Maga'haga Art Awards (Governor's Art Awards) Nomination Packet – 2026

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

I. OVERVIEW - MAGA'HAGA ART AWARDS (Governor's Art Awards)

In 1985, the Guam Council on the Arts and Humanities Agency (CAHA), in partnership with the Office of the Governor, established the Governor's Art Awards to recognize individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions to Guam's arts and culture. In 1995, the program was renamed the Maga'låhi Art Awards, with fewer, more competitive categories designed to recognize outstanding achievement in the arts.

After a 22-year hiatus, CAHA revived the awards in 2025 and renamed them the Maga'håga Art Awards in recognition of Guam's first woman Governor and honoring the island's artistic pioneers, cultural bearers, and emerging talents while paying tribute to Guam's matriarchal heritage. The 2026 Maga'håga Art Awards mark the second presentation of the revived program. The community is invited to nominate individuals and organizations who have demonstrated artistic excellence, leadership, dedication, and significant contributions to Guam. Nominations will be reviewed by an advisory panel of arts and culture experts.

The awards also include posthumous recognition for artists and cultural practitioners whose work has made a lasting impact. The Lifetime Achievement and Lifetime Cultural Contribution awards are presented at the discretion of the Governor. The Maga'håga Art Awards continue CAHA's commitment to recognizing and celebrating the people whose work has helped shape Guam's artistic and cultural heritage.

II. ELIGIBILITY

The Maga'haga Art Awards program recognizes the contributions of individuals and organizations that support creative industries and have made significant contributions and a lasting and profound impact on the artistic and cultural life of Guam.

1. Nominees should be current full-time residents of Guam or an organization or businesses based in Guam that work in and for the benefit of Guam.

2. Nominees must be worthy of recognition through a record of continuing artistic accomplishment and support.

3. Nominations for arts organizations, employees of arts organizations, or educators should reflect activity beyond normal expectations or responsibilities.

Nominees will be invited to attend the Governor's Maga'haga Art Awards ceremony on Saturday, November 14, 2026 at the Leo Palace Resort, Guam.

Individuals or groups who meet the eligibility requirements may be nominated for the award by the submission of a nomination packet as described in Section IV of this document. Previous recipients of the Maga'låhi/ Maga'haga Governor's Art Awards are not eligible. CAHA staff, Arts Council members, members of their families and previous recipients are not eligible for nomination. No one may nominate him/herself.

III. CATEGORIES

Nominations are now being accepted for these prestigious awards in the following categories numbers 1 through 9:

1. **Youth Artist -** Recognizes a talented youth, ages 15-24, who demonstrates overall artistic excellence.
2. **Literary Arts -** Recognizes overall excellence in literary arts.
3. **Visual Arts -** Recognizes overall excellence in the visual arts, including media and graphic arts.
4. **Performing Arts** - Recognizes overall excellence in music, dance, theater and other presentations.
5. **Heritage Arts -** Recognizes overall excellence in heritage, folk and traditional arts.
6. **Champion for the Arts (Individual) -** Recognizes an individual who generously supports the arts and culture through sponsorship, educational programming, or community effort.
7. **Champion for the Arts (Group/Organization) -** Recognizes **a** group or organization that generously supports the arts and culture through sponsorship, educational programming, or community effort.
8. **Champion for the Arts (Corporate) -** In recognition of outstanding corporate support of the arts within the community through funding and sponsorship of art projects which allow for educational enhancement of the arts.
9. **Posthumous** - Recognizes overall excellence of an individual who made a significant contribution to the arts and our island community.
10. **Lifetime Achievement** - Presented by the Governor for lifetime contribution in a particular art form which has benefited the people of Guam.
11. **Lifetime Cultural Contribution -** Presented by the Governor for the promotion and preservation of the CHamoru culture by bringing the practice of the arts and culture into the daily life of the people of Guam

Category #10 and #11 is awarded at the sole discretion of the Governor. It is possible that awards may not be given in all categories.

IV. NOMINATION PACKETS

Nomination packets must include the following:

A. Nomination Statement/Letter

A signed letter from the nominator that details the reasons that the nominee(s) should receive a Maga'haga Art Award. The letter must include:

1. The category the nominee is being nominated for (i.e., Youth Artist).
2. A description of the nominee's outstanding contributions to his or her particular artistic or cultural tradition especially considering advocacy, vison, collaboration, and perpetuation, in one of the categories described above. **(The nomination must address criteria cited in Section VI, page 4 of this document.)**
3. An explanation why this individual or group deserves recognition.
4. Number of years the nominee has been committed to the arts in general, or to a specific art form in Guam.
5. The nominee's commitment or innovative involvement in various arts activities in the community.
6. Impact of the nominee's activities in the arts in the community.
7. The nominator's name, contact information, phone number and email.
8. The nominee's name, contact information, phone number and email.

