

****City of Somerville**

OPEN CALL FOR ARTISTS

Know Your Rights Campaign — Public Art & Outreach Initiative**

Application Deadline: April 21, 2026

Project Launch: June 2026 (Immigrant Heritage Month)

Artist Stipend: \$4,000

Overview

The City of Somerville, through Somerville Office of Immigrant Affairs (SOIA) and a designated Review Committee, invites artists with immigrant backgrounds to submit proposals for a vibrant, joyful, and Somerville-centered artwork to anchor our 2026 **Know Your Rights** campaign.

The selected design will be adapted for multiple public-facing formats, including:

- **BlueBikes station ad panels**
 - PBSC panel: 57.75" x 37.875"
 - Large/8D panel: 67.69" x 37.5"
- **Big Belly trash can ad panels**
 - 18"x13"
- **Posters & printed materials**
 - 11"x17"
- **Paper Napkins** (for distribution at local restaurants, cafes, community events)
 - **6.5" x 6.5"**
- **Projected visual displays** at select evening events and building facades
 - Aspect ratios: 16:9 and 4:5

The goal is to celebrate the vibrancy, diversity, and resilience of [Somerville's immigrant communities](#) while increasing visibility and accessibility of Know Your Rights information citywide.

This project draws inspiration from past Somerville public art calls emphasizing community connection, innovation, and public accessibility (and follows the City's commitment to supporting local, culturally-rooted creative expression).

Who Should Apply

We welcome submissions from:

- Artists with immigrant backgrounds (any generation, any country of origin)
- Artists who live, work, or have strong community ties in Somerville
- Established artists and emerging artists with capabilities to convert the design into multiple formats
- Artists with experience in graphic design, illustration, public art, or cross-format visual design

Project Scope

The selected artist will create:

1. **One primary artwork/design** that can be adapted for all campaign formats
2. **Layout variations** for each required size and format (listed above)

3. A **projected-image version** suitable for nighttime display

Printing, fabrication, and installation will be handled by the City.

Compensation: \$4,000

The selected artist is expected to complete the following:

- Design
- Revision/workshopping as needed with project manager in preparation for up to two rounds of revision in collaboration with the review committee in the following manner:
 - Initial sketch - First draft of the design to be reviewed by committee. Feedback will be shared with artist and incorporated by the artist for the second draft.
 - Second draft of the design – The committee wants to see the design adapted to all the expected formats (napkins, BlueBikes ad panels, Big Belly trash can ad panels, posters, and projected visual displays). The committee will review and provide feedback based on how the design looks in all the expected sizes.
 - Artist will take the feedback, if any, and incorporate into the final design.
- Preparation and delivery of final artwork files for all specified formats

What We're Looking For

The selection panel will prioritize proposals that:

- Celebrate the **joy, vibrancy, and diversity** of Somerville's immigrant communities
- Are **bright, welcoming, and accessible** to viewers of all ages
- **Translate effectively** across multiple scales and materials
- **Reflect community-centered values**, similar to previous [Somerville public art initiatives](#)
- Use color, visual storytelling, or symbolism to **uplift immigrant identities and rights**
- **Demonstrate an ability to adapt artwork into multiple formats** without loss of clarity or impact
- **Are fully original** and contain no commercial or political endorsements

Submission Requirements

Please submit the following information via the online form:

1. **Contact Information**
Name, email, phone number, website/portfolio, and any Somerville affiliation.
2. **Artist Statement (max 300 words)**
Describe your background as an artist, including your immigrant identity if you wish to share it, and what draws you to this project.
3. **Concept Description (max 300 words)**
Outline your proposed art concept.
Describe its themes, colors, tone, and how it celebrates immigrant experiences in Somerville.
4. **Work Samples (required)**
Links to or thumbnails of up to 7 images of previous work demonstrating your capacity for public art, illustration, design, or community-centered projects.
5. For this project, we are relying on the artist's ability to format one visual design to many different sizes and styles. Please confirm that you have the capabilities to adjust one design appropriately. Please explain what your experience with this kind of work is.
6. **Resume or Bio (1–2 pages)**

Timeline

April 21, 2026 — Applications due

- **April 24, 2026** — Artist selection and notification
- **May 24, 2026** — All deliverables complete
- **June 2026** — Campaign launches during Immigrant Heritage Month

Selection Process

Submissions will be reviewed by the Review Committee, along with community representatives.

Evaluation criteria include:

- Artistic quality and originality
- Relevance to the themes of immigrant joy and empowerment
- Competency of adapting the design across campaign formats
- Connection to Somerville
- Clarity and strength of concept

How to Apply

Submit all required materials via the online form.

For questions, please contact:

Karim Razzaz

Multilingual Public Information Coordinator

Somerville Office of Immigrant Affairs

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