

DCA ART COMPETITION 2026

# INFO KIT

Deaf Children Australia's annual Art Competition supports, promotes and opens pathways for young deaf and hard of hearing people to explore their creativity. It is open to all residents of Australia aged between 0 and 23 years old who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Artists are invited to submit a work of art exploring the theme "**We belong**". This year's theme encourages young deaf and hard of hearing people to celebrate their unique skills. **We all belong**. We can't wait to see what you come up with!

**Applications close 11:59pm, Monday 22nd June 2026**

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## Who is eligible?

- Only Australian Permanent Residents and/or Australian Citizens can apply to the Art Competition.
- Applicants age is classified by how old they are on 22nd June 2026, when submissions to this competition close.

### INDIVIDUAL ARTIST CATEGORIES (8 to 11, 12 to 17, 18 to 23 years)

- Deaf or hard of hearing young people aged 8 to 23 years old.
- Artists need to provide proof of age when submitting the application. Please include a copy of one of the following documents with the application: a birth certificate, Australian passport, or Australian drivers licence. Applications without proof of age will not be accepted.
- Applicants need to include a current audiogram - no more than 2 years old - when submitting the application. If you do not have a current audiogram, we will also accept an official letter from a cochlear clinic, an ENT, or a GP. Applications without medical proof of permanent hearing loss will not be accepted.

### EARLY EDUCATION GROUP PROJECTS (0 to 11 years)

- A group of 2 or more deaf or hard of hearing artists aged 0 to 11 from the same school/kindergarten.
  - The school/kindergarten is required to send a formal letter with the students' names, DOB's and to confirm all students are deaf and/or have hearing loss.
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# The Categories

## Individual Artists

We accept art submissions in the following categories: 8 to 11, 12 to 17 and 18 to 23 years old.

## Early Education Group Projects

The Early Education Group Project invites group submissions and collaborations between younger deaf and hard of hearing artists who attend Early Intervention, Kindergarten or Primary School.

- The submission must be a collaboration between 2 or more children from the same school/kindergarten, and all participants must be deaf or hard of hearing.
- Full names of the deaf and hard of hearing children who created the artwork must be on the Application Form.
- Artists in this category must be between 0 and 11 years old.

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**8 TO 11 YEARS**

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**12 TO 17 YEARS**

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**18 TO 23 YEARS**

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**EARLY EDUCATION GROUP PROJECT [0 TO 11 YEARS]**

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If there is only one deaf or hard of hearing student and they are aged between 8 and 11, the school should encourage the student to submit an individual artwork in the 8 to 11 category.

Children aged 0 to 7 are not eligible for individual artwork entry, but can enter in the group category, as long as the criteria are met.

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# Art Grant Awards

DCA Art Grants are awarded once a year as part of our annual Art Competition, to support deaf and hard of hearing young people from 0 to 23 years.

## 2026 WINNER PRIZES:

**8 TO 11 YEARS - \$500**

**12 TO 17 YEAR - \$700**

**18 TO 23 YEARS - \$1000**

**EARLY EDUCATION GROUP PROJECT - \$800**

## 2026 RUNNER UP PRIZES:

**8 TO 11 YEARS - \$250**

**12 TO 17 YEAR - \$300**

**18 TO 23 YEARS - \$500**

**EARLY EDUCATION GROUP PROJECT - \$450**

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## Art Mediums

We accept most types of art including pen, pencil, paint, pastels, chalks, charcoal, collage, mixed media, sculpture, digital art, textile art, photography or video. You can think outside the box - past submissions included a graphic novel and a textile collage.

If you are producing your art digitally (eg. using an drawing app on a computer or Ipad) it is important to consider the scale of the final artwork as you set up your file. We suggest a minimum of A4 in size, as the artwork will need to be printed as a hard copy for the exhibition.

If you are submitting photography, make sure quality and resolution is high (largest file size) - fuzzy or pixelated printed artworks are not suitable!

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### **\*TIP**

The artwork will be displayed in a gallery setting and soft pencil drawings can be effective but generally brighter, bolder entries stand out more.

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## Return of artwork

Deaf Children Australia will keep all artworks for 12 months after the exhibition to display at the Head Office, to further showcase and celebrate the amazing work.

If you wish to have your artwork returned to you at the end of the 12 month period, this will be at your own expense. You can let us know if you wish to arrange return of artwork on page 9 of the Application Form, and if so, we will be in touch at the end of the 12 months to arrange payment of postage and confirm the return address.

