

***Creative Arts Fellowship Application***

**2026 Application**

1. **Purpose:**

The purpose of the *Creative Arts Fellowship* is to nurture the creative development of promising student artists and writers interested in producing work inspired and influenced by the natural world. The fellowship combines field experiences, reflection and immersion within a creative community, and the space and time to focus on your craft. Pierce Cedar Creek Institute (PCCI) believes diverse perspectives and backgrounds can help the entire community grow and develop. PCCI hopes this fellowship will result in meaningful and possibly life-changing learning experiences for emerging student artists and writers. Visual art projects can include (but are not limited to): painting, photography and video, drawing, printmaking, and other projects. Creative writing projects can include (but are not limited to): fiction, essays, non-fiction, poetry, drama, hybrids, and/or other forms.

Fellows may apply to one or more of the following:

1) *Student-directed Art or Writing Project:* Artists will create their own artwork in their preferred medium(s) on a set of works inspired and informed by their time and experience at PCCI. Project work may be individual or collaborative with other students or faculty.

2) *Client-based Art or Writing Project:* Artists will undergo the process of a client-based artwork experience, working on a project based on PCCI staff needs. The experience will include a project brief; discussions about vision, purpose, style, scope, and budget; progress updates; and regular feedback. The final product(s) will be used at the discretion of PCCI for educational or marketing purposes.

While the overlap between visual art and creative writing projects is inevitable, applicants are recommended to focus their application on either the visual arts or creative writing. Artists are encouraged to explore ideas that reinforce PCCI’s mission *to inspire appreciation and stewardship of our environment*, and connections between art and research projects are encouraged. Research themes at PCCI include:

* + - Conservation of threatened and endangered species
    - Water quality monitoring and management (e.g., E.coli, HAB, shoreline health)
    - Invasive species monitoring and management
    - Environmental issues impacting human health
    - Species and habitat resiliency to climate change
    - Social science of environmental best management practices implementation

and climate change communication

Fellows are expected to work full-time as part of a creative community in residence at the Institute from June 15 through July 24, 2026 (six weeks). During this time, they will work with an onsite writing or visual art mentor to help guide them through the experience and provide feedback on their work. In addition, fellows will participate in educational/discussion sessions and service opportunities with other artists, onsite researchers and natural resource fellows, and PCCI staff.

1. **Eligibility:**

The *Creative Arts Fellowship* program is available to undergraduate college students attending one of the member colleges or universities of the Pierce Cedar Creek Consortium (see list at <https://www.cedarcreekinstitute.org/research/>). Recent graduates can participate; however, they are only eligible if they graduate within six months of the program's start. Applicants must be over 18 at the beginning of the project. Applicants who are not citizens of the United States may be able to participate but should contact PCCI prior to applying.

1. **Fellowship Award:**

Fellows will be part of a multi-disciplinary cohort of artists and writers in residence at Pierce Cedar Creek Institute from Monday, June 15, through Friday, July 24, 2026 (six weeks). Additionally, all fellows will share their work at the end of the BFS End of Summer Celebration on August 5, 2026.

Fellows will receive a $2,500 stipend. Fellowship stipends will be paid in two installments, the first towards the beginning of the program and the second after the summary of their work and experience is submitted.

Fellows may be reimbursed up to $100 for supply expenses with approval from PCCI staff. Fellows should contact PCCI staff for approval of supplies before purchasing.

Living onsite is not required but strongly encouraged. PCCI provides housing including a private bedroom and shared bathrooms, common areas, and kitchen. Provided food service includes breakfast and lunch Monday through Friday. Fellows will need to provide for all other meals. Visual artists and writers will have access to a classroom and other spaces at PCCI that can be used as studio, work, and meeting spaces.

The announcement of the fellows will be made by March 30, 2026.

1. **Responsibilities and Reporting:**

Fellowship awardees must sign a participation agreement and return it to PCCI by April 10, 2026. The agreement signifies the fellow’s commitment to participate in the program and follow all of PCCI’s guidelines and conditions.

