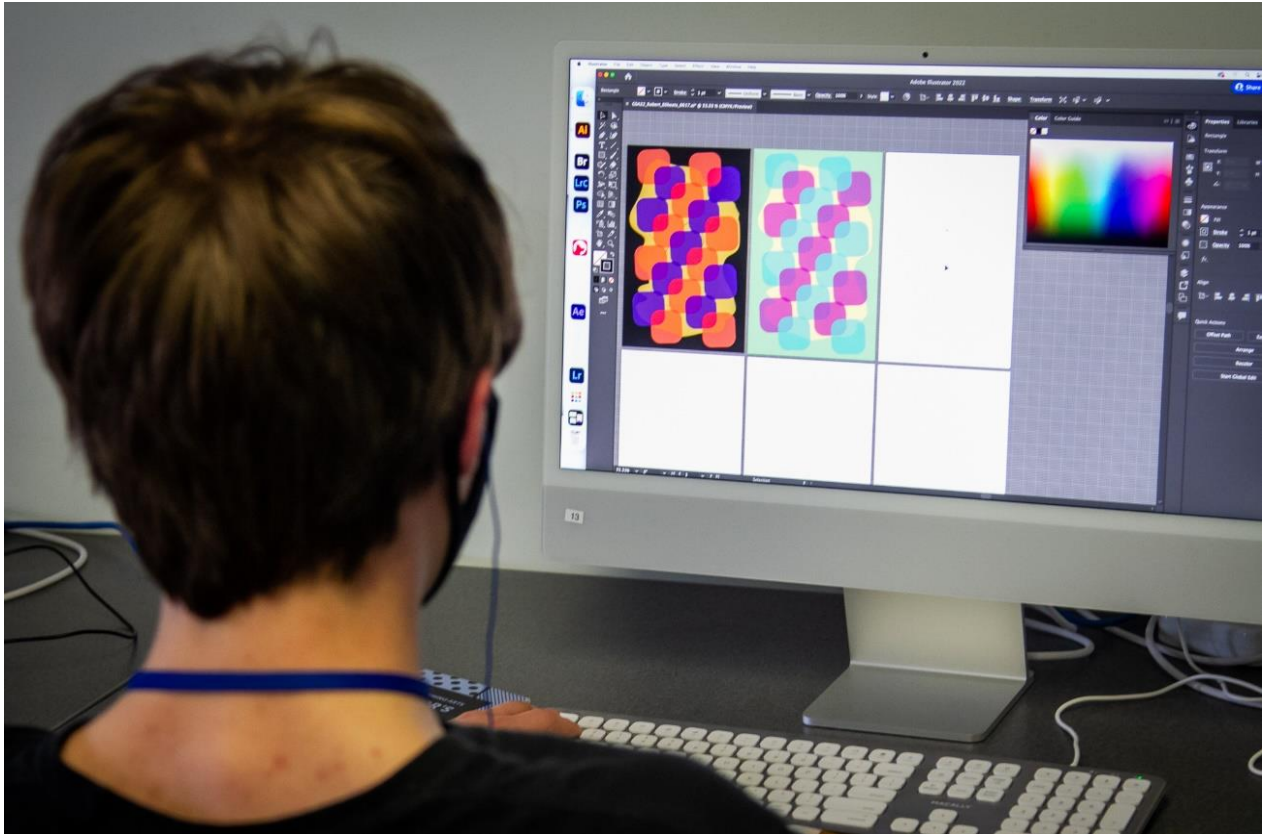# GSA 2023 APPLICANT GUIDE

Architecture + Design

I. Program Description

GSA's **Architecture + Design** program accepts students interested in architecture, interior design, product design, graphic design, fashion design, or other related design interests. Students are introduced to ideas, processes, and techniques applied in many design fields while at GSA. The goal of the program is to provide the framework within which students can explore the social, cultural, spatial, environmental, and abstract concepts that affect design. Project assignments focus on developing creative and analytical thought that is adaptable after GSA. Design thinking is introduced through a series of projects, which include drawing, sculpture, and digital media exercises, as part of an iterative process. The studio curriculum is supplemented with discussions, critiques, notable examples, cross disciplinary works, field trips, and guest artists - allowing students to observe and discuss design critically. Student work is curated for a public exhibition on the final day of GSA and prepared for collegiate portfolios.