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## Winners and runners-up

The winners and runners-up in each category will receive art grant prizes.

Additionally, we invite all winners and runners-up to put their artworks up for sale at the end of the exhibition. All proceeds will be donated to DCA, helping support programs for deaf and hard of hearing children.

Offering your artwork for sale is optional and only applies to winners and runners-up. You can opt out on page 9 of the Application Form. Should you win a prize, we will contact you at the time of the exhibition to confirm your choice and discuss arrangements.

Contact us with any questions:  
**events@deafchildren.org.au**  
using 'Enquiry DCA Art Competition 2026' as the subject line.

**IMPORTANT - to be considered, your artwork needs to adhere to the following requirements - make sure to read these conditions carefully!**

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## Artwork info

### Physical artwork:

All 2D/artworks on paper will be framed and exhibited. Please send us your original artworks. If you do not wish to submit the original, we require a high quality printed version of the work.

Please send any 3D sculptures or books with adequate padding and protection. Books or graphic novels can also be submitted as a high quality PDF files.

### Video Art:

Submissions of video art should be sent to us in MP4 format via email or WeTransfer, see more details on page 5. Video art submissions can be up to 5 minutes in length, with a max resolution of 3200 x 3200 pixels, and a max file size of 300MB. All videos **MUST** have captioning.

We will display your video on a screen in the gallery space, and use a still or title page from the video for printed and online promotional material. If you have a strong preference which still images we use, please email your suggestions as TIFF or JPEGs.

### Artwork size:

We have frames suitable for A4, A3, A2 and A1 artworks. Artwork can be portrait or landscape, or custom shapes and sizes, but if your artwork is a not A4, A3, A2 or A1, we ask you supply your artwork framed in a good quality black frame.

We suggest a minimum of A4 size, but for your art to have presence on the gallery wall, we find A3 is a good starting point.

The maximum artwork size we accept for individual artists is A1. You can go larger, but framing will be at your own expense.

If your entry is on a wooden or thick canvas that does not require a frame, send as is and DCA will add D rings and string (or similar) for mounting.

Early Education Group Project submissions must be a minimum size of A1. We will contact you to discuss display options for the exhibition based on the scale and type of art created.

## \*QUESTION

### What if my artwork has been digitally produced or is photography?

We require a printed hard copy of your artwork for the exhibition. There are many different options to print your artwork, depending on budget. We don't recommend printing at home unless you have a good printer and specialist paper. Good quality printers (Officeworks and similar) offer reasonable quality digital printing which is very affordable and convenient.

Each printer will have specific file requirements which are usually outlined on their website along with FAQ's. The artwork should be high resolution, saved as a high quality artwork file. PDF, TIFF are preferable, JPEG files are also universally accepted by printers. It can take at least 3 days to get your printed artwork back from the printer so make sure to leave enough time.

If you have any issues getting your work printed and you only have a digital version, email or WeTransfer it to us in plenty of time and we can help.

Contact us with any questions:  
**events@deafchildren.org.au**  
using 'Enquiry DCA Art Competition 2026' as the subject line.

**IMPORTANT - to be considered, your artwork needs to adhere to the following requirements - make sure to read these conditions carefully!**

## What to include with your physical artwork:

### Artwork label

Before you post your work to us please label artworks with artist name, age, title of artwork, medium used, and artwork dimensions (in cm). You can print out and attach the label on page 5, or make your own similar label. Attach the label to the back of your artwork securely. For books or 3D sculpture submissions, please make sure the label is included within in the package. Please package artworks appropriately for their protection.

### \*TIP

See page 6 or 7 for handy submission checklists.

You can print and stick the artwork label from page 6 or 7 to the back of your artwork, or make your own label with the same details.

## Documents to email us:

### 1. Art Exhibition 2026 Application Form

All submissions must include the Art Exhibition 2026 Application Form. Make sure you read the Terms and Conditions in the Application form before filling out your details carefully and providing required consent, answering the Artist Statement questions, and completing the return address info.

The Application Form is a fillable pdf and should be completed digitally (answers typed in). It should be emailed with the other required documents.

### 2. Proof of age and proof of permanent hearing loss

There are different requirements for individual and group projects, see below:

#### INDIVIDUAL ARTIST CATEGORIES

##### Proof of age

A copy of applicants birth certificate, Australian passport or Australian drivers licence.

##### Proof of permanent hearing loss

An audiogram less than 2 years old, or other proof of permanent hearing loss eg. a letter from an audiologist or ENT.

