



## Call for Expressions of Interest

How I Survived and the Yellowknife Artist Run Community Centre (YK ARCC) invite NWT-based Indigenous artists to submit expressions of interest to create original artwork inspired by the stories of residential school Survivors. Artwork will be displayed in an upcoming gallery exhibit in Yellowknife and a virtual exhibit on the *How I Survived Podcast* website.

### Project Background

How I Survived is a Survivor-led project that gathers, preserves, and shares stories about recreation at residential and day schools in the Canadian North. In 2024, we launched a podcast featuring in-depth interviews with Survivors. We are currently working on season two of the [How I Survived Podcast](#).

Creativity and art-making were important to Indigenous children's lives while at residential and day schools. Art is also a powerful means of witnessing, healing, and cultural revitalization. As such, the How I Survived project is commissioning artwork that is:

- inspired by the stories of northern Survivors shared through the *How I Survived Podcast*;
- guided by the themes of strength, resilience, and creativity; and
- created by NWT-based Survivors and intergenerational Survivors.

We encourage applications from artists from different disciplines or practices. Artwork can include sewing, music, photography, poetry, paintings, choreography, fashion, drawings, illustrations, prose, beadwork, carving, textile, printmaking, mixed media, digital art, and other media that are original creations of the artist.

Each selected artist will be provided with an episode of the *How I Survived Podcast* to inspire their art-making.

Commissioned artwork will be featured in an exhibit at the YK ARCC gallery in the Yellowknife Visitor Centre and in a virtual exhibit on the How I Survived website. These exhibits will provide opportunities for Indigenous artists from different disciplines to reach new audiences in Yellowknife, the NWT, and beyond, while also centering and amplifying Survivors' voices, increasing public understanding of residential and day schooling, and directly engaging with the TRC's *94 Calls to Action*.

### Submission

Artists are invited to apply by submitting the following:

- A short bio that includes information about your location and your status as a Survivor or intergenerational Survivor (2-3 sentences is fine);

- A short explanation of the type of artwork you would create (e.g. painting, beadwork, song, etc.) and why you chose to apply to this project (less than 500 words in writing **OR** a 2-3 minute audio/video recording);
- Evidence of past work (i.e. 1-2 sound/video clips of roughly five minutes or less, 1-2 writing samples of five pages or less, up to 10 photographs that showcase your work, or a link to a website where your artwork is displayed); and
- A materials list with estimated costs.

Please submit this information to both Crystal Gail Fraser ([cgfraser@ualberta.ca](mailto:cgfraser@ualberta.ca)) and Jess Dunkin ([jdunkin@nwtrpa.org](mailto:jdunkin@nwtrpa.org)).

**Deadline for Submissions: December 19, 2025.**

The first season of the *How I Survived Podcast* is available at <https://www.howisurvived.ca/> and also on Apple Podcasts and Spotify.

**Scope of Work**

The successful artists will do the following:

1. Complete one (1) original artwork that:
  - Conveys the artist’s choice of one or all of the three identified themes;
  - Is able to be transported to Yellowknife; and
  - Is completed by May 30, 2026.
2. Participate in two virtual gatherings in February and April (see the timeline section).
3. Immediately notify the project manager should any unforeseen issues arise.

**Artist Eligibility**

This call for expressions of interest is open to Indigenous artists who live in the NWT and who are Survivors and intergenerational Survivors of residential and/or day school.

A Survivor is an Indigenous person who attended an Indian residential school or Indian day school in Canada. Intergenerational survivors are the children, grandchildren, and other descendants of Survivors who continue to feel the effects of these schooling systems.

**Selection**

A selection committee composed of members of the How I Survived Advisory Committee, YK ARCC, and NWT Art Centre Initiative will select up to eight artists to create work for the How I Survived project.

The committee is looking for artwork that incorporates the themes of strength, resilience, and creativity. In making a selection, we will consider the feasibility of the proposed artwork. We will also work to ensure regional diversity and multidisciplinary participation. Preference will be given to northern Indigenous artists.

The How I Survived project will keep submissions on file for future opportunities.

**Timeline**

November 24, 2025: Call opens.

December 19, 2025: Call closes.

January 2026: Selection committee meets.

January 31, 2026: Selected artists will be notified.

February 25, 2026, 1-3pm: First virtual gathering of artists, interviewees, and members of the project team to build relationships and discuss the project.

March 1, 2026: Artists will be provided with drafts of one of the podcast episodes to inspire their art-making.

April 22, 2026, 1-3pm: Second virtual gathering of artists, interviewees, and members of the project team to share progress and support one another.

May 31, 2026: Deadline for completion of artwork. Images/files to be sent to the How I Survived team for review.

June-July 2026: Artists to record artist statements to be included with the relevant episode.

August 1, 2026: Deadline for delivery of artwork to Yellowknife.

September-November 2026: Artwork will be exhibited at the Yellowknife Visitor's Centre Gallery.

Artwork will also be exhibited online on the How I Survived project website beginning in September 2026.

**Budget**

Each selected artist will be compensated \$1,250 for the commission of the artwork and \$515 for the exhibition of the artwork from September-November 2026. There are additional funds available for materials, which will be allocated to the selected artists on an as-needed basis.