



2025 ORANGE SHIRT DAY ARTWORK COMMISSION DETAILS AND TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS GUIDE

Background

The University of Saskatchewan (USask) Indigenous Space & Visual Symbols in the Health Sciences Committee is seeking work samples and brief concept proposals from local emerging or established Indigenous (First Nation, Métis, and Inuit) artists interested in helping acknowledge [Orange Shirt Day](#) and the National Day for Truth & Reconciliation on Sept. 30, 2025. **The preferred medium for this commission is an original physical painting or digital graphic design.**

Since 2019, this committee has worked with [Shop USask](#) to make non-college-specific orange shirts available to the USask and external community, with **proceeds directed toward a fund supporting the implementation of the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action](#) and to the artist responsible for the featured artwork.** To date, over \$49,000 has been raised.

Please note

The deadline to declare interest in this Call for Artists is Monday, April 14, 2025.

The form to declare of interest in this Call for Artists is accessible via <https://bookstore.usask.ca/call-for-artists.php>.

Shortlisted artists who have declared interest in this commission will be contacted once selected by the review committee and asked to proceed through the deybwewin | taapwaywin| tapwewin: Indigenous Truth Policy verification of Indigenous membership/citizenship with documentation process.

Before declaring interest, artists are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the following:

- The technical requirements and other details of the commission referenced in this guide (art dimensions, digital file formats where applicable, etc.).
 - For any questions related to technical requirements or declaring interest, please email collin.semenoff@usask.ca.
- [The Indigenous membership/citizenship verification process at the University of Saskatchewan](#) led and determined by the deybwewin | taapwaywin | tapwewin: Indigenous Truth Policy.
 - For any questions related to the verification process, please email indigenoustruthpolicy@usask.ca.

Indigenous membership/citizenship verification

Only Indigenous candidates will be considered for this project. As such, [verification of Indigenous membership/citizenship with documentation](#) is a condition of receiving this commission.

The University of Saskatchewan is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion, and is proud to support academic opportunities for Indigenous students. We continue to grow our partnerships with Indigenous communities across the province, nationally, and internationally and value the unique perspectives that Indigenous students, staff, and faculty provide to strengthen these relationships.

Verification of Indigenous membership/citizenship at the University of Saskatchewan is led and determined by the [deybwewin | taapwaywin | tapwewin: Indigenous Truth Policy](#) and standing committee in accordance with the processes developed to enact the policy.

To preview or access the verification system, please visit <https://indigenous.usask.ca/indigenous-initiatives/deybwewin-taapwaywin-tapwewin.php>.

NOTE: Applicants with a USask username (known as a Network Services Identifier or NSID) can upload their documentation via a secure portal on PAWS. Applicants external to USask can send documentation to indigenoustruthpolicy@usask.ca with a brief outline as to the purpose of sending in their information (e.g., declaring interest in the 2025 Call for Artists to create artwork for Orange Shirt Day). **Documentation is not to be submitted outside of the portal or recommended email address for this Call for Artists.**

Commission overview

- **The finished piece should be either an original painting or digital art file** (see technical requirements later in this document for more information).
 - The creative direction of the piece is at the discretion of the artist and will follow the proposal indicated in the declaration of interest submission as much as possible unless significant adjustments to that proposal are established and agreed upon in advance.
- **The selected artist will be asked to provide an artist's statement** explaining the meaning or inspiration behind the artwork. This statement will be used to provide cultural context to those interested in purchasing items bearing the artwork.
 - A **brief artist biography** is also requested for submission by the commission due date.
- The phrase "**Every Child Matters**" (without quotes) may be included in the artwork provided that it can be digitally isolated and reproduced without requiring significant labour by a graphic designer.
 - In cases where this text is not included by the artist, it will be added after the fact by a graphic designer.
- The selected artist is encouraged to **include a signature and the current year** on the piece. These elements will be included in reproductions if technically feasible.

- The submitted artwork should not include nudity or offensive visual content or language.
- An **invoice for the commission** will be required from the artist once the art is completed in order to expedite payment.
- To view examples of artwork used on previous Orange Shirt Day materials, visit <https://bookstore.usask.ca/call-for-artists.php>.