#### EARLY EDUCATION GROUP PROJECTS

The school or kindergarten is required to send a formal letter with full names of the students, DOB's and confirmation that all students are deaf and/or have hearing loss.

Email your Application Form and supporting documents to:

**events@  
deafchildren.org.au**

Use 'Application DCA Art Competition 2026' as the subject line.

If possible, please include the artists name in the file names of the documents you are sending to us.

**IMPORTANT - to be considered, your artwork needs to adhere to the following requirements - make sure to read these conditions carefully!**

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## Mailing us your artwork

Please send us your physical artworks unmounted and unframed. Post in a cylinder or heavy-duty cardboard to protect your artwork, or bubble wrapped in a box for 3D works as appropriate.

If your artwork is very large and flexible, please make sure to provide a strong cardboard backing for support to prevent bending and damage. DCA will not be responsible for any damage to the artwork in postage and handling if the artwork has not been suitably packaged for protection.

See list on page 4 of the items you must include with your submission, and handy checklist on page 5 to tick everything off!

### POST ARTWORK TO:

Community Engagement - ART  
Deaf Children Australia  
PO BOX 6466  
St Kilda Road  
Melbourne, Victoria 3004

- \* Don't forget to add a label with your details to the back of your artwork before you send it.

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## Sending your artwork via email

Any digital artwork submissions should be under 300MB in size, with a max resolution of 3200 X 3200 pixels. Video art entries can be submitted as MP4's. If you need to send us any additional information, images or photos then PDF or TIFF files are preferred, as well as high quality JPEG's.

### Name your file

Please name artwork files including the following information: First initial and full surname, **We belong** and the category (8 to 11, 12 to 17, 18 to 23 or 'school name' Group Project).

For eg. **JSmith\_Webelong\_12to17.mp4**

### Email subject line

Include the following details in the subject line: First initial and full surname, **We belong** and the category (8 to 11, 12 to 17, 18 to 23 or 'school name' Group Project)

For eg. **J Smith, We belong 12 to 17**

Our email address is:

**events@deafchildren.org.au**

If your file is too large to be included in the email, please use **www.wetransfer.com** to submit your artwork. If you use WeTransfer, remember to send the Art Competition 2026 Application Form and other required documents at the same time.

## Individual Artist **SUBMISSION CHECKLIST:**

You can print this page and use the handy checklist below to make sure your submission is complete.

### ITEMS TO SEND:

- Artwork with artwork label attached
- Art Competition 2026 Application form including:
  - contact details and consent section (page 3 and 4 for individual artists)
  - artist statement (page 7 and 8)
  - artwork return info (page 9)
- Proof of age
- Proof of permanent hearing loss

### ITEMS TO READ:

- Art Competition 2026 Info Kit  
(can be downloaded from DCA website)
- Terms & Conditions  
(can be found on page 2 of the application form)

**Don't forget to follow us on Facebook and Instagram for ideas and exploration of "We belong".**

## Individual Artist **ARTWORK LABEL:**

Please print, cut out and attach to the back of your artwork, or make your own label with same details.

ARTIST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ AGE: \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE OF ARTWORK: \_\_\_\_\_

MEDIUMS USED: \_\_\_\_\_  
(EG. PEN, WATERCOLOUR)

ARTWORK DIMENSIONS: \_\_\_\_\_ cm

## Early Education Group Project **SUBMISSION CHECKLIST:**

You can print this page and use the handy checklist below to make sure your submission is complete.

### ITEMS TO SEND:

- Artwork with artwork label attached
- Art Competition 2026 Application form including:
  - contact details and consent section (page 5 and 6 for the group category)
  - artist statement (page 7 and 8)
  - artwork return info (page 9)
- A formal letter from the school/kindergarten with full names of the students, DOB's and confirmation that all students are deaf and/or have hearing loss.

### ITEMS TO READ:

- Art Competition 2026 Info Kit (can be downloaded from DCA website)
- Terms & Conditions (can be found on page 2 of the application form)

**Don't forget to follow us on Facebook and Instagram for ideas and exploration of "We belong".**

## Early Education Group Project **ARTWORK LABEL:**

Please print, cut out and attach to the back of your artwork, or make your own label with same details.

**NAME OF SCHOOL/KINDERGARTEN:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ARTISTS NAMES:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EDUCATOR CONTACT DETAILS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TITLE OF ARTWORK:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MEDIUMS USED:** \_\_\_\_\_

(EG. PEN, WATERCOLOUR)

**ARTWORK DIMENSIONS:** \_\_\_\_\_ cm