



7th Edition of Tuwaiq Sculpture

APPRENTICESHIP OPEN CALL GUIDELINES

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1. Background

The rapid population growth and subsequent urban expansion of Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia, over the past two decades, coupled with a booming economy, have created an opportunity to reshape the city's landscape through cultural transformation. Riyadh Art was launched in March 2019 as one of Riyadh's Four Grand Projects, under the patronage of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz. It is supervised by the Committee of Grand Projects, chaired by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, Prime Minister and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Royal Commission for Riyadh City. The initiative aims to position Riyadh as a leading cultural capital.

The Royal Commission for Riyadh City is committed to realizing the vision of Riyadh Art by encouraging excellence in the design of artistic interventions, public buildings, parks, streets, and infrastructure. It recognizes that public art, alongside architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, environmental design, and historic preservation, is a key tool for shaping the city's identity and enriching its public realm.

Riyadh Art engages with the city's landscape, urban form, history, and culture, making Riyadh distinct among world capitals. The program also reflects Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, aiming to build meaningful connections between the people of Riyadh, their communities, and civic life. Riyadh Art encompasses a growing permanent collection, dynamic cultural collaborations, and two annual festivals: Tuwaiq Sculpture and Noor Riyadh.

2. Tuwaiq Sculpture

Tuwaiq Sculpture is an annual international sculpture symposium and a cornerstone of Riyadh Art, one of the largest public art initiatives in the world today. Since its inception in 2019, the symposium has welcomed over 150 internationally renowned sculptors and thousands of visitors.

Now entering its seventh edition, Tuwaiq Sculpture 2026 will bring together 25 local and international sculptors, working in stone and reclaimed metal, to create original works that will become part of Riyadh's evolving public realm. The entire creative process will take place on site in a dedicated location in Riyadh and will be open to the public, offering an opportunity to witness the transformation of raw material into finished artwork in real time.

The aim is to encourage new artistic dialogues in line with Riyadh Art's vision, and to provide a platform where local and international artists can exchange ideas, collaborate, and contribute meaningfully to the cultural landscape of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. For more information,

For more information, visit: www.riyadhart.sa

3. Apprenticeship Program

Running in parallel with the symposium, the Tuwaiq Sculpture Apprenticeship Program offers a specialized hands-on training opportunity for aspiring sculptors. In this edition, 15 trainees will be selected to work alongside a distinguished group of international and local artists during the live sculpting period.

Participants will gain practical experience in stone sculpting, guided from initial concept development through to final execution. Working directly on site, trainees will learn to use professional tools and techniques in a real-world setting, while engaging with the creative and technical challenges of sculptural production. The program offers a rare opportunity to observe and collaborate with leading practitioners, providing foundational knowledge and experience within the context of one of the world's most ambitious public art initiatives.

4. Dates and Scope of Training

The training program will take place as part of the Tuwaiq Sculpture Symposium, running from **22 to 31 January 2026**, for 10 consecutive days. Each day will offer seven hours of combined theoretical and hands-on learning, with Sundays reserved as days off for participants.

Following the program, the on-site exhibition will open on 4 February and close on 18 February 2026. This exhibition will serve as a platform to showcase the apprentices' final works, celebrating their learning journey and presenting their artistic achievements to the public, critics, and the wider local and international art community.

5. Theme

Traces of What Will Be

Set in Tahlia, a district in Riyadh whose name means desalination, the 2026 edition of the Tuwaiq Sculpture Symposium and Exhibition unfolds under the theme *Traces of What Will Be*. This year's edition explores transformation as both a physical process and a metaphor for urban renewal. Tahlia is inseparable from its history as the site of Riyadh's first desalination plant, a pioneering infrastructure that converted scarcity into sustenance, and saltwater into life.

The Kingdom's journey with desalination began in 1907, when a salvaged shipwreck was repurposed in Jeddah. From that ingenious beginning, Saudi Arabia became the world's largest producer of desalinated water. This technology now sustains life in coastal cities around the globe. Tahlia's early embrace of desalination reflects a broader civic urgency, grounded in innovation, adaptability, and collective well-being.

The symposium celebrates this legacy by inviting artists to respond to a site shaped by environmental ingenuity and transformation. Working with local stone and reclaimed metal,

materials that hold both memory and potential, artists will create new sculptural works that mark the present while imagining the future. Tahlia will become a shared space for artistic production, reflection, and global exchange, culminating in an exhibition at the very site of their creation.

6. Materials and working environment

Apprentices will work with Saudi-sourced granite available in three distinctive colors: **Royal Rose, Royal Gold, and Green**. The diversity of materials will allow apprentices to experiment with unique aesthetic outcomes while learning the properties of local stone and professional sculpting techniques.

7. Exhibition and Artworks

Upon completing the training program, apprentices will mark the highlight of their journey by showcasing their artworks in the accompanying exhibition, an integral part of the Tuwaiq Sculpture Symposium. This exhibition offers a remarkable opportunity to present the fruits of their creativity and dedication to the public and art enthusiasts, while reflecting the skills and knowledge they developed throughout the program. It also provides a platform for meaningful engagement with the local and international art community, opening new horizons for their professional and artistic futures.

Once the exhibition ends, each apprentice will keep their sculpture as a personal milestone—an embodiment of their creative journey, a lasting memento of an enriching educational and practical experience, and a valuable addition to their artistic portfolio.

8. Apprentice Eligibility and Responsibility

Apprentices will be selected based on their artistic statement and portfolio. Applicants are expected to demonstrate in their statement a willingness to learn, a passion for sculpture and the arts, and a full commitment to participating in all stages of the training program. Candidates must also have a background or prior experience in the field of fine arts. Preference will be given to applicants residing in Riyadh, as the symposium takes place in the city, which facilitates daily attendance and participation in the program.

Please note: If applicants from outside Riyadh are accepted, Tuwaiq Sculpture Symposium will not cover any costs related to accommodation, travel tickets, or local transportation.

9. Apprentices Submission

To apply, candidates are required to complete and submit an online application form through the following link: <https://riyadhart.sa/en/tuwaiq-sculpture-apprenticeship-program-2026>

10. Contact Details and Inquiries

If you have a specific question, please send an email directly to the Tuwaiq Sculpture Team. All correspondence must be sent to the following email address only: tsopencall@riyadhart.sa