

December 2023

Royal Auxiliary Air Force  
Stained Glass Commission  
Call For Entries



Open to emerging stained glass artist who are members of the British Society of Master Glass Painters and resident in the UK.

We are delighted that the British Society of Master Glass Painters has been invited to work with the London RAF Club on Piccadilly to create a piece of contemporary stained glass art to be commissioned and completed by the middle of July 2024. We want to encourage emerging artists to take part as this is in line with our own emphasis on new talent within the Art and Craft of stained glass.

From the initial expressions of interest up to four artists from our membership and one selected from the ranks of the RAF will be shortlisted to visit the RAF Club and will be paired with an experienced mentor who is a Fellow or Associate of the Society. We are keen to support the transference of skills to help keep the art form alive, vibrant and relevant.

Each shortlisted artist will be given a modest fee of £300 to produce an initial idea for a design. The winning entrant will be awarded the commission for which there is a budget.



Heraldry and emblems are perfect vehicles for stained glass with some very notable and successful works, both ancient and modern. The finest examples of heraldic stained glass from the medieval period to the modern demonstrate a vibrant and tremendously exciting art form. We hope that the selected artists will embrace this sense of excitement, colour and vigour.

The choice of technique is completely open. Entrants could produce a work using traditional methods or decide to employ modern techniques.

The site of the commission is a window that receives very little natural light so the panel will need back lighting. The overall size of the window is approximately 2.3m x 2m (see photo) and the proposed site of the artwork is in front of the lower central sash window (approximately 1270 x 965 with a depth of 45mm to include the frame and light-sheet). It is envisioned that the panel will be made and framed off site and installed with a discrete fixing.

The brief itself seems straightforward enough, to depict the badge of the RAF Auxiliary Squadron. However, the simplicity of the brief comes with some complex considerations for the successful artist. Firstly, the rigour of the heraldic convention must be observed in the depiction of the badge. Secondly, the scale and position of the badge will be important and any borders, background or decoration should be considered carefully. The lettering is a vital element of the design. In the elegant surroundings of the club there are many notable artworks including two windows by the Society's Fellow, Helen Whittaker and the chosen design should seek to enhance the environment while providing a focal point. Finally, thought should also be given to the integral strength of the panel, frame, fixing and backlighting and there will be assistance from the mentors with this.

All entrants must be current members of the British Society of Master Glass Painters. Associates and Fellows of the Society are not eligible to enter. Membership of the Society is open to everyone with an interest in stained glass. Join before January 2024 to enjoy the benefits of membership for £45 per annum.

<https://www.bsmgp.org.uk>

The shortlisted applicants will be announced on 2 February and will be invited to visit the RAF Club the following week. Designs will be submitted by the end of March. A judging panel of representatives drawn from the British Society of Master Glass Painters, the RAF Club, the Royal Auxiliary Air Force and the Beaverbrook Foundation (who are funding the commission) will select the winning design from the shortlisted entries. The appointed artist will have until mid July to construct and

install their window. All applicants should be in a position to guarantee the agreed design can be made in the time frame available.

The installation of the work will be carried out with help from the British Society of Master Glass Painters.

Founded in 1918, the Royal Air Force Club is a charity that provides accommodation, events and event spaces to Serving and Former-Serving Officers and their families of the Royal Air Force in Central London. We encourage all entrants to learn more about the Club here: <https://www.rafclub.org.uk/club-history>

To express your interest please email up to six images of your work, CV including contact details (maximum of one page relevant to the commission) and up to 200 words on how you would approach the commission to [competitions@bsmgp.org.uk](mailto:competitions@bsmgp.org.uk) by 12 January 2024.

Please share this with anyone who would be suitable as an artist or mentor.

