

Lakou NOU Artist-in-Residency Application 2026

Deadline: Friday, September 4, 2026 @ 11:59pm EST

About Haiti Cultural Exchange

Haiti Cultural Exchange (HCX) is a nonprofit organization established in 2009 to develop, present and promote the cultural expressions of Haitian people. We seek to raise awareness of social issues and foster cultural understanding and appreciation through programs in the arts, education, and public affairs.

Our Arts Presentation, Cultural Engagement, and Artist Development programs support emerging and established artists, promote cross-cultural exchange, preserve Haiti's cultural heritage, and encourage discussions around contemporary social issues facing Haiti and its Diaspora.

Residency Overview:

In rural Haiti, the Lakou communal living system embodies the intersection of land, family, and spirituality. Former enslaved people created the Lakou in resistance to the racial and class divides perpetuated by colonial plantations. By organizing around shared land, the Lakou promotes economic equity and avoids exploitation.

Lakou NOU ("Our Yard" in Haitian Creole) is a creative adaptation of this traditional model. Haiti Cultural Exchange invests in artists of Haitian descent, positioning their creative talents as resources within local collective commons. They deepen community-led activism, build on neighborhood strengths, and unite diverse stakeholders around mutual aims.

Now in its 10th year, the Lakou NOU artist residency was established in 2016 to support the Brooklyn neighborhoods of Crown Heights, Canarsie, East Flatbush, and Flatbush – diverse communities home to generations of Haitians and Haitian Americans. Over the course of nine months, Lakou NOU artists-in-residence generate work collaboratively with community members. Residency projects join a long legacy of Haitian artistry tackling the socio-political issues with which Haitians contend, such as connection to cultural identity, intergenerational connection, traditional practices, forced migration, and revolution.

HCX helps facilitate the formation of partnerships between selected artists and neighborhood residents, including community constituents, nonprofit organizations, small businesses, community gardens, and local cultural institutions. These relationships help familiarize artists with challenges and opportunities unique to each Lakou and afford access to valuable resources, such as presentation venues or a platform for community conversations. Artists-in-residence also interact with each other as a cohort through discussion and support around topics relevant to Lakou NOU projects and participate in HCX-facilitated professional development opportunities and mentorship. Topics include: tools for cultural preservation, art

in public spaces, engagement in social practice, and implementation/evaluation of community programming.

Artist Benefits:

- A \$7,500 stipend for development, implementation, documentation, and evaluation of projects.
- Professional development/mentorship activities aimed at building tools and skills necessary for community engaged artistic practice.
- An opportunity to become more acquainted with assets and issues in Brooklyn's Haitian communities.
- Access to a network of other artists, community leaders, and local organizations, including meetings with our Lakou NOU Community Stakeholders.
- An opportunity to further develop artistic practice through the creation of new work.
- A platform to showcase work to members of the Haitian diaspora and their diverse Brooklyn neighbors.
- A chance to develop professional skills through production, promotion activities, public speaking, networking, and working in group settings.

Lakou NOU Application Period:

- Application Portal Open — Wednesday, August 5 – Friday, September 4 @ 11:59pm EST at 11:59pm EST
- Applications reviewed by selection committee — September - October 2026
- Finalist interviews — October 2026
- Residency Artists Notified — Early October 2026
- Residency Artist Orientation — Mid-October 2026

Participation in this program is contingent on in-person attendance at:

- Lakou NOU Orientation at our HCX office in Brooklyn in Mid-October 2026.
- Three professional development workshops, held at the HCX office from October 2026 through February 2027.
- Regular cohort bi-weekly check ins & meet-ups held at various points throughout the residency.
- Presentation of work in progress to Lakou NOU Community Dinner in January 2027.
- HCX hosted group culminating event, showcasing the work of all four Lakou NOU artists, May – June 2027.
- Cohort debrief & submission of project materials in June & July 2027.

*Exact Dates will be agreed upon by all artists before signing their residency contract.

Program Timeline:

Phase 1: Lakou NOU Project Listening & Development Stage: Activation in Lakou, October 2026 – January 2027

During this phase artist residents will become more familiar with their Lakous through HCX facilitated group meetings.

