The Living Memory Award
جائزة الذاكرة الحيَّة

Complete Submission Rules

Black Basalt Foundation · July 2026

Submission period: June 19 – July 11, 2026

CONCEPT AND CONTEXT

One year after the massacre, after a year of relentless sacrifice and continuous acts of courage, a year of solidarity among the people of the mountain at home and abroad, and out of a commitment to document and preserve these events in all their pain and all their heroism, in faithfulness to our martyrs, the wounded, and the missing, faithfulness to our homes, our streets, our villages, faithfulness to the trees, the stones, and the memories themselves, and under the banner “As long as there is someone among us to tell it…”, Black Basalt invites you to help preserve this memory through art, and to take part in a creative competition that tells the story as its own people see it.

Let us carve our wounded memory into our stones, etch our pain and our hope, and together raise a monument to dignity and freedom that honors the martyrs and heroes of July.

As long as there is someone among us who writes and sings, who draws and films, the truth will not be lost, and the sacrifices and acts of courage of our loved ones will not be stolen or distorted. As long as there is someone among us to tell it, we will not forget.

This is not a conventional competition. It is a collective responsibility, so that our story is not told in voices other than our own. We are not looking for technical perfection so much as honesty and human impact. A work may be made with the simplest means and still qualify, as long as it carries an honest testimony or an authentic artistic vision connected to the theme of memory.

Every submitted work becomes part of the first community archive of this first anniversary.

The prizes are recognition; participation is the purpose.

CATEGORIES

The competition has four categories. Participants may submit up to five works per category and may enter more than one category.

Poster

A designed visual piece intended for display and communication. May include text, typography, illustration, or graphic elements, or rely on the image alone with deliberate creative treatment.

Judged on visual strength, design, and communicative power … what distinguishes it from the Photography category. Digital, hand-crafted, collage, illustration, AI-assisted … any style or combination.

Short Film

15 seconds to 3 minutes.
Documentary, fiction, experimental, animation, archival footage, AIgenerated … any cinematic form or combination.

Photography

A single photograph as an independent work. No added text. No design elements. No compositing with other images.

Accepted edits: color, contrast, crop … standard correction only. The photograph speaks alone.

Photo & Story

A photo with an accompanying written text of no more than 200 words.

Both poetry and prose are accepted, in colloquial or formal Arabic. The text should add literary value; direct description that simply restates what's in the photo will not be accepted.

The photo must be the participant's own work, or they must hold the rights to use it, or it must come from open-source material. The text is written directly into the submission form.

PRIZE STRUCTURE

Total Prize Pool: $5,100 USD. Up to 18 winners.

Prize	Amount	Count	Notes
1st Place per category ×4	$500 each	4	Selected by each category's jury
2nd Place per category ×4	$250 each	4	Selected by each category's jury
3rd Place per category ×4	$150 each	4	Selected by each category's jury
Youth Prize for participants under 18	$200 each	5	One per category (×4) + one overall best (×1). Selected by the jury. Stackable with all other prizes, including People's Choice.
People's Choice Award	$500	1	Highest reactions on Facebook. Stackable with the Youth Prize and all other prizes.
Total	**$5,100**	**Up to 18**	

The top 50 works will be featured in a digital gallery on the anniversary day, including works that did not place.

JURY PANEL

The jury panel consists of 7 academic judges of high standing and credibility, drawn from the people of As-Suwayda, both resident and diaspora. Their names will be announced at a later date.

The jury evaluates submitted works based on originality and creativity, artistic value, relevance to the theme of memory, and the work's human impact.

HOW TO SUBMIT

Submission Period

Entries in all categories open on June 19, 2026 and close on July 11, 2026.

Who Can Enter

Open to everyone, with no geographic or age restrictions

The people of As-Suwayda inside Syria and in the diaspora, and anyone who feels this massacre touched their own humanity

SUBMISSION PLATFORM

Google Form, linked on the campaign page and in all social media posts Fields:

full name / city and country / email address / category / file upload / optional description (100 words max)

Photo & Story: the text is written directly into a designated field in the form.

Multiple submissions: one form per work. Up to five works per category. You may enter more than one category.

Confirmation: an automatic confirmation message is sent by email upon submission
Youth Prize ... to qualify, enter your date of birth in the designated field in the submission form. The jury may request additional confirmation if needed.

