



Application Package

**Shirley Elford Emerging Artist Commission Prize
Showcase your Work at the
City of Hamilton Arts Awards**

2 commissions, \$2000 per commission

Deadline: Friday, March 14, 2025

Apply Online:

www.hamilton.ca/artsawards

1. About the Shirley Elford Emerging Artist Commission Prize

The City of Hamilton Arts Awards program is pleased to partner with the Hamilton Community Foundation to present the Shirley Elford Emerging Artist Commission Prize. Two emerging artists (practicing in any discipline) will each be given a \$2000 commission fee to create an artwork that explores contemporary themes related to Hamilton's evolving identity. The commissions will be presented at the **2026 City of Hamilton Arts Awards Event**. This Prize is awarded in memory of the late Shirley Elford, a Hamilton artist celebrated for her excellence in glass work and her work giving back to the local arts community and the community at large.

The Shirley Elford Emerging Artist Commission Prize recognizes artistic excellence. It is intended to support emerging artists in furthering their work and provide opportunities to promote and showcase their work.

2. About the City of Hamilton Arts Awards

The mission of the City of Hamilton Arts Awards Program is to recognize the full breadth of achievement of our local arts community, the individual artists and organizations who are its ambassadors, and the community members who support and engage in this work throughout our community. Award recipients and the winners of the Shirley Elford Emerging Artist Commission Prize will be announced publicly (event format and date TBD) in June 2026 in conjunction with Hamilton Arts Week.

Vision

The Arts Awards will serve to promote the City of Hamilton's pride in its arts community, to inspire and enhance success, to foster growth in the sector, and to develop the talent that drives this vital part of our city.

Values

The Arts Awards program will consistently promote the values of:

- inclusivity and diversity,
- a transparent and open process,
- community building and public engagement,
- and the core principle that the arts are central to our community's identity, economy, civic pride, and sustainability.

City of Hamilton Arts Awards Commitment to Inclusion and Representation

As Hamilton has seen many demographic, economic and cultural shifts over the past few decades, so has the city's arts sector and communities. The individuals and groups who make up this sector are diverse along many lines. They include Black, Indigenous, People of Colour, people with disabilities and LGBTQ2SI+ individuals and collectives at different stages in their artistic careers, and working in a wide diversity of disciplinary practices, and citizens practicing across Hamilton's 15 wards.

Hamilton's municipal Arts Awards program strives to represent the diversity of this sector through all aspects of the program including:

- Composition of the juries
- Outreach to key individuals, organizations and community groups to encourage applications
- Commissioning of artist programming for the Arts Awards Event / Celebration

3. Commission Details

The intention of this opportunity is to showcase contemporary, emerging art practices that are reflective of the broader Hamilton arts community and the city's evolving identity. The selected artists will be announced at the 2025 City of Hamilton Arts Awards and the commissioned artwork will be showcased at the **2026 City of Hamilton Arts Awards ceremony**. This ceremony is typically a live event that attracts upwards of 500 people.

There will be a variety of options to present artwork ranging from on-stage productions (e.g., performances of music, theatre, dance, spoken word, etc.) to installations and performances (e.g., sculpture, performance art, exhibition/displays, etc.) to screen-based presentations (e.g., short film, new media, etc.). This opportunity is open to artists practicing in all mediums however the commissioned work must be in a format that can be presented at a live event.

Additional details:

- The artwork must be presented at the 2026 City of Hamilton Arts Awards, which will take place on June 12, 2025. It is anticipated that this will be an in-person event.
- Due to time limitations at the event, if the artwork is a full-length play, album, film or other longer work, the commissioned artist may be asked to select an excerpt for presentation.
- The commission fee is \$2000. This fee includes the recipient's artist fee and all costs related to the creation/production of the artwork.
- The Arts Awards program will provide support and resources to assist with the public presentation of the work (e.g. equipment rental, audio/visual equipment, artist fees for performers other than the commission recipient, staffing to assist with installation, etc.). A budget of approximately \$500 per commission has been allocated for costs related to the presentation of the artwork.
- The commissioned artists will retain all moral rights and copyright to the artwork. As part of the terms of the commission, the City will license the artworks for the promotion of and display at the Arts Awards event; the artist will take possession of the work following the event.
- The commissioned artists will be expected to prepare an initial project proposal in November 2025 for feedback and to provide a more detailed proposal once additional event details and location are confirmed. The commission fee will be

paid subject to the approval of the project proposal by the Director of Tourism and Culture, City of Hamilton or their designate.

