

The Art of Botanical Illustration Exhibition

19 September – 4 October 2026

Presented by the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne

The 18th Biennial Exhibition of The Art of Botanical Illustration, (TABI) 2026, will be held as a **hybrid exhibition**, with a physical exhibition held at Domain House, Dallas Brooks Drive, Melbourne and a virtual exhibition online.

TABI is one of Australia's leading botanical illustration exhibitions. The Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne (FRBGM) believe offering the exhibition in this hybrid format will capture a wide audience and in turn provide greater exposure to the artworks of nationally and internationally based botanical artists.

All selected **artworks from Australian artists** must be physically onsite for the exhibition at Domain House and artists must also provide high resolution digital images of their selected artworks for the virtual exhibition.

Overseas artists may choose whether to send their work to Australia or to only show their work online.

Please carefully read the following information and guidelines. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us via email: botanicexhibitions@frbgmelb.org.au.

Awards

For TABI 2026, the Celia Rosser medal winner will be awarded \$1200 (shared in the event of more than one medal winner).

Recipients of an Honourable Mention will share \$800.

The People's Choice award is valued at \$100.

Key Dates for 2026

10 July (Friday) 11:59 pm	Deadline for entry forms and images to be submitted and payment of entry fee.
10 July to 23 July	Selection process.
24 July	Artists informed by email of results of selection process.
14 September (Monday) 9.00 am to 1.00 pm	Artworks, prints and cards to be delivered to Domain House for hanging.
19 September to 4 October	TABI 2026 Exhibition at Domain House, 10.00 AM to 4.00 PM, and online.
4 October (Sunday) 4:30 to 7:00pm	Collection of sold artworks by purchasers and unsold works by artists.

Conditions of entry

1. Entry forms, fee and closing date

Entries for TABI 2026 can be completed online by visiting the Friends' website where you will find the following links:

1. Registration form which includes:
 - a. Short artist's biography (max 200 words)
 - b. Brief description of the artwork including medium, size and title
 - c. Expression of Interest in volunteering at the Exhibition
2. Dropbox link to upload your high-resolution digital image. (Please read section 7. for image requirements.)
3. Payment for Entry Fee.
4. Complete and send in the Statement by Supplier form if required

An **entry fee of \$10** will be charged for *each* artwork submitted for selection.

All four steps above **must** be completed to successfully complete your registration.

The deadline to complete your registration to **TABI 2026 is 11:59 pm, Friday 10 July 2026.**

2. FRBG membership

Exhibitors, if selected, must be financial members of the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne (FRBGM). If you are not a member, visit the [FRBGM website](#) to organise your membership.

Australian Tax Office: Statement by Supplier

This form must be completed by all artists submitting works for selection if you are not registered for GST. This also includes international artists. The form will be available to download and should be completed, scanned and return via email to botanicexhibitions@frbgmelb.org.au.

3. Size / medium / number of artworks

Artists may submit up to **three (3) artworks** for selection.

One artwork may be any size but the other two must be no more than 80 cm x 80 cm including frame.

Artworks may be in any medium used in botanical art including watercolour, graphite, colour pencil, pen, and ink.

Please note: 3D artworks, computer-generated images, digital images, or photographic images are not permitted.

4. Botanical requirements

All artworks must be of botanical subjects (or part thereof) and must accurately represent the form and botanical characteristics of the chosen subject.

Inclusion of pollinators is acceptable if they play a minor role in the artwork.

The full botanical name and cultivar of the plant and any pollinator, if applicable, must be noted in the registration form but need not necessarily be included on the artwork itself. In naming, please observe correct binomial nomenclature.

5. Style

In addition to conventional botanical illustration, the selection panel will be asked to consider artworks that may go outside these traditional parameters. Cropping or enlargement (with magnification stated, e.g., x10), background colour and detail, and innovative compositions are encouraged; however, botanical accuracy and fine detail are still vital.

6. Authenticity and date

Each entry must be the **original and sole artwork of the artist** and must have been **produced since TABI 2024**.

7. Presentation of artworks for selection

Please note: In 2026 artworks are not required to be delivered to Domain House, Melbourne, for the selection process. The selection process will be completed using the digital images submitted during the registration process.

Your artwork images must be submitted in a high-resolution, professional format. To enable judges to evaluate the artworks it is essential for artists to provide a **high-quality digital file format** i.e., **300 dpi JPG file, with a length of 25 cm on the longest edge (approx. 3000 pixels)**.

