

PHOTOGRAPHY

LENSCULTURE CRITICS' CHOICE 2026 AWARDS

DEADLINE

22 APR 2026

ENTRIES CLOSED

POSTED	ENTRY FEE	ONLINE
22 Mar 2026	FREE FOR ONE SINGLE IMAGE	VISIT ORGANIZER

DETAILS / KEEP FOR REFERENCE

SOURCE: GRAPHIC COMPETITIONS

The LensCulture Critics' Choice 2026 Awards is an internationally recognised photography competition designed to discover and celebrate outstanding photographic talent from across the globe. Organised by LensCulture, a leading platform for contemporary photography, the award invites photographers of all levels to submit work without thematic restriction, encouraging creative freedom across genres such as documentary photography, portraiture, fine art, street photography, and conceptual practices. What distinguishes this competition is its unique judging format, where a diverse panel of influential photography critics individually selects photographers whose work resonates with their curatorial vision.

Each critic involved in the Critics' Choice Awards is a respected figure in the global photography industry, including museum curators, gallery directors, photo editors, and festival organisers. Rather than a single collective decision, each juror independently chooses photographers, significantly increasing participants' chances of being recognised. This structure not only highlights a wide range of photographic styles and perspectives but also provides entrants with meaningful exposure to key decision-makers in the art and photography world. As a result, selected photographers gain valuable visibility, career development opportunities, and direct connections within the international photography community.

Beyond recognition, the LensCulture Critics' Choice Awards offer a powerful platform for professional growth and global exposure. Winning photographers are featured across LensCulture's high-traffic online channels, gaining access to a worldwide audience of curators, collectors, publishers, and photography enthusiasts. Many past winners have leveraged this exposure to secure exhibitions, gallery representation, editorial features, and book deals. With its strong emphasis on discovery, visibility, and industry access, the competition has become a significant opportunity for photographers seeking to elevate their careers and establish a presence in the competitive field of contemporary photography.

Entry fee: Free for one single image; additional images typically cost about $10 each, $35 for 5 images, or $45 for a series (optional $25 review).

ELIGIBILITY

Open worldwide to photographers of all levels, with no strict thematic restrictions.

PRIZE

Up to 60 photographers are selected as Critics' Choice winners (each chosen by individual critics), gaining publication on LensCulture, global exposure, and professional recognition; from these, a Top 10 is chosen (if selected by multiple critics), who receive a $1,000 cash grant each and are exhibited in a major international show in London (linked to events such as Photo London), alongside extensive benefits including online exhibitions, press coverage, and connections with industry professionals.