

2025-2026 Archibald Rutledge Scholarship Visual Arts Application

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) announces the Archibald Rutledge Scholarship Program for 2025-2026. This program offers twelfth-grade students the opportunity to compete for scholarships in creative writing, dance, music, theatre, or visual arts. The purpose of the competition is to encourage and recognize academic and artistic excellence.

Eligibility: Twelfth-grade students (graduating in the spring of 2026) enrolled in public schools are eligible to participate in the scholarship competition. Students receiving the scholarships must be U.S. citizens who have attended South Carolina public schools for the past two consecutive years. The scholarships may be used for tuition, campus room/board, and instructional resource expenses at any South Carolina college or university. A student may only apply for a scholarship in one of the five areas.

Maximum Number of Visual Art Entries per School:

1-100 students = 1 entry	301-400 students = 4 entries	601-700 students = 7 entries
101-200 students = 2 entries	400-500 students = 5 entries	701-800 students = 8 entries
201-300 students = 3 entries	501-600 students = 6 entries	801-900 students = 9 entries

Classification: An entry is defined as original artwork that must be a completed, rendered visual creation, produced by the applicant. Art is limited to two-dimensional work such as drawing, painting, mixed media, printmaking, and collage. **No three-dimensional work, photography, photographs of artwork, or computer-generated images will be accepted.** All artwork must be original and not be copies of master artworks or comic art.

Entries: Applicants must submit an original artwork, reflection statement, process folio, and submission checklist.

Artwork: Submissions must not be matted or framed and **should not exceed 18" x 24"**. All artwork must be signed on the back of the work. The application should be attached to the back of the artwork and included as the first page of the process folio.

Reflection Statement: The reflection statement should address, in the artist's own words, the intent of the artwork and compare the final product with the original concept. The reflection statement should be double-spaced and consist of no more than one page.

Process Folio: The process folio should contain documentation of the planning and development of the artwork from the inception of the idea to the final product. Process folios may include support materials such as drafts, notes from dialogues with peers and/or teachers, research, inspirations, interviews, pictures, sketches, and/or events upon which the artwork is based.

Submission Checklist: Applicants must submit a signed checklist (attached below) indicating that they have submitted all required material to be considered for the competition.

Artwork produced in collaboration with others is not eligible for this competition. All process folio work should be submitted in an 8.5" x 11" format. Applicants should keep a copy of all material.

Note: If requested, submissions will be returned to the applicant by June 15, 2026. Entries will also be available for pick up at the SCDE (call 803-734-3461 for arrangements). Artwork not claimed by the applicant by June 15, 2026, will become the property of the SCDE. Incomplete applications will not be scored. If minimum scores are not obtained, a scholarship will not be awarded.

Selection Criteria: Artwork will be scored based on criteria listed in this section. The artwork and process folio each count as 50 percent of the total score. The judges will consider the following when evaluating your work:

- **Originality/Creativity**—Use of original content, cohesive style, and innovative techniques, materials, and processes.
- **Composition**—Use of an aesthetic arrangement of the subject matter and elements and principles of design.
- **Quality of Expression**—Work expresses professional and emotional qualities that convey the artist's intent.
- **Process Folio**—Provides detail about the process of creating the artwork and includes any research, inspirations, drafts, interviews, pictures, sketches, and/or events upon which you based your artwork. The process folio is not merely a first draft of the artwork.
- **Reflection Statement**—Addresses items such as the process of your work, how the work relates to you, and the message or inspiration for your artwork. The reflection statement is scored with the process folio.

Awards: One Archibald Rutledge Visual Arts Scholarship of approximately \$2,000 will be awarded to attend a South Carolina college or university. Two alternates may also be selected. The scholarship awards will be determined from the pool of entries in each discipline. The scholarship recipient and alternates will be announced in May 2026.

Deadline: Monday, February 2, 2026. Entries must be received at the SCDE by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, February 2, 2026, or postmarked on or before Monday, February 2, 2026. Use this link for electronic submissions: https://scde.formstack.com/forms/archibald_rutledge_scholarship

**2025-2026 Archibald Rutledge Scholarship
Visual Arts Application**

Please **type or print** this application and include it with each individual entry. The student's name should only appear on the back of the artwork and on this application. Submit all required materials by **Monday, February 2, 2026**.

Student Name _____

Phone Number (include area code) _____

Home Address _____

City _____

Zip Code _____

Student's Personal E-mail _____

Parent/Guardian E-mail _____

School Name _____

School Phone Number (include area code) _____

School Address _____

City _____

Zip Code _____

School District _____

Visual Arts Teacher _____

Visual Arts Teacher's E-mail _____

School Counselor _____

School Counselor's E-mail _____

Number of Students in 12th Grade _____

I hereby verify this artwork is an original creation by this student who is a U.S. citizen and has attended South Carolina public schools for the past two consecutive years. Additionally, I certify that the number of entries from this school complies with SCDE guidelines.

School Counselor's Signature

Principal's Signature

Telephone

Date

Mail (**postmarked** on or before February 2, 2026) or deliver to the SCDE (before or by 5:00 p.m. on February 2, 2026) to Stephen Stokes, Archibald Rutledge Scholarship Program, SC Department of Education, 849 Learning Ln, West Columbia, SC 29172. Applications may also be submitted electronically via this link:

https://scde.formstack.com/forms/archibald_rutledge_scholarship

For more information, contact Stephen Stokes at sstokes@ed.sc.gov.

