

# **Philadelphia's Plan for Harriet Tubman Monument Decried for Excluding Black Artists**



Shown is a statue of Harriet Tubman produced by Wesley Wofford, beyond City Hall in Philadelphia.  
*AP/Matt Rourke*

The city of Philadelphia's prepare for a brand-new monolith devoted to Harriet Tubman has actually come under fire from regional artists and historians who have actually slammed the city's choice to commission Wesley Wofford, a white artist, to create the long-term sculpture without looking for propositions from extra artists.

Wofford, whose sculpture studio is based in North Carolina, had actually created the statue *Harriet Tubman: The Journey to Freedom*, that was shown beyond the Philadelphia's City Hall from January to March. Establish as a taking a trip exhibit, the statue has actually considering that been relocated to White Plains, New York, with prepare for it to live in other areas around the state throughout 2022.

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In a public virtual conference in June held by the city's Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy to talk about the job, a variety of artists and historians slammed the prepare for commissioning Wofford without thinking about alternative propositions by Black artists.

Philadelphia authorities likewise sent a public study due to be concluded on July 13 looking for viewpoints from members of the general public on the job. The expense allocated for the general public monolith is \$500,000 The statue is because of be set up in September 2023.

Marguerite Anglin, a director at the city's workplace managing arts and culture who led the conference, stated the go for the monolith is to "talk to a variety of audience."

"I am not in assistance of this specific artist," one individual, Leslie Garrett, an administrator based in Philadelphia, stated at the virtual conference. "This must have been given the neighborhood."

Another speaker participating in the virtual session, Jacqueline Wiggins, called the option to continue with Wofford as the job's designer over a Black carver a "missed out on chance."

Maisha Sullivan-Ongoza, a neighborhood organizer stated, "We're worried about the procedure," including she was especially bothered by the racial characteristics. "Someone white is benefitting off of her," she stated.

Anglin reacted stating that the city attempted to buy Wofford's taking a trip sculpture since of its "effect," however was unable due to legal and copyright constraints.

"We're doing the next finest thing in commissioning that very same artist to offer a variation of this sculpture that is particularly for Philadelphia," Anglin stated.

She stated that in a common public art commission, the city would hold an open require other artists.

She safeguarded the city's existing strategy stating it would have been "improper" to ask another artist to recreate a performance of Wofford's initial piece.

This description did not please a number of the guests.

" We do not see enough of ourselves," stated Ongoza. "We feel cheated."

Source: [Philadelphia's Plan for Harriet Tubman Monument Decried for Excluding Black Artists](#)