



Together with our partners



Proudly presents

Tomorrow's World

Visual Arts Festival

2026 SYLLABUS

ENTRIES CLOSE:

Friday 7th August 2026, 3PM

Excel entry form **MUST** be submitted on email in excel format
AND hard copy **WITH** art submissions

Art Submissions will only be accepted at the "NEW QUAD" at
Hellenic Academy (formerly St Christopher's) on this date

NO LATE ENTRIES WILL BE ACCEPTED

AWARDS CEREMONY:

Saturday 10th October 2026 (by invitation ONLY)

ENTRY FEES:

USD 8 per entry; \$15 per group entry

PAYMENTS

National Institute of Allied Arts - CABS

CABS USD NOSTRO 1146616996

CABS ZWL 1002617219

Ecocash Merchant Number 314843

No ZWL payments accepted before 3rd August

Send POP; state school name as reference/depositor)

Swipe available at NIAA office

NIAA Office: Flat A5 Northern Heights, 5 J Tongogara Avenue, Harare

Office hours: 9am - 12:30pm Mon-Fri (during term time)

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Website: www.niaazim.co.zw Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NationalInstituteofAlliedArts>

Instagram: [niaazimbabwe](https://www.instagram.com/niaazimbabwe)

Dear Teachers and Art Educators,

It is a pleasure to share with you the **2026 NIAA Visual Arts Eisteddfod Curriculum**, centred around the theme '**Tomorrow's World**'. This year's programme invites learners of all ages to explore the future through imagination, creativity, and thoughtful engagement with the world around them. From magical ecosystems and imaginative animals at primary school level, to architectural design, environmental ethics, and questions of identity and technology in senior school, the curriculum has been designed to nurture both artistic skill and visionary thinking.

The curriculum encourages learners to see art not only as a means of creative expression, but also as a way of thinking about the future philosophically and imaginatively. Through themes such as evolving nature, future cities, intelligent ecosystems, and hybrid identities, students are invited to engage with ideas about sustainability, technological change, diversity, and the ethical challenges of tomorrow's world. At every level, the projects aim to support the development of visual literacy, creative problem-solving, and confidence in personal expression, while also strengthening observation, design thinking, and collaborative discussion.

We hope that this curriculum will serve as an inspiring framework that teachers can adapt to their own classroom contexts, encouraging learners to experiment, question, and imagine boldly. The Visual Arts Eisteddfod continues to celebrate the remarkable creativity of young artists across Zimbabwe, and we look forward to seeing how students interpret and bring these future-focused ideas to life through their artwork.

Thank you for supporting *the National Institute of Allied Arts!*

Warm regards,

Vanessa Hounsell

Visual Arts Director

VISUAL ARTS FESTIVAL GENERAL RULES

Please read these rules carefully - they apply to all entries.

It is the responsibility of Heads of Schools to ensure that they and their teachers have read and complied with the Visual Arts Festival regulations.

ENTRIES:

Entry Deadline: Friday 7th August

- All entries need to be submitted on the 2026 excel entry form ONLY (no other forms will be accepted) on email to **niaa@yoafrica.com** **AND** in hardcopy when entries are submitted
- Please leave a line between each Grade/Form on the excel entry form.
- Please use the specific sheets on the entry form for each Grade/Form entering.
 - Enter individual entries on the sheet labelled **"Individual Entry"**.
 - Enter group entries on the sheet labelled **"Group Entry"**.
- Pen names must be used on entry forms.
 - Please limit to 12 characters and place in the spaces provided.
 - Pen names **MUST BE UNIQUE WITHIN EACH SCHOOL**, regardless of Class/Grade/Form. E.g.—if "APPLE" is used in Grade 1, it cannot be used again in ANY other grade in the school.
- Senior Students please give your artwork an appropriate title (to be recorded in appropriate column on the entry form).
- **Maximum Number of entries:**
 - 10 individual and 3 group entries per Grade/Form per school, regardless of Title.
 - Any candidate may only enter **ONE** individual piece and may also be included in ONE group entry.
 - **ONLY** Forms 1 - 6 and Adults may enter photographs.
 - **MAXIMUM** of 3 out of the 10 individual entries per Form may be photography.
 - No group submissions for photography are allowed.