Deadlines and compensation

- The deadline to declare interest in this Call for Artists is Monday, April 14, 2025. The selected artist will be asked to sign a contract for the commission and provide the completed piece no later than **Monday, June 16, 2025**.
- **The fee for this piece will be based on the quote provided by the selected artist on the declaration of interest form and will include an additional licensing fee of 15% of the retail price of all items sold using the featured artwork.**
 - Any other usage of the artwork (outside of communications related to the availability and sales of these items) will require artist permission and be licensed at the same 15% rate.
 - Any materials or supplies used in the creation of the commission will be provided by the artist and considered paid for through the licensing agreement and payment of the agreed-upon quote informed by the artist's declaration of interest.
- Compensation is largely dependent upon the artist adhering to the general intent of the creative proposal included in the declaration of interest submission as well as the technical logistics of the commission requirements.

Technical requirements

- **The finished piece should be either an original painting or digital art file.**
 - If the selected artist creates a painting, it should be possible to photograph or scan it for conversion into a digital file required by the shirt manufacturer. **The preferred size of a painting is 18" wide x 24" high.**
 - The painting should be created in a way which is easy to digitally isolate the artwork without substantially altering it (e.g., no complex elements that could not be digitized or intricate backgrounds that would need to be trimmed or erased before reproduction onto Orange Shirt Day items).
 - **The preferred size of a digital file is 12" wide x 14" high at 300dpi in vector format with each colour isolated to its own unflattened layer or group if possible.**
 - Be sure to leave enough room for "Every Child Matters" text to be included without exceeding a finished 12"x14" size.
 - The materials/supplies used in the creation of the commission will be provided by the artist and considered paid for through the licensing agreement and payment of the agreed-upon quote provided in the artist's declaration of interest submission.

Visual composition requirements

ARTWORK

(painting, digital artwork, or other medium that can be easily converted into a digital file for professional reproduction)



The artwork above does not have elements that can be easily isolated for reproduction without cropping out (and taking liberties with) parts of the artist's work or shrinking the piece into an awkward shape and placement.

REPRODUCTIONS

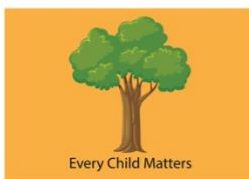


These examples have elements that can have the background removed or be digitally isolated and reproduced without significantly altering the original vision of the artist.

The "Every Child Matters" text can be incorporated into the original piece (if it can be digitally isolated) or it can be added by USask afterward. The "Every Child Matters" text can be the feature or a supporting element of the artwork.

The colours used in the artwork should be visually compatible with an orange background once placed on a shirt.

NOTE: A USask logo will be placed on all reproduced items bearing the artwork and "Every Child Matters" language. Inclusion of the artist's signature and current year is encouraged and will be included on all reproductions if technically feasible.



Digital file specifications

Print files play a critical role in the way artwork is replicated onto materials — especially when working with clothing. As such, there are a number of digital file requirements that must be met in order to most accurately replicate an artist's work while reducing any issues that would impact quality or delay production and the delivery date for orange shirts to be made available to the USask community in time for Orange Shirt Day on Sept. 30.

In cases where a *digital* artist has been awarded this commission, support is available from the University of Saskatchewan to help prepare the artist's file and make any adjustments required by Shop USask's shirt manufacturing partners; however **the following criteria are considered best practices by most custom t-shirt printers.**

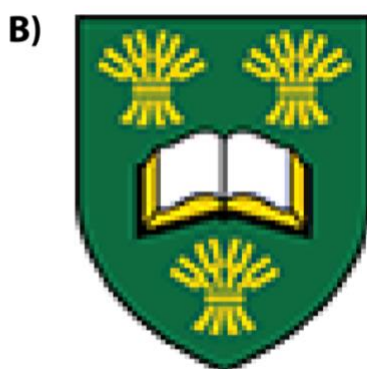
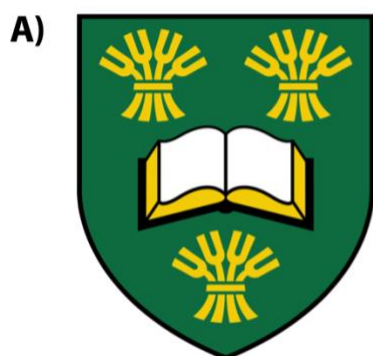
- The artwork should be vector-based. AI or EPS format is preferred.
- Each colour used in the piece should be isolated to its own unflattened layer or group wherever possible.
- Any use of clip art or other stock vector elements (copyright-free or otherwise) is not permitted. Submitted designs will be considered original work created by the artist unless indicated otherwise by the artist.

