

[Art Acquisitions by Application](#)

[Indigenous arts](#)

[Visual arts & new media](#)

[Individual](#)

This program provides support for individual Alberta artists or an ensemble of artists through the purchase of their artwork as a permanent part of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts (AFA) Art Collection.

Deadline information

April 1, 2026

Who can apply

The AFA celebrates and supports diversity and is committed to creating equitable, inclusive, and accessible programs for all, free of barriers and discrimination. We recognize the unique contributions all artists make towards our community, and encourage applicants representing diverse communities including Indigenous peoples, racialized communities, women, people with disabilities, and the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

This program will only consider submitted artwork by Alberta artists who meet the three mandatory criteria for CORE artists as described in the [AFA's Collections Development Plan](#).

Individual eligibility criteria

To be eligible for this acquisitions program, you must be a resident of Alberta. This means you:

- are a Canadian citizen, permanent resident, or Protected Person with an open work or study permit from inside Canada
- have had your primary residence in Alberta for at least one full year before applying

Current applicants to AFA grant programs and recipients of past AFA grants and awards are eligible to apply to the Art Acquisition by Application Program each

deadline providing they are in good standing with the AFA and meet the program eligibility requirements.

Ensembles are eligible if they are made up of members who meet the individual criteria.

Art training programs

To be eligible for this acquisitions program, you cannot be currently enrolled in a formal art-training program. This means a minimum of one full calendar year must pass between graduation from any formal art-training study and application to the program.

- Artist residencies and PHD programs are eligible if they are self-directed and do not have a formal art-training component

Galleries/Agents

Submission from a gallery/agent will only be eligible if the artist meets all eligibility requirements and has signed a [Designation for Submission by a Commercial Gallery, Organization or Artist Agent form](#).

Ineligible applicants

- Incorporated production companies are not eligible to apply
- Sole proprietorships must apply as an gallery/agent classification and the sole owner must complete the above Designation form

Applicants may be asked for additional information to determine eligibility, or any other program requirements when applicable.

What does this funding support?

Through this opportunity, you may apply to have your artworks purchased to become part of the AFA's permanent Art Collection. [View artwork](#) currently included in the AFA Art Collection.

The AFA acquires artwork at fair market value. Fair market value is established by the record of sales of the artwork of the specific artist and comparable artwork by other artists who are peers working in similar media.

Artworks in one or more of the following categories are eligible for submission:

- drawing
- painting
- sculpture
- printmaking (excluding reproductions)
- fibre art
- ceramics
- photography
- glass
- mixed media
- new media (time-based media, electronic arts, audiovisual art)

Eligible artworks must be original works of art and physically available for viewing at the Capital Arts building in Edmonton, should the program expert panel request to see them. Exceptions for large works may be considered on a case-by-case basis. Artworks must be clean and in good physical condition.

- please note the expert panel process can take up to four months to complete following the deadline.

Eligible submissions

Artworks must have been completed within the last five years (calculated from the program deadline)

The AFA will consider a maximum of five artworks per artist. Please note that all artworks must be included in the same application.

If an artwork is comprised of more than one part/component where the individual parts/components can also be sold separately, it must be submitted as one artwork with one purchase value placed on it or five artworks must be selected from the whole, each submitted with an individual price.

Time based media artworks should be independently produced where the artist maintains ownership and creative control of the artwork. Artworks should be intended for a non-commercial, non-industry audience. Time-based media artworks that require specialized equipment must be provided as part of the submission. This requirement should be taken into account when pricing the work.

Only one application per artist can be submitted:

- if two applications are submitted for the same artist (for example, one from a gallery and one from an individual), the application received first is the only one which will be considered

Ineligible projects

Artworks deemed to be damaged or with inherent vice will be removed from adjudication. This includes, but is not limited to artworks with the following concerns:

- flaking or chipped paint, ceramics, or other materials
- curling, faded, ripped or otherwise damaged artworks
- artworks with surface scratches or abrasions
- artworks containing unstable materials that are not archival quality and are known to deteriorate over time
- artworks that are soiled and require surface cleaning
- artworks with warped or unstable stretchers

Photographs or prints glued or dry-mounted to aluminum, foamcore or any other substrate are not eligible for submission.

Frames, matting and mounting materials that are not archival should not be submitted.

The AFA will not consider artwork produced during workshops or seminars, during the time of formal art-training study, or resulting from art courses involving formal instruction.

Applied arts such as gaming, architecture, interior design, commercial photography, graphic arts and design and/or fashion design are not eligible for submission.

