

Lowell Milken Center for Unsung Heroes

ARTEFFECT



2026 Student Art Competition

FAQs for Students

- 1. Do I need to have a sponsoring classroom teacher to enter the competition?**
Your classroom teacher does not need to approve your project or serve as an official sponsor, but you must list the name of your classroom teacher to ensure you are enrolled in an accredited middle or high school. If you completed your ARTEFFECT project outside of school, please indicate on your submission form whether you created your project as an independent project or under guidance from a studio instructor/private tutor.
- 2. I live or attend a school outside the United States. Can I participate?** Yes. ARTEFFECT accepts international entries.
- 3. Do you accept submissions from students in alternative classroom settings, like a home school or non-campus institution?** Yes.
- 4. Do I need to be in a class teaching the ARTEFFECT Unsung Hero Lesson Plan to enter?** No. Any student in grades 6-12 can enter the competition.
- 5. I am a middle or high school student, but I'm not in grades 6-12. Can I still enter?**
No. The competition is only open to students in grades 6-12.
- 6. Can I enter the competition if I've previously been an ARTEFFECT finalist?** Yes.
- 7. Can I enter the competition if I've previously won an ARTEFFECT award or prize?**
If you have won one ARTEFFECT award or prize, you are still eligible to enter the competition. If you have won one top award and one Certificate of Excellence or an Honorable Mention, you are still eligible to enter the competition. If you have won more than one Certificate of Excellence or Honorable Mention in previous years, you are still eligible to enter. If you have won two top awards, you are not eligible to enter the competition again. (*Top awards include Grand Prize, High School Best in Show, Middle School Best in Show, High School Second Place, Middle School Second Place, and Spotlight Prize.*)
- 8. My submission qualifies for a Spotlight Prize category. Can I win more than one award or prize?** Spotlight Prize submissions are eligible for all top awards and prizes but can only win one. No submission can win more than one award or prize.
- 9. Can I enter a group project?** No. We do not consider group entries.

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10. **Can I submit more than one entry for the 2026 ARTEFFECT competition?** No. You may submit only one entry for the ARTEFFECT 2026 competition. If you have created more than one ARTEFFECT project, please select your best project for your submission.
11. **Can I submit an entry that I already submitted in a previous year?** Yes, all submitted entries will be reviewed by the ARTEFFECT judging panel. Re-submitted artworks that were winners or finalists in previous competition years will not be re-considered for additional awards, prizes, or recognition. Keep in mind that a re-submitted entry that has not been significantly altered will likely achieve the same result as when it was first submitted. We encourage you to create a new project for the annual submission.
12. **Can I use source images from the internet?** You may use historical source images from the internet, although we discourage entrants from copying source material directly. Existing and known historical portraits and images of the Unsung Hero can be used for inspiration and general reference within an artwork, but judging will consider your originality and creative interpretation of the story.
13. **What criteria are used to judge my project?** Judging is based on three key elements: Creative Interpretation, Aesthetic Quality, and Impact Statement. For more information, review the [Rules and Guidelines](#) and the [Judging Rubric](#).
14. **Can I create an artwork based on an Unsung Hero that I find by myself?** We strongly recommend you choose an Unsung Hero from the [pre-approved list of LMC Unsung Heroes](#). If there is an Unsung Hero that you feel very committed to choosing for your project who is not listed, you must send an email to arteffect@lowellmilken.org with the name and detailed biographical information about the individual and receive a confirmation email in return that this unsung hero is approved.
15. **Can I enter ARTEFFECT with work that has been previously published, exhibited, or recognized by another program?** If your artwork or Impact Statement has been previously published, exhibited, or recognized by another program, confirm that they do not hold any rights to your work before entering ARTEFFECT. In the case that your work receives an ARTEFFECT award or prize, it must be free to use in our publications and exhibitions.
16. **How will ARTEFFECT use my project?** All finalists and winners will be featured on the ARTEFFECT website. Selected award-winning artworks will be showcased in ARTEFFECT materials and displayed in exhibitions. ARTEFFECT will have exclusive rights to your project, and you must send your original artwork to ARTEFFECT.