



Policies for Participation

June 2026 Studio Tour

June 5 – 7, 2026

Deadline to Apply: March 1, 2026, 5pm

We are deeply grateful to our dedicated Studio Tour Committee, as well as the galleries and artists whose talent and hard work make the Studio Tour a memorable experience for visitors.

Participants must meet the criteria below and return their completed application and payment by March 1, 2026, at 5PM EST. The Studio Tour Committee will review all applications to ensure they are complete, accurate, and meet the outlined requirements. Applications must be completed through the online application link which can be found on the Toe River Arts website or directly with the link below:

Application Link: https://secure.lqlforms.com/form_engine/s/s-i502TDFMbOFtAMhznRbQ

**The separate applications for Gallery and Artists have been combined into one application link.*

Application submission note:

All artists and galleries must submit an image for the Studio Tour Guide. To ensure high quality printing, please submit a high resolution jpg. A square image is preferred. Please note images may be cropped to fit the Studio Tour Guide format.

If you need help filling out the online application, please call JoAnn Townsend at 828-765-0520.

Please read all policies in their entirety before completing a Studio Tour application.

Artist Eligibility

- All work sold must be original and handcrafted. Work created using commercial kits, stencils, or prefabricated forms alone is not acceptable.
- Artists must be current Toe River Arts promotional level members (\$125) at the time of the application deadline and through the duration of the Tour. Please check with staff if you are unsure of your membership status.
- Artists must have studios in or live in either Mitchell or Yancey counties.
- Guest artists from outside of Mitchell or Yancey counties can participate but must be hosted by a Toe River Arts artist located in Mitchell or Yancey counties and must join Toe River Arts at the \$125 level to participate.

Gallery Eligibility

- Galleries must be current members of Toe River Arts at the time of the Studio Tour application deadline and through the duration of the Tour.
- The primary purpose of the business is to be a gallery representing multiple artists at a fixed location or have online shops.
- Galleries must maintain regular hours of operation for at least six months of the year.

Annual Membership Fees

- Individual Artist Promotional Level (\$125) – a single artist
- Collaborative Promotional Level (\$125) – two or more artists operating under a single business name, creating work together, promoted as one entity.

- Under 18 (no charge) – must have a parent or guardian participating on the tour.
- Gallery (\$150) – selling art is the primary purpose of the business, with regular hours at least six months of the year.

Studio Tour Participation/Application Fees

To continue delivering a high-quality Studio Tour experience, the participation fee will increase by \$25 for individual artists and \$50 for galleries in 2026. This adjustment helps offset rising costs, including expanded advertising efforts and the significantly increased expense of printing the Studio Tour Guide, which has more than doubled in the last 5 years. These investments are essential to promoting participating artists, reaching new audiences, and ensuring the tour remains visible, accessible, and successful for everyone involved. A marketing summary will be presented at our information sessions on 2/7/2026 and 2/21/2026.

- Individual artist - \$125
 - Two or more artists collaborating to create a single body of work are considered “one artist.” (\$125)
 - Two or more artists working in the same studio creating multiple and distinct bodies of work are considered “two artists.” (\$125 each)
 - Artist participating at a host studio - \$125
 - The participation fee is waived for high school artists age 18 and younger who are participating in their parent’s studio. Parents must participate in the tour.
- Gallery - \$200

Participation Sites & Hubs

What is a Hub?

A **Hub** is a centralized, easy-to-access location in areas where multiple artists exhibit together during the Studio Tour, offering visitors a welcoming space to experience a variety of work in one stop.

Why Hubs?

As our Studio Tour continues to grow, we are offering a hub model to better serve both our artists and our visitors. This approach creates welcoming, clearly marked destinations where visitors can easily orient themselves, discover multiple artists at one stop, and spend more time engaging with the work rather than navigating long distances. Bringing the boundary in closer helps reduce confusion, travel fatigue, and uneven traffic, while encouraging stronger connections, shared energy, and a more vibrant experience overall. Our goal is a tour that feels accessible, cohesive, and rewarding—for artists, collectors, and first-time visitors alike—while setting the stage for a sustainable future of the Studio Tour.

The hub model also creates meaningful opportunities for artists whose home studios may present challenges for visitors—whether due to steep or narrow driveways, limited parking, or accessibility concerns. By participating in a hub, artists can share their work in a setting that is easy to find, comfortable to navigate, and welcoming to a wider range of visitors. This approach helps ensure that all artists are equally discoverable, reduces barriers for collectors and guests, and allows the focus to remain where it belongs: on the artwork and the conversations around it.

How is a Hub placement different from being a “guest” in someone’s studio?

While a Hub functions similarly to a Host site, it is designed to support artists in outlying areas by placing them in a centralized, community-based location. Artists who choose to participate in a Hub will be assigned to the Hub closest to their physical address. Hub artists must be residents of Mitchell or Yancey Counties. Artists who are able are still encouraged to host guest artists in their individual studios.