We highly recommend artwork is professionally scanned or professionally photographed and colour corrected to match the original artwork. It is also recommended that artists book scanners *early* as scanners often close orders quickly.

Images must be in correct viewing orientation.

File size 25 Mb maximum per artwork. Do not submit the huge tiff files that your scanner may provide. They will supply a file in the correct format at your request.

Individual files uploaded to Dropbox are to be labelled: “ArtistLastname, ArtistFirstname – Plant scientific name”.

All selected artworks will be exhibited both physically at Domain House and online via the virtual exhibition. The only exception will be for overseas artists who may opt for online only.

Please note:

- Any deviation from the above will result in disqualification of the artwork.
- To preserve copyright, images of the selected artworks will be converted into a lower resolution format before being uploaded for inclusion in the virtual, online exhibition.

8. Selection Process

The artworks selected for TABI 2026 must be both scientifically accurate and artistically pleasing.

Each artwork is carefully selected against strict selection criteria by a panel of three professional judges, including a botanist and an experienced artist, to ensure the highest standards are met.

All artworks will be selected from the digital image provided i.e. the selectors will review all submissions online.

The decision of the selection panel is final.

The TABI Organising Committee reserves the right to decline any artwork which they believe was not faithfully represented upon sighting and does not meet the selection criteria.

Selection criteria

The artwork must adhere to the following selection criteria:

- It must provide an accurate representation of the form and botany of the chosen subject.
- The characteristics of the species or variety must be adequately conveyed.
- The representation should be an artistically pleasing, balanced and a considered work of art.
- It must be identified and named accurately according to standard botanical practices.
- It must have been completed since TABI 2024.

9. If your Work is Selected

Successful artists will be notified by email on Friday 24th July.

Artworks are to be dropped off at Domain House, Dallas Brooks Dr, Melbourne on Monday 14th September between 10-4pm. If you are unable to drop off your artwork on that day please email, well in advance, the Friends office at botanicexhibitions@frbgmelb.org.au

10. Presentation of Artworks for the TABI 2026 Exhibition

A. Artworks for display at Domain House

1. Exhibited artworks

Artworks to be hung at Domain House must be suitably framed and fitted with D rings for hanging. Please attach wire or hanging cord to the D rings. Do not use staples.

Artists should use their discretion in the choice of matting and framing. Frames, however, are to be of a professional quality and compliment the artwork.

If an artist is personally delivering the framed original artwork to Domain House, Melbourne, any bubble wrap or other protective packaging must be removed and taken away by the artist at handing in.

All artworks must be labelled. Please print and attach the label below to the top right-hand side on the back of framed (hung) artwork. We strongly encourage you to copy and paste the below template into Word and type in the relevant information rather than handwriting to ensure accuracy and legibility.

<p>Artist:</p> <p>Title:</p> <p>Medium:</p> <p>Price: \$</p>
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All artworks on display at the exhibition **must be for sale and priced accordingly.**

2. Unframed artworks

In addition to the three (3) original artworks submitted, artists can also submit up to **10 (ten)** unframed artworks and prints, which are also for sale for the duration of the exhibition.

Please note: These unframed artworks will only be available for sale at Domain House and will not be part of the virtual exhibition.

- Artists with paintings submitted, *but with none selected for inclusion in TABI 2026*, may offer those artworks which were submitted for sale as unframed, mounted artworks.

- Artists who *do have paintings selected* for hanging may also include up to 10 other unframed, mounted originals or prints of their artwork.
- Prints of original artworks hanging in the exhibition will **not** be accepted.

All unframed artworks should be tightly wrapped in clear cellophane and delivered at the same time as framed artworks.

If an unframed artwork is smaller than A3, the artwork must be wrapped in cellophane with an A3 piece of mounting board to deter theft.

All unframed artworks must be labelled and priced on the **front, top right** and marked as **“PRINT” or “ORIGINAL”**. Please print and attach the label below to the **top right-hand side on the front** of the unframed artwork on top of the cellophane in which the unframed artwork is wrapped. We strongly encourage you to copy and paste the below template into Word and type in the relevant information rather than handwriting to ensure accuracy and legibility.