Artwork Submission: Friday 8th August Only

- At The New Quad, Hellenic Academy, off Tonbridge Way (formerly St Christopher's) – **DO NOT GO TO THE HELLENIC ACADEMY ONLY**
- Between 9.00 am and 3.30pm **ONLY**.
- Entries **WILL NOT** be accepted at ANY other time.
- **OUT-OF-HARARE SCHOOLS**
 - entries being sent by courier **MUST** reach the **NIAA offices before 12 NOON** on **THURSDAY 7TH AUGUST**.
 - **DO NOT SEND TO THE NEW QUAD (HELLENIC ACADEMY) OR HELLENIC ACADEMY AT ALL.**

Entry Fees:

- **Entry Fees are: INDIVIDUAL— USD 8.00; GROUP— USD 15.00**
- Please call the office cell number for the **NIAA rate** when making payments.
- No payments will be accepted before Monday 4th August.
- **NO LATE ENTRIES WILL BE ACCEPTED; NO ENTRIES ACCEPTED WITHOUT PAYMENT OR PROOF OF PAYMENT.**

Labels:

- **PLEASE ONLY USE LABELS SUPPLIED WITH THE 2026 SYLLABUS (SEPARATE DOCUMENT)**
- No other label formats will be accepted and the person submitting art will be asked to redo before the art will be accepted/checked.
- **SECURELY** attach the appropriate labels provided to the **bottom left corner** at the **front of each entry**. The right-hand part of this label is to be folded under so as not to disclose the candidate's name to the adjudicators. These will be unfolded to reveal the candidate's name at the exhibition. **See example on Page 8**

ENTRY GUIDELINES

- All titles are broad and flexible, requiring a unique, creative, individual, innovative and original response.
- Students may respond in either an observational or interpretive manner. Work may be abstract or figurative.
- Teachers may NOT compose work. Students must each compose their own work, and come up with their own ideas to ensure that all work is unique.
- **Duplicate compositions from one grade or form will be marked ungraded. (IE the first piece viewed will be marked and the rest will be ungraded)**
- Students should explore the use of tone, colour, materials and composition through the use of media such as watercolour, oils, chalk/oil pastels, ink, pencil, charcoal and other mediums or mixed media. Artwork may be two or three dimensional.
- Work **MUST BE MOUNTED** with a 5cm card border all around, unless 3D. (see page 8 for example)
- **ANY** work on hardboard or commercially-framed/mounted work will **NOT BE ACCEPTED OR MARKED**
- 3D work should be well constructed and made to stand or hang easily. It should also be strong to avoid breakage. Use strong glue to avoid pieces falling off. It should fit through a standard single door, and be able to be carried by ONE PERSON.
- **PLEASE DO NOT USE BLING, GOOGLY EYES, GLASS OR GLITTER FOR ANY ARTWORK WHATSOEVER**, with the **exception** of Grade 0/ECD pieces where glitter MAY be used in line with the title. (Use in ANY OTHER submissions WILL result in disqualification of the piece)
- Collage should not be raised more than 5 cm from the base.
- All work must be original and clearly produced entirely by the student, with merely the required guidance of the teacher.
- Only original source material should be used i.e. work should not be copied from pre-existing photographs, or other artwork. The style of work should also not be copied from other drawings, or cartoons, or copied from the style of artwork produced by adults. It is imperative that the student uses their own imagination.

Sufficient time for posting and/or delivery must be allowed for.

Under no circumstances, including couriered work, will late entries be accepted after 3pm on Friday 7 August 2026.

ADJUDICATION

- THE ADJUDICATORS' decision is final and not open for discussion under any circumstances.
- THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE is the administering body and reserves the right to:
 - Accept or reject any submission without being bound to give any reasons.
 - Appoint new substitute adjudicators should the need arise.
 - Settle all disputes concerning candidates or procedures. No public protests are permitted.
 - Reject any work which does not conform to the specifications.

GRADES, CERTIFICATION, AWARDS AND EXHIBITION:

- No award shall be made unless candidates attain the required standard, namely:

HONOURS
HIGHLY COMMENDED
COMMENDED
UNGRADED

- Only teachers or their accredited representatives may collect certificates from the Allied Arts offices.
- The committee's decision on the criteria for the selected work for the exhibition is final.

