



Switch Grass by Treehouse Collective, Winter Wonders 2025

Call for Visual & Media Artists

Royal Botanical Gardens - Winter Wonders Installations

Deadline for application: Sunday, August 2, 2026 12 midnight

Optional Site Visit: Site visits will be held on Tuesdays and Thursday, between 10am to 2pm upon request

Event Dates: November 26th – January 3rd, 2026 5pm to 10pm each night

Learn more about the Royal Botanical Gardens at www.rbg.ca

To request a site visit email: artists@rbg.ca

About Winter Wonders:

Winter Wonders is Royal Botanical Gardens' signature winter experience attracting approximately **40,000 visitors over 5 weeks**. Guests explore illuminated outdoor trails, enjoy festive music and seasonal treats, and take in the beauty of winter landscapes throughout **Hendrie Park**. Inside, vibrant plant displays, holiday décor, and a charming model train exhibit offer warmth and wonder for all ages. It's a joyful tradition that blends nature, light, and celebration.

What we're looking for:

To enhance the experience RBG is seeking up to three installation works by Canadian artists that engage light, interactivity and a sense of magic. RBG's audience is multi-generational and loves having interactive experiences with one another. **These new installations should play off this desire to create magical moments together, a sense of exploration and curiosity, and be able to engage a visitor for a minimum 5-10-minute duration.**

Winter Wonders already includes:

- A sound-responsive Singing Tree
- Light-filled lanterns and pathway lighting
- An outdoor curling activation
- Environmental lighting that provides washes of colour and movement
- General holiday décor and tens of thousands of twinkle lights
- Real fires pits, vendor cabins, food vendors and an atmospheric soundtrack

Location:

Winter Wonders takes place in **Hendrie Park**, located directly across from the RBG Main Centre. This gated park includes multiple gardens (dormant during Winter Wonders), the [Dan Lawrie International Sculpture Collection](#) of 20+ permanent works from around the world, the reflecting pond, Tea House, Mitchell's Field, the historic Hendrie Gates and numerous other stunning features.

Working with our lighting and technical partners Winter Wonders includes many installation elements that are noted on the map below. Also indicated on the map are the opportunity sites we've identified for these commissions.

Site 1 - OAK ALLEE

Up to \$50,000.00 CDN

The Oak Allee is the grand entrance to Hendrie Park and needs to make an impact.

Measuring almost 200 feet long, the space is vast with raised gardens and linear tree beds on both sides, and ornamental garden beds in the centre. Every single guest coming to Winter Wonders arrives through the tunnel and into the Oak Allee and exits the same way.

The selected artist will be expected to engage this entire path.

Key features:

- ample electrical
- overhead lines (and the ability to add more) to hold objects overhead
- multi-tiered space

Site 2 – KIPPAX TRAIL

Up to \$50,000 CDN

Kippax Trail is a 750-meter-long trail that winds into the woods that includes lookout points into the lower forest, multiple natural stopping points and a small bridge overlooking a pond. This space needs to be an adventure for guests encouraging them to traverse the whole path with consistent engagement.

Key features:

- long footpath
- surrounding forest and central garden/tree bed
- limited electrical (but additional power can be added)
- ability for independent sound treatment due to secluded space

Site 3 – MITCHELL'S FIELD

Up to \$50,000 CDN

Mitchell's field is a massive open space at the far East end of the grounds. The gentle incline of the field has made this a prime active play zone for children during Winter Wonders. The space acts as a transition between the North and South sides of the park. Our desire is to have a work that encourages safe play and that takes advantage of the large open space.

Key Features:

- lots of open space, long vistas
- gentle incline
- limited power, but more can be added via our production partner