***[Click here](#) to view the Architecture + Design program photos from GSA 2022. ***

II. Preliminary Round Application Requirements (due January 8th @ 11:59 p.m. EST/10:59 p.m. CST)

*Submit the materials in this section through the online platform [Acceptd](#) no later than **January 8th**.*
***NOTE**: Applicants will be prompted to pay a $30 application fee when submitting their materials (or $35 if applying in two artforms). Students on free/reduced lunch may opt to have this fee waived when payment is requested.*

For the Preliminary Round, submit the following (*see below for more detail*):
- **a.** Two Recommendation Forms
- **b.** Personal Short Essay
- **c.** Personal Question Video
- **d.** Artform-Specific Questions
- **e.** Portfolio Images
- **f.** Portfolio Cover Sheet
- **g.** Sketchbook Images

a. Two Recommendation Forms (*do this first!)*
Identify two people who will complete recommendation forms in support of your GSA application (*each person will complete the same form separately*):

<u>NOTE</u>: *previous GSA application cycles have required recommendations from a teacher and a school administrator. The recommendation guidelines have changed in recent years to broaden the scope of who may complete these forms. Please review the new guidelines below.*

The recommendation form includes questions about your artistic abilities/potential, how you contribute to your learning environment/community, and your overall fit for GSA. If you can select two recommenders who can speak to your artistic abilities, we encourage you to do so. However, we understand not every applicant will have one or two recommenders who have experienced the student's artistry. In this case, select recommenders who can speak to your character, accountability, and/or work ethic. Recommenders can be teachers (from inside or outside of your school and in any subject), school administrators (i.e., guidance counselor), mentors, or other people involved in your personal or artistic development such as a coach, youth minister, or staff at an organization for which you volunteer.

You will enter the names and email addresses of each recommender in your online application, and those individuals will receive emails instructing them on how to complete the recommendation form, which will take about five minutes.

<u>**Before** submitting your recommenders' information, we strongly encourage the following:</u>

1. **Inform them you are applying for GSA and would like to list them as a recommender.** Tell them they will complete a short form via email, and that their responses are confidential (you will not have access to them). Ask if they have any questions about GSA and/or your desire to apply.
2. **Confirm what email address you should list for them**; double check that you have the correct spelling.

Submit your recommenders' information as soon as possible so they have plenty of time to complete the forms prior to January 8th. <u>**After**</u> **you have submitted their information, we strongly encourage the following:**

1. **Tell your recommenders to check their email.** The email will come from **do-not-reply@getacceptd.com** and be titled <u>"Documentation Request from {{your name}} for Kentucky Governor's School for the Arts."</u>
2. **Ask them to confirm with you when they have submitted the form** – and then tell them thank you! If they have not received the form, ask them to check their junk folder and ensure you entered their email address correctly in the application. Contact GSA if you need to correct an email address.

<u>**NOTE**</u>: Once you submit your recommenders' information, you will have to click back into your profile to access the remainder of the application; *Acceptd* will refer to this next section as **"Application Part 2."**

Additional information about recommendations:

- No letters of recommendation are needed, nor should you submit any. Recommenders simply need to complete the form they receive via email.
- Applicants are not able to review the contents of their recommendations.
- Applicants' parents/immediate family may <u>not</u> fill out their recommendation forms.
- While we encourage you to secure the best recommenders possible within the guidelines listed, know that we rely on your personal application materials (essays, artistic work, etc.) as the primary tools to assess your fit for GSA. Recommenders have the option to choose "unknown" if they are not aware of the answer to a question, and this will not be held against you as an applicant.
- If you are applying for two artforms and using the same recommender(s), they must complete two forms (one for each artform), even if their answers are identical.

b. Personal Short Essay (250-word max)

Provide an answer to the following question in <u>**essay**</u> form:

How can/why should the artform you are applying in be of importance to your community or society as a whole? *Provide an answer that is specific to the artform you are applying for.*

