maintain regular shop hours and participate in neighborhood art walks and community-facing events to build your network and showcase your creative practice.

Participation Requirements

Prior to/throughout your participation, you will be required to:

- **Program Engagement:** Attend regular check-ins with Storefronts & Artist Residencies program managers and participate in a mandatory program orientation session(s).
- **Contractual Agreement:** Complete a formal participant contract and sign an acknowledgment regarding program compliance and activation terms.
- **Evaluation & Feedback:** Complete comprehensive pre- and post-participation surveys to assist in program evaluation.
- **Financial Documentation:** Submit a W-9 form and timely invoices as required for stipend processing.
- **Sales Reports:** Maintain records of your sales and provide Shunpike with monthly reports, which are collected at the conclusion of your participation.

Additional Requirements for Artist Residency Participation

- **Business Licensing:** Maintain a valid City of Seattle Business License for the entire duration of the residency or installation.
- **Insurance Coverage:** Provide a Certificate of Insurance (COI) for General Liability, specifically naming **Shunpike** as an "Additional Insured."
- **Activation Hours:** Ensure the storefront or residency space is open and accessible to the public for at least 24 hours per week.

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for participation in the Storefronts & Artist Residencies Program, applicants must meet the following requirements:

- You must be **18 years or older** to apply and participate in Storefronts & Artist Residencies
- **Residency Only:**
    - You are not currently renting a dedicated artist studio space; home studios are okay.
    - You have not participated as an artist in residence in the Storefronts & Artist Residencies Program or Seattle Restored within the last two years (2024 - 2026).
- **Installation Only:**
    - Artists are responsible for the safe installation and deinstallation of their artwork and must provide all necessary tools, hardware, and materials (e.g., ladders, temporary walls). Artists must also maintain the work in high-quality condition throughout the duration of the cycle and provide repairs upon request.
    - Artists cannot have participated in a Window Art Installation in Downtown Seattle or South Lake Union within the last two years (2024 - 2026).

General Participation Reminders

- **Program Representation:** Acknowledge that your name and business will be associated with the Shunpike and the Shunpike Storefronts & Artist Residencies program.
- **Co-Marketing & Promotion:** Commit to promoting your participation on social media and web platforms, and maintain on-site displays of program-branded materials, such as A-boards, window clings, or postcards.
- **Media Release & Usage:** By participating in the program, the artist will need to grant Shunpike, its partners, and funders the right to use high-quality photographic and video documentation of their work, process, and likeness for promotional, educational, and archival purposes. This may include, but is not limited to, Shunpike marketing and advertising campaigns promoting the program.

Selection Criteria

In partnership with Storefronts & Artist Residencies staff, a community advisory panel will review and score applications. The community advisory panel will consist of individuals from diverse backgrounds who bring valuable perspectives to the decision-making process.

The strongest Residency Applicants meet the following selection criteria:

- **Readiness (36%):** You have a clear plan, including what artwork/merchandise you already have and/or will create to be ready to set up shop within 2 weeks of the program start date. You have relevant experience exhibiting art or making sales in a retail environment. Your artwork samples support your written proposal.

- **Compelling (20%):** Your artwork/merchandise offers a unique perspective or exemplifies artistic integrity.
- **Equity (20%):** You identify as a member of one of the following communities, or your artwork/business serves one or more of those communities. This includes women, LGBTQIA+, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.
- **Professional Impact & Fit (20%):** This opportunity, at this particular time, will supercharge your creative career/business.

The strongest Window Art installation Applicants meet the following selection criteria:

- **Readiness (36%):** Your installation proposal clearly suits a window display format and is supported by strong artwork samples.
- **Compelling (24%):** Your artwork/installation offers a unique perspective or exemplifies artistic integrity.
- **Equity (20%):** You identify as a member of one of the following communities, or your artwork/business serves one or more of those communities. This includes women, LGBTQIA+, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.
- **Professional Impact & Fit (20%):** This opportunity, at this particular time, will supercharge your creative career/business.

Application interviews

Virtual interviews will take place between **June 10 - June 18** for opportunities that begin in July. Future iterations of the program may have interviews at a later date.

Translation and accessibility

Storefronts & Artist Residencies encourages everyone to participate in its programs and activities. If you require disability accommodations, materials in alternate formats, or accessibility information, please contact us at programs@shunpike.org.

Virtual Info Session

During our virtual info session on **April 27, 4:30 - 6:00 PM** we provided a brief overview of the Storefronts & Artist Residencies program, as well as A walkthrough of the application portal, Technical requirements for submissions, and a Q&A session with Program Managers. Registration is required. Click here to register.

Deadline

Applications are due **Friday, May 8, 2026, at 11:59 PM PT**.

Click here to open the application