

LAGI - MEA

Design Guidelines

Regenerative Art for the American West



Regenerative Art: a work of art or sculpture that incorporates some technology for the purpose of generously contributing sustainable resources such as clean electricity or drinking water to meet existing needs, or to assist in the regeneration of a landscape to increase groundcover, wildlife habitat, and biodiversity. Art conceived as sustainable infrastructure or as a means of environmental remediation.

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1. Introduction

The Modern Elder Academy's vision of a regenerative community is conceived holistically to include the regeneration of soil, regeneration of ecosystems and habitats, regeneration of community, and regeneration of the soul of each individual.

Your artwork will support MEA's 2023 vision of accommodating 40 visitors between two retreat buildings.

The artworks will be strategically located (as "lures" in the landscape) to provide exploration opportunities for Modern Elder Academy participants and exist as spaces for meditation, reflection, and learning at key locations across the landscape. The regenerative artworks will be designed to entice curiosity while visually complementing and functionally supporting the natural environment and the systems of the local ecology.

Concept design teams whose proposals are chosen for implementation will take their ideas through detailed working drawings and oversee the fabrication and on-site installations of the completed works in close coordination with the planning teams already overseeing the renovations to building and landscape.

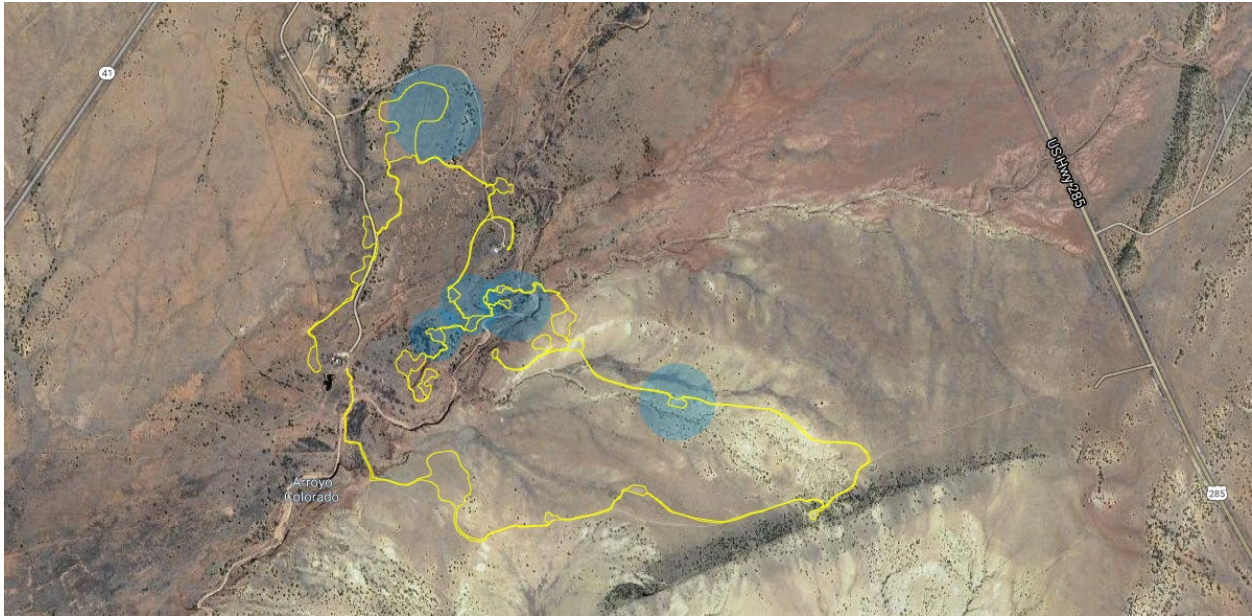
When completed, the infrastructure artworks will provide an instantly recognizable image of MEA's New Mexico site, one that is synonymous with regeneration across cultural, personal, and environmental perspectives.

About Modern Elder Academy

After creating the proof-of-concept [Modern Elder Academy](#) in Baja California Sur, Mexico, Modern Elder Academy is setting out to grow a collection of MEA Regenerative Communities in the U.S. starting in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The ethos, rich culture, distinct vernacular and human scale, enchanting natural environment, deep spiritual connection, and intergenerational and diverse population make the Saddleback Ranch property an ideal setting for MEA's vision.

