



## GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATIONS FY2021 GRANT FUNDS

**The Arts Council of Anne Arundel County** is a private, non-profit organization with the mission to encourage and invest in the visual arts, performing arts, and historic preservation for the people of Anne Arundel County. The Arts Council's vision is to serve as the premier resource for the cultural arts community in the County, providing leadership in advocacy, funding, programming, promotion and information sharing in order to help create and sustain a vibrant cultural community that enriches the quality of life for every county resident.

The Arts Council operates an annual **Community Arts Grant** program for nonprofit cultural/arts organizations in the county to help achieve its goals. The purpose of the Grant Program is:

- To foster excellence, diversity and vitality in arts offering for all Anne Arundel County residents;
- To broaden opportunities for County audiences, artists and arts organizations;
- To increase the availability of arts activities and programs for all County residents; and
- To promote countywide awareness of arts resources and opportunities.

Funding for Community Arts Grants is provided by grants from the Maryland State Arts Council, from a small portion of the tax receipts generated through the State and City of Annapolis hotel tax and through private donations. Funding limitations do not generally allow for full funding of all approved applications.

Three types of grants are awarded:

- **General Operating Grants**
  - **General Operating Grants** in support of ongoing activities are awarded to established nonprofit cultural/arts organizations which have existed for more than one year and have IRS 501(c)(3) Tax Exempt Status;
  - **Founding Grants for general support** are awarded on a one-time basis to new nonprofit cultural/arts organizations that not received prior grant funding from the Arts Council. Founding Grant applicants must be non-profit Maryland corporations with an IRS 501C-3 status. A Founding Grant cannot exceed \$2,500.

- **Strategic Grants** are awarded to current fiscal year General Operating Grant recipients for well-defined, innovative projects or programs that have not previously been funded by the Arts Council. These grants are earmarked for Projects that fall outside of an Organization’s regularly scheduled programming, to allow for a major change in the way an Organization is able to impact the Arts within the community.
- **Mini Grants** are awarded to eligible nonprofit cultural/arts organizations incorporated in Maryland on a dollar-to-dollar matching basis and may not exceed \$2,500. They are intended to support arts-related activities that reach broader audiences and residents in underserved communities. An applicant may not apply for more than one mini grant annually.

**Mini-Grant Funds Eligible Usage**

Mini-Grant funds can be used to pay artists, technicians and individuals who coordinate arts projects; to rent equipment needed for performances or exhibits; to purchase supplies or materials; or to publicize arts activities.

Activities funded by ACAAC must be **open to the public and accessible to persons with disabilities.**

**Mini-Grant Funds Ineligible Usage**

Student exhibits or student performances; programs or conferences for the exclusive benefit of students enrolled in a particular school or members of an organization; purchase of buildings or permanent equipment or the improvement of buildings; newsletters; conferences; travel; organizations that fundraise with the purpose of turning over profits to a current Arts Council grantee; profits of which will be used for a non-arts project, purpose or donated to a for-profit entity; re-granting, lectures, or scholarships.

**Schedule for FY2021 Applications and Grant Awards**

	Community Arts Grants	Strategic Grants	Mini-Grants/Fall & Spring
APPLICATION DEADLINE	April 23, 2020	TBD	April/ October
AWARDS ANNOUNCED	July, 2020	TBD	July 2020 and December, 2020
FUNDING AVAILABLE	October 2020 and May, 2021	TBD	July, 2020 and December, 2020

Qualified applicants may submit a total of three applications – one in each category -- during the course of the annual application process. New applicants may submit only two applications – one for a Founders Grant and one for a mini grant.

**Grant Funds May Not be Used For: Re-granting; capital improvements or purchases of permanent equipment; acquisition of capital assets; activities for the exclusive benefit of the organization’s members; activities that are principally recreational, therapeutic, or rehabilitative; travel outside Maryland to present or produce the arts; projects chiefly for classroom use; activities not open to the general public; or scholarships awarded by the applicant organization for its own activities. Grant funds may not be used for elected office; by any political party; organization; or action committee; or in connection with any political campaign or referendum. Grant funds may not be used for any lobbying activities.**

