



Blackadder Houston Mid-Career Painting Award 2026

Guidelines for Applicants

The RSA Blackadder Houston Mid-Career Painting Award (£20,000) provides an extensive development and production opportunity for a fine art painter. The aim of the award is to enable a committed painter to devote themselves exclusively to painting for an extended period of time, which they would otherwise not be able to do, due to other commitments such as employment or caring responsibilities. The award is funded by the RSA Blackadder Houston Bequest, administered by the Royal Scottish Academy.

ELIGIBILITY

- Entrants must be mid-career painters who are at least 15 years out of art school or can demonstrate at least 15 years of substantive practice.
- Entrants must not currently be studying.
- The entrant's practice must be predominantly based in painting; this can be in any medium or subject.
- Entrants must have been born or are currently living in Scotland (and have been for at least 3 years consecutively).
- Entrants must be able to devote themselves exclusively to painting for a period of up to 26 weeks; for example, by taking a sabbatical from employment, or by taking a break from caring responsibilities.

CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

- Entry conditions and requirements must be strictly adhered to or applications may be rejected.
- The decision of the adjudicators is final and no correspondence can be entered into.
- The award funds can be used for anything that directly enables the winner to produce painting(s) (e.g. studio time, travel, living costs that allow the winner to take the necessary time out to create/produce; but the award should not be put towards framing costs and capital investment (e.g. camera, computer software, new studio kit).
- In the case of taking a sabbatical, proof from employer of agreement to this must be provided to the RSA prior to the allocation of funds.
- The award winner will be announced by end of December 2026 and the award should be completed within a 12-month period, beginning with the start of the project. The painter may take their break from employment/childcare etc. all at once, or in separate stages – provided it occurs within 12 months of its inception.
- The RSA will have regular contact with the winner during the 12-month period.
- The winner will be expected to submit a short report to the RSA which may be shared with the Blackadder Houston Trustees. This report must be submitted within 6 weeks of completion of the award.
- The copyright of all works remains with the artist, but it is a condition of entry that the Royal Scottish Academy reserves the right of reproduction of all submitted and resultant works for publicity/educational/reference purposes in connection with the award and opportunities programme.
- Personal information supplied by applicants on application forms will be held securely by the Royal Scottish Academy in accordance with The EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Please note we do not have the expertise or specific knowledge to offer tax advice for individuals in receipt of awards and funding. We advise you visit HMRC's website for information about receiving funding, awards, bursaries and grants, or consult with a qualified expert. You may also want to look at the information provided by Art Quest on the subject [here](#).

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

This application will require the following:

- Artist statement (max 100 words)
- Up to 5 key artistic achievements (max 150 words)
- Summary of post school education
- 25-word summary of proposed research and production.
- A description of why the applicant needs this support to allow them to realise their artistic potential (max 100 words).
- Proposal (max 300 words) which gives an idea on what the artist hopes to achieve.
- CV
- A rough budget to show the use of funds.
- Up to 6 visuals of works already produced.

CRITERIA

Applicants will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Someone that the judges consider would truly benefit from the opportunities that the funding might bring.
 - Coherency of proposed research and the potential to further develop and enhance their practice.
 - Strong evidence the artist's practice falls within the discipline of painting and mid-career status.
 - Quality of visual material submitted *
- * Please note that a crucial part of the selection process is based on the review of applicant's visual material and as such we strongly encourage applicants to submit the highest quality visual material.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

The deadline for applying to this award is Sunday 11 October 2026 , 5pm.

CONTACT

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