

REQUEST FOR ARTIST PROPOSALS
MADISON COUNTY, NC
MADISON PUBLIC ART PARK SCULPTURE

Issue Date: 11/15/23
Budget: \$9,500
Deadline for proposals: 1/15/24
Location of sculpture: Dr. Otis Duck Greenway, Mars Hill, NC
Program contact: Sara Nichols, sara@landofsky.org

Madison County is proudly home to over 55,000 acres of National Forest, 60 miles of Appalachian Trail, and the world's third oldest river, the French Broad. The natural beauty of the region can be experienced in a myriad of recreational opportunities including hiking, mountain biking, rafting, hunting, fishing, kayaking, and natural hot springs. The region has a rich culture and a vibrant arts, crafts, and music scene that display the heritage of the Appalachian Mountains. The quality of life in Madison County and Western North Carolina sets the region apart from the rest of the country. Not only does the region possess natural amenities and recreational choices, but there is a wide range of educational opportunities, a terrific health care system, and a library system here that is second to none.

2023 - 2024 Call for Artists

The Madison County Economic Development Board believes that manufacturers are important members of the community and should be celebrated as such. Through funding from the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina, Madison County has developed a Manufacturing Art Park to honor the county's manufacturing and industrial heritage, as well as its growing artist community. This innovative program seeks to build community, celebrate heritage, and recognize the arts by honoring local manufacturing entities through sculpture pieces.

2023-2024 Featured Site



Modern Day “Honeywell Micro Switch Facility” in Mars Hill, NC. Now home to Spark Robotic. Located at 400 Hickory Drive, Mars Hill NC

Honeywell Micro Switch-

The 2023-2024 featured site is most commonly known in the community as the Honeywell Micro Switch Facility in Mars Hill. The Honeywell Micro Switch Facility, located northwest of downtown Mars Hill, was a major employer for the Mars Hill and Madison County from 1973 to the early 2000s. The facility produced micro switches, which are small sensitive switches that activate with minimum compression. They were used in a variety of applications such as household appliances, switch panels, and space shuttle doors.



Honeywell Micro Switch

Those employed at the facility were granted a high quality of life with good wages and benefits. The Honeywell Micro Switch Facility began as a modest operation. However, demand for products grew and, at the peak of its operations, the facility employed more than 600 people in Madison County. As a major employer in the region, those in Mars Hill were hard pressed to find people who didn't have at least one family member who had or currently worked at the facility. Though the facility closed its doors in 2012, former employees still remember it fondly and describe their memories in the following excerpts:

"I worked from Dec 10, 1973, to Jan 14, 2004. I always liked my job there. I was treated fairly; pay was good and so were the benefits. A lot of family members and friends worked there. A lot of us made lifetime friends there and still keep in touch."

"I worked there for 30 years; working there was like working with a family....you had a hard time finding a family in the area. They didn't have at least one person who worked for the plant. It was a great place to work. Overall, we were able to make out a good living at the time."

"I started originally from another department in Honeywell and was assigned to come to Asheville to open up the new facility; at the time, we were looking at three other places, but we originally chose a small town outside of Asheville called Mars Hill; we opened the plant in 1973, and we started with 400 hundred employees. It was a great time working there, and you felt that the community cared about you."

Today, the Honeywell Micro Switch Facility and its former employees remain proud reminders of the strong Appalachian Community of Madison County and American work ethic and ingenuity.

In addition to Honeywell Micro Switch several other businesses made this space their home over the years.

Hammarlund Radio-

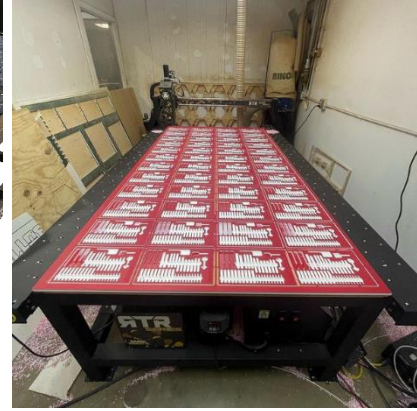
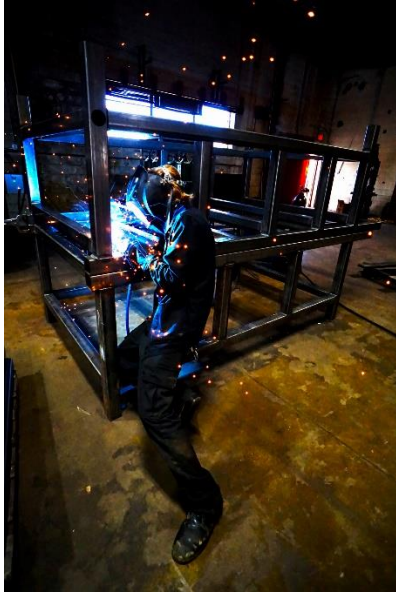
Another main business that utilized the facility was Hammarlund Radio. Hammarlund Radio, located in Mars Hill, North Carolina, is a renowned institution in the world of amateur radio and electronics. Founded in the early 20th century, it has a rich history of producing high-quality radio equipment and has been a hub for radio enthusiasts and professionals alike. Hammarlund Radio is known for its dedication to advancing radio technology and fostering a strong sense of community among radio enthusiasts. The company has a legacy of manufacturing top-notch radio transmitters, receivers, and related equipment, which have been widely used by amateur radio operators (AKA HAM Operators), government agencies, and communication enthusiasts.



A close-up of a Hammarlund machine. Hammarlund operated in Mars Hill from 1951-1972.

