



OFFICE OF ARTS & CULTURE EMERGING CURATORS FELLOWSHIP

Description

The Office of Arts & Culture (OAC) is launching its Emerging Curators Fellowship program, a funded opportunity for emerging curators to develop and present two exhibitions at the Robert T. Matsui Gallery inside Sacramento City Hall.

The Emerging Curators Fellowship is a year-long program, where one fellow will produce and mount two exhibitions (each on view for 4 months) with the support of a curatorial mentor. The fellow will receive a stipend and funding for both exhibitions. A mentor will meet with the fellow on a regular basis (minimum of 30 hours) to help fine tune ideas and provide feedback and guidance on the development of both exhibitions. This program is intended to provide an opportunity to those interested in the visual arts curatorial field, but may not have easy access to funding, locations, or other resources.

Selected fellow will receive:

- \$6,000 stipend for individual applicants; \$8,000 for a team/collective
- \$6,000 exhibition budget total for two back-to-back shows, each lasting 4 months. This is inclusive of all production costs, shipping, hiring of any other contractors, artists fees, marketing materials etc.
- Regular guidance and feedback from an OAC appointed local curator
- Exhibition related marketing support from OAC

Eligibility

The Emerging Curators Fellowship is open to curators in the Sacramento region with limited experience, but strong interest in further exploring a curatorial practice. This includes, but is not limited to: artists, art historians, arts organizers or administrators, community organizers, self-taught practitioners.

- Must be 18 years or older at the time of application
- Must live and work within a [50 mile radius of the City of Sacramento](#)
- Cannot have curated or co-curated more than 6 exhibitions
- Cannot be enrolled in a full-time degree program
- Cannot be working full time in a curatorial capacity at an arts or cultural organization, museum, nonprofit organization, or gallery
- Cannot be currently employed by the City of Sacramento or have been contracted for administrative services by OAC within the past 12 months. This includes anyone sitting on the Arts, Culture and Creative Economy Commission, or any City commission or board.
- Curatorial teams/collectives may apply. Each person on the team **must** be working together to curate **both** shows and be credited as a unit and not individually. Proposals that split the labor and credit between individuals who are applying under the claim or guise of a team will be disqualified.



Projected timeline (subject to change)

- August 2026: Fellowship application opens
- September 2026: Fellowship application closes
- December 2026: Selected fellow notified
- May 2027 – August 2027: First exhibition on view
- September 2027 – December 2027: Second exhibition on view

Application Materials

- Resume or CV with relevant arts accomplishments
- Statement of interest (500 words max) that addresses the following:
 - Why are you interested in being, or becoming, a curator?
 - How would this program be beneficial to your practice or career track?
 - What beliefs, values, ideas guide your curatorial and/or artistic practice?
 - What are your thoughts or ideas on curating a show in a government building?
- Two exhibition proposals (500 words each, max). Each proposal should give OAC an idea of what two exhibitions you would like to develop. These proposals should give an indication of what topics or themes interest you, why they are important to you, and the artists you would include, or would like to work with. These proposals do NOT need to be fully complete and should be intentionally revised and workshopped through the initial research and development phase with your mentor. Proposals should NOT be for an exhibition that has already been shown before elsewhere. Proposals will be judged on the quality and originality of ideas, and potential for the shows to be successful in the context of the program, the space, and given resources. Please see the Evaluation Rubric below for details.
 - To see photos of the gallery, [click here](#). No damage or alterations to the building can be made, including the floor and ceiling. Final installation plan must be in compliance with any ADA and building codes and is subject to the approval of the building manager.
 - You may also visit the space in person during City Hall business hours: Monday – Friday, 8am – 4pm. Please note any holidays where City Hall may be closed. The official address is 915 I Street, but you can directly enter the gallery through the entrance on H Street.
- Work Samples: image samples (no more than 10 images, must be in jpg or png format) OR writing sample (max 2 pages, pdf only). Images can be of either past curatorial projects or, if you are a working artist with no curatorial experience, your own artwork. If you submit images, please include a PDF that lists artwork information (see example below). A writing sample is also acceptable. Submitted images OR writing sample should showcase your thoughtfulness and knowledge on topics of art history and movements, art criticism, art theory, interpretation, and analysis of art.

EXAMPLE:

If the work sample is an installation shot of a past project:

image_01: Installation shot of "XYZ" shown at ABC Gallery, July 2023 - August 2023.

If the work sample is of your artwork:

image_01: "XYZ," 2023, oil on canvas, 25" x 15"



Applications must be submitted through Submittable (<https://saccityarts.submittable.com/submit>) by the **deadline of September 9th 2026, 11:59pm**. No extensions will be granted. Incomplete applications will be considered ineligible and will not be reviewed. Please email oacgallery@cityofsacramento.org with questions.

EVALUATION RUBRIC

PROGRAM DESIGN (15 points)	Little Evidence	Satisfactory Evidence	Strong Evidence
Feasibility: Proposal seems feasible with the budget provided. Proposal is well researched and/or connections have been established with the artist(s) or gallery.	1	2-3	4-5
Originality: Proposal has not been done before by the applicant. Proposal offers a new or fresh perspective not recently seen in any regional exhibitions.	1	2-3	4-5
Consideration of space: Proposal takes into account the location of the gallery being in a government building, the other uses the space may serve, and the possible constraints and limitations.	1	2-3	4-5
CURATORIAL QUALIFICATIONS, TECHNICAL SKILL, POTENTIAL (15 points)			
Visual quality of work samples and relevance to curating OR strong writing sample demonstrating knowledge of the following (not an exhaustive list): art history and movements, art criticism, art theory, interpretation and analysis of art.	1	2-3	4-5
Demonstrated experience in curating/organizing exhibitions OR artistic ability to translate their point of view to their work.	1	2-3	4-5
Beneficial impact of participating in this program for the applicant's practice or career.	1	2-3	4-5
COMMUNITY EMPHASIS AND/OR IMPACT (16 points)			
Proposal is rooted in and/or reflects lived experiences of marginalized, historically underserved communities.	1-2	3-5	6-8
Proposal takes into consideration the audience (intentional and unintentional) experiencing the exhibition.	1-2	3-5	6-8