



2026/27 Application Guidelines MCAD–Jerome Foundation Fellowships for Early Career Artist

Administered by the Minneapolis College of Art and Design (MCAD)
www.mcad.edu/jerome

FELLOWSHIP OVERVIEW

This program, administered by the Minneapolis College of Art and Design (MCAD), is made possible by the generous support of Jerome Foundation. The goal of this fellowship program is to support early career visual artists in Minnesota, creating bold, innovative, and risk-taking new work that challenges conventional artistic forms.

Artists considered for this fellowship may work in a variety of visual art media, including both traditional and new media. This Fellowship supports visual artists, including but not limited to: painters, sculptors, drawers, printmakers, sequential/comic artists, public artists, social practice artists, conceptual, installation, graffiti, textile, ceramics, glass, bead, metal, paper, and photography and digital video or film (presented in an exhibition or installation context).

The MCAD–administered fellowship program uses an independent jury of three arts professionals to competitively award four fellowships. The fellowship runs from December 1, 2026–March 15, 2028 and includes:

- \$10,000 in unrestricted award funds.
- \$1,000 in professional development funds (reimbursement-based–receipts required). The funds may be used to purchase materials, cover production costs of artwork, and to supplement living or travel costs.
 - Awards/ professional development funds are subject to state and federal income tax guidelines.
- Three studio visits from professional critics (1 local curator, 1 catalogue writer, 1 national curator).
- An exhibition at the MCAD Gallery in January–March 2028.
- A catalog with a critical essay on each artist's work.
- The opportunity to partake in a public panel discussion.
- Access to MCAD's facilities (a link for detailed access info is available on the application site), library, and ½ off tuition for Continuing Education courses.

DEADLINES & KEY DATES

Application opens:

Friday, July 17, 2026

Deadline:

Friday, September 11, 2026 at **noon (CT)**

INFO SESSIONS

Application Overview

(with Fellowship Director, Keisha Williams)

Pre-recorded link available on Submittable.

Work Samples, Statements, and Application Strategies

(with 2025/26 MCAD–Jerome fellow Suriya SamKhuth and Fellowship Coordinator Melanie Pankau)

Pre-recorded link available on Submittable.

ONE-ON-ONE MEETINGS

Applicants are welcome to schedule one-on-one appointments (over the phone or Zoom) with fellowship staff to receive feedback on their application before submitting. Please call or email Keisha Williams, program director, or Melanie Pankau, fellowship coordinator, at 612.874.3667 or gallery@mcad.edu.

In order to provide cohesive feedback, applicants must email the fellowship staff their application materials (ten work samples, artist resume, artist statement, and fellowship goals statement) one day prior to their scheduled meeting.

Please note we will not be able to schedule one-on-one meetings the week prior to the application deadline (September 7–11).

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Please read carefully. Applicants who do not meet all of the following criteria and expectations will not be considered and should not apply. Age and formal training in a degree program are not factors in determining eligibility. Applications are reviewed by fellowship administrators to confirm eligibility prior to the selection process and reserve the right to contact applicants to notify of ineligibility or request clarification to submitted materials to better demonstrate eligibility. For a more in-depth look at Jerome Foundation's eligibility guidelines, please see: <https://www.jeromefdn.org/jerome-eligible-artists>.

- Artists that are in the early stages of their creative development *with at least 2 years but not more than 10 years* of generative experience, not including any exhibition opportunities provided through a school or college program.
 - **Beginning artists with less than two years of experience generating/creating their own original non-student artistic work.** The Foundation does not consider time spent in degree-granting programs as part of their 2–10 years of eligible practice. Artists must have a demonstrable track record of creating and sharing their own work as evidenced in their artist resume.
 - **Mid-career or established artists—by Jerome’s definition, artists or culture bearers with more than 10 years of experience creating and presenting their own original work—** even if they have not received recognition or have not been provided consistent development and production opportunities, commissions, awards, national or regional prizes for multiple projects, and/or other acclaim and commercial success.
 - **Artists who have received significant artistic recognition**, in the form of awards and prizes, and production, presentation, publication or distribution— even if they are within a 10-year timeframe of generative practice—may be too established to be considered early career and therefore *not eligible*. For example, artists who have received a MacArthur Fellowship would not be considered Jerome-eligible even if they are still in the 2–10-year time frame given the award’s significant resources.
- Artists must be able to provide evidence that they are an early career artist. An artist’s resume should reflect no more than ten years of experience (recognized through publicly sharing their work, grants, awards, residencies, fellowships, etc.) for creating their own original work (i.e. no earlier than 2016) and no less than two years of experience (i.e., dating back to at least 2024).
- Artists’ work must fall within current visual art practice. Artists considered for this Fellowship may work in a variety of visual art media, including both traditional and new media. The Fellowship is not intended for commercial artists, musicians, theatre artists, or others whose work is generally not presented in a visual art context.
- Generative artists who are currently creating new original work from concept to completion and have publicly presented/exhibited/published work in the discipline in which support is requested. The artist’s primary future career goals are to continue as a generative artist. Their work is not a remount, revival, or interpretation of previously existing material

