



Art in Odd Places 2026: UTOPIAS
SENSE | DREAM | BODY | CARE | CONNECT

OPEN CALL APPLICATION TEXT

Section 1 of 9

Application deadline: April 21, 2026, 11:59 PM ET

Questions: aiopnyc@gmail.com

Please read the OPEN CALL guidelines, FAQs, and this application text PDF before filling out the application. All applications must be submitted online. Mailed/paper submissions will not be considered. You may only submit one application.

What does it mean to imagine otherwise—together, in public? What happens when we treat the street not as a corridor of consumption or control, but as a commons: a site for experimentation, mutual recognition, and collective dreaming? In a time when public space is increasingly regulated, monetized, and surveilled, *AiOP 2026: UTOPIAS* asks: How might temporary gestures—ephemeral performances, improvised gatherings, fleeting apparitions—rehearse more just, joyful, and imaginative ways of existing and communing together?

Art in Odd Places (AiOP) 2026: UTOPIAS, the 21st edition of *Art in Odd Places*, invites artists and audiences to inhabit the city not as it is, but as it could be—transforming 14th Street into a living laboratory for collective dreams, radical care, and shared futures, as this festival has been doing for over two decades.

New York City is a place built by arrivals. Generations of migrants and immigrants have carried languages, rituals, and memories that continually rewrite the city's possibilities. *AiOP 2026: UTOPIAS* recognizes NYC as a living archive of radical thinking, where people from all over the world co-think, co-resist, and co-create in the face of precarity and displacement. Rather than smoothing over differences, this project leans into the frictions and overlaps of urban life—those moments when cultures touch, (mis)align, and transform one another.

We invite individual artists and collectives to propose projects for this outdoor public visual and performance art festival taking place in New York City. We welcome projects that use installations, performance, actions, gestures, sound, and participatory practices to activate public space and spark imagination. We encourage artists to create situations where audiences can listen, participate, and reflect—where complexity becomes felt, and dialogue can emerge. Whether through solo works or collaborative interventions, we seek projects that propose speculative infrastructures for care, refusal, joy, and mutual recognition—projects that invite passersby into acts of listening, resting, mourning, celebration, or play.

ABOUT THE FESTIVAL

Festival dates: September 26 & 27, 2026

Festival hours: 12:00 PM–5:00 PM (both days)

Locations (14th Street, NYC):

- **Saturday, September 26:** 14th Street between First Avenue and Third Avenue
- **Sunday, September 27:** 14th Street between Sixth Avenue and Eighth Avenue

Performances and installations will unfold across set locations. Half of the participating artists will present each day, creating a two-day festival shaped collectively by all participants.

Throughout the festival, the city becomes both stage and collaborator: sidewalks become rehearsal rooms, lampposts and stoops become altars, traffic noise becomes a score, and the street becomes a playground for collective participation. *AiOP 2026: UTOPIAS* invites visitors to move slowly, to notice how even the smallest actions can momentarily shift what feels possible. In these shared intervals of time, public space is reclaimed as a commons.

We look forward to your submissions!

AiOP is an artist-run organization. We work horizontally and collaboratively with artists to realize the festival each year. The ability to work independently on your project is an important characteristic of the festival. Letters of support are provided to selected projects.

All selected artists will receive an honorarium, acknowledging their contributions to the festival. We are committed to supporting artists and fostering an inclusive creative community.

About *Art in Odd Places (AiOP)*

Art in Odd Places aims to stretch the boundaries of communication in the public realm by presenting artworks in all disciplines outside the confines of traditional arts institutions and conventional exhibition spaces. *AiOP* affirms public space as an epicenter for diverse social interactions and the unfettered exchange of ideas.

Read more about *AiOP* here: artinoddplaces.org

Open Call, Festival, and Exhibition Timeline

When preparing your application, please keep in mind this timeline:

- **March 21, 2026:** Open Call launches
- **April 21, 2026 (11:59 PM ET):** Application deadline
- **May 21, 2026:** Applicants notified of decisions
- **September 26–27, 2026 (12–5 PM):** Festival dates

Are you aware that *AiOP* is an outdoor public art festival taking place on 14th Street over two days? [Yes/No; if 'No' skip to Section 9]

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Are you a student? [Yes/No]

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Are you able to self-produce and provide your own technical equipment and support team (if needed)? [Yes/No; if 'No' skip to Section 9]

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Are you willing to proactively reach out to local businesses and community organizations for the placement of your project (if needed)? [Yes/No; if 'No' skip to Section 9]

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Are you able to commit to maintaining a presence at the festival locations for the duration of the event? [Yes/No/Other; if 'No' skip to Section 9]

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Does your project address the theme of *UTOPIAS*? (What is *UTOPIAS*? A living laboratory for collective dreams, radical care, and shared futures.)
[Yes/No; if 'No' skip to Section 9]

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Artist Information

First Name

Last Name

Pronouns

Are you applying as an artist group or collective? [Yes/No]

Group/Collective Name (if applicable)

Full Address [# Street, Apt, City, State, Zip Code, Country]

Mobile Phone Number

Artist Resume

Please provide a link to your CV below.

(Groups may add abbreviated CVs of each of their members).

Artist Bio

Please enter your abbreviated Artist Resume Bio below. (75-150 words)

Ethnic Background

Please mark one:

- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Black or African American
- Caucasian
- Hispanic/Latinx
- Indigenous
- Arab/mena/swana
- Mixed
- Rather not say
- Other

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Project Information

Keep in mind, your proposed project will be in all three festival locations.

- Saturday September 26, 14th Street between 1st Avenue and 3rd Avenue, NYC
- Sunday September 26, 14th Street between 6th Avenue and 8th Avenue, NYC

You are responsible for taking protective measures to minimize the spread of COVID during your travels to and from NYC and your stay in the city. *AiOP* is not responsible for arranging artist travel and living accommodations.

Guidelines are subject to adjustment as the festival approaches. *AiOP* will be following CDC guidelines to ensure a safe and healthy festival for all to enjoy. *Please keep in mind that AiOP is an artist-run organization. We work horizontally and collaboratively with artists and artist assistants to realize the festival each year. Letters of support are provided to selected projects.*

Organization's Name (if applicable)

Project Title (if applicable)

Project Summary

If selected, this draft will be considered for publicity materials. (100 words MAX)

Project Proposal

Please provide a succinct and concrete description of your project plans for this public art festival. Please include:

- Brief concept description (75–100 words)
- Media and materials
- Method of execution
- Nature of public engagement (300 words)

How does your project relate to *UTOPIAS*?

Please write a short description. (100 words max.)

Technical/Equipment, Access Needs

Please note if you and/or members of your group have specific accessibility requirements, and what technical equipment you plan to use to execute your project in a brief list form. We cannot provide financial support for securing equipment. We can not guarantee that each location will provide electricity. (50 words max)

Project Supporting Information

Please provide a link with your specific information about the proposed project in the form of renderings, photographs, drawings, or video clips (1 minute max). Photographs should be in the format of hi-res JPEGs, and video clips should be mp4s. You may provide links via your personal website or any file-sharing site such as Dropbox, YouTube, Google, Vimeo, Soundcloud, etc. (**NOTE:** Please make sure that we have full access to the links provided).

Project Type

Check all that apply:

- Dance/Choreography
- Installation
- Interdisciplinary
- Performance
- Social Practice
- Sound
- Video Projection / New Media (Will not get dark until 8:30 PM)
- Other

Past Work Samples

Please provide a link to your work and your website if you have one.