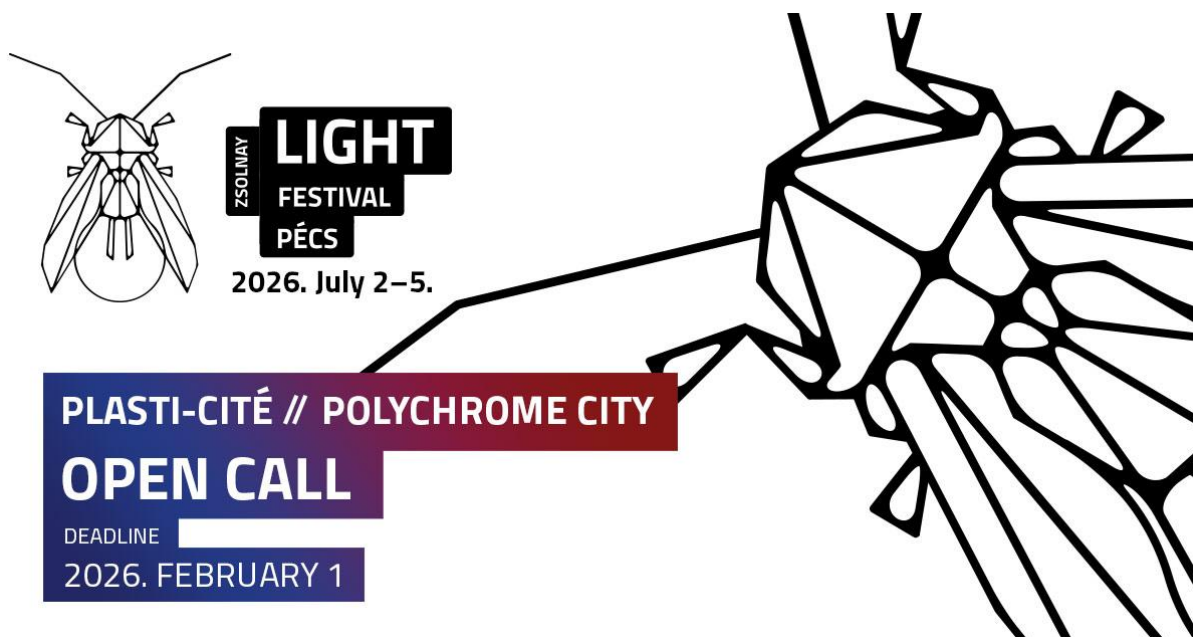




ZSOLNAY LIGHT FESTIVAL X. CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The Zsolnay Light Festival invites you to submit your application and have your creation included in the festival programme in the summer of 2026!

The deadline for submissions is 1 FEBRUARY 2026.

THE CALL

AIM OF THE COMPETITION

Between 2 and 5 July 2026, Hungary's only light festival will mark its tenth edition in the city of Pécs. The organiser of the Zsolnay Light Festival (hereinafter ZSLF) announces an open call for participation in the Route of Light.

One of the most powerful experiences of the festival is the approximately 20-station light trail, the Route of Light. The Route of Light presents a wide spectrum of Hungarian and international light art, projection works and other light-based attractions. Visitors will encounter creations based on analogue and digital techniques, as well as static and interactive installations.

The primary aim of the ZSLF is to showcase artistic works that use light as a medium of artistic expression.

THEME OF THE COMPETITION

ZSLF is seeking works that speak to a broad audience — works that captivate, inspire, educate, and actively involve visitors, while reflecting on our preferred theme. The theme

below serves as a guiding direction rather than a strict requirement; however, submissions that respond to it will be given priority during the selection process.

ZSLF invites future creators of the festival to collectively explore the following topic:

PLASTI-CITÉ // POLYCHROME CITY

Victor Vasarely, the master who integrated the mechanisms of visual perception into art, the founder and defining figure of the Op Art movement, will be celebrated in 2026, marking the 120th anniversary of his birth.

Why is this significant for us, and why do we make Vasarely's legacy the central concept of the festival's jubilee call?

VASARELY 2026 - PÉCS

One of the most influential international figures of 20th-century visual art, Victor Vasarely was born in Pécs in 1906. His presence continues to shape the city's cultural and artistic identity, and he stands as a symbol of local talent rising to global prominence.