Please state when submitting entries if the return of art is required by a specific date for external exam submission.

We will try and accommodate such requests where possible.

If you require the office to send returned artwork, certificates etc., please supply the following:

- *name of the recipient,*
- *contact number*
- *physical address*

Please note only FEDEX – carriage forward, or SWIFT - on account can be used.

Photography & Digital Media Guidelines

SENIOR SCHOOL ONLY

- Photographs should be printed, and NOT framed, but “mount” in the usual way, with a 5cm border all around.
- Digital 2D art will be accepted under the following categories **ONLY**:
 - Photography
 - Digital Drawings
 - Digital Manipulations
 - Digital Collages
- Necessary submissions should be labelled with the category in the title e.g. Shadows (iPad Drawing).
- Submission may be:
 - Photographs WITHOUT using design software OR
 - Photographs USING design software such as Procreate, Photoshop or similar,
- Relevant photography/imagery **MUST** be attached to the submission to show proof of first-hand observation where necessary e.g. pupils first hand photos of trees (or other) showing the conceptual stages for “The secret life of trees”. It is very difficult to judge the authenticity of digital work without this i.e. we need proof that the artwork produced was self-created, and not taken off google.
- **ANY submission may not be larger than A3 size**

Miniature Portrait Guidelines

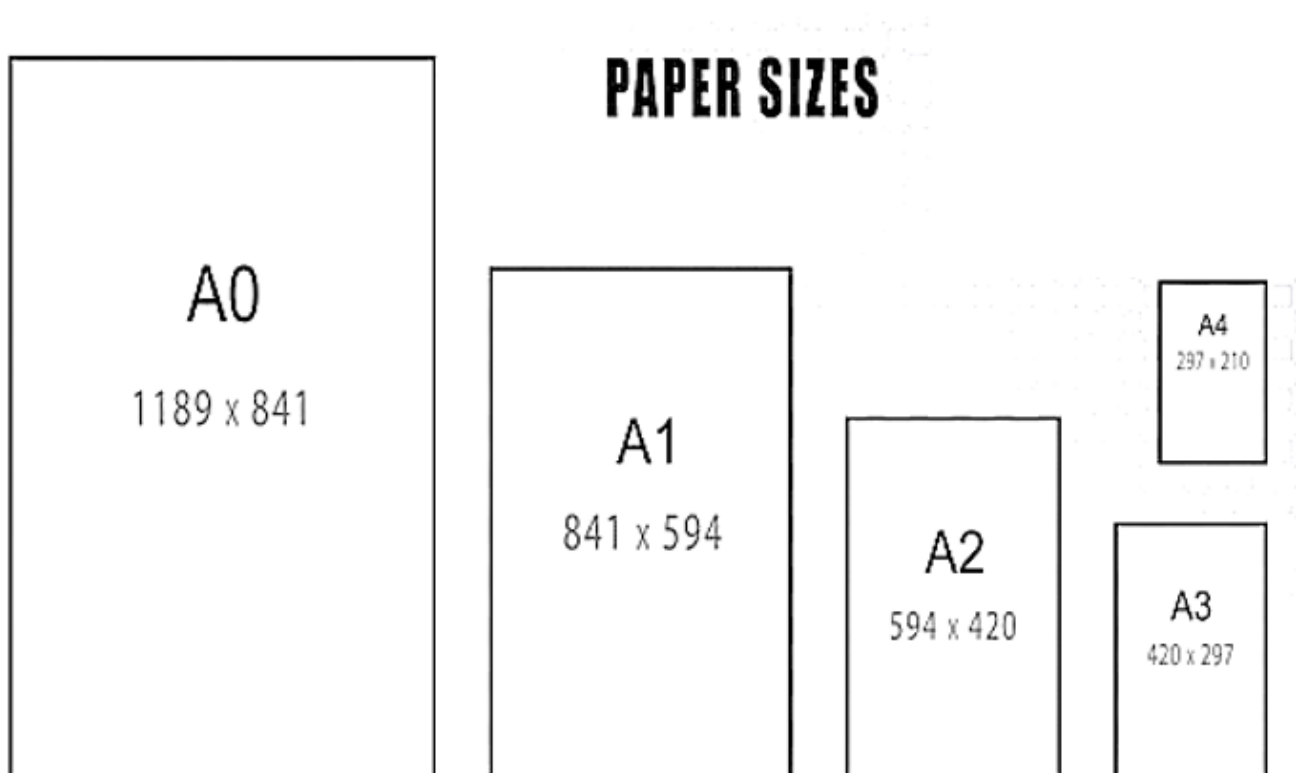
SENIOR SCHOOL ONLY

- These portraits **MAY ONLY** be A5 format (plus border)
- They **MUST** be Mixed-Media; which can include some 3D, sculptural relief work (such as collage, papier mâché, etc)
- Symbols are encouraged
- Work should be as highly imaginative as possible

Size Guidelines

FOR ALL SUBMISSIONS

- **INDIVIDUAL ENTRIES** may be A3, A2 OR A1.
- **GROUP ENTRIES** may be also be submitted in A0 size (**NO LARGER**)
- Alternative sizes and work on hardboard will be disqualified.
- **PHOTOGRAPHY** may **not larger** than A3.
- **MINIATURE PORTRAIT (Senior School ONLY)** – ONLY A5 (Half A4 size)



How to fill out the label that must be attached to each entry

ATTACH THIS SECTION TO BOTTOM LEFT HAND CORNER OF FRONT OF EACH SUBMISSION

WAY TO COMPLETE LABELS FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND SENIOR SCHOOLS USING PROVIDED TITLES