Spark Robotic-

In 2022 Spark Robotic moved into the building. Spark Robotic manufactures computerized numerical control machines including plasma cutting tables and router tables. Spark Robotic is a leading robotics and automation company, specializing in the design and development of state-of-the-art plasma cutting and CNC solutions. With a commitment to innovation and precision, they deliver cutting-edge robotic systems that revolutionize the metal fabrication industry. Their work lies in harnessing the power of robotics to provide efficient, accurate, and cost-effective solutions for plasma-cutting and CNC applications. They serve a wide range of industries, including manufacturing, construction, and metalworking. The building purchase from Spark Robotic has helped other companies such as Outrider be able to grow.



Images from Spark Robotic gallery showcasing staff working, and products manufactured at facility.

Project Description

The Madison County Economic Development Board is seeking an artist and/or artistic collaboration to submit a proposal for a permanent installation of artwork for the Madison Manufacturing Art Park. The proposal must celebrate and honor the history and impact of the Honeywell Micro Switch Facility within Mars Hill, Madison County, and the region beyond. The chosen proposal must satisfy at least one of the following elements:

- Demonstrate that the piece is inspired by the products produced by the Honeywell, Micro Switch Facility, Hummarlund Radio, or Spark Robotic
- Demonstrate that the piece will honor those who worked at the Honeywell, Micro Switch Facility, Hummarlund Radio, or Spark Robotic
- Utilization of recycled materials from the micro switch industry to create the piece.
- Made from recycled materials from Spark Robotic

Technical Information: Proposal submissions must address the following items and features in the proposal narrative:

- The piece must be able to attach to a concrete base. Madison County will facilitate the concrete base, artist will need to supply bolt pattern.
- The piece must be no smaller than 4' x 4' and no larger than 6' x 6' with a height that is no taller than 10'. Photos and maps of the installation site can be provided by staff, if requested.
- Each installation must be three-dimensional and engaging.

- The piece will be displayed outdoors in a permanent collection and must be designed to withstand exposure to Western North Carolina exterior elements.
- The piece must have a lifetime of at least ten years.
- The piece must be safe for interaction with the general public.
- The artist is responsible for the transport and installation of sculpture to the installation site.

Evaluation Criteria: The 2023 - 2024 Madison Manufacturing Ark Park application process is open to all sculpture artists and/or collaborative teams. Artists should have demonstrable project experience and be able to submit examples of work as part of their proposal submission.

The winner will be selected by a juried committee. The committee will review entries based on the following qualities (listed in no particular order):

- Artistic excellence.
- Past success in large-scale public art installations.
- Demonstrated ability to execute a large-scale project that satisfies required criteria and is within the budget set forth.

Budget: The total amount to be paid to the artist is \$9,500.00, inclusive of the research, engagement, proposal, fabrication, the base for the sculpture, materials, travel, accommodations, any other costs incurred by the artist.

Required Materials for Submission

1. Letter of Intent - Clearly describe your interest in this project and how you will contribute to its success.
2. Visual Materials – Provide past work samples. Artists may submit up to ten images and a brief description of each image, including title and medium.
3. Resume or CV - A resume or CV including all relevant education and professional experience, including past commissions and budgets.
4. Mailing address, email address, and phone number.
5. Minority and Women Business Enterprise (M/WBE) ** Documentation (See below).
6. A rendering of the proposed work with approximate dimensions.
7. Description of materials that will be used.
8. References - Names and contact information of two professional references. Letters of recommendation are not required.

**For more information on the Minority and Women Business Enterprise definitions, visit: Minority and Women Business Enterprise Certification

Please note: Applicants must be age 18 or older, and are eligible regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, gender identification, military status, sexual orientation, marital status, or physical ability.

Tentative Schedule

The artist will be required to meet a series of milestones in which the Board and staff will approve progress of the artwork before proceeding to the next stage. Payments will be made at the conclusion of each milestone.

- 1/15/24 Deadline for submissions, due by 12:00 noon pm Eastern Time Zone
- 1/31/24 Selected artist notified and announced
- 2/28/24 Contract finalization period
- 2/29/24- 8/1/24 Artist fabrication period
- 8/1/24-8/16/24 Artwork installation period
- 8/17/24 *Tentative Date*- A public art unveiling will be scheduled when the best "weather" date is determined.

To Submit A Proposal

- Submit information online - [SUBMIT INFORMATION HERE](#)
- Submissions can also be mailed to:
Madison County Economic Development
Post Office Box 579
Marshall, NC 28753

IMPORTANT: All decisions of the organizers are final. If you are accepted, by submitting your entry you give Madison County and program partners the right to publish your images for publicity purposes or as part of the program of selected artists (All credits to artist will be included). If necessary, the selected artist may be asked to provide higher resolution jpegs suitable for publishing. The selected artist will be highlighted in the event program and in media outlets. All artworks must remain on display and cannot be removed from the exhibition. The artwork is the property of Madison County or its designee.

We look forward to seeing what your ideas are for the Madison Manufacturing Art Park. Contact Sara Nichols for more information.

Project Contact:

Sara Nichols

Sara@landofsky.org

Links to more information about companies mentioned in this RFP:

Honeywell Micro Switch-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XJFIzi7Je2c>

Hammarlund-

<https://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/madison/2020/12/09/hammarlund-mars-hill-industry-leader-generations/6507182002/>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hammarlund>

<https://www.hammarlund.info/histpage.html>

<https://twiar.net/?p=1926>

Spark Robotic-

<https://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/madison/2022/09/30/madison-county-celebrates-new-business-move-into-former-honeywells-building/69521122007/>

<https://www.sparkrobotic.com/>