



## Creatively assist in safeguarding transit riders at crowded bus stops and stations in Allegheny County

This project is part of Smart Growth America's [Arts & Transportation Rapid Response](#).

**Client:** The Port Authority of Allegheny County (Port Authority)

### Background:

The Port Authority of Allegheny County, established in 1964, includes more than 700 buses, 80 light rail vehicles, and two inclined planes, the Monongahela Incline and the Duquesne Incline. Their 2600 employees operate, maintain, and support bus, light rail, incline, and paratransit services accumulating to more than 60 million riders a year.

Due to COVID, Port Authority's transit ridership continues to be around 70% lower than normal. However, there have been instances of overcrowding on heavily used bus routes and the stops associated with them. Port Authority has had to increase or even double frequency on certain routes due to high ridership and crowding on vehicles as a result of reduced capacity.

The majority of remaining riders are essential workers: individuals who work in healthcare, at grocery stores, and other institutions that have been deemed essential during the pandemic. Essential workers in the region are more likely to be low-income and people of color. These essential frontline workers are at a greater risk of contracting and, in many cases, dying from COVID-19.

As part of its COVID-19 response, Port Authority started a messaging campaign called 'Safe to Go', which provides the public with information about how to safely ride transit, and what steps it is taking as an agency to sanitize vehicles and keep riders safe. Port Authority seeks to build on this program.

### Project Description:

Port Authority seeks to work with an artist to develop innovative ways to use space at crowded bus stops and rail stations using eye-catching graphics and unique messaging that fits within some of the existing design parameters of the Safe to Go' campaign.

Efforts will most likely be focused in Downtown Pittsburgh and Oakland, the two biggest employment centers in Allegheny County, and in partnership with two community-based organizations that represent these areas, the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership and the Oakland Transportation Management Association.

### Project Goals:

- Develop untraditional solutions to encourage riders to maintain distance at stops and during rides.
- Provide engaging public messaging of safety precautions to safeguard essential workers who are riders.
- Improve relations and understanding of community and riders.

### Project Timeline:

- Early March 2021 – Announcement of selected artist
- March - April 2021
  - Project kickoff
  - Smart Growth America training for the selected artist
  - Artist works with Port Authority and partners to develop the project



# Smart Growth America

Improving lives by improving communities

- Artist conducts research and community engagement
- May - June 2021
  - Smart Growth America workshop for artist
  - Project finalization. Installation or implementation must occur by June 30, 2021.

## Funding:

Up to \$8,500 is available towards artist fee, materials, and other project expenses.

## Additional Artist Assistance:

- Smart Growth America and Forecast Public Art will provide training and assistance to the artist to ensure success throughout the duration of the project.
- Smart Growth America and Forecast Public Art will be available to assist with project troubleshooting as needed.

## Artist Requirements:

- Artist must live in Allegheny County, PA.
- Artist must be comfortable working in diverse environments.

## Artist Application:

SGA encourages artists from all artistic disciplines to apply here:

<https://smartgrowthamerica.org/program/arts-culture/arts-transportation-rapid-response-application/artist/>

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Experience working on projects with a similar scope or scale.
- Compatibility of artistic approach with “Project Goals” listed above.
- The degree to which the artist meets “Artist Requirements” listed above.

*The application will ask for the following information:*

- **Information about you:** Name, address, website (if applicable), social media handles (if applicable), and a resume or bio.
- **Information about your work:** Provide information on 3 to 5 projects that you've worked on with similar scope and budget. For each project, the application will ask for a brief project description that explains your role in the project, high-level budget information, and a digital image.
- **Your interest in the project:** Briefly describe your interest in the and artistic approach to this project. *Please do not submit a concept or project proposal at this time, rather provide some information about your process in creating public art or public art programming and how that is compatible with this project.*

The deadline for submission is February 12, 2021. Artists will be notified of their status by the beginning of March.