

SUFFRAGIST MEMORIAL
PUBLIC ART REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
(revised for Capitol Preservation meeting, October 25, 2022)

League Women Voters Kansas, American Association of University Women, and Capitol Preservation

Description: The Suffragist Memorial Committee seeks a professional artist (or artist teams) to develop a concept for a Suffragist Memorial in a particular space inside the Kansas State Capitol building.

Background

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment in the US Constitution that granted full suffrage to women, the Kansas League of Women Voters created a traveling exhibit (<https://lwvk.org/centennial>). This exhibit was so successful that we wanted a more permanent way to commemorate those Kansas women who had a statewide or national impact on achieving women's right to vote. In 2022, Governor Laura Kelly signed Senate Bill 479 authorizing the Capitol Preservation Committee to approve plans to place a permanent memorial recognizing the Kansas suffragist movement in the State Capitol.

ELIGIBILITY

We would prefer a Kansas artist(s), possibly from a list of visual artists from the Kansas Creative Arts Commission. This project is open to all professional artists, age 18 and over, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, military status, sexual identity, marital status, sexual identity, or physical or mental disability. Interested local and regional artists are strongly encouraged to submit their qualifications.

PROJECT PARAMETERS

There are two possible locations in the Kansas Capitol on the first floor:

- (1) on the wall between the Rotunda and space that has the cage elevator,
- (2) on either the wall or in the corner across from the cage elevator opening.

This permanent memorial needs:

- to be essentially maintenance free;
- No attachments can be made to the stone floor or any stone on the walls;
- Attachments can be made on the plaster wall;
- The project will include text with brief historical information;
- The artwork should also speak for itself without the text;
- If the artwork is free standing, it requires a base heavy enough to withstand tugs or pulls;
- Cost for the project and installation should not exceed \$125,000.

SELECTION PROCESS

A selection panel will comprise arts professionals familiar with the field of public art, as well as community members. The panel will review proposals and select a small group of finalists for interviews.

The criteria used by the panel will include:

- Artistic quality, innovation, and originality
- Expression that educates the public

- Reflect the diversity of women involved in suffrage
- Professional public art experience
- Sensitivity to the selected site at the Capitol

SUBMISSIONS

Interested artists should submit the following application materials due no later than December 15, 2022:

1. **A letter of interest** outlining your approach to public art and insights regarding your interest in creating a Suffragist Memorial for Kansas. Include what you bring to the project as an artist; challenges and/or sources of inspiration presented by the project; and what you would hope to gain from this experience.
2. **A professional resume/CV**, including professional references and their contact information.
3. **An annotated image list**, including thumbnail images, of past works in a PDF format that clearly indicates the title, dimensions, materials, date of work, and locations.

Proposed Narrative for Suffragist Memorial inside State Capitol

Kansas suffragists waged five campaigns to win women's right to vote since the 1859 Wyandotte Constitutional Convention. After statehood in 1861, women could vote for local school boards. In 1867, Kansas was the first state in the nation to battle for full woman's suffrage. National suffragists campaigned across the state, but white male voters rejected two propositions to remove the words "white" and "male" from the Constitution. Twenty years later, Kansas became the first state to grant municipal suffrage to women on February 15, 1887, Susan B. Anthony's birthday. Despite a vigorous campaign in 1894, male voters rejected a woman suffrage amendment. Yet Kansas women won universal suffrage in 1912, after Lizzie S. Sheldon wrote this resolution: "The right of citizens of the state of Kansas to vote and hold offices shall not be denied or abridged on account of sex." In 1919, Jane M. Brooks founded the first state chapter of the League of Women Voters, before the Nineteenth Amendment of the US Constitution granted voting rights to women in 1920.

[Then list selected names of the *most significant/diverse* women by towns/cities who campaigned most frequently and impacted the passage of KS Constitutional suffrage amendments.]

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Sources:

History of Woman Suffrage, ed. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Matilda Joslyn Gage, and Ida Husted Harper, at www.gutenberg.org:

"Kansas" by Clarina I. Howard Nichols, Vol. 1 (1848-1861), 185-94.

"The Kansas Campaign, 1867" by several women/men, Vol. 2 (1861-1876), 229-68.

"Kansas" by Anna C. Wait, Vol. 3 (1876-1885), 696-711.

"Kansas" by Annie L. Diggs, Vol. 4 (1883-1900), 638-64.

"Kansas" by Lucy B. Johnston, Vol. 6 (1900-1920), 193-206.

Wilda M. Smith, "A Half Century of Struggle: Gaining Woman Suffrage in Kansas," *Kansas History* 4 (Summer 1981): 74-95.

Martha B. Caldwell, "The Woman Suffrage Campaign of 1912," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 12 (August 1943): 300-326.

Lorraine A. Gehring, "Women Officeholders in Kansas, 1872-1912," *Kansas History* 9 (Summer 1986): 48-57.

[Note: According to *Lawrence Daily Journal*, February 10, 1870, Kansas was the first state to ratify the Fifteenth Amendment on February 27, 1869. [Nevada ratified on March 1, 1869.

Wikipedia says Kansas, January 19, 1870. We/I need to double-check date...]

Capitol Building – 1st floor by Cage Elevator



Capitol Building – 1st floor next to Rotunda