New media works produced for commercial purposes are not eligible.

Published books (photography or artwork images) are not eligible for submission.

How to apply

We only accept applications through the Grant Administration Tracking and Evaluation (GATE) Front Office online application system. We must receive your

online application through GATE Front Office no later than 11:59 pm Mountain Time on the deadline date, unless the deadline falls on a statutory holiday or a weekend when it will be extended until the next working day. Please give the system time to process your application so that the AFA receives notification of your submission before the deadline falls.

GATE username registration

First-time applicants will require a GATE Front Office username and password. Email us at registrationafa@gov.ab.ca to get your login information at least five business days prior to the application deadline. Please include:

1. the contact name of the individual responsible for preparing your application
2. the legal name of your organization (for those who are submitting via the artist's gallery/agent)
3. the contact person's email address

The username and password will be sent to the person at the email address provided.

What to include in your application

For detailed step-by-step instructions, please download the GATE Front Office user guide for this funding opportunity:

- download an Art Acquisition by Application-specific [GATE Front Office user guide](#)
- [watch a short video](#) that shows how to apply for this program

GATE Front Office online forms

- legal name and confirmation of the applicant status (minor/Albertan)
- contact information: current, complete contact information for the primary applicant (individual or gallery contact)
- applicant contact information: street and mailing address for the primary applicant or gallery
- general information: confirmation of applicant classification (artist or gallery/agent)
- a completed applicant agreement including the e-signature of the primary applicant

- artwork submission list including: artist name, artwork title, date, price, size and an artistic statement about the piece, and its exhibition history (if applicable)
 - for new media or time-based media artworks, a Vimeo or other web link to the complete work (with password provided) should be included with the artist statement

Attachments

The GATE Front Office attachment section indicates that not all attachments are required for submission. This is because they are only required for certain types of projects. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all attachments noted in the guidelines are submitted with their application. Wherever possible, support material should be uploaded as an attachment into GATE Front Office (up to 4 MB).

- an artistic resume of no more than four pages, with current mailing address which outlines any past exhibitions, achievements, teaching experience and/or formal education as applicable
 - resumes will be used to determine CORE artist eligibility
 - galleries applying on behalf of an artist must ensure that the artist's current address is included on the resume

Images must be submitted and labelled as follows:

- when entering **a single image of a single artwork** into the database, each image must be labelled with the artists' name, title of the work and numbered as follows to ensure that the correct image corresponds with the artwork
 - 1_Lastname_title
 - 2_Lastname_title, etc.
- when entering **multiple images of a single artwork**, each image should be labeled and numbered as follows
 - 1a_Lastname_title
 - 1b_Lastname_title, etc.
- mislabeled images will not be accepted. Do not title files image 1, image 2, etc.
- the AFA will not accept visual representations of artworks that do not match the artwork title, medium, size, and date associated with the submission
 - for new media or video artworks, image stills can be used to represent the work

All video and audio files must be Windows compatible, MP3 and MP4 files are preferred.

If your support material is too large to submit, please mail a hard copy CD or USB to 10708 - 105 Ave, Edmonton, AB, T5H 0A1. Please include your first name, last name and project number on the CD or USB.

Supplementary material sent by mail must be postmarked no later than 11:59 p.m. Mountain Time of the deadline date, unless the deadline falls on a statutory holiday or a weekend when it will be extended until the next working day.

Applicants may be asked for additional information.

How will my application be assessed?

Department staff provides consultative and administrative services to the AFA. They will convene an expert panel to assess all applications according to artistic merit and make recommendations to the AFA Board.

The expert panel process involves a three-stage process:

Stage 1

The expert panel reviews all eligible artworks and selects artworks to be viewed in person at the Stage 2 & 3 adjudication.

Assessment of artworks are based on the following criteria:

- strong elements of principals and design
- strong idea/concept
- excellent technique/craftsmanship
- represents a medium, practice or concept that is cutting edge, new, and/or emerging
- challenges and extends the medium
- importance in terms of the artist's overall exhibition record/achievement
- importance in terms of the artist's overall career
- whether the artwork has been created in celebration of, or to mark important events or anniversaries within the visual arts community and/or the province
- whether the artwork forms an integral piece in a series or composite work

- whether the work is a strong example of the artist's work from a particular period
- whether the work reflects the pinnacle of a transition or paradigm shift in an artist's practice
- in relation to artworks already held in the AFA collection

Department staff notify successful applicants for second stage expert panel adjudication. Artists must arrange for their artworks to be delivered to one of two depot locations (in Edmonton or Calgary), from where Arts Branch staff will collect them. Artworks are reviewed in Edmonton. Artists and Galleries are responsible for ensuring artworks are adequately wrapped for transport to depot to ensure artworks' safety.

