



Tea Box Design Request for Proposals

Overview

My Cup of Tea, Inc. is a nonprofit, social enterprise located in the historic Orange Mound community. We provide jobs to women striving to overcome poverty by packaging and selling high-quality tea. While we sell more than 70 different teas, our most popular products are those included in our Memphis-themed line.

In partnership with the Orange Mound Arts Council (OMAC), we are requesting proposals from Black professional artists with an Orange Mound association to design the next Memphis-themed tea box. This document includes the details on how and when to submit proposals, which will culminate in the chosen artists having the design printed on the new box; receiving a cash prize of \$1,000; and being featured on the side of the new box. Additionally, we expect to receive substantial media attention.

Questions can be directed to Mike Carpenter (mike.carpenter@shopmycupoftea.com.)

Submission Requirements

Eligibility: Proposals may be received from artists who meet the following requirements:

- Black or African American;
- Receive a substantial portion of their income from selling artwork or teaching art;
- Have a meaningful connection to Orange Mound to include, but not be limited to, residing in OM, working in OM, formerly a resident of OM, attend school in OM and volunteering in OM.

Dates: Proposals must be received by 11:59 PM, September 1st, 2021. After reviewing the proposals, My Cup of Tea in partnership with the Orange Mound Arts Council will select one artist with whom to contract for design of the new box. My Cup of Tea will provide feedback to the artist relative to the submitted proposal and the proposed concept for design.

Components of the Proposal: Proposing artists are asked to submit their portfolios electronically to www.shopmycupoftea.com/proposals preferably in PDF format and a resolution of at 300 DPI, but not to exceed 600 DPI. Additionally, artists are required to submit a concept description for the new box not to exceed 250 words.

Portfolio submissions should be in full color, unless some, or all, of the designs in the portfolio are intended to be in black and white, which should be noted. Portfolio submissions should not exceed 8.5" x 11". Submissions should not include or anticipate raised or 3-D-type artwork. The box will be printed flat and on a gloss finish. The artwork must be horizontal, not vertical, as the boxes are shelved horizontally.



Compensation

The selected artist will receive payment of \$1,000 upon acceptance of the new box design. The design will be printed on 500 tea boxes. A photo of the selected artist and an approximately 200-word biography will be printed on the side of the boxes that are sold throughout the Mid-South and across the country. The selected artist and design will be the subject or press releases and media advisories encouraging local media to feature the artist and the design.

Artists to Retain Ownership of Original Work

The compensation received by the artist is a licensing fee allowing My Cup of Tea to print the design on 500 boxes of tea and to use that design in promoting the sell of the tea. Ownership of the artwork will remain with the selected artist. If My Cup of Tea desire to print additional boxes, then the terms for extending the license will be negotiated with the artist.

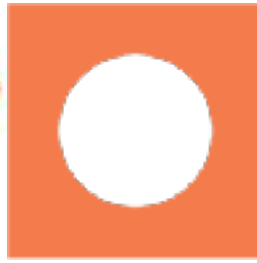
Examples

My Cup of Tea offers eight (8) Memphis-themed teas. They are Memphis After Dark (Chocolate Mint), Memphis Meadow (Lemon Cream), Blue Suede Shoes (Organic Wild Blueberry), Riverboat Queen (Strawberry Green), Orange Mound Peach Peach (Peach and Apricot), Bluff City Chai (Traditional Chai), 901 of A Kind (Coconut Almond) and Memphis Medley (Sampler box of other seven flavors). All of these teas come in a pyramid sachet, rather than a traditional bag. For the new Memphis-themed tea, we will be using Goji Berry Pomegranate Blueberry, which is a green tea.

Each box contains 20 pyramid sachets. The finished dimensions of the box are 5.5” L x 3.5” W x 3.5” D. Examples of all 8 boxes are below:

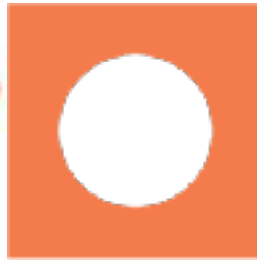


My Cup
of Tea



ORANGE
MOUND
ARTS
COUNCIL





ORANGE
MOUND
ARTS
COUNCIL

This panel will include the photo and biography of the winning artist.



For more information about My Cup of Tea, please visit our website at www.shopmycupoftea.com or visit us in person at 3028 Carnes in Orange Mound.

Background of My Cup Tea



Vision

My Cup of Tea desires to be a thriving, sustainable enterprise responsive to the expressed needs of the community we serve. We will strive to provide living wage jobs and reliable income for hundreds of Orange Mound families to God's glory and through the power of Jesus Christ.

Mission

Our mission is to build lasting cross-cultural relationships with the women of Orange Mound and provide meaningful employment, job skills and resources to help guide them out of poverty.