MEA's curriculum is dedicated to helping people in midlife and beyond prepare for the next stage of life's adventures.

You can learn more about MEA's vision for transforming Saddleback Ranch into a regenerative venue for learning and self-discovery at <https://regen.modernelderacademy.com/>, and you can learn more about Chip Conley and the founding of the Modern Elder Academy at <https://wisdomwell.modernelderacademy.com/> (MEA's daily blog).



2. Design Site

See the design site via the link below.

<http://tiny.cc/LAGI-MEA>

You may propose your site intervention(s) anywhere within the yellow site area.

Located 20 miles southeast of Santa Fe near the small town of Galisteo, the site is on traditional land of the Tewa people, a linguistic group of Pueblo Native Americans, and is a beautiful example of American desert shrublands, home to flora native to the Galisteo Basin ecosystem like Pinon-Juniper Savannah, Pinon-Juniper Wooded Shrubland, and open grassland meadows.

North-facing slopes and outcrops that receive more concentrated precipitation also have herbaceous and woody shrub species not found on drier upland slopes. Arroyo bottoms support a limited quantity of riparian shrubs and trees where roots can take advantage of shallower groundwater. A small seep along the arroyo at the center of the site sustains enough moisture for a small community of willow and cottonwood trees.

Small mammals, reptiles and birds are evident on site and represent a typical sample of drywoodland, rocky sloped ecosystems of the Galisteo Basin. Deer Mice, Kangaroo Rats, Wood Rats, Desert Cottontail and Black-tailed Jack Rabbits provide a prey base for predators such as snakes, coyotes, and raptors. Birds of prey include the Red-tailed Hawk and American Kestrel and others depending on seasonal migration patterns. Smaller bird species utilizing juniper and pinon habitat include Spotted Towhees, Rock Wrens, Black-throated Sparrows and the Mourning Dove. Antelope, bison, wild horses, deer, elk, pronghorn, sheep, and even camels (as recently as 12,000 years ago) have historically roamed this landscape.

The site has a rich history and an engaged surrounding community. For more information see the Galisteo Basin Preserve website: <https://www.galisteobasinpreserve.com/cultural-history/>.

Modern Elder Academy's goal is to operate a regenerative community. They are working with Jan Loeffler Bird, an ecological design consultant, who is developing a plan to regenerate the landscape primarily through establishing sustainable grazing practices. The following paragraphs were taken as notes during a conversation with Jan.

"Landscape function" is the ability of a place (down to the square meter) to contribute to the water cycle, support life and biodiversity, and be productive and a positive contributor to the needs of humanity. The goal is to increase landscape function and water is the cornerstone of that regenerative process.

There are two key metrics related to water and landscape function:

1. **The ability of the place to infiltrate and absorb water (inches per hour)**
 - Up to 8" per hour in a healthy landscape
2. **The ability to retain or store water**
 - Varies with soil types and can be increased with organic matter

Net primary productivity is derived from a measurement of biomass.

Some questions to ask about any site:

- How much weight of living matter is each square meter of land producing?
- How many different forms of life are within the area?
The more the better in terms of resilience.
- Is anything being produced for human use within the area?
For example: food, energy, biofuel, fibers.

Presently, there is about 50% groundcover at Saddleback. The land has been degenerated through unsustainable grazing practices.

Task is to bring it back to 95%+ of groundcover. The best way to do that at this site is with sustainable grazing practices and Modern Elder Academy is pursuing this strategy in concert with a [Keyline Design](#) approach:

1. Laying out the water control infrastructure
 - Tanks, cisterns, and gravity feeding for horse watering
2. One day or one week's worth of food areas in rotational grazing
 - Requires flexible watering system
3. Looking at ridges and valleys and contour lines to create a master pattern
4. Working with accessways for roads and trails
5. Fencing design with flexibility to control grazing

3. Process and Schedule

Congratulations! You and your team are one of four invited practices who are being provided with a \$12,500 stipend to produce concept designs that will respond to this detailed design brief.

Your concept proposal is due by June 6, 2022.

Based on the quality of the submitted concepts and conversations between MEA and the LAGI MEA design teams, a decision will be made in the summer of 2022, which proposals will be fully funded and teams engaged for detailed design and construction administration.

Nov 22, 2021

RFQ release to teams who responded to the call for expressions of interest and who have signed the NDA.

