



Cultivate and Preserve the Quilting Arts in Virginia

Exhibition Proposal Guidelines

Exhibitions to be displayed in 2028

The Virginia Quilt Museum is pleased to announce its Call for Exhibition Proposals for the 2028 calendar year. We have 4 exhibition slots available and are actively seeking proposals representing a broad range of quilting styles, including modern, contemporary, art, and traditional.

Proposals will be accepted from June 1, 2026 until 11:59 pm Eastern Time on Tuesday, September 15, 2026. Proposals will be reviewed by the VQM Exhibition Committee and applicants will be notified of decisions by November 1, 2026.

Proposed artwork may be wall-hung (2D) and freestanding (3D), however ceiling-suspended artwork is not eligible. All artwork must be completely finished and delivered assembled and ready to install. Pieces may not exceed 96" in height or 140" width and must fit through a standard 34" doorway. Each artwork may not weigh more than 45 pounds. Wall hung pieces must hang without distortion. Traditional quilt sleeves, stretcher bars, framed or mounted work, and other hanging mechanisms that work with the museum's permanent hanging structure are acceptable. More information on our gallery spaces is available at the end of this document.

We encourage you to read the requirements below carefully and in full, along with the [VQM Exhibition Policy](#), and the [VQM Artistic Freedom Policy](#). The Exhibition Policy lays out VQM's criteria for exhibitions, this document details what to include in your exhibition proposal and how to apply.

If you have any questions you may reach out VQM Curator, Kate Read, at curator@vaquiltmuseum.org or (540)-433-3818. Please give VQM staff at least two days to respond and know that staff generally work Tuesday - Saturday.

A Special Note on the Selection Process

Because we have a limited number of open exhibition slots — 4 for the entire 2028 calendar year — we expect to receive more proposals than we are able to accept. We recognize that preparing a strong proposal requires significant time and effort, and we want to be transparent about this reality upfront.

Our Exhibition Committee evaluates all proposals carefully and strives to assemble a calendar that represents a variety of quilting styles, techniques, and artistic perspectives. Being well-qualified does not guarantee selection; the composition of the overall exhibition calendar is always a factor in our decisions.

We are grateful for every submission and encourage applicants who are not selected to consider applying in future years.

Key Dates

Call Opens: June 1, 2026

Application Deadline: Tuesday, September 15, 2026, by 11:59 pm Eastern Time

Applicants Notified: By November 1, 2026

Who May Apply

- A solo artist
- A group of artists
- A guild or other organization
- An independent curator

How to Apply

Applications are accepted via email (strongly preferred) or by mail.

Email: Curator@vaquiltmuseum.org

Mail: Virginia Quilt Museum
2328 Silver Lake Rd
Dayton, VA 22821

Application Fee

There is a \$25 non-refundable application fee per application.

- Pay online [HERE](#) or
- Mail a check to the museum at the address above

If paying by check, please include a note with the name of the person submitting the application and the title of the proposed exhibition so that we can make sure to apply the fee to the correct application. This is especially important for group or guild applications.

Required Materials – All Applicants

All proposals must include the following:

1. Application fee

See above.

2. Contact Information

- Name of artist, exhibition contact, or organization
- Email Address
- Phone Number
- Mailing Address

3. Availability in 2028

Please indicate any dates or periods during the 2028 calendar year when the exhibition would *not* be available for display.

4. Exhibition Concept Description (200 word maximum)

A written description of your proposed exhibition, 200 words maximum. This should convey the theme, content, and scope of the exhibition, and help the committee understand what visitors would experience.

5. Digital Images

Images must be saved as high-quality JPEG files

- 10-15 images of full artworks
- 5-10 detail images that allow the quality of craftsmanship to be examined

Image requirements:

- Minimum 300 dpi
- File names should be the title of the artwork (abbreviated titles are acceptable; e.g., Shenandoah National Park Celebration may be shortened to Shenandoah NPC)
- Images may be submitted via email, Dropbox, WeTransfer, or a similar file transfer service

For guidance on photographing quilts, please refer to this [article from SAQA](#).

6. Image Reference List

A reference list for all submitted images including:

- Title
- Dimensions (w x h)
- Media and techniques used
- Artist name (required for group or guild proposals)

Note: Images and the reference list may be combined into a slideshow, PowerPoint, or similar presentation that is viewable on both PC and Mac.