## **GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS**

### **GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR ALL APPLICANTS**

- 1) Must have been incorporated in Maryland as a not-for-profit organization and have received tax-exempt status from the United States Internal Revenue Service.
- 2) Must be an organization providing public programming or services in Anne Arundel County in the visual arts, performing arts, cultural arts or historical preservation.
- 3) Must be physically located and primarily performing or operating in Anne Arundel County and in good standing with the Maryland Office of Assessments and Taxation on the date the application is filed.
- 4) Must comply with Title VI, Section 601, of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which states that no persons, on the grounds of race color, or national origin, shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination related to, the arts.
- 5) Must comply with Title IV, Section 1681, of the Education Amendments of 1972, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Section 6101, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex or age.
- 6) Must comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which states that no otherwise qualified person shall, solely by reason of his or her handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination related to, the arts.
- 7) Must maintain complete and accurate records of all activities connected with the grant.
- 8) Must utilize generally accepted accounting principles, maintain complete and accurate records of all receipts and expenditures in connection with the Grant, including Interim and Final Reports, and have these records available upon reasonable notice for inspection and available to send electronically to a representative of the Arts Council.
- 9) Must file interim and final reports, both narrative and financial, online through the Arts Council Website and the GO GRANTS System, by the specified deadlines. Failure to report may jeopardize any future grant being received by the organization and may result in the organization being required to repay grant funds.
- 10) Must give credit to the Arts Council of Anne Arundel County whenever and wherever credit is being given, in all web related and social media, brochures, news releases, programs, publications and publicity.
- 11) Must notify the appropriate program officer in writing if a significant change is made in any Arts Council funded program or project.

### **Specific Eligibility Guidelines for Community Arts Grants**

- Must be an established nonprofit cultural/arts organization that has existed for more than one year; and
- Must have previously received a Founders Grant.

### **Specific Eligibility Guidelines for Strategic Grants**

- Must be a current fiscal year General Operating Grant Recipient Organization of the Arts Council of Anne Arundel County.
- Must be a Program or Project not previously funded by the Arts Council.
- Must demonstrate a public value of arts and culture worthy of merit to the community.
- Must represent a novel, unusual or creative approach to the arts not previously offered by the organization.
- Must represent a collaboration or partnership not previously explored by the organization or a Project or Program that targets underserved populations in the community
- Must have clearly defined goals and measurable outcomes.

### **Specific Eligibility Guidelines for Mini-Grants**

- Must support arts-related activities that reach broader audiences and/or residents in underserved communities than is currently the case.
- Must be matched, in cash, on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

### **Review Process & Notification**

- 1) Applicants will receive a confirmation after an application has been received. Confirmation will be by email; you will be notified if there are still portions of an application that have not yet been received or do not comply with the guidelines.
- 2) The Grants Review panel will review all qualified, complete applications prior to the date indicated above. Each proposal will be reviewed individually by all members of the Review Panel. In addition, each proposal will be compared to other proposals of the same type with respect to specific evaluation criteria. For example, one of the questions that applicants have to answer is a description of the audience/constituency they serve. During the review process all responses to that question will be examined separately to identify the extent to which various geographic and demographic sectors of the county are being covered. Since the Arts Council's goal is to try and reach all residents throughout the county, proposals from applicants that focus on underserved areas or groups may receive special consideration for their Application. This will allow each Application to be examined individually for its own merit, while also ensuring a cross-cutting evaluation of the entire set of Applications with respect to Arts Council priorities.
- 3) The Grants Review Committee will present its recommendations to the ACAAC Board of Directors for final approval. All decisions by the ACAAC Board of Directors are final. All applicants will be advised electronically of the status of their application. Successful grantees will also be informed of the anticipated date of the grant funds that have been awarded.

## **Conflict of Interest**

To ensure that all Arts Council review panels are free from conflicts of interest and the appearance of such conflicts, panelists are required to disclose any current or prospective affiliations they or their immediate family members have with an actual or potential applicant. "Affiliations" applies to employment, board memberships, independent contractual relationships, substantial contributor relationships, or other relationships. In addition, panelists are required to disclose any past or current adversarial relationships with actual or potential applicants. Panel members, as well as Board Members, are not permitted to participate in discussions or votes relating to any applicant with whom they have an affiliation.

## **Restrictions on Grant Funding**

Grant funding will not be applied to capital improvements, purchase of land or real property, tuition assistance, fundraising or pre-existing expenses, debts or obligations incurred by the organization.

## **Review Criteria**

**The review of grants will be based on the following evaluation criteria:**

- ◆ **Artistic Merit; Quality/Creativity of Programming**
  - Recognized quality of artistic programming
  - Fulfills unmet community need
  - Programming reflects applicant's objectives
  - Arts Council grant will provide meaningful contribution to programming
- ◆ **Service to the Community**
  - Broadens access and opportunity to the arts
  - Reaches underserved audiences and constituencies
  - Enhances geographic, socio-economic and cultural diversity of arts programming
  - Staffing, Board membership, audience/constituency reflects a broad diversity
  - Engages in successful partnerships with other County arts groups and patrons
- ◆ **Organizational Effectiveness**
  - Exhibits sound business practices and financial responsibility
  - Exhibits ability to leverage in-kind, Board and volunteer resources
  - Management/administrative structure capable of providing planned programming