4. Eligibility

- Individual artist who is 18 years of age or older or an artistic collective (e.g., band, duo, troupe, collaborative, etc.) whose members are 18 years of age or older. Note, performers under the age of 18 years are permitted provided the project leaders/lead applicants are 18 years or older.
- Artist or majority of collective members (minimum 75%) have been practicing professionally for **less than five years** (full-time students are not eligible).
- Full-time students are not eligible (high school or post-secondary students in an art program).
- Current resident of Hamilton (including Ancaster, Dundas, Flamborough, Glanbrook, Stoney Creek, Waterdown), Six Nations of the Grand River or Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation consecutively for the past two years or longer at the time of submission.
- Artistic collectives are eligible for nomination provided that a minimum of 75% of the collective has lived in Hamilton, Six Nations of the Grand River or Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation consecutively for the past two years or longer.
- Must be a Canadian Citizen or Permanent Resident (Landed Immigrant) or have an application pending for Permanent Residency.
- May be self-taught or have art training through formal education, apprenticeship, or with a mentor or elder.
- Previous Shirley Elford Emerging Artist Prize winners are not eligible to apply.
- Previous City of Hamilton Arts Awards recipients are not eligible to apply.

5. Selection Process

Selection Panel: an independent panel comprised of emerging artists and arts professionals representing a variety of disciplines will evaluate the applications. A member of the Arts Advisory Commission will audit the selection session to ensure a fair and transparent process (non-voting position).

Scoring: The selection panelists will select the strongest application based on the scoring chart and subsequent selection panel deliberation. Nominations must achieve a minimum benchmark score to be eligible for the award. If the benchmark is not met, the selection panel reserves the right to not select a winner.

Scoring

Item	Evaluation Criteria	Scoring
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Artwork Samples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body of work exhibits a high level of creativity and artistic merit. • Artwork samples demonstrate consistency in quality and execution. • Artwork is reflective of contemporary practice in artistic discipline(s). • Current work (within the last 3 years). 	30 Points
Artist Statement and Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly articulates the artist’s understanding of their discipline and artistic practice. • Statement provides context for the artwork samples. • Suggested approach is contemporary and compelling and reflects Hamilton’s evolving identity. • Artist demonstrates an understanding of the Arts Awards program and event. 	15 Points
Curriculum Vitae (Artist Resume)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artist’s qualifications and professional experience demonstrates the artist’s continued career development and growth. • Artist is actively producing work (e.g. recent examples of exhibitions, programming, publications, etc.). 	5 Points
Maximum Total Score		38 Points
Minimum Required Score		50 Points

6. How to Submit an Application

Applications are due on or before Friday, March 14th, 2025 (11:59 pm) and can be submitted by the following methods:

1. **Online:** Visit www.hamilton.ca/artsawards to access the online application form.

2. **Mail:**

City of Hamilton Arts Awards
Attn: Jen Anisef
Tourism and Culture Division
28 James Street North, 2nd floor
Hamilton, ON L8R 2K1

3. **Drop Off:**

28 James Street North, 1st floor (Visitor Experience Centre*)
Hamilton, ON L8R 2K1
Attn: Jen Anisef

**Hours: Tuesday to Saturday – 10am to 4pm;
Closed: Sundays, Mondays and all statutory holidays*

If you are submitting a hard copy application, please submit one copy of all written materials on letter-sized paper (8 ½ X 11”). Items will be scanned and input into the online application system. Support materials may be submitted on CD/DVD or USB key (as required).

Incomplete applications and / or applications received after the deadline will not be accepted. Emailed, faxed, and post-dated submissions will not be accepted.

We are here to help

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions or need assistance with the application process.

Contact:

Placemaking, Public Art and Projects Section,
Tourism and Culture Division
E: artsawards@hamilton.ca
T: (905) 546-2424 ext. 7612

Connect with us online

Get the latest information and useful tips for completing your application by following the City of Hamilton Arts Awards on Facebook, X (formerly Twitter) and Instagram. And don't forget to check out #HAA2025 on X to join in the conversation and anticipation for the 2025 Arts Awards!

Facebook: [CityofHamiltonArtsAwards](https://www.facebook.com/CityofHamiltonArtsAwards)
X: [@HamArtsAwards](https://twitter.com/HamArtsAwards)
Instagram: [@hamartsawards](https://www.instagram.com/hamartsawards)

6. Application Form

Applications (**including this form**) can be submitted online by visiting www.hamilton.ca/artsawards. If you wish to submit your application by mail, please print and fill out the form below (see Contact information in *Section 5: How to Submit an Application*).