Artists-in-residence will host meetings and listening sessions to consider their own creative talents as a component of a collective Lakou commons, charging themselves with connecting their skills to existing efforts and/or resources. As artists connect with local residents, organizations, and other community members, HCX provides mentorship to implement participatory processes and tools to support relationships that are beneficial for the collective Lakou communities.

During this phase, artists will present their proposed project to their Lakou, receive feedback, and adapt their plan to fit the needs of the community. Artists will share their progress with HCX and have an opportunity to share their projects during a community dinner hosted by HCX.

Residents will engage in curated professional development activities designed to help them prepare for the challenges and opportunities that come with cultivating and stewarding space for their projects. This series of workshops introduces artists to the principles of social practice, community engagement, project planning and implementation, as well as impact assessment.

Finalized project scope & descriptions are submitted by residents and approved by HCX during this stage.

Phase 2: Lakou NOU Project Implementation Stage: January – May 2027

During this period, artists-in-residence will carry out their Lakou NOU project. The schedule of the implementation phase is based on the scope of each project, as determined by the artist and community stakeholders.

Artists will also begin developing the works they will share at the Lakou NOU culminating event in June.

Phase 3: Lakou NOU Production Stage: March – June 2027

As a team, the artists-in-residence will design their contribution to the Lakou NOU culminating event, a collaborative event featuring the work of the entire cohort. In addition to presenting their projects, the culminating event will showcase how Lakou NOU artists merged their artistic practice with neighborhood needs, while sharing space and engaging reciprocity within the community.

Culminating Event: May – June 2027

HCX will host a culminating event to showcase the newly developed artistic work of all Lakou NOU residents.

Phase 4: Lakou NOU Project Evaluation Stage: June – July 2027

During this period of self-assessment, artists complete evaluative reports that measure the success of their projects against metrics created as part of their project proposals as well as any additional criteria identified during the life of their projects. The artists themselves compile documentation and notes for assessing their own projects.

HCX facilitates conversations and provides an opportunity for artists to measure their own success within the context of socially engaged art.

Total Length of Lakou NOU Residency: 9 Months

Applicant Guidelines

Selection Criteria:

- Artistic excellence and originality
- Residence in and/or a demonstrated relationship with the Lakou NOU communities
- An artistic practice rooted in community, collaboration, and dialogue
- Identification as an artist of Haitian descent working in any artistic discipline

Additional Requirements:

- Previous Lakou NOU Artists-in-Residence are not eligible to apply.
- Artists are not required to live in the targeted "Lakou" neighborhoods (Crown Heights, Flatbush, East Flatbush, or Canarsie) BUT must live in the greater New York City area for the duration of the residency period. Regular presence in selected Lakou neighborhood is required. Extended periods away (more than 2 weeks) from New York City during the term of the residency must be discussed in advance with HCX.
- Artists must demonstrate interest in and commitment to Crown Heights, Flatbush, East Flatbush, and/or Canarsie neighborhoods.
- Artists are ineligible to apply if they are enrolled as a full-time, part-time, or low residency student in *any* degree-granting education program during the residency period.

How do I apply?

Applications may be submitted in writing OR as a video. Responses must demonstrate a detailed and organized thought process. If you have any questions, please email lakounou@haiticulturalx.org.

• OPTION 1: Written Submission:

Applications may be submitted via this form:

<https://form.jotform.com/lakounou/2026-lakou-nou-application>

• OPTION 2: Video Submission:

- Complete Part One and Part Three of this form:
<https://form.jotform.com/lakounou/2026-lakou-nou-application>
- Video submissions answering Part Two of this application may be submitted as an MP4, AVI, MOV, or FLV file via the form link above.
- Video submissions may be in English or Kreyòl.
- Videos should be no longer than 8 minutes.
- Supplemental Documentation is still required with your video application. See Part Three: Work Samples & Background for instructions.

Note: Incomplete submissions will not be reviewed.

Application Assistance

To increase accessibility to this opportunity, HCX offers application assistance. If you have specific questions, issues with access to technology, or require language assistance, please contact lakounou@haiticulturalx.org to schedule a Zoom appointment.

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PART 1: Artist Information & Interest Areas

Full Name: _____

Full Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Primary Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Website/ Social Media: _____

Artist Discipline (Please check those that apply.)