7. Artist Process Statement

A written statement describing how and why you work as an artist. For groups or guilds, explain how and why your group exists and how this particular exhibition came to be.

8. Educational Offerings

If available, provide a listing of classes, workshops, or lectures that could accompany the exhibition. If none are available, please indicate that.

9. Delivery Method

Please indicate whether the exhibition will be **delivered to the museum or shipped**. If shipped, provide an estimate of shipping costs. While VQM strives to assist with one-way shipping or delivery costs whenever possible, coverage cannot be guaranteed and will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Additional Requirements by Applicant Type

Solo Artists

- CV and/or resume
- Biography

Groups of Artists or Guilds

- A listing of each artist included in the exhibition, with:
 - Name
 - Number of pieces included
 - 2-3 highlights of their artistic career
- Full CV or resume of the exhibition contact

Independent Curators

- CV and/or resume
- List of proposed artists

Note: This does not need to be a final or complete list at the proposal stage, but should give the committee a sense of the types and caliber of artists you intend to include.

- Sample wall text and label copy

Optional Supporting Materials

Applicants of any type are welcome to include:

- Press coverage or articles about the artist(s) or previous exhibitions
- A professional letter of reference

Gallery and Artwork Information for Exhibitions

The Virginia Quilt Museum has two floors of gallery space that can be configured in many different ways for exhibitions. This document provides basic information about each gallery. All gallery spaces in the museum are fully accessible. The Virginia Quilt Museum is located in the historic Silver Lake Mill. As a historic building we have things to work around in galleries such as windows and beams that are not a problem in more modern gallery spaces or spaces built to specifically be museums.

Proposed artwork may be wall-hung (2D) and freestanding (3D), however ceiling-suspended artwork is not eligible. All artwork must be completely finished and delivered assembled and ready to install. Pieces may not exceed 96" in height or 140" width and must fit through a standard 34" doorway. Each artwork may not weigh more than 45 pounds. Wall hung pieces must hang without distortion. Traditional quilt sleeves, stretcher bars, framed or mounted work, and other hanging mechanisms that work with the museum's permanent hanging structure are acceptable.

General Information for all Gallery Spaces at VQM

- 9-foot-high ceilings which can accommodate artwork up to 96 inches (2.4 meters) height
- All walls are either wooden or painted [Sherman Williams Honied White](#)
- VQM has off-white fabric that matches the walls that can be hung to divide the gallery spaces into smaller areas or provide a backdrop in the open areas of the galleries
 - This is often advisable when displaying smaller pieces so that the artwork has a backdrop as opposed to appearing to float in the middle of the space
- All galleries have adjustable LED lighting to highlight the artwork
- All windows are covered with UV blocking shades or inserts

Hanging System

- All galleries are equipped with the [AS Hanging System XPO rail Track](#)
 - The hanging system is installed so that all pieces are hung at least 5" away from the wall, this ensures the artwork is not in contact with the walls
- VQM has [AS Hanging System Cables](#) in Stainless Steel in both 48" and 72" lengths
- VQM has [530 Safety Hooks](#) and [40 Secure Gripper Hooks](#)
 - Artwork should include a sleeve to hang from a rod or slate with eye hooks at the end, or should include fasteners or wire that the above safety or gripper hooks can easily attach to
 - Saw tooth hangers will not work with our hanging system
- VQM does not attach any artwork to the walls
 - All pieces must utilize the hanging system

Main Floor Gallery

- The main floor gallery is an L shaped space and can be divided into different exhibitions or all used as one space
- The main floor gallery space has a total of 180 linear feet (roughly 54.8 meters) of hanging space
 - This amount of space is not continuous and is generally divided into sections of 6 or 12 feet (roughly 1.8 or 3.6 meters)
- [Please see photos of different exhibitions installed in this space here](#)
- The full main floor gallery can display up to approximately 40 smaller wall hanging size quilts, or up to 15 bed size quilts if the entire quilt is shown

Second Floor Gallery

- The second floor gallery is smaller than the main floor gallery and is generally not subdivided
- The second-floor gallery has 120 linear feet (or roughly 36.5 meters) of hanging space
 - This amount of space is not continuous and is generally divided into sections of 6 or 12 feet (roughly 1.8 or 3.6 meters)
- [Please see photos of different exhibitions installed in this space here](#)
- The second floor gallery can display up to 25 smaller wall hanging size quilts, or up to 10 bed size quilts if the entire quilt is shown

Questions

Please direct all questions to:

Kate Read, Curator
curator@vaquiltmuseum.org
(540) 433-3818

Please allow at least two business days for a response. VQM staff generally work Tuesday through Saturday.