- **Be open, honest, and authentic in your response – let us learn something about you.**
- **Upload this essay response as a document file**; type out the question at the top of your response, so the question and answer are both in the document (the question restatement does not count toward the word count limit).
- **When uploading your essay, title the file, "Personal Short Essay."**

c. Personal Question Video (90-second max)

Provide an answer to the following question in <u>**video**</u> form:

Why is the artform you are applying in important to you? What are your goals for yourself as an artist in this artform? *Provide an answer that is specific to the artform you are applying for.*

- **Be open, honest, and authentic in your response – let us learn something about you.** While you are encouraged to prepare your thoughts before shooting the video and you may consult notes as you speak, please do not just read off a transcript. We want to get a sense of your personality.
- **Begin your video by stating "Hello, my name is (first/last name)."** Record your answer in an interior space that is free from interruptions, noise, etc. Do not edit or splice the video. You do not need to include an introductory frame or any effects such as fades, etc.

- **Shoot straight on, leaving the camera in one location.** Review the video to ensure you can be seen AND heard. Ensure the video plays all the way to the end.
- **When uploading your Personal Question Video, title the file, "Personal Question Video."**

d. Artform-Specific Questions

Applicants will be asked questions about their specific interests in their artform and their level of access to training/classes/lessons in their artform. Applicants can review the specific questions for their artform once they have submitted their recommender information. There are no right or wrong answers for these questions, nor are we looking for one profile of a student over another – rather, we ask these questions to understand the applicant in the fullest context possible.

e. Portfolio Images and/or Files

Your Architecture + Design portfolio should consist of **7 total works** uploaded into your application.

*(**NOTE**: if you are also applying for Visual Art, note that while the guidelines for both artforms are similar, there are a few differences. Use the instructions as listed here only when applying to Architecture + Design. Consult the separate Visual Art guidelines when applying for Visual Art.)*

Four Required Portfolio Pieces

The following four pieces are required:
- an object study (still life)
- a portrait or self-portrait
- an environment (landscape)
- one 3-D (three-dimensional) piece made of any material

For these required pieces:
- The still life, portrait, or landscape can be 3-D as long as it is still done from direct observation; however, you must still submit a separate 3-D pieced for the fourth bullet point above.
- Drawing/working from photographs *may not* be substituted for any of these required submissions; the still life, portrait, and landscape must be created from direct observation of yourself and your surroundings.
- Digital illustrations and photographs may NOT be submitted for the three required pieces but may be submitted as part of the three remaining portfolio pieces.

Three Remaining Portfolio Pieces

The remaining pieces are selected by the applicant. Do your best to include a variety of mediums and subject matter. Show us your best work, your identity, or your interests with these pieces. We encourage you to include additional 3-D work of any material, if applicable. If any of these portfolio

pieces are derived from another work or photograph, please submit an image of the reference material, crediting the original artist (when applicable). You may also include original photography in these pieces.

FOR ALL PORTFOLIO PIECES:
- If your work is not already digital, digitize it by taking a digital photo or scanning it. Upload the file into the application. Verify all images are upright (not sideways).
- If submitting images of 3D work, please submit up to three images (per portfolio piece) from different angles.
- You do not have to photograph your work next to a ruler, as you will provide dimensions in the Portfolio Cover Sheet (described in the next section).
- Save and name your files individually so they correspond to the pieces and titles as listed on your portfolio cover sheet. The first piece listed on your cover sheet should be saved as "01_title", your second piece as "02_title" and so on. For multiple image files detailing one work or idea (e.g., multiple angles of a 3D piece), title images as "01_title; 01_title_2; 01_title_3" and so on.

f. Portfolio Cover Sheet
This one document should outline all portfolio pieces uploaded as part of your application, almost like a table of contents (note file naming instructions above so your uploaded images correspond with pieces listed on this sheet). For each work, please include the following:

- Reference image of the work (small image/thumbnail of the piece so we can quickly reference it to the higher-quality image uploaded based on guidelines in previous section). You only need to provide one reference image for 3-D work in the cover sheet
- Title of Work
- Year of Completion
- Approximate Dimensions
- Medium
- A very brief description of your process for creating this work (if the work is a collaboration, describe your role in the project)

g. Images of sketchbook pages and/or 3D experiments
Submit five photos of pages from a sketchbook, individual sketches, in-progress work, and/or 3D experiments that are an important aspect of your creative output. These items:

- should be a current reflection of your creative journey; a visual documentation of your brainstorming, investigations, and creative process.

