Howard County Arts Council

Paint It! Ellicott City 2026

Request for Applications

Deadline: April 13, 2026

Howard County Arts Council
8360 Court Ave
Ellicott City, MD 21043
410.313.ARTS (2787)
info@hocoarts.org
hocoarts.org

The Howard County Arts Council (HoCo Arts) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to enrich and uplift our communities by advancing the arts, artists, and arts organizations for the benefit of all. To fulfill its mission, HoCo Arts offers a wide variety of programs and opportunities - grants to local and regional arts and cultural groups; exhibits; affordable studio, performance and meeting space for artists; classes for children and adults; a quarterly newsletter; arts advocacy and awareness initiatives; and others that are essential to artistic development in Howard County. HoCo Arts also manages a 32,000 sq. ft. multi-disciplinary art center that provides opportunities in the arts for people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities. The center features two professional galleries, a 100-seat black box performance space, meeting and classrooms, a dance studio, individual artists' studios, and administrative offices.

Howard County Arts Council receives major support from Howard County Government, Maryland State Arts Council, The Reis Foundation, Inc, The Isadore & Bertha Gudelsky Family Foundation, The Altscher Family, COPT Defense Properties, Ellen Flynn Giles & Ronald H. Giles, Howard Hughes, Elizabeth & Ken Lundeen, M&T Bank, SECU.

Howard County Arts Council
Paint It! Ellicott City 2026
Request for Applications

Event & Exhibit Description

Paint It! Ellicott City is an annual event that brings artists and spectators interested in the plein air tradition to Historic Ellicott City in early June. Juried artists set up their easels around the historic district, enjoying a summer weekend as they capture the picturesque mill town and all its charms. Juried artists will paint in the historic district of Ellicott City, Maryland for three days, creating original artwork that will be shown in a six-week exhibit at the Capitoline Center's Gallery I. Juried artists will also enjoy a welcome reception, an exhibit reception, and juror's awards.

Event Sponsors*
The Flynn-Giles Family
The Family of Gino Manelli
Historic Ellicott City Inc.
Patapsco Heritage Greenway
Blossoms of Hope
The Family of Carole Zink
Artists' Gallery

*as of 5/7/2025

Application & Eligibility Requirements

All artists working en plein air, in a variety of media including oil, acrylic, pastel, or watercolor, aged 18 years and older, are eligible to apply. Applications for digital work will not be accepted.

Artists wishing to be considered must submit an application via Submittable with the following:

- Contact information
- Artwork Portfolio: Up to 4 images of visual artwork examples including medium, dimensions, and year completed. Images must be submitted in .jpg format. Files must be labeled with the last name and corresponding entry number (Smith_1.jpg). Files should be less than 1 MB.
- Entries must be submitted digitally by 11:59 PM on April 13th.
- Artists must submit a non-refundable entry fee of $30 at https://www.hocoarts.org/exhibit/paint-it-ellicott-city/

To apply, visit https://hocoarts.submittable.com/

Entry Fee

A non-refundable entry of $30 is due with entry. All fees go toward awards and costs for the event. Submit fee here.

Timeline

February-April 13: Call open for juried artist submissions
April 13: Deadline to apply
Late April: Acceptance notification
June 3: Artist kick-off reception hosted via Zoom
June 4-7: Paint Out in Ellicott City
June 8: Opening reception & award ceremony
June 8 - August 1: Exhibit open to the public

Juror: Valerie Craig

Valerie Craig has drawn and painted nearly all of her life. Known for her impressionist approach to color and light, Craig is inspired by urban and rural landscapes, and the beauty of ordinary moments. Like many artists, Craig is a lifelong student, always seeking, searching and growing in her painting journey. Craig paints out of doors whenever she can and finds great inspiration in her familiar Pennsylvania landscape. Intrepid and fascinated by atmosphere, Valerie is happiest at her easel in the midst of a snowstorm, thick fog or even a nor'easter. She leads workshops both nationally and internationally and is a respected juror for painting exhibitions.

Sales

A 20% commission will be retained by HoCo Arts on all sales of artwork included in the exhibit, as well as any sales during the plein air event. Work is not required to be for sale.

Awards

A minimum of $8,000 in cash awards will be presented, including the $2,000 Gino Award, named in honor of Gino Manelli (1915-2010), an avid artist and cyclist who established his art studio in Ellicott City in 1966. Over a 70-year artistic career, Gino created landscapes, portraits, and still lives in a range of media and styles with dramatic color use and a dynamic palette knife, creating emotional, engaging artwork. His work is in galleries in the United States and Europe.

The Arts Council is seeking funding for additional awards.

Agreement

The decision of the juror is final. All accepted work must remain in the gallery for the duration of the exhibit. HoCo Arts reserves the right to photograph artwork and artists for publicity and educational purposes and to use images of submitted work for the same purposes. HoCo Arts reserves the right to reject work not suitably presented. All work must be original, no reproductions (including giclee, commercially printed, or computer-generated reproductions of paintings, drawings, etc.) Submission of an entry constitutes understanding and agreement with all conditions mentioned in the prospectus.

Application

All application materials must be submitted online by 11:59pm on April 13, 2026. Faxed, mailed, emailed, or late applications will not be accepted.

Apply online at https://hocoarts.submittable.com/

Questions can be directed to exhibits@hocoarts.org