SITE 4 – ROSE DOMES

Up to \$20,000 CDN

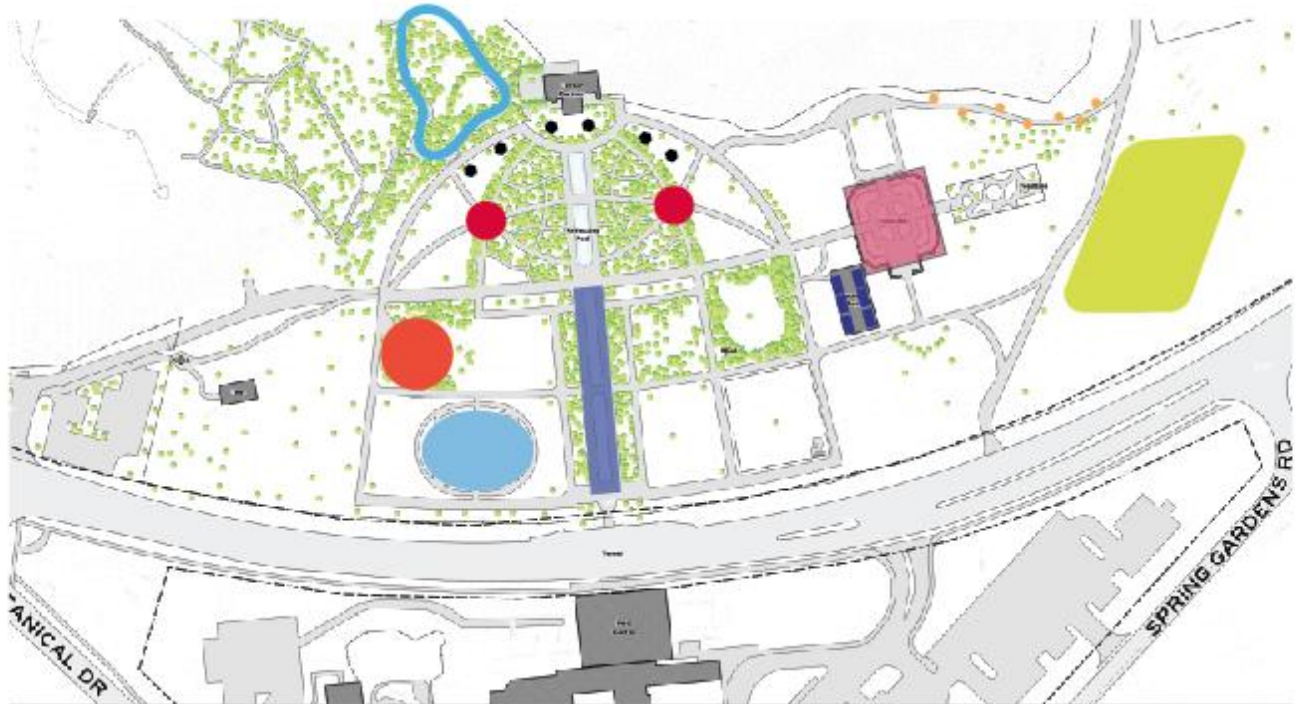
At the centre of Hendrie Park is the rose garden which features two identical black metal trellace domes. These structures are amazing for connecting work on all sides and provides height and symmetry in the garden. The selected artist will be expected to address both domes with a unified installation. Patrons pass through the domes on paved pathways in multiple directions.

Key Features:

- two identical dome structures

- access to power
- central location within event grounds
- height and visibility

Site Map:



Existing Ammenities & Installations

- Singing Tree
- Winter Village vendor cabins
- Fire Pits
- Lantern lane
- Iris Garden Light Installation

Commission Sites

- Site 1
- Site 2
- Site 3
- Site 4

Special Instructions:

All installations for Winter Wonders will undergo a technical and environmental review by RBG staff who know our grounds and nature of our weather conditions during Winter Wonders.

All installations must consider the following:

- robust fabrication to **withstand 40 days in winter conditions** (+10 to -25 degrees) and periods of significant wind
- installation/de-installation plan that requires **no ground staking or below grade support except in select garden beds along Kippax Trail**
- daily operation by RBG staff requiring **minimal daily set-up/tear down**

- **if engaging technology, the artist (or a partner acting on their behalf) must be remotely available for the duration of the run for technical troubleshooting** should a piece not perform consistently, in-person for complex repairs, and provide a detailed technical operation manual

Fees:

RBG has allocated fee based on each site as follows:

SITE 1	up to \$50,000
SITE 2	up to \$30,000
SITE 3	up to \$50,000
SITE 4	up to \$20,000

This fee is inclusive of all artists fees, transportation, materials, studio and fabrication costs, insurance, licensing, technical needs, installation requirements, stamped Ontario engineered drawings if required, and de-installation costs.

Selected artists will be required to provide **proof of insurance** for the duration of the design, fabrication, installation and exhibition period.

RBG will provide **site drawings, electrical as required, and minor assistance with installation** as negotiated during the contracting process.

Artists will retain ownership of their installation following its exhibition at Winter Wonders.

Timeline:

Deadline for application: Sunday, August 2, 2026 12 midnight

Installation: Between November 15-23rd, 2026 as scheduled

How to apply:

To apply to the [Winter Wonders Call for Artists](#), please submit the following information by visiting:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Wonders26>

Document Formatting: All documents should be in **12 pt font, single spaced, PDF format ONLY**

Deadline for application: Sunday, August 2, 2026 at 5pm

Name of Artist/Collective:

Name of Business if different:

City of Origin:

Website:

Instagram:

Tik Tok:

Facebook:

Email:

Phone:

Artist CV: 3-page maximum artist CV outlining your experience & exhibition history

Location Selection: Select one location. **To apply to multiple sites, you will need to complete the application process for each site. Artists will only be selected for one location.**

Description: 2-page maximum description of your practice and how you would approach a commission for your selected location.

Photos: Submit 5 photos of previously completed work. Do not submit renderings for projects that have not been realized. Do not submit images of proposed works for this Call for Artists.

Embed all images in your PDF file:

Provide an image list that includes the following information for each image:

Name of Work, Materials, Year Created, Approximate budget, Installed Location