PRINT	ORIGINAL
Artist:	
Title:	
Medium:	
Price: \$	

3. Artists' Cards

Cards will only be sold of artwork selected in the exhibition. Cards should be delivered in a box, clearly marked with the artist's details on the front of the box, and an image (or images) on the box lid, plus the total number of cards. All cards will sell for **\$7 each. This price includes the 33% commission.**

Please note: Artists are responsible for arranging and paying the cost of shipping of their all their framed and unframed artworks and cards to and from Melbourne.

B. Display of artworks online

All selected artworks will also be included in the online, virtual exhibition.

The TABI 2026 exhibition website includes a search and a magnification function, a gallery of artworks, information about each artist, the size and cost of the artworks, a continuous display banner of images and a shop with a secure payment gateway.

High resolution images will be used to generate cropped images of the artwork which allows for the magnification function on selected parts of the artwork. To prevent copying of images and

preserve copyright, images will be converted to a lower resolution format (72dpi 1000 pixels), for website publication.

A feature of the previous online TABI Exhibitions was the inclusion of progress images and short videos of artists speaking about their artwork. All selected artists are encouraged to submit progress videos or images for the TABI 2026 online exhibition. These elements increase the engagement of potential purchasers via the virtual exhibition and are therefore beneficial to both FRBGM and the artists. Videos should be 20-60 sec maximum.

11. Exhibition sales

All artworks entered for the exhibition **must be for sale**.

The FRBGM will receive a 33% commission from the sale of any artwork. Sale prices must therefore include both GST (where artist is GST registered) and the **33% commission**.

Sale of artworks will be concurrent via the physical exhibition at Domain House and the virtual exhibition presented on the online platform. Sales will be processed and noted as 'sold' on the website as they occur.

12. What happens when an artwork is sold?

FRBGM will advise the artist of the sale.

Sold artworks are to be picked up by the purchaser on Sunday 4 October between 4:30 pm and 6:30 pm.

If the purchaser is unable to collect the artwork at the conclusion of the exhibition, the committee will package the artwork ready for postage or courier. The purchaser must pay the cost of packaging, freight, insurance etc. The Committee will liaise with the purchaser to arrange postage, including costs, which the purchaser must pay directly to the FRBGM, or the purchaser can arrange for a courier to pick up the artwork from the FRBGM office for shipment to the purchaser.

Please note:

- Artworks exhibited cannot be shipped to the purchaser until after the closing of the exhibition.

13. Collection of unsold artworks

Unsold artworks must be collected from Domain House, Melbourne, **on Sunday 4 October 4:30pm to 7:00pm**. Artists are required to bring their own packaging for safe transport of their artwork.

If an artist is based regionally, interstate or overseas, and unable to collect their unsold artwork following the exhibition, FRBGM will package the artwork for the artist. The artist is to organise and pay for transport with their preferred courier to return the artwork.

14. Media promotion, online events etc.

The FRBGM may reproduce images of selected artworks, for marketing purposes. Marketing activities may include printed materials, digital displays and online, including the FRBGM

Facebook, Instagram, the FRBGM website and eNews, or in any form of media. Artists will be acknowledged when the image of one of their artworks is used. All images used will only be for the purpose of promoting TABI 2026.

Selected artists are encouraged to also submit video clips, talks, demonstrations, preliminary sketches etc for use online. *Videos should be 20-60 seconds.*

15. Volunteering at Domain House

The TABI 2026 Exhibition at Domain House, Melbourne, is heavily reliant on the support of volunteers to staff the exhibition.

Local artists submitting artworks in TABI are asked to consider volunteering for selected periods of time throughout the exhibition in the following capacities:

- At the Welcome Desk
- On the floor of the Gallery – to ensure security of unframed artworks, answering visitors' questions etc.
- At the Sales Desk
- As an Artist in Residence
- Conduct a tour of the Exhibition.

16. Disclaimer

All care will be taken, but no responsibility will be accepted for loss or damage to any artwork.

Frequently asked questions

What if I cannot find the scientific name for the plant I want to paint?

The exhibition aims to combine the best botanical art with a scientific focus. Artists should research their plant subjects beforehand to determine whether correct botanical names can be obtained. Selectors will not accept paintings without the correct botanical nomenclature.

Do I have to name the plant on the painting itself?

No, but it is important that this information is correctly provided in the entry form, and on the label attached to the back of artwork.

Do I have to name any animals (such as insects) that I have included in the painting?