- Demonstrable breaks in practice: The Foundation does not consider time spent in degree-granting programs—or other breaks such as for caregiving—as part of the period defining 2-10 years of eligible practice. Breaks from practice should be demonstrable periods (during which new original work is clearly not being created or presented) and should be considered on a case-by-case basis, including through one-on-one conversations with artists and review of their artist resumes and/or websites.
- No double-dipping: An artist *can* be a recipient of direct grants from Jerome Foundation—including the Jerome Hill Artist Fellowship, Jerome@Camargo, or a Filmmaker Mentorship or Film Production grant—and participate in a Jerome- supported arts organization program; however, an artist may not use Jerome- supported funds received through multiple opportunities for the same project costs.
- Artists who are legal residents of the state of Minnesota and have been residents for a least a year prior (since September 11, 2025) to the submission of an application. (Determined by voting and/or payment of taxes in the state. Applicant must also have a street mailing address within Minnesota to be eligible to apply.)
- Artists must reside in the state until the end of the Fellowship period.
- Artists living outside the Twin Cities metropolitan area who receive a MCAD–Jerome Foundation Fellowship must be willing to travel to the Twin Cities for Fellowship events, meetings with visiting critics, and other group meetings. Mileage and lodging for trips will be reimbursed.
- Artists must be willing to meet with visiting critics during the Fellowship period and accommodate their schedules to the critics' visits. This may include arranging for and transporting your artwork to a location in the Twin Cities for studio visits.
- Artists must be willing to participate in a Fellowship exhibition and related activities.
- **Applying as a Collaborative Team** While the Jerome Foundation Fellowship is traditionally awarded to single artists, we recognize that there are many contemporary artists who work as collaborative teams. If you are applying as a collaborative, make sure each artist involved meets the eligibility requirements. The images you submit should be of work created by the collaborative, not by the artists individually. However, the resume submitted should be one file including both the collaboration's exhibition history, as well as each artist's. Please do not use your names, rather, distinguish between the three resumes by using the titles, "Artists A and B," "Artist A," and "Artist B." In your statement, you should address why collaboration is integral to your work. Since the Fellowship is intended to further the existing practice of early career artists, it should be clear that your collaboration is already an established part of your work.

MCAD–Jerome Fellowships do NOT support:

- Students who are or will be at the time of application and during the grant period enrolled in degree-granting programs (including K-12, college, graduate or post graduate studies);
- Artists that are full-time tenured faculty at any college, university or institution of higher learning (or equivalent)

- Artists that have shown in major museums, art centers, art fairs, international biennales; and are represented by a prominent commercial gallery.
- Mid-career or established artists from fields other than visual arts will not be considered early career based on the decision to shift artistic direction. For example, a composer with a substantial career in music who is now moving into the realm of visual arts will not be considered early career for the purposes of this Fellowship.
- Artists who have been awarded a McKnight Visual Artist Fellowship or other McKnight Fellowship disciplines (for mid-career artists) or a previous recipient of the MCAD–Jerome Fellowship are not eligible for the MCAD–Jerome Early Career Artist Fellowship.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Per the Jerome Foundation, organizational grantees are required to screen for conflicts of interest among artists participating in the Fellowship program. These guidelines and requirements are intended to maximize access and to avoid actual and perceived bias in the selection of artist participants in Jerome-funded programs.

No conflict of interest—Applicant is NOT:

- MCAD executive leadership and board members, or fellowship administrators working directly with the fellowship program.
- Immediate family of MCAD executive leadership, board, or fellowship administrators.
- Jerome Foundation staff, board, or immediate family of the Foundation staff or board.
- Organization leadership or program staff directly involved in Jerome-funded programs or opportunities at other grantee organizations.
- Current MCAD faculty (full-time, part-time, contracted) at the time of application.