Understanding vector and raster images

What is a vector image file?

A *vector* image file is a type of graphic file that uses mathematical equations to define shapes, lines, curves, and colours. Unlike *raster* images (like photos, or other JPG and PNG files) which are made up of pixels, vector files are resolution-independent and can be scaled to any size without losing quality. Common vector file formats include AI, EPS, and SVG.

[Learn more about vector files.](#)



In these examples, Image "A" is vector-based (curves and lines with mathematical calculations) and Image "B" is raster-based (pixel-based curves and lines).

Key features of vector files

Scalability: You can resize the image infinitely to fit any size without distortions such as blurriness or pixelation.

Editability: Each element (line, shape, etc.) can be manipulated individually in vector graphic software like Adobe Illustrator.

Best for logos and designs: Ideal for logos, illustrations, and designs that require flexibility in size and editing.

Can you save a non-vector image as a vector file?

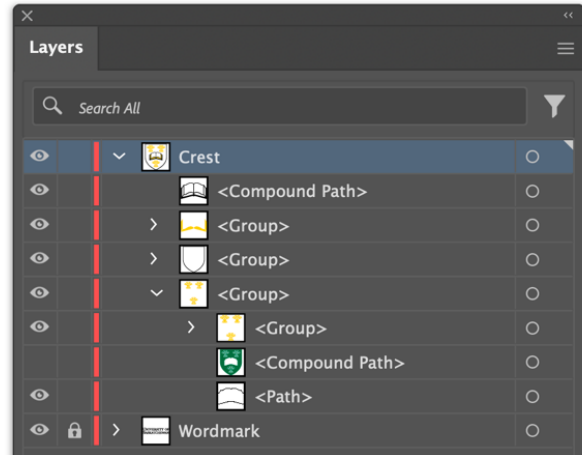
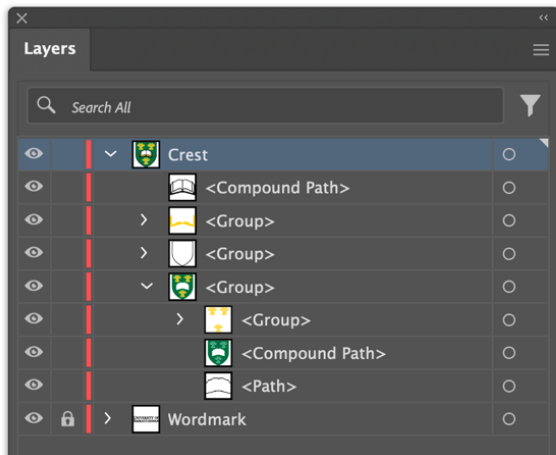
No. Raster images are pixel-based and simply saving them as the filetype used by vector files does not convert them into a scalable format. Vector images require access to software that either allows artists to draw and fill vector elements or to convert raster images into the vector files required by specialized printing software.

PLEASE NOTE: Vectoring works best with simple images, such as logos or simple illustrations. **Complex images can be vectorized but there is the potential for them to lose detail or for them to become overly simplified in the process.**

Layered and/or grouped vector files

When reproducing digital artwork onto materials such as t-shirts or other merchandise, manufacturers often require the ability to isolate individual colours — especially when the inks used may bleed or run into each other.

Designing artwork using layered and/or grouped digital files helps to keep different components of a design separate during the printing process to maintain the quality of the artwork once all design elements have been merged together.



In these examples created in Adobe Illustrator, the first vector file has components of the University of Saskatchewan logo grouped by colour. In the second example, the visibility of the green element has been turned off to demonstrate colour isolation. Professional printers require the ability to isolate colours when preparing customized products.

The process of working with layers and building a vector file can vary based on the software being used. A number of instructional videos are available on YouTube and elsewhere for those needing software-specific guidance.