Hub Locations:

Burnsville
Bakersville
Spruce Pine
Micaville
Celo

Participation Sites

- New and existing artists outside of the identified “zones (see map)” are encouraged to participate in a Hub location or to become a guest in another studio. Participation in a Hub is completely optional. Artists who are successful and comfortable in their current locations are welcome to remain there.
- Artists participating in a Hub are responsible for their own set up and displays, i.e tables, chairs, lighting, displays and inside signage.
- Participation sites must have a physical address in Mitchell or Yancey County.
- Restricted to either studios or galleries.
- Host Artists/Studios may have up to five participating artists in any single studio (including host[s]).
- Must be open all the designated hours and days of the Tour weekend (10am to 5pm, Friday-Sunday).

Participating in the Studio Tour is an opportunity for Toe River Arts member artists to be highlighted, celebrated for their contributions to the craft community, and to open their studios to the public in order to promote their work. To honor this purpose, artists are asked to limit items for sale during tour weekend to their own work or that of registered guest artists. **Studios offering work by artists who are not officially participating in the tour will be disqualified from future participation.**

The Studio Tour Committee will review all applications for completeness, quality, and adherence to tour policies. This process helps ensure a fair and equitable experience for all participating artists and galleries.

Studio Tour Exhibition: May 16 - June 7, 2026 – **PLEASE READ CAREFULLY**

Studio Tour Exhibition Guidelines

- Individual Tour participants may submit up to 2 pieces of artwork.
- Collaborating artists and galleries may submit up to 2 pieces of artwork. (Gallery submissions do not have to be from current Toe River Arts members)
- All work displayed in the Studio Tour Exhibition must be for sale, please price work at its retail value.
- Toe River Arts retains 40% commission on sold work
- All work being submitted for the Studio Tour Exhibition must be dropped off at the Toe River Arts Kokol Gallery (269 Oak Ave, Spruce Pine) between 5/2/26 - 5/11/26 between 10:30am - 5pm and must be display-ready.
- Please be prepared to fill out the exhibition paperwork with your name & contact info, the title, medium and retail price of work.
- No work will be accepted after the deadline of May 11, 2026.
- Please pick your exhibition work up between June 9 - 13, 2026.
- Toe River Arts reserves the right to refuse or limit work too large, not ready for hanging, or for other reasons determined to not be in the best interest of Toe River Arts.

Following the exhibition closing, work left for more than 60 days becomes the property of Toe River Arts.

Payment for Exhibition Work Sold

- All work displayed in the Studio Tour Exhibition must be for sale, please price at its retail value.
(Note: Toe River Arts retains 40% commission on sales)
- Payments from works sold at exhibitions will be made by check or direct deposit on the 15th of the month following the sale.

Volunteering

- Participants in the June Studio Tour are expected to volunteer for one of the events below or pay a \$40 non-volunteer fee. You will be asked to volunteer a minimum of two hours:
 - Fire on the Mountain Blacksmith Festival: Saturday, April 25th, 2026
 - Studio Tour Exhibition Install: May 11 - 15, 2026
 - Studio Tour Reception Support: Friday, June 5th, 5:30pm-7:30pm
 - Studio Tour Exhibition Deinstall: June 9 - 13, 2026
 - 50th Anniversary Celebration Weekend: July 24 - 26, 2026
- Please indicate in the application your first, second and third choices of preference for a specific task and event from the areas above. Some of these tasks are limited to a first-come basis.
- You will have six months to fulfill your volunteer responsibility. If not fulfilled after six months, you will not be permitted in the next tour.

Additional Information

Information Sessions

Toe River Arts will host a series of informational sessions for artists to learn more about upcoming changes, ask questions, and share thoughts as we move forward together:

Saturday, February 7th, 1pm, Birdfoot in Burnsville

Saturday, February 21st, 1pm, Toe River Arts in Spruce Pine

Website and Social Media

- Please include a link to the Studio Tour page on your own website and social media posts:
<https://toeriverarts.org/the-journey/the-events/studio-tour/>
- Please share the Facebook event created by Toe River Arts as opposed to creating your own event. This will draw more attention to one event, making it more visible to other Facebook users.
- In addition to sharing the Facebook event on your page and in your stories, please send invites to your Facebook followers.

Studio Tour Committee

The Tour committee is made up of artists, staff and other interested individuals who are dedicated to making each tour the best it can be. Based on survey responses and the post-Tour committee meeting, concerns and improvements are discussed with resolutions made for Board approval. Meetings are held as needed. If you are interested in being part of the Tour Committee, please contact nealy@toeriverarts.org.



JOURNEY OF THE ARTS
ART OF THE JOURNEY

