



Community
Driven
Artist Led

wavepoolgallery.org

MATCH: An Artist Employment Program

MATCH is an artist employment program that places artists in 30-month salaried positions within three Cincinnati nonprofit organizations. Artists are employed to advance their host organizations' missions, developing new programs and services that address community needs.

The Three Placements

Findlay Market

Permits, inspections, certifications, and administrative procedures burden small food entrepreneurs, and the burden falls hardest on those with the least capital and fewest institutional relationships. The artist will work alongside Findlay Market employees, business owners, agencies, and communities on more transparent and equitable pathways into the food economy, and on food access in underserved neighborhoods.

Wave Pool

As property values and taxes rise in Camp Washington, its thriving creative communities are at risk of displacement. The Camp Washington Cultural Land Trust is a program of Wave Pool that will acquire and develop properties for affordable artist housing, studio space, and cultural nonprofits, holding them for long-term affordability. The artist will work on the trust's formation, community engagement, and the design of its first properties.

Washington United Church of Christ

Washington United Church of Christ is a mission outreach church that has served Camp Washington for over five decades. The artist will work alongside staff and volunteers to establish a year-round ceramic arts program for children and families within the church's after-school and summer programs, and create permanent installations on the church grounds.



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University of Cincinnati Collaboration

The program is developed in collaboration with the faculty of the University of Cincinnati College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning and the College of Arts and Sciences. Thirty-two co-op students rotate through paid placements over the program's three years, providing research, communications, and project support. This is a unique opportunity for arts and humanities students to access paid employment experience aligned with their training, and to build professional networks in Cincinnati's nonprofit and creative sectors.

Background

MATCH builds on Wave Pool's 2024 pilot, which placed six artists in eight-month fellowships with Cincinnati organizations. Projects included community murals at affordable housing sites, an indigenous plant garden, an intergenerational exhibition at the Contemporary Arts Center, and an expanded narrative medicine program at the Cincinnati VA Medical Center. Host organizations reported increased capacity, and some fellows continued in paid roles with their host organizations after the fellowship ended.

The program also incorporates lessons from Creatives Rebuild New York, a statewide initiative that employed 300 artists in New York nonprofits. Both precedents point in the same direction: stable salaries and longer placements produce deeper integration and more durable outcomes than short residencies. This evidence informs MATCH's central design choices, the 30-month employment term and Wave Pool's role as employer of record for organizations too small to hire directly.

The open call for artists launches in October 2026. Artist employment begins in January 2027 and runs through mid-2029.

MATCH is supported by the Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile, Jr. Foundation and the Greater Cincinnati Foundation.