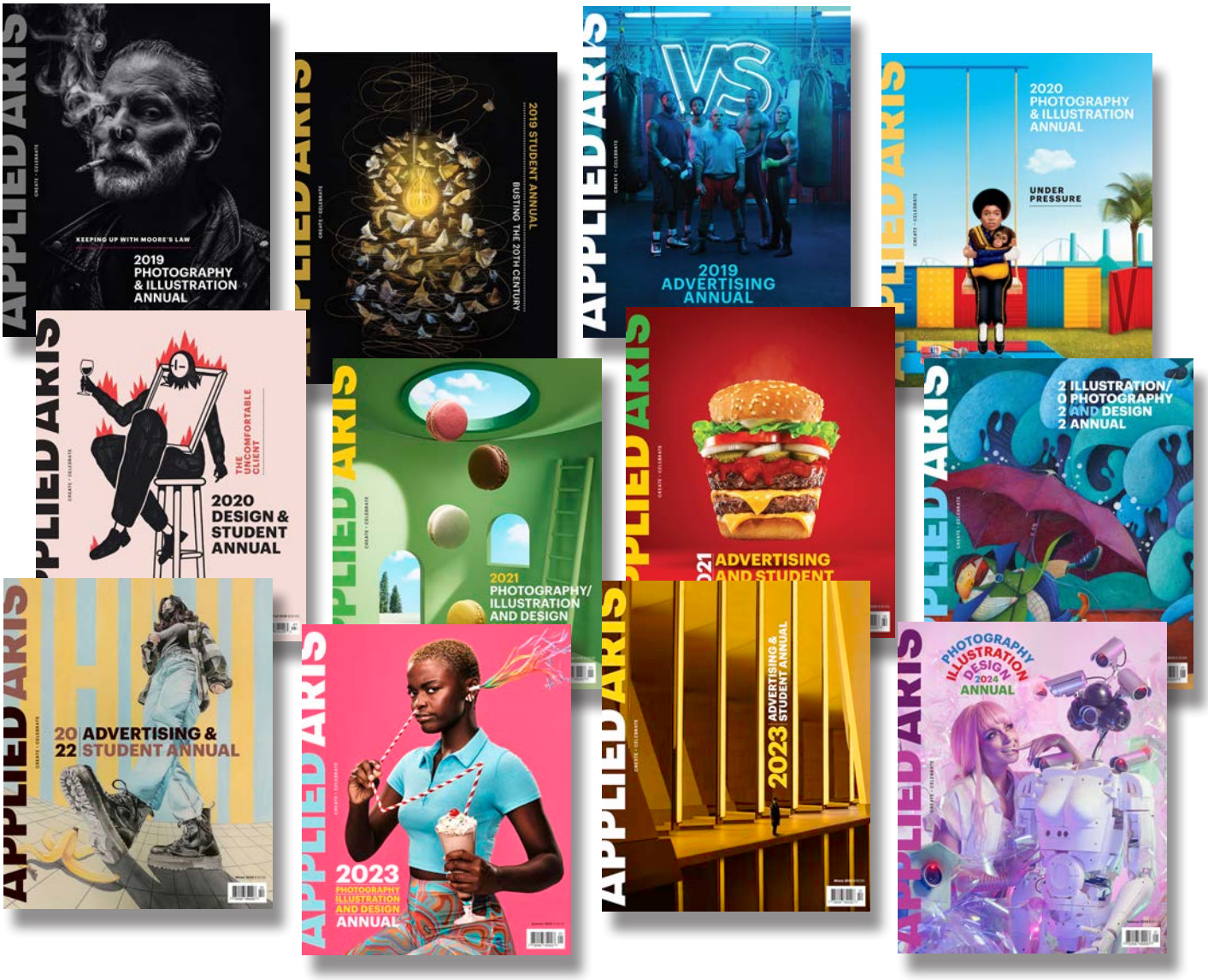
APPLIED ARTS

2026 AWARDS CALL FOR ENTRY GUIDE

YOUR CREATIVITY, CELEBRATED.
YOUR WORK, PUBLISHED.
YOUR TALENT, RESPECTED.

Version No. 1, November 2025

Celebrating Creativity.



WHY ENTER

The Applied Arts celebrate creativity in visual communications. Since 1992, we've helped advertising agencies, design firms, photographers, illustrators, and emerging artists gain industry-wide exposure—building careers, collaborations, and community across Canada and beyond.

Entries are judged by an internationally recognized jury of professionals who are actively working in advertising and design.

WINNER RECOGNITION

- Featured in the corresponding **Applied Arts Awards Annua**l, mailed to all winners.
- Permanent presence in the online **Winners Gallery**.
- Official **Awards badge** for your site, portfolio, or marketing.
- Formal **certificate** of achievement.
- Industry recognition that elevates your professional reputation.