- can consist of in-process drawings, experiments, photographs, collages, cut outs, or any other creations you'd like to share.
- do not count toward the total number of portfolio pieces you present. These five images are in addition to the seven required portfolio pieces.
- do not need to be included on the Portfolio Cover Sheet.
- Please title each image "Sketchbook_1", "Sketchbook_2" and so on.

III. Final Round Requirements

Some applicants will be invited to participate in the Final Round of GSA Auditions/Reviews, which will consist of the elements described below. All applicants will be notified on February 17th of whether they are invited to the Final Round. **The final round auditions/reviews for <u>Architecture + Design</u> on March 17th and 18th will be virtual.**

The Final Round for Architecture + Design will include:
  a. Pre-Review Questionnaire
  b. Images of Design Exercise
  c. Virtual Portfolio Review and Interview

a. Pre-Review Questionnaire (due via *Acceptd*)

Applicants who advance to the final round will be forwarded to a new section of their application in *Acceptd* (called **"Application Part 3"**). This new part of the application will include a short questionnaire. This questionnaire may cover a range of topics, including your previous experience in your artform, your favorite artists, and/or your college and career goals. The questionnaire is not a quiz and is not scored, but it is a way for adjudicators to get to know you. The questionnaire may be used to customize questions in your interview.

b. Images of Design Exercise (due via *Acceptd*)

All Architecture & Design Finalists must create a piece in response to a **Design Exercise Prompt** (provided after the final round announcement); the piece is reviewed during their Finalist Review. You will upload images of your work from the design prompt in *Acceptd* and then discuss the work with adjudicators during your interview on March 17th or 18th. All relevant instructions are included in the prompt, If extra assistance is needed, a **Design Exercise Tutorial** will also be provided.

The prompt reflects the design process at GSA and provides an opportunity to show/discuss your personal creative process. There is no correct way of responding to this design prompt – be creative and let us learn something about your process!

We will use this project as part of our selection process - both the final object which you present, as well as your ability to discuss your personal design strategy.

c. Virtual Portfolio Review/Interview (on March 17th or 18th)

Adjudicators will lead a brief conversation with each applicant about their portfolio, design exercise, and artistic motivations. This is an opportunity for the student to verbally express the qualities of their visual work as well as their personal artistic perspective. Finalists do not need to have on hand the portfolio pieces submitted for the preliminary round application; adjudicators will review and utilize images of the portfolio from the initial GSA application on *Acceptd* for the conversation (although applicants should be prepared to talk about their work and may benefit from having the work or images of the work within view for their own reference, when possible). *The duration of the review is limited to 10 minutes per applicant.*

Finalists will receive the time/date and Zoom link for their review/interview. This will be sent through Acceptd's messaging system.

IV. Criteria
The work of each student will be given an objective review by the adjudicators as to how they fulfill each of the following criteria:

Use of Formal Art Elements
An ideal applicant exhibits successful use of art elements such as line, value, shapes, forms, space, color, and texture. The applicant uses these elements to create structure and meaning and can speak to how they have done so.

Use of Design Principles and Sense of Composition
An ideal applicant utilizes design principles such as balance, contrast, movement, emphasis, and proportion in their work to guide their use of the formal art elements and the organization of the picture plane or three-dimensional form. The applicant uses these principles to create visual impact and meaning and can speak to how they have done so.

Technical Skill
An ideal applicant demonstrates practiced skill and developed technique, as well as an awareness of the specific tools, processes, and approaches required by the specific media being used. This does not necessarily mean each piece requires an extremely detailed finished quality, but rather that each piece is crafted in a way that is connected to ideas and materials.

Craftsmanship and Sensitivity to Materials/Media

The ideal applicant demonstrates a keen sensitivity to a variety of materials, a strong awareness of their intrinsic properties and limitations, and makes deliberate and intentional choices in crafting their work.

