

PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY, B.DES.

Seven Penn State campuses are scheduled for closure after Spring 2027: DuBois, Fayette, New Kensington, Mont Alto, Shenango, Wilkes-Barre, and York. New students are not being admitted at these campuses.

Begin Campus: University Park

End Campus: University Park

Career Paths

The Bachelor of Design (B.DES.) in Professional Photography at Penn State University equips students with creativity, technical skills, and industry expertise essential for success. Graduates pursue careers in commercial, editorial, fine art, and digital media photography, tailoring their paths to their interests.

Commercial and editorial photography provide extensive opportunities. Graduates create visuals for advertisements, publications, and media outlets. Many work as commercial photographers, producing images for brands and marketing campaigns. Others focus on editorial photography for magazines, news organizations, and digital platforms. Specializations such as portrait, fashion, product, food, event, documentary, and fine art photography offer additional career options.

Freelance and entrepreneurial paths allow graduates to establish independent careers. Some become creative directors, managing visual storytelling for businesses, while others develop stock photography portfolios for commercial use. A degree in Professional Photography from Penn State University prepares students for a dynamic industry, equipping them with the skills to make a lasting impact in visual storytelling.

Careers

The creation and use of photographic images has increased exponentially since the development of digital photography in the mid-1990s, and you will encounter the use of photographic images across all disciplines and in many professional careers. Advanced camera and software technology has made taking and editing photographs substantially easier, and the quality achieved among practitioners has dramatically increased. Our goal is to help you achieve a balanced approach in acquiring the necessary skills and knowledge to develop your confidence and attitude in being able to pursue your professional interest in photography.

Opportunities for Graduate Studies

A capstone photography project serves as both a culminating experience and a creative and critical assessment that will help you identify the distinctive look of your portfolio. Through peer review, and input from faculty who are all exhibiting photographic artists, you will receive mentoring about career options and further educational opportunities, such as applying for graduate school.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDIES (<https://arts.psu.edu/degrees/mfa-art>)

Professional Resources

- College Art Association (<https://www.collegeart.org>)
- National Art Education Association (<https://www.arteducators.org>)

- National Council of Art Administrators (<https://www.ncaaart.org>)
- Pennsylvania Art Education Association (<https://sites.google.com/paea.org/paea/home>)