Yes. All species included in the painting must be scientifically named in the title.

What happens if I forget to put in an entry form on time?

Don't forget! Reminders will not be sent.

Preparing for selection is a very time-consuming task for the committee. All the data from the entry forms and the digital images must be organised and prepared for the selection panel to view. As a result, any forms not received by the due date **cannot** be accepted.

Is there a size or dimension limit for artworks?

Yes. The number of artworks each artist can submit for selection is limited to three (3).

One artwork may be any size but the other two must be less than 80 cm x 80 cm including frame.

If my artwork is not selected, can I find out why?

No. The selection panel includes an established artist, and a botanist, who will scrutinize each artwork for botanical accuracy and nomenclature. They choose artworks according to the selection criteria outlined in the conditions of entry. In addition, they aim to select a wide variety of subjects and attempt to include as many artists as possible.

Their decision is final.

Can I submit a pair/trio etc. set of paintings as one artwork?

No. Artists can submit up to three artworks in total. That means three individual artworks in three separate images. A 'pair' or triptych etc. can be submitted but each individual artwork counts as one of the three and there is no guarantee that all the individual parts will be selected. The only way to guarantee a pair or triptych is kept together is to put them into the one frame as this will count as a single entry.

How do I price my artwork?

In previous TABI exhibitions artists basically used a "thirds" system - for artistic work, for framing and for commission to set their price. If you are sending your artwork from a regional location, interstate or overseas, you may also wish to include the cost of delivery to Melbourne as the artist is responsible for this cost.

Include your artistic time, but do not undervalue your artwork.

For the exhibition at Domain House

What if I can't deliver original paintings in person?

Ask a friend to deliver it for you. Alternatively, there are a number of reputable courier companies who regularly transport artwork. We suggest that artists find one that is convenient for them and within their price range. **Please ensure that the courier you use delivers the artwork on the correct day and by the required time.** It is the artist's responsibility to follow up with couriers, not that of the exhibition organisers.

If using Australia Post or a courier, please send your artwork to the following address:

Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne
Observatory Gate Lodge
100 Birdwood Avenue, Melbourne, 3004

If your artwork is being posted or couriered, please ensure the work is delivered before the date required as the timeline to bump in the exhibition is very tight.

Do I need to label my artwork?

Yes. See section 9 of the Conditions of Entry for the required labels. The appropriate label must be attached to the back of every framed and the front of every unframed artwork delivered for exhibiting.

What can I submit in unframed artworks and prints?

See section 9.A.2 and 9.A.3 of the Conditions of Entry

For the online exhibition

How will the online exhibition work?

Once the selectors have chosen the artworks to be exhibited, low resolution versions will be generated and exhibited online along with identifying information including title, artist name, medium, size, price and any comment that was included in the Registration Form.

Purchasers will click on an artwork to add it to a cart and purchase the artwork via the Friends online store.

Artists will be notified their artwork has sold and it will also be noted on the website.

If the work is online only i.e. an overseas artist, the artist will be advised of the purchaser details and will need to liaise directly with the purchaser to organise shipment.

The purchaser is required to pay for any postage, insurance, courier costs or customs duty.

How are my images protected from online copyright infringements?

Only low-resolution images will be placed online.

How do I ensure my digital scan is high enough quality?

Digital scans need to be high resolution, so selectors have the best opportunity to evaluate the artworks. The requirements are given in the Conditions of Entry, Section 7, Presentation of artworks for selection.

Any reputable scanning company should be able to produce an image to this specification.

Payment of sold artworks

Artists' whose artwork is selected for the exhibition will be required to provide their bank details for payment of sold items - Account name, BSB and Account No.

Following the closure of the exhibition, income derived from the sale of artworks, unframed artworks and cards will be calculated for each artist. Commission will be deducted, and the balance will be paid to the artist.

As we are hoping for many sales, payment may take up to 30 days. We will make every effort to make payments as soon as possible after the exhibition and we thank you in advance for your patience.

As in recent years, a detailed statement of income and commission will be sent to each artist.

Payment will be made through direct transfer to the nominated bank account. Please note that payment cannot be made to a third party. Please make sure you have provided the correct bank details on the form. All bank details provided will not be held by FRBGM office after processing.

If you have any queries concerning this process, please feel welcome to telephone the Friends office and ask for the Accounts Officer (ph. 03 9650 6398).