Originality & Creative Voice

An ideal applicant's work is consistently approached from a personalized viewpoint, background, or experience. Even if the work is a product of an assignment, it contains an artist's personalized point of view or desire. The applicant can identify and explain how their individuality and perspective are evident across the portfolio.

Dedication to Artform, Growth, and Community

An ideal applicant demonstrates a commitment to and passion for their artform, as well as a desire and ability to grow as an artist. The applicant can thoughtfully and authentically explain why they want to attend GSA and how they are uniquely qualified to contribute to a robust, diverse community of artists.

Design Exercise (Final Round only)

The design exercise is intended to evoke each applicant's individual expression through creative problem solving. There is no "correct" way to complete the on-site exercise, but each student will be critiqued on what product is created and how they explain their ideas. The prompt is open to a number of different solutions so that each student can create a designed piece through their own processes. The finished product is then considered as a designed object, and how it supports both the prompt and the focus of the conditions set by the applicant. All materials for the Design Exercise will be provided by GSA.

V. Tips

These tips are suggestions. They are NOT eligibility requirements for admittance to GSA.

- Your portfolio **does not** need to be architecturally oriented. We cover a number of design principles in our work and our teaching.
- Pay attention to the presentation of your pieces. Include only finished work in your portfolio pieces.
- If you have "architectural" work in your portfolio, **be sure to include other pieces.**
- We consider **aptitude for design** – this can be presented by work in any medium.
- Consider using **multiple materials** in the construction of your 3D work; this may allow you to address the criteria in a different way than using one material for an entire piece.
- **Incorporate recent work in your portfolio**, especially if you're applying a second time.
- Consider including **work completed outside of school/school projects** when possible.
- Be sure to pay attention to the presentation of your pieces**. Include only finished work** in your portfolio.

- Consider how you discuss your work. Try to **express ideas and interest we cannot see,** rather than describing the piece.
- **Pay close attention to the adjudication criteria.** While GSA students are accepted based on their holistic identity as a young artist, the criteria are the foundation of how your portfolio is being scored.
- **Remember the adjudicators are very excited to see your work and they want you to do well!** We know it takes hard work to submit this application, and that it can be scary to "put yourself out there." We have faith in you, so put your best foot forward and don't be afraid to show us the wonderful artist you are. You prove a level of dedication just by submitting your application, and you should be proud of yourself.

VI. Application Timeline/Deadlines

January 8, 2023 - GSA Application Due
All applicant materials must be submitted via *Acceptd* by **11:59 p.m. EST/10:59 p.m. CST**. We encourage you to submit early and not to wait until the last minute, as the application portal runs slowly when many people try to upload at once.

February 17, 2023 – GSA Finalists Announced
All applicants will be notified of whether they have advanced to the final round of adjudication. Those who've advanced to the final round will also be given instructions on how to complete "Application Part 3" via *Acceptd*.

March 17 & 18, 2023 – Final Round Auditions/Reviews
All Finalists will attend an audition/review. Some artforms will hold their auditions & reviews in-person at the University of Kentucky, while others will be held virtually. Friday and Saturday auditions/reviews run from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. EST.

Friday, April 14, 2023 – Announcement of GSA 2023 Accepted Students and Alternates
All Finalists will be notified of whether they have been accepted into the summer program. Alternates will also be listed. In addition, accepted students will be sent their assigned summer session.

Sunday, June 11, 2023, to Saturday, July 1, 2023 – Session One of GSA Summer Program
- *Architecture + Design* will be held in Session One only

Sunday, July 9, 2023, to Saturday, July 29, 2023 – Session Two of GSA Summer Program
- **Dance** will be held in Session Two only

For technical support with the application, contact *Acceptd*:

Acceptd **Email:** support@getacceptd.com

Acceptd **Phone:** 1(888) 725-2122, *press 2*

For questions about the content and/or requirements of the application, please contact *GSA*:

GSA Office Hours – Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST

GSA Info Box (Email) – gsainfo@kentuckyperformingarts.org

GSA Helpline (Phone) – (502) 566-5192