Anonymous Submissions
For participants who prefer not to reveal their identity for security or personal reasons:
In the form, select “I prefer to participate anonymously”
Your work will be published as “Participant from [City]” ... your full name will not appear in any post
Your email stays completely private and is used only to contact you if you win

Technical Specifications:

Category	Format	Minimum	Maximum
Poster	JPG or PNG	1080×1080 px	20 MB
Short Film	MP4 or MOV	15 seconds	500 MB
Photography	JPG or PNG 0r HEIF	1200 px on the longest side	20 MB
Photo & Story	JPG or PNG or HEIF + text in the form	1200 px on the longest side	20 MB

People’s Choice — How Voting Works

Voting is done by reacting to the work’s post on the Black Basalt Foundation Facebook page
Voting opens July 4 and closes July 11, alongside the submission deadline
The team tallies reactions manually on July 13

People’s Choice is stackable with the Youth Prize — the same work may win both Purchased reactions or systematic manipulation of votes is not permitted

Timeline

Date	Event
June 19, 2026	Submissions open
July 4, 2026	People’s Choice voting opens
July 11, 2026	Submission & voting deadline
July 13, 2026	Final jury deliberation
July 14, 2026	Winners notified privately
July 15, 2026 — Anniversary Day	**Digital gallery launch + People’s Choice announced**
July 17–18, 2026	Jury award winners announced

Memory does not survive alone,
it lives in the voices of those who carry it.

CONTENT GUIDELINES

Eligibility Requirements

The work must be original and created by the participant

The participant retains full intellectual property rights to their work. By submitting, they grant Black Basalt Foundation a non-exclusive license to publish, display, and use the work for the purposes of the award, archiving, and promoting the initiative, with credit to the creator.

Accepted works will be published on the Foundation's pages during the submission period, with full credit to the creator

Not Accepted Content

Any sexually explicit content or sexual insinuation
Any content that promotes or incites violence
Any defamatory content targeting specific individuals
Any racist content or content inciting hatred
Any plagiarized work or work reproducing someone else's creation
Any work that depicts, names, quotes, or references a current political figure .. including heads of state, government officials, or active political leaders ... will be immediately disqualified from the competition.

Historical figures and archival material are not subject to this restriction.

Archival Material and AI

Archival material ... photographs, documents, and video footage .. is welcomed and encouraged in all categories

Work produced with AI assistance is accepted in the Poster and Short Film categories.

Photography requires the image to be entirely original, with no digital compositing.

Written text must be the participant's own work; AI tools may only be used for proofreading, translation, or technical editing

Dignity of Martyrs and Victims

The people who lost their lives or were affected by the events of July 2025 are not creative material. They are people with names, families, and memories. In every submitted work, their images, names, and testimony must be treated with full dignity and in a spirit of commemoration.

The following are not permitted in any category, and will result in immediate disqualification:
Using AI to alter, reconstruct, animate, or generate the face, body, or voice of a martyr or victim
.. such as generating a version of a martyr saying words they never said, or reconstructing their face from old photos to create an image that never existed.

Placing the image of a martyr or victim into a scene or context they were never part of … such as compositing their image into a place, event, or artistic composition for visual effect.

Altering the facial expression, pose, or appearance of a martyr or victim in a way that changes how they are perceived … such as editing a photo of a deceased person to look different from the original, documented image.

Using the names, images, or stories of martyrs or victims in a way the jury considers undignified or exploitative, or that fails to respect the person's memory or their family's grief.

Black Basalt Foundation reserves the right to disqualify any work it judges to treat the martyrs, victims, or the events themselves in a manner that is inappropriate, disrespectful, or harmful to the community … at any stage of the competition, including after shortlisting or the announcement of results.

AI Use Policy

AI tools are permitted as a creative or production aid in all eligible categories, as specified per category above. AI may not replace authentic human experience, or be used to fabricate testimonies, memories, or documentary material that did not occur.

Any use of AI in producing the work must be disclosed at submission Failure to disclose AI use, if discovered, results in disqualification.

The jury reserves the right to disqualify any work where AI use is judged to undermine, rather than support, authenticity or documentary integrity

Artistic symbols and metaphor may be used freely, provided they don't blur the line between fact and fiction regarding real events or real people