SPECTOR
CRAFT PRIZE

The Spector Craft Prize for Emerging Artists 2026-2027
Rules of Entry

ABOUT THE SPECTOR CRAFT PRIZE FOR EMERGING ARTISTS

The Spector Craft Prize for Emerging Artists (the "Prize") was established in 2025 by Abigail Klem Spector and Warren Spector through the Spector Family Foundation to celebrate and support excellence in American craft. It is designed for artists who have built a strong foundation in their craft but are still early in their trajectory, at the stage when recognition, resources, and guidance can have an outsized impact on the direction of their work. Recipients are selected by an expert jury who evaluate each application on four criteria: artistic excellence, cultural significance, growth potential, and alignment with the Prize's mission.

Each year, the Prize supports five exceptional makers with studio practices of seven years or less, awarding each a $10,000 grant alongside professional development at a pivotal moment in their careers. Through these awards, the Prize aims to lift emerging voices into the national conversation around American craft, giving their work visibility across art institutions while offering the connections that sustain an artist's career over time. Recipients are celebrated at the annual Spector Craft Summit, where they network with collectors, curators, and leaders in the field.

The Spector Craft Prize recognizes that the future of American craft lies in the hands of the next generation of makers. The Emerging Artists Prize is a direct investment into these artists, ensuring American craft continues to evolve, innovate, and thrive for generations to come.

PRIZE BENEFITS

Up to five artists will be selected annually to receive comprehensive support, including:

- $10,000 financial award to support artistic practice
- Participation in the Spector Craft Summit, including workshops, seminars, and networking sessions
- Travel and accommodation costs covered for the Spector Craft Summit and awards ceremony
- Recognition and potential catalogue opportunity
- Mentorship opportunities with established craft artists and curators
- Peer networking sessions with fellow emerging artists
- Integration into the vital network of American craft professionals

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

All applicants must:

- Be within the first 7 years of commencing their professional craft practice
- Be residents or citizens of the U.S.*
- Be 21 years of age or older at time of application
- Submit high-resolution images of an artistic work created within the last 3 years (further detail below)
- Be the sole creator of the submitted work. If assistants, fabricators, or industrial processes were involved, the applicant must clearly describe their own role in the making. Partnership duos (limited to two people) are permitted, provided each collaborator clearly identifies their contribution in the application. Partnership duos will be awarded as a single artist for purposes of the Prize.
- Self-identify as an "emerging" craft artist who would benefit from the Spector Prize program

Provided they meet the requirements above, eligible artists may include those who:

- Are in their final year or have recently graduated from any undergraduate program (BA, BFA, etc.)
- Are currently in or have recently graduated from any graduate program (MA, MFA, PhD, etc.)
- Have completed non-accredited or alternative craft learning programs
- Have developed their practice independently or are self-taught
- Have had a break from their practice but are still within 7 years of commencing
- Came to craft practice later in life, but are still within 7 years of commencing

Applicants whose professional artistic careers began more than seven years ago may still be eligible if they have recently transitioned into craft from another discipline or experienced a significant interruption in their practice. Applicants should clearly explain these circumstances in the Eligibility Confirmation section of their application.

*If selected, applicants must be able to provide a complete and accurate IRS Form W-9 for tax reporting purposes.

CRAFT DISCIPLINES

The Spector Craft Prize celebrates excellence across a broad spectrum of craft disciplines that demonstrate technical mastery and innovation. Eligible disciplines include, but are not limited to: ceramics, glass, woodworking, textiles, metalwork, paper arts, basketry, and more. All works must demonstrate mastery of fundamental techniques while pushing boundaries.

Applicants may reapply each cycle with a new, original work, provided they meet all eligibility requirements. A recipient of the Prize is no longer eligible to apply.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

All submitted work must:

- Be owned exclusively by the Applicant at the time of submission and at all times since creation. After submission, Applicants may sell or transfer ownership of submitted work, provided that any such sale or transfer remains subject to the grant of rights set forth in the Usage Rights below.
- Have been created within the last 3 years
- Demonstrate artistic intent and technical excellence

Each applicant may submit only one work or series. Previously submitted work, with or without alterations, will not be accepted.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applications must be submitted through the Foundation's online portal at www.spectorcraftprize.org from November 1, 2026, to February 15, 2027.