Vasarely's deep connection to Pécs is indisputable. In 1976, on his own initiative, the Vasarely Museum of Pécs was opened, and he donated hundreds of his works to his hometown. The museum — now celebrating its 50th anniversary - has since become a key institution of Pécs' artistic life, representing the city's modern and international spirit.

The city marks this double anniversary with a unified, large-scale programme series. The commemorative year is realised under the professional direction of the Janus Pannonius Museum, with the involvement of the University of Pécs, local cultural institutions, and the creative industry, in cooperation with the Municipality of Pécs.

THE POLYCHROME CITY

Vasarely's visual world forms a crucial historical foundation and source of inspiration for contemporary light art and digital art. His works, based on optical illusion, use the interplay of light and shadow to evoke the sensation of movement and spatial depth — transforming light into both a visual experience and a perceptual phenomenon.

In his practice, Vasarely sought to create a universal visual language, uniting the ideas of science, technology, and humanism. His works explore the sensory experience of movement, space, and light, while advocating for the democratisation of art.

For Vasarely, art carried social responsibility. Through the concept of "social art," he emphasised that art must step out of elite galleries and become part of everyday environments. His vision was a world where art is not a privilege but a shared experience and collective value accessible to all.

For Vasarely, the expression “Polychrome City” represented one of the core visions of contemporary art: a human-centred and inspiring environment where art is not mere decoration, but an active presence in daily life. He believed that the harmony created by vivid colours, geometric forms, and optical effects could positively influence well-being and social interaction. Thus, Polychrome City remains both an aesthetic and humanistic programme — a vision still relevant today.

ZSOLNAY LIGHT FESTIVAL X.

Ten years of light. Ten years of encounters between art and audience, technology and human perception.

Our intention is for the jubilee of the Zsolnay Light Festival to be not only a round anniversary, but also a renewed opportunity to collectively reconsider what light means as an artistic and communal experience.

Just as Victor Vasarely placed the mechanisms of vision at the centre of art, the Light Festival transforms the city, its architecture, and its public spaces into sensory experiences. The vision of the Színes Város comes to life during the Festival: the city fills with light, movement, and human presence. Light becomes play, reflection, and shared experience — just as in Vasarely’s work, where visual experience was also a path to understanding.

APPLICATION PREFERENCES

In this jubilee edition, we welcome ideas for the indoor and outdoor stations of the Route of Light, with possible locations in the historic city centre and the Zsolnay Quarter.

We are primarily looking for works that alter visual perception, reshape architectural or spatial structures, and reinterpret the familiar.

Approaches based on algorithmic, modular, or generative design are considered an advantage, as well as any experimental technique, including those not yet traditionally associated with light art.

We seek works that engage with Vasarely’s legacy in a forward-looking way — not through imitation, but through reinterpretation filtered through the technological, sensory, and social conditions of the present.

A key evaluation criterion is the quality of site adaptation — how thoughtfully and effectively a piece relates to its location within the festival.

We are looking for light installations, kinetic structures, architectural or object projections, digital works, and interactive experiences that offer fresh perspectives on the relationship between light and perception, and that contribute to making the city more vibrant, open, and liveable.

Plasti-Cité is therefore not only a reflection on Victor Vasarely’s legacy, but also an invitation: to collectively imagine and create the Színes Város of the future — a city where light becomes a space for encounter, inspiration, and shared reflection.

CATEGORIES OF THE COMPETITION

Applications may be submitted in two categories:

ROUTE OF LIGHT

Works created with digital or analogue projection or lighting technologies that relate to the festival's theme. It is essential that works submitted in this category remain accessible to large audiences throughout the entire festival, over four evenings, for 4–5 hours per night, and that they provide a continuous, reliable experience.

LIGHT ARTIST CAMP

A distinguished component of the Route of Light is the Light Artist Camp, realised for the fourth time in 2026. Through this programme, the Light Festival is committed to presenting experimental works involving light and new media, aiming to provide development opportunities and professional visibility for emerging university-level creators.