Attach Here	PEN NAME:	C I N D E R E L L A												fold here	SCHOOL:	HOGWARTS			
	(maximum of 12 characters)														CANDIDATE NAME:	HETTY JIMBLE			
	GRADE / FORM	GRADE 1													GRADE:	H	HC	C	UG
	TITLE CODE:	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	circle code									
SENIOR SCHOOL:														GRADE:					
PIECE TITLE																			

Attach Here	PEN NAME:	C I N D E R E L L A												fold here	SCHOOL:	HOGWARTS			
	(maximum of 12 characters)														CANDIDATE NAME:	HETTY JIMBLE			
	GRADE / FORM	FORM 4													GRADE:	H	HC	C	UG
	TITLE CODE:	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	circle code									
SENIOR SCHOOL:		Reflections of Humanity												GRADE:					
PIECE TITLE																			

WAY TO COMPLETE LABELS FOR SENIOR SCHOOLS PROVIDING THEIR OWN TITLE TO THE PIECE WITHIN THE THEME

THIS SECTION TO FOLD UNDER PEN NAME SECTION

How to mount artwork on card border

ARTWORK SECURELY ATTACHED TO CARDBOARD OR MANILLA BORDER

5CM CARDBOARD OR MANILLA CARD BORDER (ANY COLOUR)

POSITION OF LABEL

LABEL



Primary Schools

- Choose **ONE** of the following titles for your submission
- **Please note that TITLES are GRADE specific.** If the correct title is not chosen for the correct grade the submissions will be disqualified.
- Please refer to the **“LEARNING OUTCOMES APPENDIX”** for title-specific information on the following:
 - Skills
 - Creative thinking
 - Knowledge & understanding
 - Personal & social development

Grade 0/ECD; Grade 1 & 2

Title Code

A	Sparkling Bugs and Giant Plants: The Future of Nature
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Grade 3 & 4

Title Code

B	Pink Zebras and Blue Giraffes: A World Re-Imagined
C	Future Helpers: Friendly Robots and Clever Machines

Grade 5

Title Code

B	Pink Zebras and Blue Giraffes: A World Re-Imagined
C	Future Helpers: Friendly Robots and Clever Machines
D	My Dream Life in the Future

Grade 6 & 7

Title Code

B	Pink Zebras and Blue Giraffes: A World Re-Imagined
D	If Cars Could Fly... Cities of the Future
E	Nature Reclaims the Future

Primary School - Title Guidelines

Sparkling Bugs and Giant Plants: The Future of Nature

In tomorrow's world, nature has adapted, grown, and transformed. Bugs might glow like stars to light the night, plants may grow as tall as buildings, and flowers may sing when the wind blows. This theme allows children to explore a future where nature is powerful, magical, and alive with possibility.

