



The Towpath Trail Lantern Parade needs big, bright and portable parade lanterns made by Northeast Ohio artists and community groups who can make magic out of recycled materials.

Canalway Partners is seeking five artists/groups to create large-scale lanterns from recycled and upcycled materials for the fifth annual Towpath Trail Lantern Parade hosted by Canalway on **March 7, 2026 at 6 PM**. This spring forward stroll invites Clevelanders to craft lanterns out of recycled materials and join local artists like you to welcome spring to the banks of the Cuyahoga River.

We're looking for artists to create lanterns or illuminated sculptures that draw inspiration from this year's celebration of the nation's 250th birthday, specifically highlighting and celebrating the historic impact of notable people, places and moments that played a role in the Ohio & Erie Canalway National Heritage Area. Background in public art projects, puppetry, sculpture, performance, and other public performance is helpful. We are looking for artists and community groups to create BIG, BRIGHT and PORTABLE artworks over 10' feet tall, and less than 6' wide that are lightweight and can be carried by you and your group.

About Canalway

Canalway Partners is a non-profit cultural heritage organization that preserves natural and cultural experiences of the Ohio & Erie Canalway National Heritage Area for the future and connect people to place for the prosperity of all.

About the Lantern Parade

The Towpath Trail Lantern Parade on March 7, 2026 is a celebration of light, creativity and sustainability welcoming spring to the banks of the Cuyahoga River. All are welcome to participate in the parade by creating a lantern from recycled materials and a battery powered light. The parade will start and end at Sokolowski's Overlook and include a 1.4 mile roundtrip along the Towpath Trail. The goal of this event is to connect participants to the Ohio and Erie Canal Towpath Trail, spotlight local artists, and encourage sustainability.

Request for Artists – Towpath Trail Lantern Parade

Scope of Project:

- Create a large-scale lantern following these guidelines:
 - Lantern must be made mostly of recycled materials and upcycled supplies.
 - Lantern Design must specifically highlight and celebrate the impact of notable people, places and moments in history that played a role in the Ohio & Erie Canalway National Heritage Area.
 - Completed lanterns must be over 10' feet tall, and less than 6' wide
 - Lantern design must include a framework that allows it to be carried or worn *by no more than five people*. Artists are asked to provide their own assistance if more than one person is required to carry the lantern.

- Lanterns are to be lit by battery or solar powered lights. No candles or flames are permitted.
- Lanterns may be kinetic but not motorized.
- Artists are required to:
 - Attend the event and carry their lantern in the parade on **March 7 from 5:30 PM** until the end of the event (approx. 8 PM). The event will occur rain, snow or shine. The parade will begin on the Towpath Trail at the Sokolowski's Overlook, with parking at 1429 Abbey Ave, and include a 1.4 mile walk (total). Please let us know if you require any special accommodations to participate physically in this event.
 - Engage with community members, discuss their lantern and act as judges in our community lantern contest.
 - Provide a 100-word description of their lantern prior to the event for promotion.
- We expect artists who have been awarded to help promote the Parade by submitting designs, photographs, or videos of their building process and to be available for television or newspaper interviews.
- Artists may be invited to participate in a media campaign that includes press releases, paid and organic social media posts, and email communications with 14,000+ subscribers.

Compensation:

Artists will receive a stipend of \$1,000. Canalway can pay 30% of the award upon approval of an accepted proposal and receipt of an invoice and W9 from the artist. Canalway will pay the balance within 30 days of the completion of the event.

Submission Timeline:

- Submissions are due by 11:59pm on Sunday, January 4, 2026.
- Selected artists will be notified by Friday, January 16, 2026.

Submission details:

To be considered, submit the following in an email to mckenzie@canalwaypartners.com:

- **Letter of interest (PDF or Microsoft Word):** A one-page document describing the content of your design. If appropriate, describe collaborations with other artists or community groups involved and their role(s) (500 word max).
- **Proposed Lantern Design (PDF or Microsoft Word):** Provide an initial design concept with dimensions.
- **Images or a video of past work (jpg or mov file):** provide 3-5 images of similar artwork created in the last 5 years (3MB max).
- Please include relevant phone number and links to social media profiles if applicable.

