



2026 Wisconsin State Fairtastic Poster Art Competition

Call For Entries

Overview

This competition is for Wisconsin artists who have a true passion for the Wisconsin State Fair. Artists are asked to submit a bright and bold color sketch inspired by Agriculture at the Fair. Be a part of this annual competition and submit your most creative idea that showcases Agriculture – Rooted in Tradition at the Wisconsin State Fair.

Artists have the chance to win a \$1,250 grand prize if their piece is selected. Three finalists will receive a \$400 stipend and six (6) complimentary admission tickets. All artists will receive two (2) complimentary admission tickets for their entry to the 2026 Wisconsin State Fair, August 6 – 16.

Eligibility

The Fairtastic Poster Art Competition is open to Wisconsin residents only, age 18 and older. Employees of Wisconsin State Fair and previous Grand Champion Artists are not eligible to enter. Any artists who submitted work for consideration in previous years are encouraged to enter again.

Theme

This year's theme is Rooted in Tradition we would like the poster to highlight Wisconsin's strong agricultural heritage as we showcase 175 years of the Wisconsin State Fair. Artists will submit a bright bold single graphic element, not a collage, to celebrate this milestone.

Submission Requirements

All submissions must include the following:

1. A completed entry form
2. Resume (maximum of two pages)
3. **Color** sketch depicting the Wisconsin State Fair – Agriculture, Rooted in Tradition
4. Brief description of submitted sketch and intended medium
5. Three color copies of previous artwork

All materials must be submitted in hard copy form on 8 ½” x 11” sheets of paper with artist’s name on the back of each sheet. Submission materials will not be returned, including all materials submitted in later stages of the competition.

Artwork must be two-dimensional and use traditional media in the final piece. Concepts may be rendered using computer software, but the final piece must use traditional media.

Finalists must submit artwork in the following size: 18” x 24” horizontal or vertical poster.

Artist signature must be at least 1-inch from the border of the artwork.

The submission must be delivered or dropped off by **Wednesday, January 7, 2026, at 3 pm**. See *Submitting Entries* below for mailing and drop-off addresses.

Selection Criteria

Judges will be looking for the following in each of the submissions:

- Artwork should show Agriculture, Rooted in Tradition at the Wisconsin State Fair
- Bright and bold with a singular graphic element
- Appeal to a broad audience
- Must include “Wisconsin State Fair” and Fair dates (August 6 – 16, 2026).

Failure to adhere to these standards will result in disqualification.

Selection Process

There will be three parts to the selection process:

1. A panel of judges will review all Fairtastic submissions and select their top three submissions.
2. The artists of the top three submissions will be invited to Wisconsin State Fair Park to further explain their concept.
3. Each finalist will create a more detailed piece of his/her concept. Three finalists will be given a \$400 stipend and six (6) complimentary admission tickets upon the timely completion of the second piece, as outlined by an artist's agreement. The three finalists must submit artwork in the following size: 18" x 24" horizontal or vertical poster.
4. The panel of judges will review the finalists' concepts and will select the most Fairtastic artwork.
5. After the Grand Champion Artist has been selected, the artist will meet with the judges to discuss why their piece was chosen and the next steps.
6. The top artist will receive a grand prize of \$1,250 after final artwork, size 18" x 24", is delivered to Wisconsin State Fair.

Terms and Conditions for Finalists and Grand Champion Artist

A complete agreement will be presented at the time of artist selection.

All finalists' artwork will become property of the Wisconsin State Fair. The artists will retain the copyright, but full ownership of the finished selection will be transferred to Wisconsin State Fair. The Wisconsin State Fair will also have the right to reproduce the original artwork for sale in the form of commemorative posters and other merchandise, as well as for use in advertising and promotion of the Wisconsin State Fair.

The artist of the final selection agrees to publicity promoting their artwork upon request, including attending poster signing events during the Wisconsin State Fair

In addition to the \$400 stipend and \$1,250 prize for being the Grand Champion Artist, the artist will receive 25 posters and five samples of any merchandise using the art, (i.e. postcards, buttons). Furthermore, the Grand Champion Artist will be considered for various opportunities that arise after the conclusion of the 2026 Wisconsin State Fair.

Competition Proceeds

Posters will be on sale in Fairwear booths at the 2026 Wisconsin State Fair. Merchandise will be sold exclusively at the 2026 Fair. All proceeds from poster and merchandise sales will support the Wisconsin State Fair Park Foundation.

The 2026 poster competition is sponsored by the Wisconsin State Fair Park Foundation. The Wisconsin State Fair Park Foundation, established in 1995, is a 501c3 non-profit corporation. We are committed to providing a superior experience for Wisconsin State Fair Park visitors through public and private partnerships year-round art and education programs and the continual enhancements and environmental sustainability of the fairgrounds. For more information about the Foundation and how you can get involved, please visit: www.wsfpfoundation.org.



Schedule of Events

Entry deadline:	January 7, 2026 (W)
First round judging artwork:	January 20, 2026 (T)
Finalists informed:	January 20, 2026(T)
Finalists interviewed:	January 21, 2026 (W)
Finalist artwork deadline:	February 17, 2026 (T)
Judges select winning artist:	February 18, 2026 (W)
Winning artist meets with judges to discuss final artwork:	February 19, 2026 (R)
Final artwork to be delivered to the Wisconsin State Fair:	March 19, 2026 (R)

Submitting Entries

Materials must be delivered and arrive by **Entry Deadline: Wednesday, January 7, 2026, at 3 pm** or dropped off between 9 am – 3 pm at:

Wisconsin State Fair
Fairtastic Art Competition
640 S 84 St
West Allis WI 5321

The Grand Champion Artist meeting will take place at the same address. Finalists will be contacted with further details at that stage of the competition. Any entries dropped off or received after 3 pm **Wednesday, January 7, 2026** will not be accepted.

Questions?

Any questions about the competition should be directed to Jill Albanese at jill.albanese@wistatefair.com.