Required submissions include:

- A completed application
- A biographical summary (150 words maximum)
- Four short essay questions
    - Statement of Practice (200 words maximum)
    - Process of Submitted Work (100 words maximum)
    - Significance of Submitted Work (100 words maximum)
    - Why the Spector Craft Prize? (125 words maximum)
- Two to five high-resolution images of submitted work (with scale reference and neutral background)
- A copy of government-issued photo identification

Optional submission:

- 90-second video submission
- Up to 5 career portfolio images

Image specifications:

- Format: JPEG or PNG
- Minimum size: 800 x 600 px
- Maximum file size: 2 MB each
- White or neutral background required
- At least one image must include scale reference (a ruler, measuring tape, or any other clear indicator of scale placed next to or near your work or edited next to an image of your work)

SELECTION PROCESS

Spector Craft Prize for Emerging Artists Jury:

All eligible applications are reviewed by curatorial fellows with expertise in contemporary craft, who select a group of artists to advance to the Spector Craft Prize for Emerging Artists Jury. The jury, composed of distinguished curators, artists, scholars and leaders in the field, reviews these applications and selects five recipients based on artistic excellence, cultural significance, growth potential, and mission alignment.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Artistic Excellence
  We look for a clear demonstration of technical skill and artistic vision, with the hand of the artist evident in the work.
- Cultural Significance
  We look for a unique artistic perspective that contributes to the evolving landscape of American craft, drawing on community, place, personal experience, or through innovative approaches to materials, techniques, and processes, with an intentional engagement with tradition.
- Growth Potential
  We look for artists with a strong foundation whose practice continues to develop, who have not yet received widespread recognition, and whose careers could be meaningfully advanced by the Prize at this moment.
- Mission Alignment
  We look for artists whose work brings fresh perspectives and expands the possibilities of craft, combining tradition and innovation in ways that help shape what American craft means today.

TIMELINE

- November 1, 2026: Application period opens
- December 9, 2026 at 7:00PM EST: Information session
- January 23, 2027 at 3:00PM EST: Information session
- February 15, 2027: Application period closes
- February–May 2027: Jury deliberations
- July 2027: Final selection; applicants notified by email
- September 2027: Public announcement
- November 2027: Spector Craft Summit

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND USAGE RIGHTS

Artist Declarations: By submitting an application, applicants represent that their work is original and does not infringe on third-party intellectual property rights. Applicants further represent that they have maintained exclusive ownership of the work since creation and guarantee accuracy of all submitted information.

Usage Rights: By submitting an application, the applicant hereby grants the Spector Family Foundation a perpetual, irrevocable, nonexclusive, royalty-free license to reproduce and display images of their work for promotional purposes related to the Prize, the Spector Craft Summit, and the related general activities of the Foundation, including without limitation, catalogue publication, website display, social media, and press materials. This license is granted upon submission, shall survive any subsequent sale, transfer, or other disposition of the submitted work, and does not affect the artist's continued ownership and copyright in the work, provided that no transfer may impair the license granted to the Foundation.

Selected artists may be asked to participate in one or more promotional videos or clips in connection with the Prize. Accordingly, selected artists grant the Foundation permission for their name, likeness, image, or voice to be recorded, used, and distributed for promotional purposes related to the Prize, the Spector Craft Summit, and the general related activities of the Foundation, including without limitation, website display, social media, and press materials.

Attribution: The Spector Family Foundation will credit selected artists in all usage of their work and will refer to applicants in professional terms in all communications related to the Prize.

PROGRAM COMMITMENT

Selected artists agree to:

- Use the $10,000 Prize proceeds to support their artistic practice
- Attend the Spector Craft Summit and awards ceremony
- Participate in promotional activities related to the Prize
- Engage professionally in mentorship and networking opportunities
- Represent the Prize and the Spector Family Foundation in positive terms
- Report to the Spector Family Foundation in accordance with IRS requirements
- Provide a complete and accurate IRS Form W-9 to the Foundation for tax reporting purposes

Travel and accommodation costs for required program activities will be covered by the Spector Family Foundation.

GENERAL TERMS

Modification of Rules: The Spector Family Foundation reserves the right, at any time and without prior notice, to modify these rules, extend deadlines, or suspend or terminate the Prize in case of unforeseen circumstances. Any changes will be published on the Prize website, and applicants may withdraw if they disagree with modifications.

Publicity: Selected artists agree that they shall not make any public announcement, press release, or any other communication concerning the Prize or the Spector Family Foundation without the Spector Family Foundation's prior written consent. The Spector Family Foundation will be authorized to use the name, biography, and likeness of the selected artists in any communication and/or promotional material released to promote the Prize, the Spector Craft Summit, or the related general activities of the Foundation.

Disqualification: Failure to meet eligibility requirements, submission of false information, or violation of these rules, each as determined by the Foundation in its sole discretion, may result in disqualification.

Final Decisions: All decisions regarding selection are final and not subject to appeal. Selection panel deliberations remain confidential.

Governing Law: These rules are governed by the laws of the State of New York, United States.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions about the application process:

View our FAQs.

Email info@spectorcraftprize.org for all general inquiries.

Email support@spectorcraftprize.org for any application-related technical support.

Website: www.spectorcraftprize.org

The Spector Craft Prize is committed to supporting artists from diverse backgrounds and experiences. We encourage applications from artists of all races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, abilities, and socioeconomic backgrounds.