



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

### REDMOON THEATER SEEKS COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL TO BE A PART OF THE GREAT CHICAGO FIRE FESTIVAL!

In October 2014, the inaugural Great Chicago Fire Festival will introduce an annual urban ritual to our city, in the form of a massive citywide event celebrating Chicago's powerful spirit of resilience. The Great Chicago Fire Festival is a project of Redmoon Theater Company, in partnership with the City of Chicago, Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events. Redmoon's mission is to transform the experience of our city through free large-scale theatrical events that promote community, creativity, and an empowered democracy.

The building blocks of The Great Chicago Fire Festival will come from the city's neighborhoods. In 2014, the Festival will start with 15 aldermanic wards, with the number growing in subsequent years. Redmoon will determine these aldermanic wards on the basis of interest from this RFP process, as well as working with our core partners: the Chicago Park District, Family Focus, Cure Violence, and Young Chicago Authors.

Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) selected to be a part of the Fire Festival will receive free arts programming, as described below. This is the chance to get in on the ground floor of this new city festival, and we need great organizations to apply!

#### **THE PROJECT:**

**Designing a large-scale festival that celebrates Chicago's unique character and spirit of resilience by showcasing its diverse communities.**

From the aftermath of the Great Chicago Fire to Millennium Park's spectacular emergence out of the old rail yards, the epic story of Chicago has been a story of destruction and renewal. Drawing on this rich history, the Fire Festival will be a 'signature event', reflecting Chicago's true nature so genuinely that it becomes a cultural and economic beacon for its citizens, the nation, and the world.

The festival's major activities will occur in three parts: 1) **Sidewalk Senates** in 15 aldermanic wards over the course of Summer 2014. Sidewalk Senates will gather communities for arts activities that are designed to discover and tell the stories of each ward. The Senates will include 6 – 8 months of events for CBOs selected through this

application process and events open to the public; 2) A **River procession** from Chinatown to Wacker Drive during the day of Saturday October 4, 2014; and 3) a **Grand Spectacle** that evening from State to Columbus Avenue, that will draw tens of thousands to the banks of the Chicago River.

Drawing on elements of a fashion show, the Grand Spectacle will include live music, spectacular performances, and a watery parade of artwork from the 15 aldermanic wards down the Chicago River. It will culminate in a grand showcase on the downtown riverfront.

## THE PROCESS

Redmoon will work closely with each of the 15 aldermanic wards. We will implement the Sidewalk Senates in each ward through a cluster of CBOs selected through this application process and through our core partner organizations. Using the information gathered from these Senates, we will then invite communities to participate in building a Fire Sculpture—a symbolic sculpture designed in two parts: an exterior that burns away to reveal a hidden core. This core symbolizes each ward’s unique gift or assets and the exterior symbolizes each ward’s obstacles.

### Project Timeline:

November 19, 2013	Proposals for Community-Based Organizations Open
December 19, 2013	Proposals Due
Mid-January, 2014	Finalists Notified
March 1, 2014	15 Aldermanic Wards Announced, Sidewalk Senates in Wards Begin
June 1, 2014	Fire Sculpture Design and Build Begins
Summer 2014	Open Build in Parks in Each Ward Beginning and End of Summer Celebration BBQs
October 3, 2014	Launch Party at Redmoon
October 4, 2014	Great Chicago Fire Festival

## THE NEED:

We are looking for CBOs that are interested in being a part of the inaugural showcase of the Great Chicago Fire Festival. **In exchange for the free arts activities of the Sidewalk Senates, selected organizations will commit to: 1) bringing their constituencies to the arts activities, and 2) working with Redmoon’s media team to help promote the Great Chicago Fire Festival and its auxiliary programming.** CBOs will not only benefit from Redmoon’s free arts programming, but will be able to expose their community members to Redmoon’s diverse networks and core partners throughout these different events.

Specifically, in the realm of promotion, Redmoon asks CBOs to be part of a word of mouth campaign, talking up the work and Festival in their wards. Towards this effort, Redmoon will provide posters, email blasts, and social media announcements that the CBOs will disseminate through their existing networks and communities. Redmoon will also provide a small amount of funding to organizations in support of their efforts to promote the programming of the Great Chicago Fire Festival.

In the arts activities of the Sidewalk Senates, Redmoon asks CBOs to be responsible for bringing a consistent group of at least 10 community members to participate. In Spring 2014, these groups will meet with a local artist hired by Redmoon 8 times over the course of a month to design a “Pop-Up Tour”—a dynamic tour of their ward in which the community members will tell their own stories of growing up in the ward to discuss its character. Artists will work closely with community members to perform their stories, develop their storytelling skills, and fashion a coherent narrative of all the different stories of the community members. Community members and artists will perform this Pop-Up Tour 3 times throughout the summer.

