ARTWORKSTO

_____NEWCOMER PROGRAM

General Eligibility Criteria (All Applicants)

- Applicants must be newcomers to Canada with a background in media arts (e.g. graphic design, photography, UX/UI design, digital illustration, animation, film, sound art, and interactive or web-based media) or arts education, seeking professional integration and career development opportunities.
    - For the purposes of this program, a newcomer is defined as someone who has recently arrived in Canada or has been living in the country for no more than 7 years. To be eligible in 2025, applicants must have arrived in Canada after January 1, 2018.
- Must be a Canadian Citizen, Permanent Resident, or have an application pending for Permanent Resident status, or be a Protected Person (approved refugee claimant).
    - In alignment with our equity framework, temporary residents with valid work authorization may be considered for the Newcomer Program, subject to program capacity and overall eligibility priorities.
- Must possess a valid Social Insurance Number (SIN), which is required to legally work in Canada.
- Must currently reside in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), including the City of Toronto and the regional municipalities of Durham, Halton, Peel, and York.
- Must be 18 years of age or older to join the program.
- Must be available and committed to fully participate in the program, which runs from August 2025 to August 2026.
    - Program activities will span approximately one year, but participation is not continuous. Various activities, including training, mentorship, and work placements, will occur at different points throughout the program.
    - The timing of activities will vary between Stream 1 (Media Artists) and Stream 2 (Arts Educators), with Stream 1 beginning first.
    - Applicants should ensure they have sufficient availability over that period to engage meaningfully in all key components.
    - The program combines both online and in-person elements, designed to be flexible and accommodating to participants' schedules.
        - ★ *For more details, please refer to the "Expected Time Commitment Overview" section at the end of this list of requirements.*
- Must demonstrate a genuine interest in developing new skills through short courses that are micro-credentials in Canada, as well as acquiring Canadian work experience in their field and using the program to advance their long-term career plans.
- Must demonstrate clarity of professional goals and explain how this program aligns with their career development and integration objectives in Canada.

- Must have intermediate English skills (CLB 6 or above) to participate effectively in all aspects of the program.
  (Note: Fluency is not required, but applicants should be able to communicate effectively in both verbal and written form in professional settings. As a reference, this would be equivalent to CLB level 6 or higher, which is an intermediate level suitable for basic workplace and social communication.)

Stream 1 – Media Artists: Additional Criteria

- Must be practicing media artists whose careers have progressed beyond the early stages, either in their countries of origin or in their first years in Canada, but who may still face challenges in establishing themselves professionally in Canada. Media arts may include disciplines such as graphic design, photography, UX/UI design, digital illustration, animation, film, sound art, and interactive or web-based media.
- Must present a portfolio that showcases a consistent personal artistic voice or statement, professionalism, quality of execution, as well as demonstrated technical skills and artistic control in one or more media (e.g., video, film, digital arts, installation, sound art, etc.).
- Must have participated in a minimum of 3 group exhibitions or public showcases, either in their country of origin or internationally. This can include exhibitions, screenings, festivals, digital showcases, collaborations, finished pieces, or other forms of public presentation relevant to their discipline.

Stream 2 – Arts Educators: Additional Criteria

- Must have a background in arts education, including experience in teaching or leading community-based arts programs, and/or working in educational or cultural institutions (e.g., universities, colleges, schools, libraries, museums, community centers), whether in their countries of origin or, for those who may have started in Canada, still facing challenges in establishing themselves professionally in this country.
- Must have experience in developing or delivering arts education content appropriate to the context in which they have worked.
- Applicants should have a personal artistic practice, a portfolio, and a history of exhibitions or public showcases, as this stream is intended for practicing artist educators. Evidence of active artistic practice will be required.

Expected Time Commitment Overview:

Note: These timeframes are tentative and subject to confirmation. They are provided to help applicants understand the approximate time commitment required and should be considered carefully before applying.

Before you Apply

- 1-hour online portfolio workshop provided by OCAD U, scheduled for July 3, 2025, from 6:00pm to 7:00 pm. If a participant is unable to attend live, the session will be recorded and made available within a defined time frame prior to the application deadline, so participants can still complete it and be prepared to upload their portfolio as part of their application.

Upon acceptance into the Program

- The program is divided into two streams: Stream 1 (Media Artists) and Stream 2 (Arts Educators). Stream 1 will begin first, with the application period for both streams running from June 23 to July 24, 2025.

- A two-hour RFP workshop is scheduled for August 27, 2025, followed by the proposal development phase:
    - Stream 1: approximately September 2025 to mid-October 2025
    - Stream 2: approximately late November 2025 to mid-January 2026

- During the program, and as part of our commitment to cultural learning and inclusion, participants will be offered access to a 1.5-hour online course on Indigenous protocols in Canada.

- Each participant will complete approximately 5 hours of mentorship distributed between November 2025 and July 2026.

- Participants will undertake OCAD U micro-credential courses as follows:

    Stream 1:

    - “Introduction to Project Management”: asynchronous 8-week course with 1–2 synchronous sessions (approx. Sep 15 – Nov 9, 2025)

- “Social Enterprise”: asynchronous 6-week course with 1–2 in-person sessions (Feb 2 – Mar 15, 2026)

  Stream 2:

- “Teaching Art”: in-person 6-week course (Jan 15 – Feb 19, 2026 – 6:30 to 9:30 pm)
- “Introduction to Project Management”: asynchronous 8-week course with 1–2 synchronous sessions (March 30 – May 24, 2026)

- Participants in both streams will choose one elective course at OCAD U, which may be online (synchronous/asynchronous) or in-person if selecting a studio-based course. These elective courses typically run for six weeks, expected approximately:
  - Stream 1: April to Dec 2026
  - Stream 2: April to Dec 2026

- Project realization periods (approximate):
  - Stream 1: November 10, 2025 – Week of February 16, 2026
  - Stream 2: March 2, 2026 – Week of June 1, 2026