MCAD staff who do not work directly on any aspect of a Jerome-funded program may be eligible, provided they meet other artist eligibility criteria.

No Single Majority: To ensure the most diverse group of fellows possible, no more than 2 fellows from any MN-based higher education institution will be awarded per cycle. Educational affiliations must be included in your artist resume.

MCAD Affiliation: Per a Jerome Foundation ruling, artists with a relationship to MCAD should not represent a majority of Fellowship awardees in any given cycle—including alumni, past staff (full-time and part-time), and current eligible staff. For example, if there are four fellowship awards, no more than 2 may be awarded to MCAD-affiliated applicants. If you have questions about the definition of MCAD affiliation or if you fall under this judgment, please contact us at gallery@mcad.edu.

SELECTION PROCESS

Jury Panel:

Three jurors, one who is familiar with the visual arts in Minnesota and two who are not, select the fellows. These panelists are artists, curators, art critics, and educators with an appreciation for and knowledge of a wide spectrum of contemporary art practices. Panelists, insofar as possible, represent a diversity of age, ethnicity, gender, abilities, and geography.

MCAD fellowship staff does not participate in any part of the selection process.

Review Process and Selection Criteria:

Applicants are evaluated and selected according to these criteria:

- Compelling—offering distinctive vision and authentic voice;
- Deeply considered, imaginative, and executed with attention to craft and with technical proficiency, providing artistic experiences that communicate unique perspective/s, and invite viewers to question, discover, explore new ideas in new ways;
- Innovative and risk-taking—engaging, questioning, challenging, or re-imagining conventional artistic forms. Innovation and risk-taking are Jerome Foundation values that reflect our interest in supporting artists from diverse backgrounds and experiences who are expanding ways of working, asking questions, and inspiring new ways of imagining.
- No Single Majority and MCAD Affiliation (please see full definition on p. 4)

The panel will also be asked to consider the breadth of artistic practice among Minnesota artists, which can include a wide range of aesthetics and traditions that might be influenced by ethnicity, gender, abilities, and/or geography. (Please consider the selection criteria when choosing your work samples and composing your artist and fellowship goals statements.)

First Round: The jurors review all submissions in the form of digital images viewed on their personal computer monitors. They are asked to score each applicant 1 to 5. Their decisions are tabulated and the top 25-30 applicants with the highest numerical score move on to the next semifinal round.

Second Round: The jurors are asked review for a second time the applications of the semifinalists and provide some written comments. Then a conference call is held where the panelists discuss these top 25-30 applicants. Those 10 applicants receiving the greatest interest will be contacted to schedule studio visits.

Email notification will be sent to all applicants on Friday, October 30. One email will be sent to applicants who did not make it to the second round. A separate email will be sent to applicants who were semifinalists, letting them know that applicants making it to the second and final rounds can contact the Fellowship Staff to set up a time to discuss the jurors' comments. These phone conversations will happen after the announcement of the four Fellows (i.e., after December 1, 2026.)

Online Studio Visits for Finalists: In this final phase, the Fellowship Staff notifies the 10 artists identified for final review no later than Friday, October 30. Appointments are made for brief, 20-minute online studio visits via Zoom with the jury. **The dates for the studio visits will be Thursday, November 12 and Friday, November 13.**

Notification: Upon completion of the studio visits, the Fellowship Director will call the four Fellows and email the other finalists of the results. The Fellowship Staff will notify all applicants about the juror's final decision via email no later than Tuesday, November 24. Please do not call for results.

APPLICATION MATERIALS

Application link:

<https://mcad.submittable.com/submit>

1. Contact Information and Questionnaire Form

2. Proof of MN residency

- Applicant must have or maintain MN residency for at least one year prior to application deadline (since September 11, 2025). Please upload a copy of one of the following: MN driver's license (or MN identification card); a utility bill in the applicant's name; lease; or other supporting documents.

3. Ten Work Samples

- You must submit work samples in any combination of image, audio, video, and pdf formats. Review the guidelines for information on file types, sizes, lengths, and total number of work samples.
- You must submit no more than 10 files or the equivalent.

1 Work Sample is equivalent to:

- 1 minute of video (415 MB max)
- 1 still image (5 MB max)
- 1 page of PDF (5 MB max)
- 1 minute of audio (415 MB max)

For example, you can submit a single 10-minute video, or 10 images, or 10 pdf pages. Or you can submit a combination. For example, you can submit 2 minutes of a video, 5 pages from an artist book as a pdf, and 3 images—this equals 10 work samples. The total amount submitted must equal no more than 10, which may not necessarily be how many files you upload.

