

“The Canvas of Leadership”

Aspen Leadership Seminars Cover Art Contest – Call for Submissions

WHAT

“The Canvas of Leadership” Cover Art Contest hosted by the Aspen Institute’s Leadership Seminars department invites artists to creatively explore themes of leadership, values, and dialogue through visual art. This Contest celebrates the power of artistic expression to inspire reflection and human-centered leadership and may feature the winning artwork on the cover of the Aspen Executive Seminar book—allowing Seminar participants to further engage with the ideas that have shaped our world and explore what we owe ourselves, our organizations, and our communities as leaders.

This year’s Contest invites artists to reflect on and creatively express the following concepts:

- **Fortify and undeceive ourselves**
- **Intentional dialogue**
- **Leading forward**
- **Humanistic leadership**

We’re looking for original artworks that speak to the transformative power of leadership, dialogue, and reflection in today’s complex world. In this context, “art” is defined as a printed or digital artwork that mixes imagery and text to convey a message or idea.

Submissions will be accepted electronically through an online [Entry Form](#) and must comply with the [2025 Rules & Guidelines](#).

Entries must be submitted by **11:59 p.m. Hawaii-Aleutian Standard Time on September 9, 2025**. Winners will be announced in **October 2025**.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for the Contest, submitting artists must be residents of the United States, and 18 years or older by the time they submit their entry to the Contest. Additionally, employees, officers, directors, and fellows (current or former) of the Aspen Institute (“Institute Persons”) and members of the immediate families (parents, spouses, children, siblings) or individuals residing in the household (whether related or not) of any Institute Persons, are not eligible to participate in this Contest.

SUBMISSION PROCESS

- Review the [2025 Rules & Guidelines](#).
- Create or identify your piece of art
 - Submissions may include painting, drawing, graphic design, or photography.
 - Orientation: portrait
 - Dimensions at least 8.5”x11” (2550px W x 3300px H) and no larger than 24”x36” (3600 x 5400 pixels).
 - Quality: 250 to 300 pixels per inch (ppi)
 - Preferred Format Options: .png, .jpg, .jpeg

- Non-original computer-generated images, images generated using Artificial Intelligence (AI), and traced images will not be accepted or judged.
- We are seeking original artwork responsive to the Contest theme.
- Artwork may explore any side of the concepts above. Please note that the Aspen Institute is a non-partisan, non-profit organization and submissions including partisan political themes will not be eligible for consideration.
- Write a brief artist's statement of no more than 200 words to explain your inspiration and how the submission speaks to the Contest theme(s).
- Submit your artwork using the [Entry Form](#), including up to three high-resolution images.
- Review and sign the Entry Agreement on the [Entry Form](#).

[READ THE 2025 RULES & GUIDELINES](#)

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JUDGING & USE

Submissions will be evaluated by a panel of judges on:

- Creativity and originality
- Alignment with the Contest's themes
- Emotional and conceptual impact and aesthetic merit
- Application of the piece for possible inclusion on the Aspen Executive Seminar book cover and for use in connection with other materials

Judges will select up to 6 winners.

- **Up to (1) Grand Prize Winner: \$5,000 USD**
- **Up to (5) Finalist Winners: \$1,000 USD each**

The Aspen Institute reserves the right to choose fewer than five (5) Finalists if, in its sole discretion, an insufficient number of qualified entries are received. Art Submissions may be displayed in a virtual gallery on the Aspen Institute website. The Grand Prize may be featured on the front cover of the 2026 Aspen Executive Seminar reader. Finalists may also be displayed on other Aspen Leadership Seminar materials to spark meaningful conversations and celebrate the Institute's 75-year history of working with leaders.

Questions can be directed to seminars.info@aspeninstitute.org .

ABOUT THE ASPEN INSTITUTE

The Aspen Institute is a global nonprofit organization committed to realizing a free, just, and equitable society. Founded in 1949, the Institute drives change through dialogue, leadership, and action to help solve the most important challenges facing the United States and the world.

The Aspen Institute has earned a reputation for gathering diverse, nonpartisan thought leaders, creatives, scholars and members of the public to address some of the world's most complex problems through the melding of art, philosophy, and civil dialogue.

Today the Aspen Institute is an educational and policy studies organization based in Washington, DC with an Aspen, Colorado campus designed by Bauhaus-trained artist Herbert Bayer. Its mission is to foster leadership based on enduring values and to provide a nonpartisan venue for dealing with critical issues.

ABOUT THE ASPEN LEADERSHIP SEMINARS DEPARTMENT

The most difficult decisions leaders make are moral, not technical. For 75-years, the Aspen Leadership Seminars department provided individuals and organizations what they need most: time, space, and a structured environment to become more self-aware, more self-correcting, and ultimately more effective leaders.

To foster leadership and build teams whose decisions are guided by humanistic values and grounded in purpose, the Seminars department offers residential leadership development seminars in Aspen, CO for individuals as well as bespoke custom leadership seminars for organizations.

Aspen Leadership Seminars challenge individuals to think more deeply, listen more attentively, and refine their ability to lead in an increasingly complex and conflicting world. Seminars participants engage in challenging conversations about enduring questions of ethical and effective leadership, gaining a greater capacity to lead with courage and conviction.