February 22, 2022

Invited teams are provided with the design brief document and the concept design period commences.

March 7, 2022

Kick-off meeting with teams via Zoom (4pm Mountain Time). Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84012084669?pwd=S082MElrVWFYVZJd05ZbGw5dTJFdz09>

June 6, 2022

Submissions due date.

June 14, 2022

Presentations to MEA Santa Fe.

June – July 2022

Identification of project concepts to proceed in the first round of implementation.

Negotiation of detailed design contracts with selected project teams.

Late 2022

Completed working and fabrication drawings and specifications.

Early 2023

Fabrication, installation, and commissioning on site.

The installation of the regenerative artworks in the landscape is intended to coincide with the opening of 40 rooms between two renovated buildings as part of the Modern Elder Academy. Construction on the Modern Elder Academy retreat buildings will be ongoing from the summer of 2022 through the summer of 2023, with a targeted opening in late summer or early fall 2023.

4. Budget

Phase 1

The four invited teams who are selected through this RFQ process shall each receive a total stipend of \$12,500, which is to be shared between the collaborating disciplines within each team.

Phase 2

Teams whose concept designs are selected to continue to implementation will be commissioned under separate agreement to undertake a detailed design stage to develop the project to production including fabrication drawings, cost estimates, schedules, prototyping and testing as required, and coordination with fabricators and installers.

The design fees for this phase will be negotiated between the selected teams and MEA.

Phase 3

Fabrication/construction and installation.

Construction budget guidance shall be provided to teams in early March 2022.

Teams will coordinate the details of Phase 3 with Modern Elder Academy.



5. Design Brief

Your concept design must:

- Primarily exist as a permanent and intentional art composition—a three-dimensional sculptural form that creates a unique and memorable human experience;
- Inspire wonder, awe, or a sense of delight in those who encounter and interact with it;
- Reflect on one or more of the site development themes:
 - Storied
 - Wild
 - Equine
 - Contemplative
 - Soulful;
- Demonstrate awareness and proficiency of scale and perspective, whether the installation is experienced from a distance or from within and around;
- Be exemplary of the beauty of a future when humanity achieves harmony with the natural world and environmental systems;
- Consider its place within the surrounding ecosystem and its symbiotic relationship to native flora and fauna;
- In some way tell a story about the place within which it exists to the people who will visit it. Consider how the story and the experience will change through the seasons, with memory, and across multiple visits;
- Support the four pillars that define the MEA Regenerative Community:
 - Regenerating Soul
 - Regenerating Community
 - Regenerating Locale
 - Regenerating Soil;
- Support the objectives of the Modern Elder Academy wisdom school to the benefit of each future cohort of participants;

From the Modern Elder Academy [website](#):

Learning is the glue that drives our engagement in purpose, community, and our evolving wellbeing. Committing to learning for life is a commitment to staying healthier, continuing to grow and have an open mindset, and thriving as a human being. Instead of “lifelong learning”, think of it as “long life learning”.

Our core curriculum is based on elements in founder Chip Conley's book, Wisdom@Work: The Making of a Modern Elder, but each workshop has its own unique set of topics, exercises, and discussions.

Weeklong workshops are grounded in four primary pillars:

- 1. Evolve: strategically editing your historical identity and mining your mastery*
 - 2. Learn: strive for a beginner's mind that allows you to be both a mentor and intern*
 - 3. Collaborate: use your EQ [emotional quotient] and team building skills to create more successful partnerships*
 - 4. Counsel: tap into your "know-how" and "know-who" and your role as a confidant and coach*
- Your design should be regenerative, helping to meet the needs of the Modern Elder Academy Santa Fe. Regenerative services might include:

WATER

Sustainably harvest surface, ground, stormwater, and/ or atmospheric water and provide systems for the conservation, filtration, recycling, treatment, and/or distribution of water for a variety of uses, including but not limited to irrigation, drinking, cooling, heating, ice or steam production, and soil regeneration.

WILDLIFE OBSERVATION AND HABITAT

Offer opportunities for engaging with wildlife in ways that do not disturb. Your artwork may help to support habitat restoration and could provide safe places for local birds and animals to nest.

LANDSCAPE REGENERATION

Increase the landscape function of a given area of the ranch by increasing the water content and encouraging biodiversity in keeping with the Keyline Design concepts being employed at the site.

