



TOWN OF ASHFIELD

OFFICE OF THE
TOWN CLERK

412 Main Street
PO Box 560
Ashfield, MA 01330
Phone: 413-628-4441 x5
Fax: 413-628-0228
TownClerk@ashfield.org

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ASHFIELD ANNOUNCES ARTIST CALL FOR 2026 LIGHTED BOAT PARADE

ASHFIELD, Mass. – The Town of Ashfield is excited to announce a Call for Temporary Public Art. Twelve selected participants will receive \$1,000 grants to create lighted art installations built onto small boats that will participate in a Lighted Boat Parade on Ashfield Lake the evening of Saturday, September 12, 2026.

The Call for Art will be released on January 5, 2026, with information available at Ashfield.org/publicart. The deadline to apply is March 31, 2026, by 5:00 p.m.

Ashfield is looking for illuminated floating artworks that will collectively transform Ashfield Lake into a festive, visually striking performance at dusk. Applicant's original creative ideas should be designed to engage or appeal to audiences of all ages at this free public art event. The Lighted Boat Parade is a celebration of art, culture, and our local landscape meant to connect people at Ashfield Lake. The site is a picturesque rural lake used by residents and visitors for recreation and relaxation in all seasons.

This project is made possible by the New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA) Making It Public grant program. The Town of Ashfield was one of ten municipalities selected for a public art training and grant initiative, Making It Public 2025, offered by NEFA in partnership with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council's Arts & Culture Department.

The evening of September 12 will offer a variety of free all-ages entertainment before the parade begins, with opportunities to also visit food vendors or local restaurants. Event sponsors include Greenfield Savings Bank, Ashfield Trails, Inc., The Mill at Shelburne Falls, and the Ashfield Lake House.

The call is open to any residents of the United States with experience in visual arts, sculpture, design, creative technology, public art, performing, or other related fields. Individuals or teams may apply, with team members of all ages welcome; the main contact must be age 18 or older.

Applicants do not need to own their own boats, as there are private individuals willing to loan kayaks or canoes to participants on a first come first serve basis, with a signed waiver. The person(s) creating the artwork does not have to be the person(s) appearing in the parade.

Proposals can be abstract, or have a theme, or incorporate kinetics, performance, sound, and other approaches. Proposals do not need to include all of the above, the Town seeks a range of selected works in a variety of styles. A 5-person Selection Committee of local and regional experts in the visual arts and boatbuilding will choose participants based on the evaluation criteria outlined in the call.

Proposals must include a completed Application Form and project sketch, with optional supporting materials. Learn more about the event, applicant eligibility, evaluation criteria, and how to apply by visiting [Ashfield.org/publicart](https://ashfield.org/publicart).

Questions should be directed to publicart@ashfield.org or to the Ashfield Town Clerk at (413) 628-4441 x5. Questions will be answered as they come in, with responses posted on [Ashfield.org/publicart](https://ashfield.org/publicart).