Critical Mass for the Visual Arts' HomeGrown for the Arts is an annual fundraising event that draws upon St. Louis based artists, businesses, and musicians, with the intention of fostering the local visual arts community by helping support Critical Mass for the Visual Arts' programs and initiatives.

Building on its mission to foster an enduring artistic environment in the St. Louis region, the premier event of the HomeGrown fundraiser is a sustainability inspired design challenge. Motivated by the Watershed Cairns exhibition at the Missouri History Museum, the 2014 HomeGrown event committee is seeking imaginative proposals for a **Rain Garden Design Challenge**. For the purposes of this challenge, a rain garden is defined as "a depression that collects storm water runoff and allows it to infiltrate into the ground." Using this as a starting point, design proposals must incorporate viable rain garden design concepts into an overall aesthetically driven composition with an incorporated sculptural rain water harvesting component. Local artists, gardeners, designers, and other creative and sustainability minded individuals are invited to submit design proposals, either on their own or in collaborative teams, that fuse aesthetically creative structures with green architectural processes.

For this year's event Critical Mass has partnered with Show Me Rain Gardens to help provide advice and guidance in both the planning process for the event, as well as for the design challenge applicants during the submission process. Prior to the fundraiser a jury panel comprised of both visual arts and ecology experts will narrow the field of submissions down to the top 5 proposals that they believe exhibit the best aesthetic, structural, and environmental design choices. These 5 finalists will be expected to refine and elaborate on their design proposals for the HomeGrown event by creating additional presentation materials. During the event, attendees will have the possibility of helping these designs come to fruition by donating money to their favorite design. If a finalist's design achieves the necessary funding ($1,500) through this crowd sourcing effort then it will be realized after the event. If finalists designs do not achieve the necessary funding, the monies collected will go to Critical Mass for the Visual Arts to help fund its annual programming.

Artists have the opportunity to have their designs funded by a grand prize jury that will select 1 of the 5 designs prior to the event. This jury will be comprised of representatives from an installation site, a sponsor, a sustainability design expert, and a visual art expert.

The award presented to the grand prize winning design will include:

1) The construction of their rain garden design, funded by a local sponsor, and installed at a sponsored site within the community.

2) An additional cash award (beyond the artist's stipend included in the design proposal).

3) Proposal details and final installation images will be featured on the Show Me Rain Gardens website.

*Note: The winning submission's designer or team will be responsible to oversee and assist in the installation of their rain garden design on the designated sponsors site.

The Design Criteria

A rain garden is a functional landscaped area constructed to capture and hold storm water so that it infiltrates the soil rather than becoming surface runoff, with the goal of reducing polluted runoff and recharging the water table.

DESIGN CHALLENGE RULES

1) **The design must include a Sculptural Rain Water Harvesting Component. This object may be designed to harvest and dispense rain water or simply function as a rain water catchment device.**

2) **The design should engage 300 square feet of continuous area that will function as a landscaped rain garden.**

3) **The design must utilize a minimum of 60% native plants.**

4) **The design is limited by materials & supplies budget of $1,000. An additional design and installation fee of $250 is to be included in the overall budget of the project, bringing the total proposed design budget to $1,250.**

5) **While the design may be inspired by any available resources, it must be original in its concept and form, and not mined or reproduced from an existing rain garden design.**

Submission Guidelines

Complete applications must include the following information:

1. A Resume or CV in .doc or .pdf format (preferred). Collaborations must include a document for every participant involved.
2. A maximum of 10 images in JPG format or 2 websites that show examples of artwork, design, or rain garden/project based experiences. Each image should be submitted at less than 1 MB each, 300 dpi and 1920 pixels on the longest side.
3. A one page project proposal with detailed design and supplemental information including a bibliography listing the resources and reference materials researched to create your design.
4. Concise responses to all questions on the application questionnaire. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Application Questionnaire

1. **What is the title of the design?**

2. **Does the design address a location that receives**

   o **Full sun?**

   o **Partial shade?**

   o **Complete shade?**

3. **Briefly (in 100 words or less) describe the concept of the design.**

4. **How would the $1,000 materials/supplies budget be allocated? In table format create a detailed list of estimated costs, as well as the proposed source locations of the materials specified.**

5. **What references (including professionals, literature, institutions, websites) were researched to develop a solution to this design challenge? Please include these in a bibliography and/or works cited page with your proposal.**

All applications must be received by 12:00 (CST) AM (midnight) on **Monday, February 16, 2014.**

Applicants will be informed of the jury's decision within 1 week of the application deadline.
Any applications received after this deadline will not be considered for review by the Design Challenge Jury.

How to Apply
Applications can only be submitted electronically to: homegrownCM@gmail.com.

Email Attachments: Attachments can total no more than 5 MB in a single email. If necessary, please divide attachments into multiple email messages or use YouSendIt, Dropbox, or a similar file sharing service.

Image File Labeling: Files must be titled with a number indicating the viewing order, followed by the artist's last name. Use "0" in front of single digit numbers. Do not use more than 30 characters; use only letters, numbers and underscores. Example: 01_Smith; 02_Smith. Mac OS users: Image files must be in JPEG format and include ".jpg" at the end of each image title. Example: 01_Smith.jpg.

Please contact the Design Challenge team through homegrownCM@gmail.com with any questions pertaining to the submission guidelines or design challenge proposal criteria.

Any additional documents or materials submitted that are not requested in the submission guidelines will not be consid-ered for review by the Design Challenge Jury.

Rain Garden Design Proposal Advising
Recognizing the somewhat obscure technical details that may be required for this design challenge, applicants are encouraged to do research and look to community experts for assistance. In order to assist applicants in their research the Home-Grown for the Arts Committee has developed a list of Resource Advisors for this challenge, which can be accessed via the Critical Mass HomeGrown event webpage: http://criticalmassart.org/homegrown.

Suggested resources include:

-Show Me Rain Gardens: http://showmeraingardens.org/.

-Missouri Botanical Gardens, Rainscaping Guide: Rain Gardens: http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/sustainability-conservation/sustainable-living/at-home/rainscaping-guide/rain-gardens.aspx

-Missouri Botanical Gardens, Native Landscaping Manual, Chapter 2: Rain Gardening and Storm Water Management: http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/Portals/0/Shaw%20Nature%20Reserve/PDFs/horticulture/NLM%20Ch2.pdf

-Missouri River Communities Networks Rain Garden Resources: http://www.moriver.org/raingardens/raingardenresources.html

-Grow Native! Missouri Prairie Foundation: http://grownative.org/

-State of Missouri Native Plants Guide (pg. 6): http://mdc.mo.gov/sites/default/files/resources/2010/05/nativeplantsrevision_2012_07web.pdf

The Critical Mass social media sites are also great resources for finding out more information and updates about this design challenge and other rain garden related events, as well as information about other Critical Mass programming.

Critical Mass's HomeGrown event webpage: http://criticalmassart.org/homegrown/

Critical Mass Yahoo list serve: https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/criticalmass/info

Critical Mass Facebook pages: Organization: https://www.facebook.com/criticalmassart
                                                Group: https://www.facebook.com/groups/319148459824

If you haven't already "liked" and "followed" Critical Mass for the Visual Arts, please do so!