Children create artworks that combine **science, fantasy, and observation**, inventing new species of plants and insects that help the Earth heal and thrive. They might design sparkling beetles that clean the air or giant leaves that provide shelter for entire communities. Through this imaginative process, learners develop a sense of **care, responsibility, and wonder** for the natural world, while exploring line, pattern, scale, and imaginative detail in their artwork.

Pink Zebras and Blue Giraffes: A World Re-Imagined

In tomorrow's world, nature is no longer limited by the colours we know today. Zebras may be pink, giraffes may be blue, and elephants might shimmer with gold spots. This theme invites children to imagine a future where animals evolve in magical, unexpected ways — perhaps to survive climate change, to blend into new landscapes, or simply because the world has learned to celebrate difference.

Learners explore **colour, pattern, and texture** while designing their own fantastical animals. They are encouraged to ask: *What if the world allowed everyone and everything to be different and beautiful in their own way?* Through drawing, painting, collage, and mixed media, children learn that imagination is a powerful tool for empathy, diversity, and creative problem-solving. This project gently introduces the idea that tomorrow's world may look different from today — and that difference can be joyful.

Future Helpers: Friendly Robots and Clever Machines

In tomorrow's world, machines may become helpful companions in everyday life. Robots might help plant trees, clean the oceans, build houses, or assist people with daily tasks. Some robots may even look friendly, playful, or imaginative rather than mechanical.

In this theme, learners imagine machines designed to help the world become kinder, safer, and more sustainable. Children create artworks showing robots, inventions, or machines designed to solve problems in their communities.

Learners may design robots that help farmers grow food, machines that collect plastic from the sea, or flying helpers that water gardens in dry places. Through this process, learners begin to understand that invention and creativity can help improve the future.

My Dream Life in the Future

In tomorrow's world, each person may imagine a different kind of life — a different place to live, a different way to travel, new kinds of homes, jobs, communities, and adventures. This theme invites learners to imagine **their own future life** and explore the question: *What kind of world would I like to live in?*

Learners create artworks that show themselves in the future. They may imagine where they live, what their home looks like, what work they might do, how they travel, or what hobbies and passions shape their lives. Perhaps they live in a floating house above the ocean, explore distant planets, care for newly evolved animals in a nature sanctuary, or design inventions that help people and the planet.

Through drawing, painting, collage, and mixed media, learners explore visual storytelling about **their hopes, dreams, and personal values for the future**. This theme encourages imagination, self-reflection, and positive thinking about how each person might contribute to tomorrow's world.

If Cars Could Fly... Cities of the Future

What if roads disappeared into the sky? What if cars had wings, floated on bubbles, or glided like birds between buildings? In this theme, children are invited to design the **cities of tomorrow**, where transport no longer follows the rules of today.

Learners imagine flying cars, rainbow highways in the clouds, rooftop playgrounds, and buildings connected by bridges of light. Through this project, children experiment with **shape, structure, and spatial awareness**, creating drawings, 3D models, or collage cityscapes. They are encouraged to think like inventors and architects, exploring how humans might live more freely, safely, and creatively in the future. This theme builds early design thinking skills and nurtures confidence in imagining solutions for tomorrow's challenges.

Nature Reclaims the Future

In tomorrow's world, nature may begin to reshape the planet in response to human activity. Forests might grow through abandoned buildings, rivers may reclaim cities, and plants may evolve new ways to survive pollution and climate change.

This theme invites learners to imagine a future where **nature and human environments merge**, challenging students to think about environmental responsibility and resilience.

Learners create artworks showing **cities overtaken by plants, animals returning to urban spaces, or landscapes transformed by climate and time**. Through drawing, painting, collage, or sculpture, students explore the relationship between humans, nature, and the future of the Earth.

This theme encourages both imaginative thinking and environmental awareness, helping learners understand that tomorrow's world depends on the choices we make today.

