

Call for Artists and Creators in Riga: Turn Local Climate Story into Public Art

About the opportunity

We invite artists, muralists, designers, and community facilitators to apply for a €2,500 commission to create a community mural that brings urban climate stories and data to life. The mural should be co-created with local residents and inspired by one or more of the following:

- Environmental data obtained by the Urban ReLeaf project (mapping of urban heat islands, air quality measurements – PM 2.5 particle concentration);
- The individual's role in addressing climate change, such as behavior changes, connection with nature, and sustainable daily habits
- The need for climate resilience and greener cities in today's society.

The planned location of the mural (see Appendix), between the Central Railway Station and the Stockmann shopping centre, is central and colourful, with strong potential to enhance this section of the pedestrian infrastructure, inspire passers-by, and encourage reflection on environmental issues that are relevant to and impact everyone

The aim is to create a visually impressive, meaningful work of art that encourages reflection, strengthens community identity, and inspires action for the climate.

Community involvement is essential — we want residents (volunteers involved in the project, people living/working near the mural, nearby students/schoolchildren etc) to feel like co-authors of the work. This may include joint creative sessions and discussions, as well as storytelling workshops for generating ideas.

Why This Matters

Murals are a form of visual art that can bridge the gap between complex or scientifically presented information and people's everyday experiences, making climate stories more visible and emotionally engaging.

A visually powerful mural created in a local context can become a symbol that promotes discussion, strengthens local identity, and calls for action towards a greener, healthier urban environment.

It is a way of transforming scientific and technological knowledge into a story that is understandable, accessible, and emotionally powerful for people.

Urban ReLeaf project activities

Urban ReLeaf is a European project helping cities become greener and healthier by involving residents in environmental data collection. In Riga, volunteers have been mapping:

- Urban heat islands and thermal comfort
- Air quality (PM 2.5 particles)

Heat islands:

In central urban areas, air temperatures can be several degrees higher than in surrounding regions, particularly at night. This urban heat island effect is driven by factors such as reduced ventilation and heat retention from closely spaced high-rise buildings, heat generated by human activity, the heat-absorbing properties of concrete and other urban materials, and limited vegetation. As urbanization continues and heatwaves become more frequent due to climate change, this effect is expected to intensify in the future.

The extent and intensity of heat islands can be determined by analysing information obtained from satellite data on land surface temperature and land cover, as well as by taking measurements at ground level. As part of the project, we are involving 70 volunteers who collect data on temperature and humidity by walking around the city with sensors, using citizen science methods.

You can find a map showing data collected by residents here: <https://platform-urbanreleaf.iccs.gr/public/map/#/home>

Keywords: Heat islands, urban microclimate, adaptation to climate change, thermal comfort zones, shade and coolness, the importance of trees in the city, urban respiration.

PM2.5 monitoring:

PM2.5 are fine particles with a diameter of up to 2.5 micrometres, which is 30 times smaller than the diameter of a human hair (not visible to the naked eye). Due to their small size, they easily enter the respiratory tract and even enter the bloodstream, posing a risk to human health — especially cardiovascular disease, respiratory diseases, and premature mortality.

The main sources of air pollution, including PM2.5, in cities are the burning of solid fuels (e.g., wood heating), industrial processes, transport emissions, construction dust and, in some cases, natural sources such as forest fires. Fine particles can also be carried into urban areas by wind from more distant regions.

Reducing PM2.5 levels is essential to improving the quality of life and health of urban residents. This can be achieved by improving heating systems and switching to cleaner energy sources reducing transport pollution (e.g. by switching to more environmentally

friendly modes of transport) limiting construction dust, and increasing the amount of green spaces in cities, which help to filter the air.

As part of the project, 19 low-cost sensors measuring PM2.5 pollution have been installed in green areas and built-up areas of Riga to obtain a detailed picture of PM2.5 concentration fluctuations across the city.

PM2.5 sensor data displayed on a map. Measurements can be followed online.

Keywords: PM2.5, air pollution, impact of transport, impact of solid fuels, air quality, green infrastructure, clean air in cities, environmental sustainability.

Additional topics

Individual contribution to climate change mitigation

Each of us has the opportunity to reduce our impact on the climate on a daily basis. The type of housing we live in, how we travel, what we eat and how we spend our free time have a significant impact on our carbon footprint. By choosing more environmentally friendly modes of transport, conserving resources, using renewable energy sources and adopting other sustainable habits, we strengthen society's overall resilience to climate change.

These choices may appear small, but when totalled up, they have a real impact. Each of us is part of the solution, and individual actions also help to create political and social pressure for broader systemic improvements.

Keywords: individual habits, reducing carbon footprint, responsible consumption, resource conservation, climate neutrality, 1.5° lifestyle.

Sustainable urban environment and reconnecting with nature in modern society

The impact of climate change in cities is becoming increasingly noticeable – heat waves, air pollution and floods remind us that cities must adapt by becoming more resilient to these changes. Green spaces, tree planting, water features and sustainable infrastructure help to mitigate the effects of extreme weather while improving the health and quality of life of residents.

A green urban environment is not only a technical response to climate challenges; it is also a fundamental human need. Maintaining a connection with nature—often lost in today's urbanized world—supports wellbeing and a sense of belonging. Spending time in nature helps us recharge, reduce stress, and strengthen our connection to the places where we live. This relationship is essential to identity, social wellbeing, and a sustainable future.

Keywords: climate resilience, green urban environment, urban health, connection with nature, green infrastructure, belonging to a place.

