W. Eugene Smith Fund Announces Panel of Judges for 2026 Grants in Humanistic Photography

Award-Winning Journalists, Educators, and Documentary Photographers Highlight Prominent List of International Judges for 2026 Entries



This year's list of international judges include National Geographic Explorers and journalists, researchers, and educators.

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, September 28, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- The W. Eugene Smith Fund today announced the panel of judges for its 2026 annual grants: the W. Eugene Smith Grant, the W. Eugene Smith Student Grant, and the Howard Chapnick Grant. The adjudication panel for the 47th annual W. Eugene Smith Grant includes Mónica de Miranda, a visual artist, filmmaker, and researcher; Newsha Tavakolian, a Magnum Photos member and visual artist and educator known for work that explores the human condition; and Hayley Lohn, an artist and photographer based in Vancouver, Canada, and a member of the Smith Fund Board of Trustees.

> These judges bring a global perspective and a commitment to excellence that will help guide the selection of this year's grant recipients from hundreds of international entries."
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> *Marcia Allert, president, W. Eugene Smith Fund*

Judges for the 9th annual W. Eugene Smith Student Grant include Andrea Stultiens, a photographer, educator, and researcher; Bandile Gumbi, Head of Market Photo Workshop, a photography institution in Johannesburg, South Africa, focused on photographic education and training; and Dr. Roger Härtl, a spine surgeon in New York, a collector of photography and a member of the Smith Fund Board of Trustees.

Now in its 29th year, the Howard Chapnick Grant recognizes programs—not individuals—that make significant contributions to documentary

photography through education. The grant will be adjudicated by Muhammed Muheisen, a two-time Pulitzer Prize winner, National Geographic photojournalist, and Explorer; Paul Gambin, a visual artist, photographer, and National Geographic Explorer; and Cristopher Rogel Blanquet, a documentary photographer, journalist, and educator.



This year's adjudication process will be managed and directed by Eugene Smith Fund board member, and president, Marcia Allert.

The deadline for submitting applications for all grants is October 12, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. EDT.

"We are honored to have such a talented and diverse group of industry professionals adjudicate this year's grant entries," said Marcia Allert, president of the W. Eugene Smith Memorial Fund. "These judges bring a global perspective and a commitment to excellence that will help guide the selection of this year's grant recipients from hundreds of international entries."

2026 W. Eugene Smith Grant Judges
Mónica de Miranda is a Portuguese visual artist, filmmaker and researcher of Angolan descent, whose interdisciplinary, research-based practice critically engages with the intersections of politics, gender, memory, space and history. She is the founder and Artistic Director of Hangar (2014), an art and research center in Lisbon.

Newsha Tavakolian is a Magnum Photos member and a photographer, visual artist, and educator from Iran known for her work that captures the human condition. Newsha has received numerous awards, such as the Carmignac Gestion Award, the Prince Claus Award (principal laureate), and several international photo prizes.

Hayley Lohn is an artist and photographer based in Vancouver, Canada. She holds a bachelor's degree in Political Science and Psychology from the University of Western Ontario and graduated from the International Center of Photography's Documentary Practice and Visual Journalism program in 2021. Her work has been exhibited internationally in Milan, Boston, New York City,

and Vancouver. She also serves on the board of the W. Eugene Smith Memorial Fund.

2026 W. Eugene Smith Student Grant Judges
Andrea Stultiens trained as a photographer and currently works as an educator and researcher. She uses her photographic and artistic practice as a method to contribute to the understanding of images and imaginations of Uganda in particular and 'Africa' at large. Stultiens is a senior lecturer at the BA Photography and the MA Photography & Society at the Royal Academy of Art in The Hague.

Bandile Gumbi is the Head of Market Photo Workshop. She holds an MA in Communication for Development from Malmö University in Sweden and previously served as Chairperson of the Visual Arts Network of South Africa.

Dr. Roger Härtl is a spine surgeon and a collector of photography. He considered photojournalism before turning to medicine. He has taught neurosurgery in Africa, Asia, and other regions where surgical care is most scarce, and is committed to building lasting capacity in those places. He has collected documentary and photojournalistic work for more than twenty years, with a focus on the lyric documentary tradition, and serves on the board of the W. Eugene Smith Fund. He is Professor of Neurological Surgery at Weill Cornell Medicine and Director of Och Spine at New York-Presbyterian in New York.

2026 Howard Chapnick Grant Judges
Muhammed Muheisen is a world-renowned photographer. He is a two-time Pulitzer Prize winner, a National Geographic photojournalist and Explorer, the founder and chairman of the Dutch non-profit organization Everyday Refugees Foundation, and a Global Ambassador for the Jordan Tourism Board. In 2013, TIME Magazine named him the Best Wire Photographer, and in 2023, he received the National Geographic Wayfinder Award.

Cristopher Rogel Blanquet is a documentary photographer, journalist, and educator focused on long-term visual research. His work addresses human rights, social fractures, and the unseen impacts of systemic violence. In 2023, his long-term project Beautiful Poison (Hermoso Veneno), which documents the severe consequences of agrochemical use in the flower-growing region of Villa Guerrero, won the World Press Photo award in the Long-Term Projects category. This body of work was supported by the W. Eugene Smith Memorial Fund in 2021.

Paul Gambin is an Italian-British visual artist, photographer and cultural practitioner based in Cusco, Peru. Working across photography, sound and moving image, his experimental and collaborative practice explores the relationship between people, environment and perception through long-term, research-based projects. Gambin is a National Geographic Explorer, and his work has been published internationally by Le Monde, The New York Times and El País, among others.

He is co-director of Maleza, an independent arts center in Peru’s Sacred Valley, where he

produces and curates exhibitions, educational programs and community-based projects that critically engage with contemporary and often underrepresented issues in Peru.

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Lou Desiderio
Synergy Communications, Inc.
+1 917-627-0912
email us here
Visit us on social media:
Instagram
Facebook
X

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