Recommendations based on previous juror feedback:

- *If you are submitting multiple bodies of work, please limit to 2-3 projects max.*
- *If you are submitting videos, juror attention wanes after 3 min.*

IMAGES

- Maximum of 10 images
- Images must be in JPEG format.
- Do not submit composite images (i.e. multiple views of the same work at different angles, multiple installation views, or a full view with a detail view in the same work sample) You can submit work that is a diptych or triptych.
- Individual files should not exceed 5 MB.
- Upload files in the order you would like them to be viewed. Each juror reviews applications individually, one image at a time, on a personal computer monitor.
- Label files this way: 1_title.jpg (For example, 1_Stars.jpg)
- Provide: title, year, medium, dimension (h x w x d) in inches.

Optional 100-word max. annotation describing the medium, context, or installation of a particular work. Info should provide the juror with a greater understanding of what they are viewing. Avoid interpreting the work for the jurors.

APPLICATION MATERIALS (cont.)

VIDEOS

Videos submissions are for artists using film, video, moving image, animation, sound as their main medium or as part of an installation, or paging through artist books.

PROCESS DOCUMENTATION VIDEOS, STUDIO or GALLERY WALK-THROUGHS, ARTIST INTERVIEWS ARE NOT ACCEPTED.

- Videos will be accepted as mp4, mov, avi, mpg, 3gp, flv, webm, wmv, mkv, or m4v files.
- Audio will be accepted as aac, aiff, flac, m4a, mp3, ogg, wav, wma files.
- Individual files should not exceed 415 MB
- Upload each video as one work sample and in the order you would like them to be viewed. Please leave ample time for the upload.
- Upload either a video clip or full video. If applicable, for full videos identify a start and end cue point per work sample for the panel to watch. Cued sections may equal up to 10 minutes total. (Example: #1 video is 3 min, #2 video is 2 min, #3 video is 1 min, #4 video is 2.5 min, #5 video is 1.5 min. totaling 10 min.)
- Provide: title, year, medium, duration. Indicate whether or not there is sound.
- Optional 100-word annotation describing the content, context, or site of a particular work. Info should provide the juror with a greater understanding of what they are viewing. Avoid interpreting the work for the jurors.

Because of the blind jury process, artist's name or credit listing must be removed from all video submissions.

PDF

For artists' work that involves text, artist books, graphic novels, comic/sequential works, book spreads, didactics, or texts that are unreadable in the images submitted.

- Maximum of 10 pages. (Example: one pdf is 6 pages of a graphic novel and second pdf is 4 pages from a comic book)
- Label file this way: 1_PDF.pdf; 2_PDF.pdf

4. Artist Resume

Artist Resume must clearly establish eligibility for the program by documenting an artist's artistic experiences, achievements, and credentials for easy reference by fellowship staff and panelists. Your resume must list all artistic recognition, including venues and dates of publicly shared works, grants, prizes, fellowships, awards, residencies, commissions, publications, screenings, performances, educational credits and graduation dates (where applicable), the artist has received to date.

- Please be honest in your resume. Do not add or omit experience to qualify as an early career artist. Applicants will be required to affirm the accuracy and completeness of their submitted resume.
- Label file this way: Resume.pdf
- DO NOT include your name, home or studio address, phone number or e-mail address on the resume.

APPLICATION MATERIALS (cont.)

Artist Resume (cont.)

- Information on preparing a professional artist resume is available at the College Art Association web site: <http://www.collegeart.org/standards-and-guidelines/guidelines/resume>

5. Artist Statement

- Upload artist statement. (500 words max.)
- Label file this way: Artist_Statement.pdf
- DO NOT include your name, home/studio address, phone number, or email address.
- The artist statement should directly speak to the images you are submitting. It may also provide information about your background, the development or current direction of your work, or other information you would like to present to the panel.
- DO NOT use AI or ChatGPT to write your statement.

6. Fellowship Goals Statement

- Upload fellowship goals statement. (500 words max.)
- Label this way: Fellowship_Goals.pdf
- DO NOT include your name, home/studio address, phone number, or email address.
- The fellowship goals statement should describe what new work you plan to create during the fellowship year, and why this is a pivotal moment in your practice where this fellowship would make a difference. A budget is not required.
- DO NOT use AI or ChatGPT to write your fellowship goals statement.