The following are required for all fellows:

1. Participate in an orientation program at the Institute on Saturday, April 18, 2026.
2. Complete all program paperwork, including a background check.
3. Participate in all aspects of the summer program, including regular meetings and activities and service experiences (land management workdays, public events).
4. Provide a progress presentation on July 7, 2026 and share some of their work with the general public at a Field Station Tour (July 16, 2026) and an artists’ showcase/summer celebration program on August 5, 2026.
5. Submit a summary of their work and experience by August 7, 2026. All documents and reports submitted to Pierce Cedar Creek Institute will become the property of PCCI to use and duplicate at the Institute’s discretion.
6. Complete an online evaluation of the program.

Pierce Cedar Creek Institute will be given rights to use the works completed in relation to the *Creative Arts Fellowship* program for promotional and educational purposes. In addition to presentations at PCCI, fellows are strongly encouraged to present their work elsewhere.

**Application and Guidelines**

1. **Application:**

Applicants must e-mail their materials as a Word or PDF file to Ellen Holste ([eholste@cedarcreekinstitute.org](mailto:eholste@cedarcreekinstitute.org)) by February 27, 2026. The application should have 1-inch margins and be in 11- or 12-point font. Up-to-date versions of the application are available at: <https://www.cedarcreekinstitute.org/research/>

Applications must include:

* 1. A completed **cover sheet** (see below).
  2. Maximum two-page **Artist Statement and description of why the applicant wants to participate in the program**. Questions to help guide this statement include: What is your relationship to the natural world? What do you hope to gain out of the fellowship? How will the fellowship further your creative endeavors? What unique perspectives and ideas do you bring to the creative community? What do you hope to accomplish during the fellowship? What is your preferred creative writing or art form?
  3. A brief proposed timeline for completing your proposed creativing writing or art form *(if applying for the student-directed art or writing project)*
  4. **Resume**
  5. **Unofficial transcript** reflecting courses completed and grades received.
  6. **Recommendation letter** from a faculty member.
  7. Representative **work samples**. Maximum of 15 pages for writing applications and 10 pieces for art applications. Must represent work completed by the applicant within the last three years. If possible, please share previous work in the medium that you would like to explore while at PCCI.

Questions are welcome – please contact Ellen Holste – Research and Community Engagement Manager at [eholste@cedarcreekinstitute.org](mailto:eholste@cedarcreekinstitute.org) or 269-721-4170

1. **Award Evaluation Criteria**

Fellowship award decisions for the *Creative Arts Fellowship* program will be based on the strength of the portfolio and recommendation letter, how the fellowship experience will further the applicant’s work and experience, and how the applicant will contribute to the creative community.

***Creative Arts Fellowships Application***

##### Application - Cover Sheet

***Deadline for Application****: February 27, 2026*

# **Student**

Name:       College or University:

Local/Campus Address:

Permanent Address:

Phone:       E-mail:

Major:       Emphasis (if applicable):

Anticipated graduation date:       Current GPA:

Driver’s License State and Number (for background check)

Are you authorized to work in the U.S.?

**Fellowship Interest –** Please rank or mark the fellowships you would like to be considered for:

      Student-directed Visual Art Project

      Client-based Visual Art Project

      Student-directed Creative Writing Project

      Client-based Creative Writing Project

**Faculty Reference**

Name:       Department:

Address:

Phone:       E-mail:

**Second Reference**

Name:       Department:

Address:

Phone:       E-mail:

**Signatures -** By signing below, applicants confirm that all information provided is true and correct to the best of their knowledge. If awarded, fellows will follow the requirements of the program guidelines and commit to full participation in the fellowship program.

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Signature Date



701 W. Cloverdale Road, Hastings, MI 49058 | 269-721-4190 | [www.cedarcreekinstitute.org](http://www.cedarcreekinstitute.org)