COMPETITIONS & ELIGIBILITY

There are four (4) awards competitions open to international creative professionals and enthusiasts, including both published, unpublished and personal work. Applied Arts offers a stand-alone competition for Students, see below for eligibility for the Student Awards.

ELIGIBLITY PERIODS

- **ILLUSTRATION AWARDS |** February 2025 – February 2026
- **PHOTOGRAPHY AWARDS |** February 2025 – February 2026
- **DESIGN AWARDS |** March 2025 – March 2026
- **ADVERTISING AWARDS |** July 2025 – July 2026
- **STUDENT AWARDS |** Open to current secondary and post-secondary students or recent graduates (graduated during the 2025/26 academic year). Work completed either as a school requirement or independently (personal work) during any year of your schooling is eligible (but not work submitted previously). Students are **ONLY ELIGIBLE** to enter the Student Awards competition, where work is judged alongside your peers at a similar level of experience.

OPPORTUNITIES AT EVERY STAGE

- **SMALL-COMMUNITY/BUSINESS PROFESSIONALS:** Exclusively for **CANADIAN** creators in smaller markets or single-establishments. **Small Community** categories weigh local resources and budgets during judging.

- **YOUNG PROFESSIONALS:** Explore **Young Blood** categories—open to entrants with under five years of professional experience in advertising or design, and under three years for Photography and Illustration.

- **STUDENTS:** If you're currently in secondary, post-secondary or graduate studies, you're only eligible for the Student Awards, where entries are judged alongside peers at a similar level.

KEY DEADLINES

COMPETITION	LAUNCH	DEADLINE	RESULTS NOTIFICATION	AWARDS ANNUAL
PHOTOGRAPHY	November 24, 2025	January 30, 2026	March 4, 2026	**SUMMER ISSUE:** July 2026
ILLUSTRATION	November 24, 2025	January 30, 2026	March 4, 2026	**SUMMER ISSUE:** July 2026
DESIGN	November 24, 2025	March 13, 2026	April 22, 2026	**SUMMER ISSUE:** July 2026
STUDENT	November 24, 2025	May 22, 2026	June 24, 2026	**WINTER ISSUE:** November 2026
ADVERTISING	May 24, 2026	July 24, 2026	Auguxt 26, 2026	**WINTER ISSUE:** November 2026

JUDGING PROCESS

Entries are judged digitally by award-winning creatives working in Canada and beyond.

- **Each entry is evaluated indpendently** on creative merit, technical excellence, and suitability for end use in the category it was submitted to.
- **Judges score independently—**no ranking, no quotas. All entries above the cut-off score are declared winners.
- **Student, Young Blood and small community/ business entries** are judged with experience and available resources in mind.

ENTRY MATERIAL GUIDELINES

- **Format:** Digital only. No hard copies.
- **Stills:** PDF*, JPG, PNG, or GIF | 8 in (2,400 px) longest side | 300 DPI | RGB | Max 5 MB.
- **Motion:** MP4 (max 80 MB) or URL (YouTube, Vimeo).
- **Multipage PDFs are recommended**, especially to show context or multiple views.
- **English translations required** for key text.
- **No entrant watermarks** (self-promo exempt).

RESTRICTIONS

- Password–protected sites are not allowed.
- MPEG and WMV file formats are not supported.
- File-sharing sites such as Dropbox, Google Drive WeTransfer, etc. are inadmissible.

MAIN ENTRY FILES

REQUIRED

Main Entry File(s) must clearly show the entry, ideally with no additional graphics in hi-res format.

SINGLE | A single unit - A single piece, such as a single image, illustration, poster or multipage unit (e.g. book/publication/brochure), a video. **Only one (1) material type can be uploaded.**

SERIES | 2-3 units (EXCEPTION: Photography & Illustration Awards – 2-5 images/illustrations) that relate to one another by topic or product. **A maximum of 3 material types can be uploaded.**

CAMPAIGN | Up to 9 elements/units (EXCEPTION: Student Awards – 6 pieces/file types) from an entire campaign or program to promote an event, brand, product, service or business. Upload a **maximum of 9 material types.**

SUPPORT FILES

Support Files help clarify your entry for judges. They **are not for publication** (unless noted) and **do not count** towards your main file limits. Only one **file or URL** may be uploaded.

REQUIRED

English translations for non-English entries must be included either as a Support File or in a multipage PDF as your Main Entry file.

PERMITTED

Brief descriptions: Optional, recommended if the use or intention is not obvious. Limit to 50 words in English (10-second intro for motion).
Case studies: Optional, ONLY as a support file. Limit 50 words in English or 45s for videos. **Note:** judges score the creative, not the outcomes.