A. Artist Information

Name:

Organization / Collective Name (if applicable):

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Website:

Instagram:

Twitter:

Facebook:

What is your primary artistic discipline (select up to 2)?

- | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Arts Education & Community Arts | <input type="checkbox"/> Fine Craft |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Media Arts | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Theatre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visual Arts | <input type="checkbox"/> Dance & Performing Arts | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Writing

- Other (please provide detail) _____
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B. Artist Statement & Approach

Statement: An artwork proposal is not required at this time. Please submit a brief statement outlining the philosophy, inspiration and methodology behind your work (e.g., key themes, points of inspiration, techniques and/or materials). Indicate how you would approach this commission, including areas of inquiry related to Hamilton's evolving identity that you plan to explore. The successful artists will work with program staff to develop a complete proposal once details of the 2026 Award event are finalized (e.g., event format, location, etc.). This proposal will be subject to approval by the Director of Tourism and Culture, City of Hamilton or their designate to ensure that it is in keeping with the Artist Statement & Approach as awarded and meets generally accepted community standards for display in public.

750 words maximum

Artist Biography: Please submit a brief biography that summarizes your career as an artist/arts worker. The biography should be written in the third person as it may be used for promotional purposes (e.g., website, social media, screen presentation, etc.).

Please see the example below:

“Jane Smith is an established textile and fibre artist based in Hamilton, Ontario. Her artistic process involves hand-dying fabric, embroidery, and quilting large sculptural wall hangings. Her work uses colours, imagery and patterns that reflect bodies of water and land formations from natural landscapes across Canada. “

50 words maximum

C. Examples of Past Work

Professional CV: Submit a professional curriculum vitae or resume. This can include (but is not limited to): education and professional development, exhibitions, performances or publications, awards, professional recognition, professional associations or memberships, etc.

Artwork Samples: Submit 6 examples of your past work. This can include any combination of the following materials:

- **Images:** All images must be in JPEG format at a maximum of 1024 X 728 pixels and 300 dpi.
- **Audio / Video Samples:** **Audio/video** cued to appropriate time. Links to online content (e.g., YouTube, Bandcamp, etc.) may also be provided. 3 minutes per sample maximum.
- **Writing Samples:** Please submit typed manuscript pages or photocopied selections from books, periodicals, etc. Please do not submit original books, periodicals, etc. 3 pages per sample maximum.
- **Project Report:** A written description outlining key details of a recent project/program that the applicant played a key role in implementing. 500 words maximum.
- **Media Clips:** news articles, reviews, interviews, videos, etc. that profile the applicant.

Documentation List: Please include relevant details relating to the Artwork Samples in a list format (e.g., title, date, location, dimensions, materials, production credits, etc.)

7. Terms of Application

All application materials submitted to the City of Hamilton Arts Awards program must be true and accurate. Falsified information will result in disqualification from the Arts Awards process.

Phone numbers, email, and mailing addresses will not be made public as part of the Arts Awards program. All other content submitted as part of the **Shirley Elford Emerging Artist Commission Prize** processes including but not limited to applicant name(s), website and social media information (where applicable) and Application Information including Artist Statement, Biography and Examples of Past Work (hereinafter referred to as “personal information”) may be used on the internet, in print publications or in other methods of communication (whether verbal or written) for the purpose of organizing and administering the Arts Awards program, including evaluating the nominations and communicating with awards recipients, and for the purpose of promoting the Arts Awards program. Personal information of successful applicants will be used to promote future Arts Awards programs.

Personal information collected on the nomination form, or as part of the nomination process, is collected under the authority of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25 s.227 (b). Information collected is subject to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.56. . By providing your email address, you are consenting to receive emails from the City of Hamilton and/or their agents/contractors for information provision purposes. Information collected for this initiative may be stored on servers located in Canada and the United States and may be subject to Canadian and/or American laws. Questions about the collection of personal information should be directed to: Manager, Placemaking, Public Art and Projects, Tourism and Culture Division, Planning and Economic Development Department, City of Hamilton, P.O. Box 2040, Hamilton, ON, L8P 4Y5, telephone 905-546-2424, ext. 6281.

An applicant may withdraw consent to the collection, use or disclosure of this personal information by providing written notice prior to the nomination closing date of Friday, March 14th , 2025 at 11:59 pm to the City’s Manager of Placemaking, Public Art and Projects, Tourism and Culture Division, City of Hamilton, P.O. Box 2040, Hamilton, ON, L8P 4Y5, in which case the application will no longer be eligible for consideration.