After Selection

All successful applicants must enter into an exhibition contract with the Virginia Quilt Museum. Any deviation from the original exhibition proposal must be approved in advance by VQM. The name “Virginia Quilt Museum” may not be used in any grant or sponsorship application without the prior written approval of the Executive Director. Artwork is covered by VQM’s insurance while on the premises.

Application Deadline: Tuesday, September 15, 2026, by 11:59 pm Eastern Time — All applicants will be notified by November 1, 2026.



Cultivate and Preserve the Quilting Arts in Virginia

Exhibition Policy

The Virginia Quilt Museum (VQM) provides public access to a diverse selection of rotating quilting and fiber arts exhibitions. The Virginia Quilt Museum will present exhibitions from the museum's collections and exhibitions that originate from outside sources that support the museum's mission to cultivate and preserve the quilting arts in Virginia. The Virginia Quilt Museum's goal is to inspire and engage a diverse community by building and preserving quilt collections, sharing historical and contemporary exhibitions, and providing education opportunities for all ages.

Purpose of Exhibition Policy

This policy serves to outline the Virginia Quilt Museum's exhibition philosophy. This policy describes the criteria that are used to develop in-house exhibitions and to evaluate exhibition proposals from outside artists, groups, and curators.

Criteria for Exhibitions

Exhibition theme

Exhibitions should have a clear theme and point of view that is relevant to the times and the museum's mission.

Quality of work

Exhibitions are composed of significant works of art that demonstrate a high level of aesthetic quality and craftsmanship.

Balance of exhibitions

VQM presents a balanced calendar of exhibitions, demonstrating diversity in audiences served, artists represented, and themes of the exhibitions. Exhibitions will include historic, traditional, contemporary, modern, and art quilts. Exhibition proposals may come from solo artists, independent curators, or local, regional, or national groups and guilds.

Education potential

VQM looks for exhibitions that can include educational opportunities for audiences of all ages. These opportunities can range from artist talks, lectures, classes, and workshops. Educational programs can be offered both in-person or virtually. Other educational opportunities are also welcome including interactive elements included in the exhibition.



Cultivate and Preserve the Quilting Arts in Virginia

Cost of exhibition

VQM considers the cost of the exhibition and balances that with the other criteria listed in this policy. VQM also considers the potential for sponsorships of exhibitions to offset the costs. VQM covers the cost of printing exhibition labels, title boards, and supplementary items such as price lists. VQM strives to cover one way shipping or delivery costs of exhibitions, but this is dependent on the museum's budget for the exhibition year.

Staff time required of the exhibition

VQM considers the needed staff time for each exhibition. As a small institution VQM must balance the staff time required for exhibitions with the other projects of the museum.



Cultivate and Preserve the Quilting Arts in Virginia

Artistic Freedom and Expression Policy

The artwork our museum exhibits may awe, illuminate, challenge, unsettle, confound, provoke, and, at times, offend viewers. Freedom of speech is the foundation of our community and our nation. We believe in the freedom of individuals to create content and exhibit work as they envision, and we recognize that personal freedom to create work is a constitutional right.

To exhibit a work of art, or present a program, is not to endorse the work or the vision, ideas, and opinions of the artist. It is to uphold the opportunity for all to experience diverse visions and views of artwork associated with our museum.

If or when controversies arise from the exhibition of an artwork or program, we welcome discussion and debate regarding that controversy. It is not the museum's intention to censor exhibitions in response to political, religious, or ideological pressure as that would constrain an artist's freedom to create. In all matters related to the exhibit, sale, or raffle of an artwork or the content of a scheduled program or the use of museum space for activities, final decisions as to these uses remains the responsibility of the Board of Directors.