



YOUR TOWN

The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design

Request for Proposals
2011

Your Town: The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design is a **National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)** funded opportunity for non-profits, community organizations, and local governments to tackle critical regional planning issues through design by bringing design professionals to your community for a multi-day workshop. *Your Town: The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design* is an NEA leadership initiative conducted in partnership with SUNY Syracuse's Department of Landscape Architecture and consultant Shelley Mastran, Professor at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Since 1991, nearly 60 workshops have been held in all regions of the country.

Design Excellence

The National Endowment for the Arts invests in three national design leadership programs to comprehensively protect and enhance the American built and natural environments at all scales:

- [Your Town: The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design](#)
- [Mayors' Institute on City Design](#)
- [Governors' Institute on Community Design](#)



RFP Summary

Submission Deadline:

Friday, February 25, 2011

Funding opportunity: \$22,000 for a 2-1/2 day community design workshop.

Timing: Workshop must occur between March 1, 2011 and December 31, 2011.

Eligibility: Applicant towns must have a population of less than 50,000 people and/or be located in a non-metropolitan county or a metropolitan county on the urban fringe.

Website: www.yourtowndesign.org



CITIZENS' INSTITUTE FORMAT

Your Town brings together rural community leaders to learn how to use design to help build a future for their communities. The workshops take place over two and a half days, and bring together participants from one or several communities in a geographic region to address specific regional planning and design issues. These issues might include: downtown revitalization, growth management, transportation, greenway development, and subdivision design. The coordinators convene experts in planning, architecture, landscape architecture, transportation, historic preservation, and creative placemaking to contribute to the session. These experts are engaged to work specifically on the issues identified by a community through the problem-solving lens of design.

Past organizations that have hosted a workshop include university community design centers, chambers of commerce, county governments, main street organizations, local preservation organizations, historical societies, and other 501(c)(3) groups.

If you are selected to produce a *Your Town* workshop, you will be sent a Coordinator's Manual to guide you through the planning process and you will receive limited technical and logistical guidance from the program's co-directors.

FUNDING

Up to \$22,000 will be available to a non-profit organization or local government to conduct each workshop. If your organization is selected, the funds will be provided through a fee-for-service contract with SUNY Syracuse. Although \$22,000 should cover most expenses, workshop organizers must secure matching funds to supplement the NEA funding. Past successful applications have included matches of approximately \$10,000, which may take the form of



funds raised or donated by local organizations, including goods and services (food, printing, space, and staff time, for example). Typically, all the local participants' expenses (food, lodging, and materials) are paid for, except transportation. You are required to maintain budget records for all expenditures. If substantially fewer than 30 participants attend the full workshop, funding from NEA will decrease accordingly. Securing committed attendance at the workshop is critical.

FOLLOW-UP

We are particularly interested in workshops that produce tangible results and want to know the follow-up activities you propose to extend the workshop's impact after it ends—public meetings, educational sessions, publications, photo documentation, website forums, or other social media tools. The funds you receive from NEA may be applied toward follow-up work, including the production of publications or web-based materials, but these costs should not exceed 10% of the total project costs.



HOW TO APPLY:

If you are interested in organizing a 2011 *Your Town* workshop, please submit a brief proposal that includes the following information:

1. **Principal Organizer/Contact.** (Name, Address with Zipcode, Phone Numbers, Email)
2. **Sponsoring Institution.** (501(c)(3) Non-profit Organization or Local Government Agency)
3. **Organizer Experience.** Briefly describe the experience of the principal organizer or organization for the *Your Town* program, with reference to event planning, the rural community or communities proposed, and rural community issues. While a design background is not required, if you or your organization has no design expertise, please provide a paragraph explaining how design issues will be addressed during the workshop.
4. **Proposed Location of the Workshop.** (Facility, Town, State and Zipcode) We recommend a retreat-like setting for the workshop.
5. **Principal Issues and Problems to be Addressed.** Describe both the general rural community issues and proposed design problems that the workshop would address. Why is the timing of this workshop important?
6. **Proposed Faculty and Speakers.** List key individuals you propose to be involved as faculty, speakers, and/or resource persons, and note whether commitments have been secured. For each, describe his or her area of expertise in a sentence or two. For the most important speakers, please provide some indication -- even a simple email message -- of their commitment to attend the workshop. *Your Town* workshops have created an extensive network of speakers and faculty dedicated to the design issues facing rural America. Starting with a community's proposed list of speakers, *Your Town* staff will work closely with each community to identify the most appropriate speakers from this network.
7. **Proposed Strategy for Recruiting and Retaining Participants.** Describe the audience for the workshop and explain how you would invite them to attend. Participants are expected to attend the **entire** workshop and must agree to full attendance before being accepted. Please provide a strategy for keeping participants in attendance at the workshop for its entirety. We recommend approximately 35 participants.
8. **Statements of Support.** Include endorsement(s) from your local governmental entity and other significant partners. Statements should indicate a commitment to provide logistical, technical, or financial support **and** a willingness to participate in the workshop.
9. **Logistical Support.** Briefly explain the administrative and technical support available for preparing the workshop and producing a *Your Town* briefing book (a suggested format for the briefing book will be provided). We strongly encourage you to partner with an

academic or other institution, organization, or agency with experience and commitment to rural design issues that can assist you in developing the *Your Town* workshop and provide follow-up technical assistance. To see an online version of the notebook, please contact Richard Hawks at rshawks@esf.edu.

10. Proposed Source(s) and Amounts of Matching Funds or In-Kind Services and Materials. Please indicate which funds are committed and secured versus those that are simply proposed.

11. Follow-up to Workshop. Describe what follow-up activities you propose in order to carry forward the results of the workshop. If you have held similar workshops previously, describe any implementation that resulted and their impact.

Please respond to all eleven elements outlined in this RFP. Applications should be approximately 3-5 pages with no more than 5 letters of support and 5 images of the community. You may send a maximum of 5 digital images of places or locations in your community that the *Your Town* workshop would address. Please submit your proposal as one PDF document.

If you need more information about *Your Town*, you may contact one of the following previous workshop coordinators:

- Pratt Cassity, University of Georgia – pcassity@arches.uga.edu
- Peggy Pings, National Park Service – mpings@wvu.edu
- Doug Self, Driggs, Idaho – pzdriggs@pdt.net
- Ryan Kilpatrick, Douglas, MI – rkilpatrick@ci.douglas.mi.us
- Krista Schneider, Luzerne County, PA – kschneider@digclds.org

Please send e-mailed or mailed proposals to both of the following individuals for receipt **no later than 5:00pm on Friday, February 25, 2011.**

Richard Hawks

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and

Shelley S. Mastran

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