B. Work Samples

Nominator must provide work samples that demonstrate the excellence and impact of the nominee's work. Work samples may include press clippings, photos, video or audio samples, letters of recommendation or support, or printed programs.

C. No one may nominate him/herself.

D. Each nomination should have a separate nomination package.

E. A complete package should not exceed 20 pages in length. Excess pages will be removed and not reviewed.

F. Support material in the nomination package shall become the property of CAHA and will not be returned unless a nominee does not receive the Maga'haga Art Award and requests the materials back. Please do not submit originals or the only existing copy.

V. DEADLINE FOR NOMINATIONS and WHERE TO SUBMIT NOMINATIONS

A. Nomination packet guidelines can be picked up at the Guam Council on the Arts and Humanities Agency (CAHA) located at DNA Building, Ste. 202, 238 Archbishop Flores Street in Hagåtña or downloaded at **www.guamcaha.org** beginning Wednesday, August 19, 2026.

B. **Deadline** to submit completed nomination packets with supporting materials to the Guam Council on the Arts and Humanities Agency (CAHA) is **4pm, Wednesday, October 7, 2026**.

C. Completed nomination packets **must be submitted directly to** the Guam Council on the Arts and Humanities Agency (CAHA) at the address listed in item A, of this section and addressed to the CAHA Director, Mrs. Angie Taitague. **Mailed, emailed and late applications will NOT be accepted.**

VI. REVIEW PROCESS AND CRITERIA

CAHA is expecting many nominations to be submitted for the Maga'haga Art Awards and the selection process will be competitive. Complete nomination packets submitted to the Guam Council on the Arts and Humanities by the deadline will be reviewed by an advisory panel of heritage and arts experts.

Advisory Panel recommendations are forwarded to the CAHA Board of Directors to determine the final recipients of the Maga'haga Art Awards based on the following selection criteria:

The award determination is based primarily on the award criteria listed below that focuses on the nominee's background, impact and scope of work. Nominators should take great care to make the case on behalf of their nominees by addressing all applicable criteria in the nomination letters and should encourage individual preparing letters of recommendations to do the same. If an application is incomplete, it will not be reviewed.

Criteria

Background: Address the nominee's background in the arts, including artistic excellence (for individual artists and arts organizations) or level of standards (for patrons, businesses or communities). How many years has the nominee been committed to the arts in general, or to a specific art form? Is the nominee highly accomplished in the category in which they are being nominated?

Impact: What outstanding contribution(s) has the nominee made to the arts in Guam? How successful has this individual utilized the arts to create a positive impact on Guam's economy, the creative sector, and/or the lives of Guamanians? Have they leveraged projects in the creative sector to address social or community needs? Define the nature and impact of the nominee's involvement in the arts. Has the nominee utilized arts and culture in a significant way to enhance Guam's social and/or economic fabric, quality of life and well- being?

Scope: Describe the breadth of the nominee's support of various arts activities in the community. Describe the nominee's involvement in special initiatives supporting the arts. Did the nominee work to create sustainable and long-term impacts in their community? Did they have a broader vision for the arts in their community and consistently work towards that vision or goal?

The Review Process is as follows:

1. Nominations open on August 19, 2026 and close on **Wednesday, October 7, 2026 at 4 pm.**
2. Nominations are received at the Guam CAHA offices, and time-stamped as received.
3. Nomination packets are reviewed by CAHA staff only to ensure completeness. Should any packet be incomplete, it will not move to the next phase of review
4. Packets are forwarded to an "Advisory Panel" comprised of the arts and culture experts for review.
5. Within 2 weeks from the close of the submittal date, the Panel Review Committee will determine the nominees in each category worthy as a recipient of the Maga'haga Art Award.
6. The panel's list of recommended Maga'haga nominees will be submitted to the Guam Council on the Arts and Humanities Board of Directors for their approval and ratification during their board meeting in October.
7. The CAHA Board will certify that the nomination process was followed and that the nominee meets the criteria described.

8. Announcement and Recognition of the nominees will be made at the 2026 Maga'haga Arts Awards on November 14, 2026.

VII. CHECKLIST

Did you include the following?

(**Please refer to pages Section IV for detailed information.)

	1. Nomination Statement/Letter
	2. Recommendation / Support Letters
	3. Work Samples

For further information, contact Jackie Balbas, CAHA Program Coordinator IV via email at jacqueline.balbas@caha.guam.gov or at (671) 300-7584/ (671)456-5387.