☐ Music

☐ Dance

☐ Visual Arts

☐ Multimedia

☐ Film/Photography

☐ Literary Arts

☐ Spoken Word

☐ Other (Specify): _____

1. 1. Are you or will you be enrolled in a degree-granting education program during the residency period (October 2026 - July 2027)?

2. How long have you been creating and publicly presenting your own original work outside of student contexts?

3. Lakou NOU resident artists will be working in one of the following Brooklyn Lakous (neighborhoods): Crown Heights, Flatbush, East Flatbush, and Canarsie. Choose your

Lakou of Interest (Please check all that apply.) We will do our best to place you in your Lakou of interest, but if we believe your project is a better fit for a different neighborhood, we may place you elsewhere.

- ☐ Canarsie
- ☐ Crown Heights
- ☐ Flatbush
- ☐ East Flatbush

4. **Why are you most interested in working in your top choice Lakou(s)?**
5. **Do you already have a relationship with any of these communities (e.g. resident, working in this community)?** If yes, please describe.
6. **Do you have a local collaborator or organization in mind for this project?** If yes, please describe who you have identified and whether you have an existing relationship. Note: HCX will help facilitate connections with community stakeholders as needed.

PART 2: Proposed Project

Please write your answers below each question:

1. **What motivates you as an artist?** Please describe your creative practice. Does your work connect to a specific community or place? (250 words max)
2. **Our Lakou NOU artist residency prioritizes community-based participatory practices whereby the community is an equitable partner in inciting, building, creating, and implementing creative projects. In the space below, please propose a project to pursue during this residency.** (500 words max)

Your response should:

- Describe your proposed project.

- Describe the social issue or community asset your project will engage and explain how this topic impacts the Lakou you plan to work with.
- Explain why your proposed activities and goals are helpful in addressing this topic.

Note: You will adapt this proposal in Phase 1 of the residency, after getting to know your Lakou.

- 3. Describe how your proposed creative strategy is rooted in collaboration and community engagement.** (200 words)
- 4. What does success on your proposed project look like? How will you measure this?** (200 words max)
- 5. How would a Lakou NOU residency foster your artistic growth and help you develop new work?** (200 words max)
- 6. How might your work be informed by your relationship within a neighborhood?** (200 words max)
- 7. If applicable, please tell us about a past artistic project of yours that involved working with residents or organizations in a specific community or neighborhood.** What were the strengths of the project? What were the challenges? What did you learn? (250 words max).
- 8. If you are part of a band or collective, will you include your band/ collective in the work you produce during this residency?** If so, please describe how you envision distributing responsibilities and funding. If not applicable, please write N/A.
- 9. Why are you interested in being a Lakou NOU resident artist? (Check all that apply.)**

- a. ____Mentorship
- b. ____Opportunity to engage with issues impacting Brooklyn residents
- c. ____Opportunity to create new work
- d. ____Opportunity to connect with the Haitian Diaspora community
- e. ____Leadership Building
- f. ____Networking
- g. ____Stipend
- h. ____Opportunity to collaborate with other artists
- i. ____Visibility of my work
- j. ____Other (Please describe here)

VIDEO APPLICATION OPTION:

If you are submitting a video response to Part Two of this application, please upload it here.

Supplemental Documentation is still required with your video application. Please upload it on the next page.

- You may submit MP4, AVI, MOV, FLV files.
- Video submissions may be in English or Kreyòl.
- Videos should be no longer than 8 minutes in length.

Save file as: 2025_Lakou_NOU_video_response_[First Name]_[Last Name]

Part 3: Lakou NOU Application Work Samples & Background

Please upload a high-resolution headshot and ONE pdf, which includes:

- Your resume and/or CV
- A bio (500 words max)
- 2 references including their name, professional affiliation, email, and phone number
- Links to Work Samples: Please submit your strongest creative work. The selection committee cannot review additional materials. Save file as:
FirstName_LastName_Supplement.pdf
 - Photo documentation: No more than 10 JPGs (1280 pixels on the longest side, at 300 dpi)
 - Audio & Video documentation: Footage or web link(s) totaling up to 5 minutes of video footage or audio recordings.
 - Writing: Writing samples should be no longer than 3 pages in length of original work.