



OCAD University Honorary Degree Nomination Guidelines 2025/2026

Introduction

The nomination and approval process for Honorary Degrees is confidential, and all those involved in the process are expected to maintain that confidentiality.

Nominations will be accepted from anyone from the OCAD University community. Individuals may not nominate themselves or members of their family.

More than one individual may be selected to receive this honour which will then be presented at Convocation. Awardees will be asked to address the graduating class with brief remarks.

Eligibility

An Honorary Doctoral Degree is the highest honour conferred by OCAD University, awarded to outstanding individuals who have made a significant contribution to the fields of art, design, and culture; to education; and the ideals of our University:

- in Canada, or internationally, particularly in fields of interest to OCAD U; or
- to the development of OCAD U; or
- to the betterment of arts, design and culture, or society, or the local community.

All eligible nominations received by the nomination deadline will be considered by the Honorary Degree Committee. Artistic partnerships or small collectives in which each artist meets the eligibility requirements may also be nominated for the award.

The Honorary Degree Committee selects recipients both for their individual contributions and for how they collectively reflect the vision of the OCAD U community: to nurture diversity and equity; to advance innovative Art & Design education and research; and to cultivate the next generation of professional practitioners and industry leaders.

Given the cohort-based nature of the selection process, past nominees who were not selected for the award may be carried over to later competitions if the Honorary Degree Committee determines, based on the Selection Criteria below, that the nomination merits further consideration.

Eligibility Exclusions

- OCAD University faculty, administrators, staff and members of the Board of Governors are normally not eligible for nomination until a minimum of three years has elapsed following their departure or retirement from active service. Emerit faculty not otherwise serving at the University are eligible for nomination after this three-year period.
- Other than in exceptional circumstances, honorands must be present at the Convocation ceremony to receive a degree; degrees will not be offered in absentia.
- The nominee must be living. If the candidate dies after accepting the nomination, but prior to its award, the degree will be awarded posthumously.

Selection Criteria

Since almost all candidates for honorary degrees will be distinguished people in one way or another, the Honorary Degree Committee will consider the following:

- Will this candidate's achievement be seen to be important and exemplary to the students who will graduate at Convocation?
- Given its vision, mission, and strategic and academic priorities, is it appropriate for OCAD University to honour this person at this time?
- In what ways is the candidate's achievement truly outstanding?
- In what ways has the candidate made an extraordinary contribution to culture, scholarship, and society?
- Has this candidate already been sufficiently recognized by other honors and awards?
- Has this person been appropriately recognized by the field or profession in which s/he is said to excel?
- Does this candidate help OCAD University achieve the goal of reflecting the diversity of Canadian society or the academic diversity of the University in the honours it bestows?
- Is the candidate already aware of OCAD University and would they appreciate the significance of the award?
- Does this nominee help OCAD University raise its stature and standing in civil society, broadly defined?

Nomination Form and Deadline

The online nomination form may be accessed on the [OCAD U website](#).

The nomination deadline is **5:00 pm EDT, Friday, October 31, 2025**.