This category is open to students currently enrolled in higher education. A core feature of the programme is that selected works receive professional consultation and technical assistance throughout their development and realisation. Works submitted in either category will generally appear as independent stations of the festival. However, the Organiser reserves the right — with the creator's consent — to present certain works in grouped formats.

THIS YEAR, OUR CALL FOR APPLICATIONS SPECIFICALLY FOCUSES ON WORKS FOR THE ROUTE OF LIGHT. THE CREATORS OF THE ZSOLNAY LIGHT ART MAPPING COMPETITION ARE SELECTED BY INVITATION ONLY. APPLICATIONS FOR ALL OTHER PROGRAMME TYPES OF THE FESTIVAL MAY BE SUBMITTED TO: info@zsolnayfenyfesztival.hu

SCOPE OF APPLICANTS

ZSLF welcomes submissions from artists who have previously participated in the festival as well as first-time applicants. An artistic degree or previously completed works is not a strict requirement, although professional experience and proficiency may be an advantage. The competition is open to both individual creators and creative collectives.

EVALUATION CRITERIA OF THE APPLICATION

All submissions will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Originality of the idea, content, and execution
- Creative concept and artistic value
- Site-specificity and the relationship between the work and its physical environment
- Audience experience and engagement
- Interpretation and use of the theme
- Technical feasibility
- Cost-effective implementation
- Environmentally conscious approach

FORM OF SUPPORT

For the winning works, ZSLF undertakes to provide full financing of the presentation, based on a mutually agreed set of conditions.

Only expenses directly related to the realisation and presentation of the work may be included in the submitted budget.

The budget submitted with the application represents a significant component of the evaluation process, and the applicant agrees that the items listed are to be considered final.

Increases to the budget after submission may only be approved in exceptional cases.

ZSLF reserves the right to review and adjust budget items with selected applicants.

Where equipment or services can be provided through the festival's own resources, the budget may be reduced accordingly, by mutual agreement.

Financial support will be provided after completion, upon receipt of an invoice, with a 30-day payment term.

A maximum 50% advance payment may be requested following the signing of the contract.

In addition to financing the project budget, the organiser provides accommodation for essential team members during the preparation period and throughout the festival.

SUBMISSION OF THE APPLICATION

To submit your application, register and complete our online application form, accessible via the "Submit an application" link.

Only applications submitted through the online system, and completed in full, will be considered.

Applications submitted after the deadline or via email cannot be taken into account.

Before filling in the form, please ensure you have carefully read and understood the details of this Open Call and the Application Guide.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: 1 FEBRUARY 2026, 24:00 CET

For questions related to the application process or completing the form, please write to:

fenyutja@zsolnayfenyfesztival.hu

We welcome enquiries about feasibility, site-specific considerations, or any other professional support. If needed, we also provide on-site visits and personal consultations.

Submit an application:

<https://palyazat.zsolnayfenyfesztival.hu/en>

DECISION-MAKING AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESULTS

The ZSLF team makes its decision with the involvement of technical and artistic advisors.

All applicants will be notified of the results via email once the evaluation has concluded.

Announcement of results: 15 March 2026

CONTACT

We remain available throughout the preparation of your application. Please send your questions to: fenyutja@zsolnayfenyfesztival.hu

INFORMATION

Organizer: Zsolnay Heritage Management Ltd.

<https://zsolnayfenyfesztival.hu>

<https://www.youtube.com/c/ZsolnayFényfesztiválPécs>

<https://www.facebook.com/zsolnayfenyfesztival>

<https://www.instagram.com/fenyfesztival/>

APPLICATION GUIDE

The Application Guide complements the Call for Proposals with important practical information that supports the preparation and submission of a successful application.

GENERAL INFORMATION

This competition provides an opportunity to be included in the 2026 programme of the Zsolnay Light Festival.

The organiser reserves the right to implement internally developed or invitation-based projects alongside the selected works.

Submissions may include new works or previously presented works, provided they fully comply with the conditions and principles of this call.

The organiser reserves the right to propose adjustments to selected works — in agreement with the creator — to ensure presentability, feasibility, and alignment with festival conditions.

ZSLF does not necessarily expect fully finished works in this competition.

It is also possible to submit concepts or partially developed ideas that require further support in adapting to the location, defining technical requirements, or developing implementation plans.