Senior Schools & Open

- Choose **ONE** of the following titles for your submission OR submit a piece of your own title (Form 3-open ONLY)
- **Please note that TITLES are NOT form specific.** If the correct title is not chosen for the correct grade the submissions will be disqualified.
- Please refer to the “**LEARNING OUTCOMES APPENDIX**” for title-specific information on the following:
 - Skills
 - Creative thinking
 - Knowledge & understanding
 - Personal & social development
- For **FORM 3, FORM 4, FORM 6 & OPEN** you may submit a piece of your own title provided it is still within the theme of “**Tomorrow’s World**”. Please provide a title on the **LABEL and entry form**

Title Code

A	Rewriting Nature: Evolution, Mutation, and the Future of Life
B	Cities in the Sky, Cities Underwater: Designing Tomorrow’s Habitats
C	The Living Earth: Nature as Intelligence
D	Human Identity in Tomorrow’s World: The Hybrid Self
E	Utopias and Dystopias: Imagining Possible Futures
F	MINIATURE Portraits: ‘Myself Tomorrow’
G	OWN TITLE – still within the theme of “Tomorrow’s World”

Senior School - Title Guidelines

Rewriting Nature: Evolution, Mutation, and the Future of Life (*Progression from: Pink Zebras and Blue Giraffes*)

In tomorrow's world, nature **evolves in response to human action, climate change, technology, and survival pressures**. This theme asks learners to imagine what life might look like after centuries of adaptation, genetic mutation, or environmental transformation.

Students create artworks that explore **hybrid species, altered ecosystems, and symbolic mutations** as metaphors for resilience, loss, or hope. Learners are encouraged to research real scientific concepts (adaptation, extinction, genetic modification, biodiversity) and reinterpret them artistically.

Cities in the Sky, Cities Underwater: Designing Tomorrow's Habitats (*Progression from: If Cars Could Fly...*)

As the planet changes, humans must rethink how and where we live. This theme explores **future architecture, sustainability, and the ethics of human expansion**, encouraging students to design environments that respond to overcrowding, climate change, and resource scarcity.

Learners will create **architectural drawings, digital designs, or 3D models** of future cities that float, fly, sink, or exist underground. Emphasis is placed on **function, sustainability, symbolism, and design intention** rather than decoration alone.

The Living Earth: Nature as Intelligence (*Progression from: Sparkling Bugs and Giant Plants*)

In tomorrow's world, nature is no longer passive — it is **intelligent, reactive, and possibly more powerful than humans**. This theme explores the idea that plants, insects, and ecosystems could develop forms of awareness, communication, or resistance.

Students create artworks that personify nature or imagine ecosystems that respond to human behaviour. The theme encourages **symbolism, narrative, and metaphor**, pushing students to use art as a language for environmental ethics and future thinking.

Human Identity in Tomorrow's World: The Hybrid Self

As technology advances, the boundary between **human, machine, and digital identity** becomes blurred. This theme invites students to explore who we become when technology shapes memory, emotion, communication, and even the body.

Learners create artworks that explore **hybrid identities**, digital selves, future portraits, and emotional landscapes of tomorrow. This topic connects strongly to adolescent identity development while remaining future-focused and imaginative.

Utopias and Dystopias: Imagining Possible Futures

This theme asks students to critically explore whether tomorrow's world will be better or worse than today. Students choose to create a **utopian (ideal) or dystopian (warning) vision** of the future, using visual symbolism, narrative, and design.

This unit encourages **ethical thinking, visual storytelling, and personal voice**, allowing students to synthesise ideas from nature, cities, technology, and identity.

MINIATURE Portraits: 'Myself Tomorrow'

These A5, mixed-media portraits ask students to critically consider themselves as they evolve into a re-imagined future? Will our species have metamorphosed into owning luminous, green hair, and enormous eyes so that we can see in the dark? Or our skin may change its texture – adapting to better coping mechanisms as the ozone layer looms larger? Perhaps our hair will evolve into growing naturally in the shape of sunhats, protecting us from further sun damage? Or our teeth may become much larger, avoiding the necessity of using knives whilst eating?

This encourages visual storytelling, imaginative thinking, and deeply personal reflection. We may be larger, smaller, shrunken, sunken, or a different colour altogether? But whatever we are; students are asked to deeply consider the ongoing emergence of our species as we head into the future. What will have changed? And what will matter in the future?

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