NOT PERMITTED

Do not submit the same creative either as a file or URL if already added as the Main Entry File.
Do not add entrant-identifying watermarks on the main entry files, support files or URLs.

RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICES

Entries are judged fully online, here's how to help the judges:

- **Use a multipage PDF rather than individual multiple** files.
- **Curate your images carefully.** More is not better.
- **Provide context:** Show multiple views of 3D work, close-ups of detail, and contextual shots for experiential projects.
- **Include supporting material within a multipage PDF** as your Main Entry File when requested.
- **Check your entry on a smaller screen** to ensure legibility.

HOW TO ENTER

The Entry Form consists of five (5) steps. You can save your progress at any point.

- Start, stop, and edit at any time.
- Simple digital upload with clear material requirements.
- Save and reuse creative credits.
- Copy an entry into multiple categories or competitions.

ENTRY FORM

The Entry Form consists of five (5) steps. You will have the option to save your progress at any point.

LOG IN OR SIGN-UP
- Go to Appliedartsmag.com/myaccount.
- Click Awards Entries to start or review submissions.

STEP 1: ENTRY INFORMATION
Choose the Awards competition, sub-group, category, and add the entry title.

STEP 2: ENTRY MATERIALS
Upload all required digital files.
Follow the Entry Material Guidelines.

STEP 3: WINNERS' INFORMATION
For publication only, not for judging.

Enter the primary credit ("Winner") and optional details: phone, email, web, social handles, or URL for motion entries.

For teams, list one (1) name as "Winner" here; add others in Creative Credits.

Add a **500-character** project description (published with winning work).

STEP 4: CREATIVE CREDITS
List creatives and roles. Up to six roles printed in the Annual; all appear online.
- **For team entries** (Young Blood/Student), add additional winner names as the **Other** Winner so they're credited together.

STEP 5: CERTIFICATE INFORMATION
Provide the winning company/individual and/or client name to appear on the certificate.

One certificate will be given for each winning entry. Additional certificates can be ordered later.

FINALIZE & PAY
Click save to return to your dasboard to add or copy entries.

Payment completes the submission—entries are not officially submitted until payment is processed.

You may edit entries **up until payment**. After payment, only **limited edits** (e.g., Winners' Information) are allowed. Once results are released, there will be a 48-hour window to update the Winners' Information and creative credit role.

PAYMENT & REFUNDS
Fees: Entry fees vary by category. See the Categories Kit for current pricing.
Payment Options: Visa, MasterCard, and American Express (AmEx available for Canadian payments only), or PayPal. U.S. and international fees must be paid in U.S. dollars.
Special Circumstances: Cheques or direct deposits are accepted only with prior approval—email awards@appliedartsmag.com

NOTE FOR THE STUDENT AWARDS COMPETITION:
School codes are available for teachers who arrange for their school to pay for their students' entries. Students can complete the entry form individually and submit a school code as a form of payment. We will track entries and issue an invoice to the school.

Entries are non-refundable. If an entry is submitted to the same category, entrants will have the option to move the entry to another category or enter new work in its place.

Keep a record of your submissions.

WINNER RECOGNITION

Award recipients receive:

- **Publication** in the corresponding Applied Arts Awards Annual mailed to every winner.
- **Online Winners Gallery** permanent digital showcase.
- **Digital Winners' Badge** for websites and portfolios.
- **Official Certificate** printed recognition.
- **Industry Recognition** a respected credential to attract clients, employers, and collaborators.

Optional Add-Ons*

- **Extra certificates** for your team or client (with optional plaque mounting).
- **Additional copies** of the Awards Annual at a discounted rate.
- A personalized, engraved **Lucite AACE trophy** (3.5 × 3.5 × 3.5 in.).

CELEBRATED. PUBLISHED. RESPECTED. ENTER TODAY.

CONTACT US

Be sure to visit appliedartsmag.com/awards for information about each of the Award's competitions or answers to frequently asked questions.

For general awards information, category-related questions or technical issues, contact our Awards Manager at awards@appliedartsmag.com or call 416.510.0909 ext. 30.

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DISCLAIMER

Applied Arts reserves the right to amend these rules throughout the competition. Applied Arts assumes all entries are original and the property of the entrant, with all rights granted therein. Applied Arts reserves the right to publish or exhibit entries for our print or electronic formats or related promotions. Entries are non-refundable. Costs cover administration, processing, and the judging of the entry. Entries may be moved to a more suitable category if Applied Arts deem the category chosen unsuitable. All descriptions and credits are subject to be edited for length, clarity and grammar in accordance with the Applied Arts editorial style guide. A submission of entry acknowledges acceptance of these rules.