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Checklist

Applicants must submit ALL required documents as outlined in this checklist. Incomplete applications will not be considered for scoring. Arrange the submission in the order listed below. Do not send any additional materials, such as transcripts or letters of recommendation. Do not place your name or other identifying information on the original creation, process folio, or reflection statement.

- _____ **Completed visual arts application attached to the original artwork and process folio.**

- _____ **One original artwork—The original artwork must be a completed, rendered visual creation produced by the applicant. Submissions are limited to two-dimensional works including mediums such as drawing, painting, mixed media, printmaking, and collage. No three-dimensional work, photography, photographs of artwork, or computer-generated images will be accepted. The artwork counts toward 50 percent of the total score.**

- _____ **One original process folio—The process folio includes documentation of the planning and development of the artwork from the inception of the idea to the final product. It may include support materials such as drafts and notes from dialogues with peers and/or teachers, research, inspirations, interviews, pictures, sketches, and/or events upon which the artwork is based. The process folio counts toward 50 percent of the total score.**

- _____ **One original reflection statement—The reflection statement is no more than one page, addresses the intent of the artwork, and compares the final product with the original concept.**

- _____ **One copy of this completed checklist.**

- _____ **I request for my entry to be returned to me upon conclusion of the scholarship competition.**

I have submitted ALL documentation required to apply for the 2025-2026 Archibald Rutledge Scholarship in dance. I understand that I will not be eligible for the Archibald Rutledge Scholarship competition if any of the above required materials are not included in my scholarship packet.

Student's signature

Print student's name

School

2025-2026 ARCHIBALD RUTLEDGE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Deadline for applying is Monday, February 2, 2026.

What is it? The Archibald Rutledge Scholarship program, named for South Carolina's first poet laureate, offers twelfth-grade students (enrolled in a public school in South Carolina) the opportunity to compete for a scholarship in creative writing, dance, music, theatre, or visual arts as well as encourages and recognizes academic and artistic excellence among South Carolina students.

What does the program include? Students will mail or deliver original creations, process folios, and other required documentation in one of the five arts disciplines (creative writing, dance, music, theatre, or visual arts) to the South Carolina Department of Education.

When does the program begin? Applications will be available online in October 2025. All application material may be submitted online or by mail; however, artwork for the visual arts competition must be mailed or delivered in person to the SCDE. The deadline to submit an entry online or in-person is Monday, February 2, 2026, by 5:00 p.m. Mailed entries must be postmarked on or before Monday, February 2, 2026. Entries will not be accepted after the deadline. Entries should have been created during the 2024-2025 or 2025-2026 school year.

How will the students be recognized? Five scholarships (approximately \$2,000 each) will be awarded in May 2026. The South Carolina Department of Education will make the necessary arrangements to transfer the scholarship funds directly to the South Carolina college or university of the student's choice. Students planning to attend an out-of-state college or university are ineligible to receive an award. The recipients may also be recognized by their local schools/school districts.

Eligibility criteria:

- Students must currently be enrolled in twelfth grade in a public school in South Carolina.
- Students must plan to attend a South Carolina college or university.
- Students must be a U.S. citizen and have attended public school in South Carolina for the past two years.
- Students may only apply for a scholarship in one of the five arts disciplines.

General composition criteria include (click on the individual arts form to access the application and criteria for that arts form):

- **Creative Writing**—An entry is defined as an original composition, created by the applicant, utilizing any form of creative writing including, but not limited to, journals, diaries, letters, memoirs, essays, poetry, storytelling, speeches, and free writing. The composition should not exceed two, double-spaced pages in length.
- **Dance**—An entry is defined as an original creation of dance choreography timed at three to six minutes created for solo dancer or ensemble in any appropriate movement style. The applicant must perform in the recording of his or her creation.
- **Music**—An entry is defined as an original vocal or instrumental composition created by the applicant timed at four to ten minutes for solo performer or small ensemble (recommended no more than five parts) utilizing any appropriate compositional technique. Arrangements of existing works will not be permitted for this competition.
- **Theatre**—An entry is defined as an original one-act script created by the applicant with a runtime of eight to fifteen minutes.
- **Visual Arts**—An entry is defined as original artwork that must be a completed, rendered visual creation, produced by the applicant. Art is limited to two-dimensional work such as drawing, painting, mixed media, printmaking, and collage. Artwork must not be copies of master artworks or comic art.

Additional Information:

- Entries produced in collaboration with others are not eligible for this competition.
- A panel of professionals in each of the five scholarship areas will select a recipient for each of the disciplines. The decision of the judges is final.
- Students may compete in one scholarship area only.
- Student creations and process folios each count toward 50 percent of the total score.
- Student names or other identifying information should not be permanently written on the original creation, process folio, and reflection statement.

Additional criteria that each applicant/creation must meet are included on the individual entry forms.

How do students apply? Eligible and interested students apply through their school counseling office between December 2025, and February 2, 2026. For more information, contact your school counseling office or Stephen Stokes at sstokes@ed.sc.gov.

LINK for electronic submissions: https://scde.formstack.com/forms/archibald_rutledge_scholarship