



Fall Mini Grant FY2021 Program Guidelines

The Arts Council of Anne Arundel County's Mini Grant program is designed to support innovative, well-defined arts-related projects that are directed to a new or broader audience, preferably within underserved communities. They are awarded to eligible nonprofit cultural/arts organizations and programs on a dollar-to-dollar matching basis and may not exceed \$2,500. New partnerships with other arts-related groups are encouraged in an effort to engage more local residents in cultural and artistic activities. The Arts Council is available to assist applicant organizations with outreach and marketing to potential partners and audiences within Anne Arundel County. Organizations may not apply for more than one Mini Grant per fiscal year.

For Fall FY2021 Mini Grant applicants only:

In recognition of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the arts, organizations will be asked within the application to explain how their grant activities will comply with current public health guidelines. We encourage applicants to develop creative proposals for projects that can be delivered safely, whether virtually or utilizing social distancing measures.

This cycle, on a case-by-case basis, the Arts Council is prepared to relax the Mini Grant requirement for a 1:1 cash match. For example, in-kind donations may be included in the match. The match requirement may also be reduced or waived for smaller projects, or those filling a critical need in the community.

FY2021 Timeline:

- 1) Grant application cycle opens September 14, 2020 at 9 am.
- 2) Grant application period closes October 9, 2020 at 5 pm. Applications must be completed online through the ACAAC GO Grants portal.
- 3) Arts Council award letters to recipients: November 11, 2020.
- 4) Grant awards payments to be delivered electronically by December 1, 2020.
- 5) Grant performance period: January 1, 2021 through June 30, 2021.
- 6) Final reports to be completed by August 31, 2021.

General Guidelines for All Arts Council of Anne Arundel Grant Applications:

- 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 a final report, both narrative and financial, with the Arts Council 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.

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.

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 engage with 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 or 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

Review Process and Notification

- 1) Applicants will receive an email confirmation after an application has been received. 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 Policy

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.