EQUINE INFRASTRUCTURE

Support the regenerative goals of the ranch related to environmental services that are provided by the horses that sustainably graze there. Horses need food, water, and shelter.

ENERGY

Convert natural and renewable sources of energy (i.e., sunlight, wind, geothermal heat) into electricity, heat, coolant, or fuel to be used on site. The demand requirements of the academy retreat center buildings are minimal since they will already be incorporating rooftop solar.

- Provide interpretation and learning opportunities to engage people with an understanding of how the artwork functions to provide the sustainable service(s) outlined above;
- Consider a future operations guide that will support the design life of the installation including schedules for maintenance and replacement of equipment along with a plan for decommissioning at end of life;
- Not generate greenhouse gas emissions or generate other forms of environmental pollution during its operational life;
 - Provide a brief (approx. 500 words) environmental assessment describing the potential impacts of your proposal on natural ecosystems and outlining a strategy to mitigate any foreseeable issues.
- Exist anywhere within the boundary identified on the Site Area and Topography drawing. Many considerations were made in drawing the boundary. If you have a good reason to propose your installation outside of this area, please let us know and we can make recommendations during the Q+A process. Your concept may be mobile;
- Not be visible from Highway 41;
- Be either permanently rooted in place, mobile, or some combination of solutions existing in one place or in many places simultaneously;
- Function as lure(s) to help connect Modern Elder Academy participants with nature and to safely stray from the beaten path;
- Support the idea of a field house where off-grid experiences can take place with reliable access to electricity and drinking water;
- Consider providing accessible experiences for MEA participants with disabilities. Not all features of your artwork must be accessible;
- Consider how the artwork installation(s) relate to walking paths, topographic features, and visitor experience;
- Be safe for people and animals to experience and touch. Especially consider how the artwork installation(s) relate to the horses that should be assumed have access to all parts of the ranch.
 - “Whatever the artwork is, it will likely be subject to the curiosity of horses and other wildlife. Meaning 1,000 lb. animals may try to eat it or rub themselves on it. Just something to keep in mind.” —Jan Loeffler Bird;
- Use English language for all text and feet/inches for design drawings and diagrams.

6. Technical Requirements for Responses

FORMAT

- Exactly four (4) A1 size layout boards (PDF only). Each layout board may not exceed 50MB file size. Layout boards must be landscape in orientation.
- One (1) DOC or DOCX file containing:
 - A 2,500-word maximum written narrative that tells the story of your artwork and includes the information listed below.
 - Technologies used in your design;
 - List of activities your design would support;
 - List of system inputs (what is required to operate your system on an annual basis and what kind of maintenance is required);
 - List of system outputs (for example, how many kilowatt-hours, gallons of water, estimated biomass generation, what waste materials are generated and where do they go?);
 - List of the primary materials used in your design and major dimensions;
 - Order-of-magnitude conceptual cost estimate;
 - A short summary of your strategy for detailed design, prototyping, fabrication, and installation and an estimate of design and administration fees associated with bringing the project to completion;
 - In the same DOC or DOCX file, include a 500-word environmental impact summary (may be in addition to the 2,500-word narrative).

Submission to be sent in electronic format to lagi@landartgenerator.org.

7. Decision to Proceed

Following the submission of the proposals from the four invited teams, the Modern Elder Academy will reach out directly to each to coordinate a presentation. At each of the four presentations, team representatives will have 30 minutes to explain their project, followed by 30 minutes of Q+A and discussion.

Modern Elder Academy will decide how to proceed following the conclusion of the final presentation. The decision to proceed may take place in several ways, including the selection of one complete project, the selection of more than one complete project, or the selection of elements or components of more than one project.

8. Q+A

Contact Details

For questions concerning this design guidelines document:

Land Art Generator

Elizabeth Monoian and Robert Ferry

Co-Directors

lagi@landartgenerator.org

(412) 996-4906

9. Supplementary Materials

[Site Areas \(Google Map\)](#)

[Site Areas and Topography Drawing \(CAD files\)](#)

AutoCAD Map 3D use WGS84 coordinate system

DWG, DXF (saved back to v2004), KML, and PDFs of Site topography

[Aerial Videos](#)

[Aerial Panorama Photographs](#)

To learn about the mission of the Modern Elder Academy:

[Modern Elder Academy](#)

[Wisdom@Work](#)

[Wisdom Well](#)