Also in the summer, the Sidewalk Senates will include a beginning of summer Kickoff barbeque, open Fire Sculpture build workshops in local parks (2x/week in June and July), and an end of summer Celebration barbeque. All the CBOs and other partners will come together for a Launch Party at Redmoon’s space in Pilsen on October 3, 2014 (transportation will be provided), and on October 4, also will attend the Grand Spectacle on the river’s Main Branch, between State and Columbus, where at sundown, communities will see their Fire Sculpture float and burn in a fantastic ritual.

The partnerships we aim to find through this RFP will be essential in realizing the Great Chicago Fire Festival’s ambition to engage as many different populations as possible during the process of creation. We seek CBOs of a great variety of sizes and missions, who will bring diverse populations to the process of creating this festival.

## **PROJECT REQUIREMENTS:**

This festival aims to celebrate and support the spirit of resilience in organizations and individuals throughout the city. In order to be a partner in the Fire Festival, CBOs must be able to demonstrate the ability to bring community members to events and promote the programming of the Great Chicago Fire Festival through their existing networks. CBOs must:

1. Enthusiastically partner with Redmoon and other partner organizations during the Sidewalk Senates and throughout the Summer 2014 and the GCFF, to **bring at least 10 community members to the Sidewalk Senates.**
2. Foster local economies by **dispersing Redmoon posters, email blasts, and social media announcements** that promote lead off events in exchange for arts programming through our Sidewalk Senates.
3. **Invite and promote** participation in the Beginning and End of Summer Celebration BBQs by bringing at least 30 people to these events.

4. Celebrate with us at Redmoon's Pilsen warehouse at the October 3, 2014 launch festival. Redmoon will provide transportation.
5. Have an opportunity to **enjoy the showcase of their work, organization, and efforts in the Great Chicago Fire Festival on October 4, 2014**
6. **Designate a contact person** who will be responsible for communications with Redmoon (estimated at 2 to 3 hours a week from January to October). They will attend meetings, **give feedback about the process, and explore new partnerships, ideas and approaches to community dialogues** during the process and after the Great Chicago Fire Festival

## **WHO CAN APPLY?**

All CBOs (both loose groups of individuals and more formal nonprofit partnerships) can apply to be a part of the inauguration of the Great Chicago Fire Festival. We are looking for a diverse array of applicants, including but not limited to: Church groups, Neighborhood Organizations, Local Arts Organizations, and Parent Boards at Schools.

**PROPOSALS** will be limited to two pages to include the answers to the questions listed below. The proposal should clearly answer the following questions:

1. Paint us a picture of your community: who lives there? What is the culture like?
2. What excites you about being a part of the Great Chicago Fire Festival?
3. Please provide us with a brief description of your organization. What do you do? Where are you located? What communities do you work with? How big is your organization? What are your existing programs and partners?
4. How many people do you reach? Who are the people you reach? What are your existing networks? How do you reach them?
5. If we were to have an event in your ward, how would you promote it through your organization? What are the steps you would take to get community members to the event?
6. What is the primary mode of communication for the members of your ward, regarding community issues? (Town hall meetings, open mics, parent board discussions, meetings held by an alderman...)
7. Not required but preferred is a letter of Aldermanic support.

**Please submit proposals in a word document to [Proposals@Redmoon.org](mailto:Proposals@Redmoon.org) by December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013. Redmoon will carefully evaluate proposals before passing them on to an external civic committee comprised of leading individuals from Chicago. Final decision will be made, and organizations notified mid-January, 2013. Questions can be directed to Fatimah Asghar ([fasghar@redmoon.org](mailto:fasghar@redmoon.org)).**

## **ABOUT REDMOON THEATER COMPANY:**

[www.redmoon.org](http://www.redmoon.org)

Redmoon's mission is to transform the experience of our city through free large-scale theatrical events that promote community, creativity, and an empowered democracy. In 1995, Redmoon Theater burst onto Chicago's cultural consciousness with its empowered democracy award-winning production of Moby-Dick. A year later,

Frankenstein was presented at Steppenwolf Theatre and gained equal praise. Commended for their unique aesthetic, the productions boasted an evocative blend of puppetry, pageantry, gadgetry, and robust physical performance that became Redmoon's signature. While the company continued to receive critical acclaim and popular support, Jim Lasko focused the theater's energy outdoors, where Redmoon began presenting free, large scale theatrical events to bridge difference and transform the ways that people see and understand public spaces.

Over the past twenty-three years, Redmoon has become a valued Chicago institution with its high profile collaborations, vibrant outdoor performances, and genuine community partnerships. Site specific performances opened Millennium Park, animated the facade of the Museum of Contemporary Art, and commemorated the groundbreaking for the Modern Wing of the Art Institute. At the same time, Redmoon brought its work to the parks and streets in Chicago's most far flung and overlooked neighborhoods. Redmoon has performed for more than 250,000 people in thirty Chicago neighborhoods.

In 2009 Frank Maugeri, twenty year veteran of the theater and spectacle work, joined Jim Lasko to co-lead Redmoon as it garnered international attention for its unique productions, site-specific performances, and participatory events which have been seen across the US, including a 2009 appearance at the White House, and around the globe in Holland, Ireland, France, Australia, and Brazil.