

## 2026 Creative Fellowship: Call for Proposals

Providence Public Library is now accepting applications for our 2026 Creative Fellowship. The 2026 Creative Fellow will create new, original work in the field of **two-dimensional art or illustration** related to materials in Special Collections.



### About the Creative Fellowship

Providence Public Library offers an annual Creative Fellowship for an artist to create new work from our historical materials. Creative Fellows perform in-depth research in our collections, using images, artifacts and text as source material and/or inspiration.

Each year's fellowship focuses on a specified artistic discipline, rotating between visual art, performance, writing, and music/sound on a four-year cycle.

In addition to new work, a successful Creative Fellowship results in innovative, engaging **programming** and measurable instances of **engagement and learning** on the part of both the Fellow and other community members. Our hope is that a stipend alongside supported, immersive research allows the Fellow to explore new directions, topics, or methods in their own work and creative process.

Read more about Special Collections [here](#); applicants are encouraged to [make an appointment](#) to meet with Special Collections staff.

### Research Process and Fellowship Products

The Special Collections research process is designed to be iterative and immersive, with the Fellow receiving extensive personal attention and support through consultations with librarians and curators, and assistance in selecting research materials to support and enrich their research interests.

Fellows may choose to focus their research on a particular collection, format, topic, or time period, or they may choose to spend time with a broad selection of Special Collections materials in support of their Fellowship project. Fellows may also augment their research with items from PPL's digital collections and databases, circulating collections, or historic periodicals.

After performing research in Special Collections, the Creative Fellow will create an original work of two-dimensional art or illustration.

Fellowship products will include:

- An original work of **two-dimensional art or illustration**.
- An interactive workshop or artist's talk open to members of the public.
- Archival-quality documentation of the Fellow's new work for inclusion in PPL's Special Collections in the form of photographs, video, prints, or other paper-based or digital formats.
- Ongoing documentation of the fellow's research and creative process for PPL's social media.

## **Stipend and Benefits**

The 2026 Creative Fellow will receive a stipend in the amount of \$1500, with an additional amount of up to \$500 reimbursable for supplies or materials costs.

Other benefits include extensive research support from Special Collections staff as described above, with opportunities to build connections with librarians, archivists, and curators in other local libraries and museums.

## **Timeline**

September 24, 5-6:30pm: Special Collections open house for interested potential applicants (send an email to [jgoffin@provlib.org](mailto:jgoffin@provlib.org) if you're interested in attending)

October 26, 2025: Application materials are due by 5 p.m.

November 12, 2025: Creative Fellow is selected; all applicants will receive notification of their status on or before this date.

November 2025 - April 2026: Creative Fellow performs self-paced research in the Library's Special Collections. The Fellow documents their research and creative process for inclusion in PPL's social media.

April 1 - June 30, 2026: The Fellow's work should be completed and viewable by the public during this window. Additionally, artist's talk/workshop will be scheduled during this time, with date based on the Fellow's availability and preference.

June 30, 2026: Fellow's final products must be delivered on or before this date.

## **Eligibility**

Application is open to practicing artists 16 years of age or older.

## **How to Apply**

All proposals must be submitted electronically by the end of the business day on **October 26, 2025**. Applications should be emailed to:

special\_collections@provlib.org

**A complete application consists of the following (details about each below):**

- proposal in body of email
- link to a portfolio or examples of previous work
- short artist biography (PDF) as email attachment

## **Proposal**

The written proposal should describe the applicant's potential project with some specificity. (For example: "I intend to create a zine illustrated in the manner of 19th-century textile labels....") We understand that projects grow and change during the research process, sometimes dramatically, but want to know what you have in mind in terms of format and scope.

The proposal should also address how the applicant would work within the Fellowship's budgetary limitations, how the applicant envisions Special Collections materials influencing or being integrated into their work, and how the finished project will be made accessible to or viewable by the public.

## **Work samples**

Please submit 3-6 recent, representative samples of your work. These can be submitted as files attached to your proposal, or you can link to online content or to a Dropbox or GoogleDrive folder. If you would like to provide context or explanation for any of the work samples, feel free to attach a description in a PDF document.

**Description of experience:** A résumé or written narrative of the applicant's knowledge and experience in performance is required.

**Artist biography:** Please submit a short artist biography to help us understand you, your context, your approach, and your inspiration.

### **Review Process**

The 2026 Creative Fellow will be selected based on the quality and consistency of work samples; the potential of the proposed project to be accessible and interesting to a diverse audience; and the connections between the proposed project and PPL's Special Collections materials.

**Questions?** Contact Special Collections at [special\\_collections@provlib.org](mailto:special_collections@provlib.org).