

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can I submit the same body of work that I've submitted in previous year(s)?

*Yes. But **only 2 images** can be from a previous submission. So, same series, but at least 8 new images.*

Can I submit more than one body of work?

No. You may only enter Critical Mass once. Furthermore, you may only submit one body of work per submission.

I don't have 10 images that I would like to submit. Can I enter Critical Mass with fewer than 10 images?

*Yes. But please know, this could put you at a disadvantage. We ask that you submit a **minimum of 7 images**. We will disqualify all submissions with less than 7 images. These submissions will not be forwarded to the pre-screener nor included on the All Entrants CD and registration fee will be forfeited.*

Is there a time limit on work submitted? That is, does the work have to have been made within the past year or so?

No.

Can I enter if I'm a student?

Yes.

Do I have to list prices for my work?

No.

Some things to consider when making this decision:

While gallerists do not necessarily expect an artist coming to them to know what the price of their prints should be, they should have an idea. Also, artists should be clear about what they want the size of their editions to be and most of all, at what print size they feel their work looks best.

Photographic prints generally cost between \$10 and \$100,000. An artist's basic trajectory is to start print prices lower and have them rise as the demand for the work rises. The price for a given size and type of print should never go down and your print prices are going to be weighed in the context of other artists' prices. That means that you should be finding out what other unrepresented photographers are charging – ask them how they configure things! You can also check prices at non-commercial exhibition venues, such as university galleries. Once you enter into a relationship with a gallery, your print prices will go up because of the value added that the gallery contributes by exhibiting them and working for you to place them in private, and sometimes public, collections.

If you are guessing on a price to place your work at, and it is obviously inaccurate or inflated, jurors will spot and question this. Just because you assign a high price to your work, it does not mean someone will pay it or jurors will think it more worthy content-wise. Research before you assign!

If I sell work as a result of Critical Mass, does Photolucida charge a commission?

Absolutely not. We consider ourselves a matchmaking service, not a broker. Our funding comes from [donations, grants, and sponsorships](#); as well as through entry fees for our programs.

Do I have to list edition numbers for my work?

No. It's at the photographer's discretion.

Some things to consider when making this decision:

Some photographers (and most gallerists) believe that in today's market it is critical for an artist to make a limited edition of their work, and that all good collectors demand it. This gives the artist the ability to be able to stop selling a particular image, and to move on and let it have a second life on the secondary market. There is no better sales tool than having a sold out print. It makes a collector pay more attention to what is still available, so that it doesn't sell out before they can buy it. In general, an artist should be more concerned about what they are going to do next than what they have done in the past.

Some photographers do not like assigning editions to their work as they feel it gives gallerists too much control. For example, if a collector or museum wants a particular image that has a sold out edition, the artist is no longer able to reprint and sell it to them. They will have to purchase that image from the secondary market and the artist, lose out that sale/income.

In the end, you are responsible for deciding how best to price and edition your work. We've heard from some jurors they are more likely to purchase a print if the pricing information is listed (and reasonable). While you should determine your pricing based on an objective analysis of the market and your costs, you're not required to list a figure here if you feel that would be premature. To suggest that potential buyers "inquire for pricing" is acceptable, but know they would prefer to see the price listed and be prepared with an answer if you are asked.

I've uploaded my images and text and I'm done making changes. Where's the submit button?

***There is no submit button. If you can see your images and text and it looks good to you, you're done.** We close the system on July 15 and, immediately begin loading all of the entered images and text into the pre-screening program.*

I made a mistake in my submission. Can I change it even though the registration period has closed?

No. As soon as registration closes, we begin uploading all text and images so the Pre-Screeners can begin voting. We will not change a submission after registration closes.

If I don't make it to the Finalist round, can I withdraw my submission from the CD?

No. All submissions are loaded to the All Entrants CD as an archive of each year's program. We do not allow the withdrawal of submissions.

I didn't make it to the Finalist round. Will I still get feedback on my work?

No; for two reasons:

1. It is not practical to ask pre-screeners to leave feedback when they are looking at such a large number of submissions. The time constraints are too great.

2. The goal of Critical Mass is primarily one of making connections; not one of creating dialogue between jurors and entrants. If a juror is interested in your work, they will contact you. If you are looking for expanded feedback on your project, please consider our [Portfolio Reviews](#) or a similar in-person review program.

I made it to the Finalist round! What kind of feedback from the jurors can I expect?

As with the previous question, the goal of Critical Mass is primarily one of making connections; not one of creating dialogue between jurors and entrants. Jurors do have the option of leaving feedback, but all feedback is anonymous, unless the juror chooses to identify him or herself. If a juror is interested in your work, they will leave their contact information or contact you directly. If you are looking for expanded feedback on your project, please consider our [Portfolio Reviews](#) or a similar in-person review program.

I did the math. You guys make a lot of money on this program. Where does it all go?

Photolucida is a 501(c)3 non-profit, so all income the organization takes in is used to further the mission of the organization. For the Critical Mass program, this includes:

A portion of staff salaries and overhead to ensure we have basic facilities/equipment to run the program.

Payment to a programmer to manage registration, the online juror voting system and CD production.

Costs associated with the Critical Mass Top 50 traveling exhibition.

Payment to produce the Book Award monograph (design, production, and printer fees).

Shipping of the CD's and monograph(s) to all jurors and entrants (typically 700+ people internationally).

If you, as an entrant, look at the entry fee from a cost/benefit standpoint:

For \$75 (\$90 international) you have 20+ photo industry professionals look at your work. It is included on a CD that goes to traditionally more than 500 photographers internationally. You received a copy of this CD, and the book award winners monograph. The books typically retail at

\$25–\$50 and cost about \$5 for us to ship (\$30 for international shipments). So, if you subtract the average book cost of \$40 and \$5 shipping expense, then you've paid \$30 for 20+ people to look at your work and a CD of images. Not so bad, really.

If you are a Finalist:

You get all the above benefits and pay \$200 to have 200+ photo industry professionals look at your work. That's \$1 a look. Not bad, considering quite a few of those looks turn into concrete connections. To our knowledge, this is the most cost-effective way to put one's work in front of this many people in the simplest way possible.

Sure, there are the awards: the Book Award, the Solo Exhibition Award, the Top 50 Group Exhibition. But Critical Mass is not just another "contest". These awards add to the primary goal of Critical Mass:

To create connections in the photographic community. While obvious opportunities might not happen immediately (but, some do!), there is an inherent process in this industry of exposure and long-term connections, and, ultimately, relationship-building.

Critical Mass registration fees are there to ensure that Photolucida is able to offer this program, now in it's eighth year. Please be assured registration fees do not line the pockets of any individual(s) or for-profit organizations. As a non-profit we strive to provide transparency in our programming.