The ZSLF team provides support throughout the entire lifecycle of the project — preparation, installation, operation, and dismantling — through professional consultation and human or technical resources. Details will be agreed with the selected applicants following the announcement of results.

We provide security guarding for all productions during installation, presentation, and dismantling.

However, operation during festival hours must be undertaken by the artist or their team members. In special cases, exceptions may be negotiated and specified in the agreement.

During the financial planning process, we aim to assist applicants in optimising and rationalising costs.

The organiser reserves the right to involve sponsors to support the costs of realising the work.

If your project is eligible for external funding, grants, or financial support, please indicate this during the application, as it may be considered an advantage during evaluation.

Acceptance of the application does not guarantee that the work will be realised.

Where justified, the ZSLF team may provide technical equipment or on-site infrastructure. Details will be discussed with applicants upon selection.

By submitting the application, the applicant accepts that the organiser may request non-conceptual modifications — adjustments that do not affect the artistic essence but ensure feasibility or alignment with financial or festival-wide considerations.

Naturally, the applicant has the right to review and consider these changes.

The applicant acknowledges that the completed intellectual product remains the property of the creator, but the organiser receives the full right to present and publicly display it, determining access conditions and presentation timing.

By submitting the application form, each applicant undertakes to ensure that their work does not violate the honour, human dignity, or reputation of any third party.

By submitting the application form, each applicant also undertakes and guarantees that, should any damage be caused to a third party through the submission or presentation of the work, they will fully compensate all material and non-material damages directly to the injured party.

By submitting the application form, each applicant guarantees that their work does not infringe the copyright or property rights of any third party

If any justified legal claim is made against the organisers of ZSLF due to copyright, personality rights, property rights, or other rights violations caused by the applicant's work, the applicant agrees to assume full liability on behalf of the organiser.

SITES

You may explore the potential indoor and outdoor locations of the Route of Light via the provided map and photo/video gallery.

Applications may be submitted without specifying a location, but works designed specifically for the listed sites may receive preferential consideration.

The final selection of sites and programme layout is determined by the ZSLF team.

We reserve the right — in cooperation with the applicant — to refine presentation details upon selection.

We also reserve the right to discuss site adaptation requirements, while fully respecting artistic freedom.

[LOCATION MAP](#)

[LOCATION PHOTOS](#)

Each submitted work must respect the character, spirit, and cultural significance of its presentation site.

During the decision-making process, works are evaluated in relation to specific sites and their unique characteristics.

For outdoor locations, the installation must be robust and weather-resistant, capable of withstanding rain and wind.

In the contract, the applicant must assume responsibility for the equipment and materials they provide.

TECHNICAL DETAILS

We welcome applications created using the following technologies:

- Building projections using analogue, digital, or mapping techniques (separate from the invitational mapping competition for the Cathedral — these function as independent artworks)
- Light sculptures
- Light installations (interactive, site-specific, etc.)
- Sculpture mapping
- Works using natural light
- Analogue projectors, digital projectors, robotic lights, LED systems, lasers, fire, or other light-generating devices

FAQ

I need to specify the technical equipment required for my work, but I don't yet know all the details. What should I write on the form?

Please list the equipment to the best of your current knowledge.

If you are uncertain, indicate this in the form — our team will contact you during evaluation to clarify technical details.

I have a great idea but no experience in implementing it. What should I do?

We welcome concept-level ideas and are happy to assist in bringing them to life.

This development process may require more time, and we reserve the right to support the idea through extended preparation, potentially realising it in a future edition of the festival.

What additional administrative tasks should I expect for presenting my work?

Once submissions have been evaluated, we will send a draft contract outlining both artistic obligations and expectations from the festival organisers.

Please note in advance: it is your responsibility to arrange insurance for your work.

If my work is selected, how much time will I have for setup (assembly/installation)?

A 3–5 day installation period is usually anticipated, and the work must be fully completed one day before the festival opens.

We will provide a detailed schedule for installation, presentation, and dismantling, ensuring that all artists receive the necessary support and attention.

We wish you every success in preparing your application. We look forward to receiving your submission — please feel free to contact us with any questions!

Pécs, 17. November 2025.