Available support

You will work closely with the Urban ReLeaf Riga team, including city partners and researchers. The Urban ReLeaf Riga team can help you:

- Access relevant environmental data and information on your chosen topic
- Develop and refine your idea implementation process
- Support public awareness and community engagement activities by offering space for workshops, support in implementing activities, and assistance in communicating with communities;
- Communicate about the activity locally and within the Urban ReLeaf European network.

The communities involved may be thematically or territorially related to the call's objective.

For example:

Geographical communities – in relation to nearby institutions (Riga Construction College, Riga Reinhold Schmeling Secondary School, Ministry of Transport of the Republic of Latvia, Riga Central Market, etc.).

Thematically related communities – related in terms of content from a thematic point of view (green urban environment activists; environmental anthropologists; volunteers involved in the project who have collected data on heat islands/ "adopted" air quality sensors, or related in terms of implementation (young artists who are passionate about street art; who communicate about climate/environmental issues through art).

Project details

Curators, producers, visual artists, and creative associations with experience in co-creation or community engagement are invited to apply for the competition. The call seeks proposals for a mural concept, a community engagement plan, and process curation, including the coordination of engagement activities, quality control, communication with the project team, and the preparation of a technical plan for the mural's production.

Section	Amount	Explanation
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Fee	EUR 2500	The amount applies to concept development and process management.
Creation of the mural	*	*The physical execution of the mural (paints, technical support, artist(s) work) will be financed separately and covered by the IKSD budget, in accordance with the offer and technical specifications.

How will the evaluation take place?

As the final mural concept will be developed through a participatory process, the jury will assess the strength of the proposed idea, the quality of previous work, and the relevance of the applicant's experience and skills, as well as the creativity and feasibility of the community engagement plan, including budget, technical solutions, and implementation plans, rather than a fixed visual design.

The evaluation will be conducted in two stages. In the first stage, applications will be assessed against the evaluation criteria. In the second stage, the authors of the two to three highest-rated applications will be invited to an interview with members of the selection committee.

Commission members:

Jānis Krievkalns – Culture Department, Head of the Urban Environment Art and Design Department

Agnija Saprovska – Culture Department, Urban Environment Art and Design Department, Project manager

Sabīne Skudra – spatial planner, landscape architect, Urban ReLeaf project expert / manager

Nora Gāgane – spatial planner, Urban ReLeaf project expert

Mel Woods – professor of creative intelligence, Urban ReLeaf project lead researcher

Toms Altbergs – Head of Corporate Communications Department, VAS “Latvijas Dzelzceļš”

The application must include:

- Conceptual direction: style, mood, possible color palette, and visual representation based on the specifics of the location and how the viewer of the artwork will perceive the piece. The mural must not contain advertising.
- Engagement process: a plan for engaging residents, describing the methods by which they will be involved
- Thematic rationale: the connection between the theme, location, and community
- Technical solution and plan: materials, production, protection against weather conditions
- Examples of previous work related to street art and community involvement

Evaluation criteria

Criteria	Percentage
Quality of the proposal's idea, thematic justification – suitability for the specific location and its cultural-historical, aesthetic, functional, and social context, originality, relevance in the context of climate and urban environment.	25%
Community engagement approach – clearly describe how the community will be involved and how this involvement will help to create a site-specific, theme-appropriate work of art. The goal of community involvement is to create a dialogue in which the artistic result is created through communication between the parties involved. The community can be involved in both the idea generation process and the realization of the artwork.	25%
Feasibility and technical plan – the possibility of implementing the project within the budget and timeframe, which ensures the quality of the mural in the long term	25%
Experience and previous work – experience in community involvement projects, experience in the implementation of murals/street art, project management skills.	25%

Project Timeline

- Submission of applications – by February 6, 2026
- Round 1 – jury evaluation based on evaluation criteria

- Round 2 – interviews with selected candidates – clarification of the method of involvement, possible visual direction, technical requirements.
- Announcement of results for the 1st round - March 1, 2026
- Announcement of results for the 2nd round - from March 15 to March 30
- Implementation phase – until June 1, 2026, coordinating the sketch before the realization of the mural, submitting it to the commission, mutually agreeing on the deadline.
- Opening — June

Application procedure:

Send your application to rpr@rpr.gov.lv, subject: Urban ReLeaf Mural

The application (max. 6 pages) must contain:

1. Proposal, including thematic justification;
2. Community involvement plan;
3. Planned technical implementation costs;
4. Approximate project time schedule;
5. Up to 5 examples of relevant previous work;
6. Short biography or CV

Appendix

Address: border between 13.janvāra iela 12, Stacijas laukums 2

Ownership: VAS “Latvijas Dzelzceļš”

Description: 9 rectangular support planes facing the sidewalk and/or the wall opposite them

Total area: 255 m²

Approximate dimensions and description of the painted surfaces:

Support dimensions (width x length):

1st support: 3m x 3m; 2nd support: 2m x 3m; 3rd support: 2.7m x 3m; 4th support: 2m x 3m; 5th support: 2.7m x 3m; 6th support: 2m x 3m; 7th support: 2.7m x 3m; 8th support: 2m x 3m; 9th support: 1.35 x 3m.

Support side edges: height – 3.0 m; width – from 70 cm (bottom) to 90 cm (top).

Support surface area: 60 m² for main surfaces, 43 m² for side edges, total 103 m²

The Opposite wall: continuous surface with architectural division

At a height of about 1.20 m – horizontal protrusion that divides the wall into two planes.

At the ceiling – lighting strip that visually and technically delimits the upper zone.

Total wall height: 3.80 m

Wall height to lighting: 2.80 m

Wall length: approximately 40 m

Total continuous wall area: 152 m² (area to lighting strip from the ground: 112 m², area of the middle strip: 64 m²)