The Need

Orange Mound is the oldest community in our country established and constructed by African Americans. For many years, Orange Mound was a thriving, middle-income community founded by Black professionals and fortified with black-owned businesses. But in the 80's and 90's, Orange Mound was ravaged by violent crime, poverty, and plummeting property values.

The median income today is \$21,698, but 35% earn \$15,000 or less. Fifty-five percent of the community is female. Forty percent of female-led households live in poverty. Thirty-six percent of households with children are led by single mothers. Anecdotally, we know that many of these female heads of households provide for children, grandchildren, or other extended family members. Educational attainment is elusive as well with 40% of those 25 or older lacking a high school diploma.

Despite the dire circumstances of the community and most who live there, significant, leverageable assets exist. Community pride is prevalent, even among those who have moved, but have roots there. Orange Mound boasts a creative legacy in the arts and music spurring community-based efforts to promote the works and their artists. Orange Mound's addition to the Memphis Heritage Trail has the potential to raise the profile of the community with people both in and outside of the Memphis metro area. While not obvious because of a high vacancy rate, Orange Mound has a legacy of home and property ownership that is a primary focus of resident-led nonprofits like JUICE Orange Mound. Christ Community Health Services is a community anchor providing a broad range of health care services to the community. Orange Mound is a place of interest for local corporations like First Horizon, local and national philanthropic organizations and most recently a new crop of policy makers concerned about low property values and decreasing population.

What remains starkly absent from the community landscape, especially for the female majority, are jobs with livable wages, training and skills development and opportunities for relationships that transcend race and economics. This is how My Cup of Tea aims to help.



Our Story

In 2015, Rick and Carey Moore purchased My Cup of Tea, which was a small for-profit tea business. They believed that as a social enterprise MCOT could provide skills, good-paying jobs, cross-cultural relationships, and a step toward racial reconciliation in our community.

Carey and Rick converted My Cup of Tea to a nonprofit and renovated a Victorian-style home at Carnes and Semmes to serve as a women's resource house and the home of the tea company. The house was renovated by Orange Mound-based contractors, and maintenance and upgrades are performed by local craftspeople whenever possible.

The House is the place where women learn about My Cup of Tea. Women needing work and a new start are referred to the House from neighbors, other employees and community partners. There they experience a loving, welcoming environment - a place safe from judgement and the struggles of daily life.

At the House, women can voluntarily participate in daily bible study and prayer. My Cup of Tea strives to promote racial reconciliation bringing together black and white women from disparate backgrounds.

They listen to one another, share their struggles, work side-by-side and pray for each other. My Cup of Tea is served by about 50 volunteers annually. Authentic relationships are grown at the House.

Women who want to pursue the opportunities available through My Cup of Tea come on board as interns and agree to pass a drug test. They start by participating in a program that begins with teaching basic job skills known as *Work Life*-a curriculum also used by organizations like Advance Memphis. Once *Work Life* is completed, participants receive financial literacy training known as *Faith and Finance* and progress to the *Tea Life* training. The *Tea Life* training explores how and where tea is grown, the various varieties, how it is packaged, how to best brew certain kinds of tea, its wellness properties and even the history of tea.

Those that successfully complete the *Tea Life* course complete their paid internship and are offered part-time employment with MCOT as tea packagers. Top wages are \$15 per hour for supervisors who began as packagers and worked their way into managerial positions. In addition to perfecting their packaging abilities, employees are taught to sell, which includes regular participation in the Curb Market, the Memphis Farmer's Market among others. MCOT volunteers and staff also work with them to improve literacy and prepare them to eventually leave MCOT for a full-time, higher-paying opportunity. MCOT is proud to say that some of the staff have successfully made that transition, but many have asked to continue working at the House in a safe and peaceful environment. Others, with start-up support, are engaged in micro-enterprises that supplement their incomes.



My Cup of Tea's 5-year journey includes these accomplishments:

- Employed and interned 40 Orange Mound women impacting over 300 children, grandchildren and immediate family.
- Two employees purchased their first homes in 2020. One is Orange Mound and the other on the edge of Orange Mound.
- Provided all employees daily lunch, uniforms at no cost, personal care items as needed, individual vegetable gardens, Christmas bonuses, food boxes as needed, one-on-one mentoring, cooking classes, use of laundry facilities and clothing.
- Provided \$3,000 per year in emergency funding for unmet and unexpected needs of our employees.
- Ensured every employee visited a primary care physician and dentist for exams and when necessary additional treatment.
- Launched 5 new Orange Mound entrepreneurs in woodworking, sewing, monogramming, furniture refurbishing and a wig shop providing supplies, equipment and a location from which to operate.
- Increased sales of tea and other products, which fund the social enterprise and allow more hiring, by 105% since 2017.
- Increased number of locations stocking MCOT products to 25 across the region.
- Chosen by Google as one of 58 businesses/nonprofits nationwide to be featured in the annual economic development report.