Stage 2

Department staff review the shortlisted artworks to ensure works are in accord with the Collections Development Plan, including;

- assessment for potential conservation, structural, and/or maintenance issues
- evaluation of the work's importance in the Alberta artist's oeuvre
- consideration of whether the artwork fills a gap of the artist's works already included in the AFA Art Collection
- consideration of whether the artwork fills a gap in medium and would broaden the representation of that medium in the AFA Collection
- consideration of whether the artwork fills a gap in genre and would broaden the representation of that genre in the AFA Collection

Stage 3

The expert panel members view and review the shortlisted artwork in a gallery setting. Artworks are assessed again and selected artworks are prioritized for purchase, based on the criteria from Stage 1.

Proof of fair market value may be required from artists selected for the Stage 3 expert panel.

Artworks not selected for purchase are returned to artists at a second depot in Edmonton and Calgary.

All expert panel recommendations are reviewed by the AFA and all decisions are final.

When will I hear?

Artists whose artworks are not requested for Stage 2 will be notified within three months of the application deadline. All applicants will be notified in writing of the result of their applications within six months of the application deadline.

We gather general comments about the applications and [share them on the Adjudication page](#). The expert panel does not record specific comments about individual applications.

Exhibition requirements for second stage adjudication artworks

If artworks called in to the second stage adjudication are booked for an upcoming exhibition, [please contact us](#) and let us know as soon as possible.

An exhibition loan, according to the [AFA's loan request deadlines](#), will need to be arranged if the work is purchased by the AFA.

Conditions

Before an artwork is purchased, the artist/copyright owner of the artwork(s) must complete, sign and upload an Reproduction/Exhibition Agreement, a fully completed Acquisition Data Sheet, and an invoice through the GATE Front Office system.

- forms and templates for these documents are available from program staff
- the AFA will accept electronic signatures (e.g., Adobe e-signature) on the Acquisition Data Sheet

Artworks selected for purchase are evaluated for conservation concerns before acceptance into the AFA Art Collection. Artworks must be in good condition and free from inherent vice.

For new media or time-based media artworks, the following will be required to complete the purchase:

- submission of an uncompressed or lossless (preservation) master copy of the work, labelled with the title of the work, how the drive is formatted (Mac, NTFS)

(Windows), or Linux), and the file format (.AVI, .MOV, .WMV, etc.) on a external (USB or Firewire powered) hard drive

- submission of a high quality, lossless, unencrypted exhibition copy of the work on a USB zip drive or external (USB powered) hard drive, suitable for playback in a Windows / PC environment, labelled with the title of the work and the file format (.AVI, .MOV, .WMV, etc.)
- submission of an access copy of the work on a CD ROM or DVD suitable for playback in a Windows / PC environment

HD video should not be anamorphic and should be in resolutions of either 1920 x 1080 or 1280 x 720 with square pixel aspect ratios. Artists working in PAL environments must also provide an NTSC version.

Acceptable formats for digital video works are:

- Audio Video Interleaved Format (AVI) (Codecs- Uncompressed 4:2:2)
- QuickTime file format (MOV) (Codecs- Uncompressed 4:2:2)
- Windows Media Video 9 File Format (WMV) (Codecs-VC1)
- MPEG 4 (Codecs- H.264)
- MPEG-2 Video (MPEG 2)
- Material Exchange Format (MXF) (codecs- J2K losslessly compressed)

Reporting

Art Acquisition by Application does not require a final report.

Helpful resources

Resources for using the GATE Front Office system:

- [download the user guide](#)
- [watch a short video](#)

Visit the [Help and Resources section](#) of our website to:

- read application tips for individual artists that will help you write a stronger application
- find tips for developing digital images to attach to your grant application

Galleries/agents submitting applications must include a signed [Designation for Submission by a Commercial Gallery, Organization or Artist Agent form](#).

Art acquisition recommendations are made by Expert Panels. Their comments can be useful tips to help you improve your application.

- [review general comments](#) from the Expert Panel from the previous application deadline.

Should you wish to receive payment through direct deposit, please use the Direct Deposit form:

- [direct deposit form](#)

Successful applications will result in artworks being acquired into the AFA Art Collection.

- [view artwork currently included in the AFA Art Collection](#).

The AFA recognizes many artists encounter barriers to application and reporting procedures.

- [learn about the AFA's Accessibility Program](#)

[Apply](#)

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