



SAM Spotlight 2026 Application Guidelines

SAM Spotlight is an exhibition opportunity open to individual artists living, working, or studying in the Goulburn Valley region. The selected artist will be supported by Shepparton Art Museum to create a body of artwork for a solo show.

Key dates (TBC)

Applications open: 1 August 2025

Applications close: 1 September 2025

Successful applicant will be notified in early October 2025

Exhibition installation period: 10 – 14 November 2026

Exhibition: 24 October 2026 – 21 February 2027

Exhibition de-install period: 22 – 27 February 2027

Application fee: \$44.00 inc. GST

This non-refundable application fee covers the administration costs of the selection panel.

Successful applicant will receive

- An artist fee of \$1,000.00 plus additional financial support for artwork production.
- A 12-week exhibition at SAM
- Support from the SAM Exhibitions Team to develop, deliver and install the successful exhibition.
- All exhibition signage including labels and a printed room guide or catalogue.
- Exhibition furniture such as plinths and AV equipment as available.
- Full suite of advertising and promotion for the exhibition.

Eligibility

- Applicants must live, work, or study within Greater Shepparton, Alpine, Benalla, Campaspe, Greater Shepparton, Indigo, Mansfield, Mitchell, Moira, Murrindindi, Strathbogie, Towong, Wangaratta, and Wodonga.
- Applicants must be 20 years of age or older at the time of applying.
- Applicants must be an emerging artist who fit the following criteria:
 - Have undertaken specialised training in an artistic field, but not necessarily from a tertiary institution.
 - Are within the first five years of their career as a professional artist.



- Can be either unrepresented or represented by a commercial gallery and/or exhibited with a commercial gallery, but not had a solo exhibition at a regional or state public gallery in Victoria.
- Applicants must not have exhibited at SAM in a solo or group exhibition (excluding SAM OPEN and/or SAM Fresh) within the past two years (2023 – 2025).
- Applicants cannot be full-time employees or immediate family members of Shepparton Art Museum, SAM Ltd Board, and SAM Foundation Board and their advisory committees.
- Applicants must submit original work and be able to show a sustained commitment to their practice.
- Applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria requirements will be considered.

Selection Criteria

The selection panel will be considering the following criteria:

- That the exhibition proposal considers and is appropriate for the gallery space.
- That the applicant has a prior exhibition record and/or a demonstrated commitment to their creative practice.
- The applicant's art portfolio is of high artistic merit and the opportunity will benefit the artist's professional development.
 - Artworks included in the portfolio must be the applicant's original artwork and representative of the applicant's current studio practice. In general, artworks included should be less than 5 years old, but consideration will be given for materials and individual practices.
 - If artworks have been previously exhibited, please note where and when.
 - Artworks in the portfolio can be of any medium such as painting, photography, ceramics, bronze, woodwork, watercolour, graphite, charcoal, stone, video, and graphic design.
 - Example artworks can include hazardous materials, rust, or untreated organic material such as wood, plants, or animal matter; however, the artworks proposed to be exhibited at SAM cannot include those materials due to the potential risk to staff and the SAM Collection.



- The merit of the proposed exhibition idea or concept that the artist wishes to develop further in collaboration with SAM's Curator – Community.
- The Selection Panel will also be evaluating the applicant's ability to produce an exhibition of new artworks or build on an existing body of artwork. Availability to make the necessary time commitment will be considered.

Selection process

Once applications have closed

- SAM will convene the Selection Panel to review and assess all SAM Spotlight applications according to the selection criteria.
- The Selection Panel will select one application.
- SAM will contact the applicant to offer them the opportunity to exhibit.
- Acceptance of the offer to exhibit must be made in writing within 14 days. After this time, SAM will approach another applicant to exhibit or make alternative arrangements.
- All SAM Spotlight applicant(s) will be notified of the outcome of their proposal in early October 2025.

Application checklist

In addition to some general information and survey questions, the following will be requested in the application:

- A short artist biography and statement
- An artist CV - no more than 2 pages
- An artist portfolio as a .pdf that includes no more than 10 artworks and includes the artworks' title, medium, year and dimensions. For moving image, performance, or sound artworks a 'still' must be included of the artwork in the portfolio and a link provided to viewable files on Vimeo, YouTube, or the applicant's website.
- A brief proposal of the exhibition and artworks you plan to show and/or create.
- Proof of Public Liability Insurance (PLI) for exhibition installation or intention to get PLI if successful.
- Statement of availability. Few people are able to be full-time artists, particularly at the emerging stage. SAM acknowledges this and understands that applicants will have other commitments that will impact their availability to produce a new body of artwork within one year. The application will request that you outline your availability for the program, such as how many hours a week you devote to your studio practice currently, if you'll be able to increase that, and/or if you plan to include artwork already made or started.



Questions? Email Caroline Esbenschade, Curator – Community at cesbenschade@sheppartonartmuseum.com.au

Application form is available online via sheppartonartmuseum.com.au