



## 2026 Photo Contest Guidelines

**The Community Foundation of South Puget Sound is excited to announce the return of our Summer Photo Contest.**

As communities across the country commemorate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence this July, we're reflecting on the stories, experiences, and connections that continue to shape our local communities. This year's theme, *Here For Generations*, celebrates the moments that bring people together and the places that help define what it means to call this region home.

### **Eligibility**

The photo contest is open to residents of Lewis, Mason, and Thurston counties, as well as photographers from outside these areas whose photos were taken here. There is no fee to enter.

### **Contest Categories**

- **Community Celebrations & People:** What traditions, gatherings, and shared experiences bring your community together? Share photos that capture the people and moments that create connection across generations.
- **Landscape & Wildlife:** What places help define our region? Share images of waterways, forests, farmland, wildlife, parks, or cityscapes that reflect the beauty and identity of the South Sound.
- **Nonprofit Mission in Action:** How do people care for one another in your community? Capture nonprofits and community organizations making a difference through service, support, and action.
- **Youth Category (Ages 0-17):** What makes your community special to you? Youth photographers are invited to share their perspective. A Parental or Guardian Permission Consent Form is required.

### **Prizes**

The first-place winner in each category will receive a \$250 cash prize and a canvas of their winning photo. Second-place winners will receive \$100, and third-place winners will receive \$50. All winners may choose to receive their prize as cash or direct their award as a grant to a nonprofit they care about.

## 2026 Important Dates

- **June 15:** Photo contest opens for submissions
- **August 10:** Photo contest closes at midnight PDT
- **August 20 – September 4:** Photo contest review
- **Mid-September:** Entrants will be notified of decisions, and a photo showcase will be posted on our website.

## Submission Guidelines

- There is a limit of five photographs per entrant.
- Entrants to the Youth Category (Ages 0-17) must provide permission from a parent or legal guardian to participate as part of their submission.
- Print entries are not accepted. Only electronic files submitted via our photo contest entry form will be entered into the contest.
- Standard processing of the original file is acceptable. See below for more details.
- The electronic file name must include the entrant's first initial and last name, i.e., JSmith.jpeg (include a number if submitting more than one photo, such as JSmith1.jpeg)
- The Community Foundation of South Puget Sound reserves the right to disqualify any entry deemed unsuitable for consideration due to inappropriate content, such as profanity, nudity, drug, alcohol, or tobacco use, or cruelty to persons or animals.

**Image quality:** Minimum image size of 3600 x 4800 pixels

**Format:** .jpeg or .png accepted

## Image Editing Restrictions

- Examples of acceptable editing to the original image file include:
  - cropping
  - minor adjustments to color, white balance, tone, lighting levels and curves, shadows and highlights, saturation, contrast, and sharpness
  - moderate dodging and burning
  - stitched panoramas
  - sharpening, removal of dust spots, and moderate reduction of image noise
- Photographs that have been digitally or otherwise altered beyond standard optimization will be disqualified. Examples include:
  - HDR frame stacking
  - images that have been manipulated by the addition, removal, or alteration (painting over, cloning, or blurring) of anything in the original subject and scene that were photographed
  - borders, signatures, or watermarks

- changes in color so significant that the processed colors are widely different from the original colors

**Special Note:** Your photo submission authorizes the Community Foundation of South Puget Sound to use your image in marketing materials. You are responsible for obtaining permission to photograph subjects featured in your submission.

All photos must be original work taken by the entrants. No third party may own or control any materials the photo contains, and the photo must not infringe upon the trademark, copyright, moral rights, intellectual rights, or rights of privacy of any entity or person. No compensation will be provided for the submitted photos other than the prize awards outlined in the contest rules. Photo credit may be provided at the discretion of the Community Foundation of South Puget Sound and its media partners.

### **Questions?**

Contact Mary Lam-Witcher, Philanthropy & Communications Officer, at [mary@thecommunityfoundation.com](mailto:mary@thecommunityfoundation.com) or call us at 360.705.3340.