



“We’ve Always Been Here”

Queer History Zine

Artist Guidelines

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✨ [Artist Application](#) ✨

“We’ve Always Been Here”, a queer history zine, aims to show that queer people have always existed, and always will, through depictions of queer characters in historical settings.

This is *not* a zine of real, known historical figures in queer history, but rather, a celebration of the ‘unseen’ history, depicting original characters in scenes that show how queer people of all kinds have been here throughout various cultures, faiths, and time periods.

We plan to create both physical and digital versions of this art book, along with some limited physical merch, through a Kickstarter campaign.

Artists will be paid for their work. (more details below)

About Us

Tapling Zines is a project made by a team of two husbands, SacredSapling and TapiocaWizard. Though this is their first community zine project, both have past experience running a set of Kickstarter campaigns for a dog-themed tarot deck which successfully shipped to over 600 total backers worldwide.

SacredSapling: [Bluesky](#) | [Instagram](#)
TapiocaWizard: [Bluesky](#) | [Instagram](#)

Schedule

The following schedule is approximate, and timelines may shift as needed. We will do our best to update everyone as promptly as possible when necessary.

Artist applications open: September 18, 2025

Artist applications close: October 17, 2025 (midnight CEST, as it becomes the 18th)

Artists chosen and contacted: Early-mid November, 2025*

*depends on number of submissions received

Art creation period: December 2025 - February 2026 (3 full months)

Kickstarter launches: February/March 2026 (approximate)

Order fulfillment begins: Spring-Summer 2026**

**depends on printing companies, number of pledges received, etc.

Art Creation

Original characters:

All characters depicted must be newly created for this project, or belong directly to the artist (as in, an existing OC). No fanart is allowed for this zine due to potential copyright issues. Characters must be human, and scenes depicted must be based in reality; for example, no fantasy settings, furry characters, elves, etc.

Scenes:

Art pieces must include a background to depict a full scene (this can be stylized!), and characters shown must be at least half-body to properly depict what's going on. We highly encourage diversity in chosen scenes, as we aim to depict a broad scope of queer history without a narrow colonial lens. BIPOC artists are highly encouraged to apply, and we also encourage the depiction of visibly disabled or otherwise marginalized characters. "Own voices" (depicting your own culture, faith, ancestry, and experiences) are encouraged, but not required as long as everything is done respectfully.

A short list of examples, to better illustrate the idea behind the zine:

- Two men kissing in a precolonial African country
- A trans masc character in ancient Greece
- Two lesbian flappers in the 1920s flirting in the corner of a club
- A two-spirit person in precolonial America/Turtle Island
- A transfem character in an ancient Korean palace

Small illustrative comics (single page) and unique paneling/framing are allowed, however, in the case of comics, we ask that there be no dialogue or words that are necessary to understand the comic. (Text on signs in the background, etc, are allowed). We want the art in the book to be accessible to everyone regardless of their language!

Adult content:

We aim to make this zine available to the general public, and as such, can not allow 18+ content for this specific project. Artistic nudity of the top half of the body

(regardless of gender) is allowed, but all genitals must be covered. Images may be sensual or suggestive in nature, but not explicitly sexual.

Art mediums:

Both digital and traditional art is welcomed, as long as the final submitted piece fits our minimum printing specs. Art must be fully colored and rendered in a similar fashion to the portfolio pieces submitted in the original artist application. For this project, we are not currently looking for submissions of writing/poetry, photography, sculpture, photomanipulation, or other non-illustration forms of art. Feel free to send us an email or DM if you're unsure if your medium is something we're looking for!

AI use:

Absolutely no generative AI use is allowed within this project. If you are found using AI in any part of your process (including, but not limited to: art creation, refining, and idea generation), you will be immediately removed from the project without payment.

Art sizing and specs:

Final art pieces must be portrait orientation, with margins for crop/bleed. Submitted pieces will need to be large enough for good printing quality, and traditional media must be scanned or photographed at a high quality as well. Exact dimensions and specs will be given to the selected artists once the art creation timeline begins.

Timeline

Check-ins:

We will have periodic check-ins to make sure progress is being made to complete your piece on time, and to provide a small amount of art direction if needed (mainly on sizing, print specs, etc.). We recognize that each artist's progress looks differently at these stages, and that's fine! These check-ins are just to confirm the project is moving along and goals are being met.

Here is a rough timeline (exact dates will be given before art creation begins):

- 2 weeks: Thumbnail/composition sketches submitted
- 1 month: Piece 25% complete (or 50% of sketch/lines)
- 2 months: Piece at least 50% complete
- 2 weeks before final submission date: Piece at least 90% complete
- Final submissions 100% complete and ready for printing by deadline

If there are delays due to health or life events, we ask that we are contacted as soon as possible. Overall, the timeline is 3 months, which we hope is accessible to most creators. For those working on the shortened timeline (optional, so we will have art for the Kickstarter mock-ups and test prints), the 1-month check-in will

require your piece to be approximately 50% done, and final submission complete at 2 months.

Check-ins will be completed by uploading your piece's current progress to a shared Google Drive by the given date.

Posting Schedule:

Artists will be required to post about the zine on their social media during the project. This will typically include at least one Work in Progress shared each month (a small, cropped version of the image), as well as sharing/promoting the Kickstarter at least twice after it's gone live. A full social sharing timeline, with more details, will be provided to the selected artists.

We realize not everyone utilizes social media the same, and we want to do our best to work with you and your individual audience while still promoting the zine sufficiently to your followers.

Compensation:

As long as our Kickstarter successfully funds, artists will receive a 100€ (or equivalent in your currency) flat-rate compensation, delivered after the Kickstarter ends. There may also be a potential bonus, divided evenly between all artists, dependent on the level of our Kickstarter's successful funding. Exact details will be shared in a contract, along with limited use licensing terms.

Contact

For any questions or issues, please contact us at hello@taplingzines.com or through Bluesky/Instagram DMs. If we don't respond within 3 days, please try another method of communication, in case your email didn't send.