COCA - Center of Creative Arts - seeks to commission an artist or team of artists to create a large-scale, site-specific, participatory installation as part of the celebration of the completion of a multi-year Create our Future Campaign and opening of COCA's expanded campus, designed to scale COCA's impact and serve the St. Louis community as a house of the people. In place of a traditional ribbon cutting ceremony, COCA sees a participatory project that ties our community together.

COCA will celebrate the grand opening with an installation entitled Common Ground to capture the themes of community, gratitude, celebration for how art connects us, and the importance of inclusive and welcoming shared spaces. Common Ground, represents COCA's ongoing commitment to ensuring equitable access to the arts for our entire community. The work will be prominently positioned inside the new Ferring East Wing, in a new, soaring, two-story Centene Commons. Artists will also be given access to the Millstone Gallery in COCA's original mid-century Kuehner West Wing.

The total project budget is $15,000. All applications are due August 7, 2020 by 5:00 CST via email to artopencall@cocastl.org. There is no fee to apply.

Artist selection will be made August 28, 2020 to announce publicly on September 10, 2020. The artist(s) will be asked to work onsite and/or virtually with student artists and community participants beginning September 25, 2020, with the exhibition to run through November 15, 2020.

COCA's mission is to enrich lives and build community through the arts. With a commitment to equity and access, COCA serves as a regional hub for learning in and through the arts for all ages from all backgrounds. One of the most diverse cultural institutions in S. Louis, COCA serves over 50,000 students, audience members, arts and families from over 220 zip codes across the region each year. In all the work we do, COCA is committee to actively and intentionally operating as an anti-bias, anti-racist institution. As such, we know art is a powerful instrument for social justice. It is a means for people to share history, culture, and perspectives, celebrate differences, challenge assumptions, and find common ground.

Replacing a single large celebratory event and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a reimagined series of activities are planned to take place on site as well as virtually to commemorate COCA's opening of its expanded campus. The renovated mid-century original wing, designed in 1946 by renowned architect Erich Mendelsohn, the new wing, designed by Christner Inc. in partnership with
Axi:Ome, and COCA’s location will be celebrated. The art installation, *Common Ground*, is envisioned as providing a common thread to connect these varied grand opening experiences.

“As our city and country moves forward through the pandemic, it is clear that the community needs opportunities for dialogue, expression, connection, and education,” said Kelly Pollock, COCA’s Executive Director. “The installation is a chance to innovate and amplify community participation in at time of continued distance. The title, *Common Ground*, recognizes our commitment to creating a home for all people with gratitude towards all those who contributed to this moment throughout COCA’s history and the history of St. Louis.”

A seven-person panel of art and design professionals and community representatives will manage the section process. Detailed submission requirements (resume, detailed project description, rendering, portfolio, budget, artist’s statement) as well as more information about the installation spaces are available at [www.cocastl.org](http://www.cocastl.org). Please direct any questions about the application process to sflanigan@ cocastl.org.