

ARTS INNOVATION

Project Support for New and Innovative Activities

The Arts Innovation program supports projects designed to enliven and invigorate Ohio communities and cultivate the creative spirit of their citizens. Arts Innovation grants are awarded to organizations proposing imaginative projects that involve the production of new works of art that stretch the boundaries of conventional disciplines or forms, use unusual collaborations and program design, respond to new conditions or technologies, or promote access for new audiences in ground-breaking ways. These grants encourage arts and cultural organizations to take calculated risks while embracing exploration, invention and originality in their programming, management, service delivery and cultural participation strategies. Projects should be new to the organization and cannot have been previously offered as part of ongoing programming. The competitive application and open review process ensures that only the most exemplary projects receive funding. Applications must evidence superior artistic, educational and cultural value for their proposed activities and demonstrate a clear departure from current offerings. Organizations must also show effective strategies for building participation, planning, evaluation and organizational management. Through the support of outstanding projects that embody the best new strategies, ideas and arts experiences, the OAC is making a significant investment in the dynamic evolution of the arts in Ohio.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

January 15

WHAT THE PROGRAM SUPPORTS

The Arts Innovation program provides grants to Ohio organizations offering arts activities that use experimental designs for programming, management, service delivery or participation strategies, or advance an art form through new activities. Projects may be in the early stages of development or, for phased projects, in the second phase of roll-out or development.

Allowable Expenses

OAC funds may be used for a variety of expenses related to the activities or programs. Organizations often choose to dedicate Arts Innovation funds to artistic or administrative expenses. Other allowable expenses included program planning, educational activities, marketing expenses and production expenses. Please refer to the [Funding Restrictions](#) section of the OAC *Guidelines* for a list of activities the OAC cannot fund.

Grant Awards

Arts Innovation applicants may request grants of \$5,000, \$10,000 or \$15,000. Actual grant award amounts will vary from year to year according to the availability of OAC funds.

All Arts Innovation grants require a 1:1 cash match.

WHO MAY APPLY

Arts, cultural, community-based and social service organizations doing arts programming may apply to this program. All organizations applying to this program should have nonprofit status or nonprofit intent.

Eligibility Requirements

Applicants to the Arts Innovation program must be either:

- Beginning a new project, or
- Beginning the second year of a two-year project.

Applicants may be:

- Nonprofit arts and cultural organizations in any discipline (community arts, literature, performing arts, traditional arts, visual arts, etc.);
- Other nonprofit organizations that provide arts programming (government entities, social service agencies, etc.);
- Educational organizations (colleges, universities, etc.) that demonstrate a commitment to arts programming in a larger community setting.

Additional Eligibility Information

No organization may receive more than two Arts Innovation grants within any three fiscal years.

HOW TO APPLY

Please refer to the [Grant Process for Organizations](#) on page 14 of the OAC *Guidelines* for a step-by-step guide on the entire process of applying for and managing an OAC grant for arts organizations.

Applications

All applications to the Arts Innovation program must be submitted via the OAC [OnLine Grant Application system](#) (OLGA). No paper applications are accepted.

Organizations applying for an Arts Innovation grant are encouraged to notify their OAC [regional program coordinator](#) of their intent to apply. All applicants are strongly encouraged to submit a draft application at least 30 days before the final deadline date. To submit a draft application, follow the instructions on the final page of the online application.

Applicants must submit their application electronically via OLGA by 5 p.m. on the final deadline date. If the application is not officially submitted electronically, the application will not be accepted. Your organization will be notified via e-mail (sent through OLGA to your organization's primary contact) when your application is received.

Support Materials

To complete an application for this program, all applicants must submit one set of support materials in hard copy to the OAC. Applications that do not include support materials will not be accepted.

Each OAC program has different support material requirements. To learn which materials are required for this program, as well as other materials that are optional but may strengthen your application, refer to [Appendix H: Support Materials Grid for Organizations](#).

A signature page and support materials must be received in the OAC office by 5 p.m. seven calendar days following the final application deadline date (regardless of postmarked date). If the signature page and support materials do not reach the OAC within this timeframe, the application will not be accepted. Your organization will be notified via e-mail (sent through OLGA to your organization's primary contact) when your support materials are received.

Timeline

The timeline below presents a general outline of the grants process for Arts Innovation. Please note that if a deadline falls on a Saturday, Sunday or state holiday, the deadline will be extended until the next business day.

Application available in OLGA	November 1
Draft application deadline	December 15
Final application deadline	January 15
Support material deadline	7 calendar days following the application deadline
Panel meeting	March
Grant award announcement	July
Signed grant agreement deadline	August 30
Grant period	July 1 - June 30
Final report deadline	30 days after grant end date

Evaluation and Scoring

A panel consisting of arts and cultural professionals, educators, Ohio artists and other community members meets to evaluate and score Arts Innovation grant applications and support materials. This panel meeting is open to the public and organization representatives are encouraged to attend so they may hear the panel's comments about their application.

At the panel meeting, an evaluative discussion will take place for each application. Following the discussion, a vote will be taken to determine whether the application advances to the scoring round. If an application moves to the scoring round, it will be given a score based on how well the organization meets the review criteria. After the panel meeting, this score and the organization's request will be used to determine the panel's funding recommendations to the OAC Board which will make the final funding decision.

The review process is competitive; not all applications are funded. Applicants not voted into the scoring round will not be funded. A cutoff point in the scores may be determined, so that applications below a certain score are not funded.

Review Criteria

A competitive application will show that an organization meets the criteria described below. Evidence should be demonstrated through the components of the grant application, including OLGA responses and support materials, the organization's Web site and its' most recent final report. Applicants will be given a numerical score and can receive a maximum of 100 points across four criteria categories: Artistic/Educational/Cultural Value; Community Participation and Accessibility; Planning, Evaluation and Documentation; and Organizational and Financial Management.

Organizations will be evaluated according to how well they meet these criteria:

Artistic/Educational/Cultural Value

The highest score for this category is 35 points.

- Applicant's proposed activities demonstrate artistic, educational and cultural value for the community being served;
- Applicant's proposed activities represent a clear and strategic progression from past practice or programming;
- Applicant's proposed activities are innovative in concept, design or delivery;
- Applicant's proposed activities align with and advance the organization's mission;
- Applicant's proposed activities are strengthened by qualified staff, volunteers and/or outside personnel;

- Applicant's proposed activities satisfy a demonstrated need within the community;
- If applicant participates in K-12 in-school educational programming, that programming addresses the Ohio Fine Arts Academic Content Standards.

Community Participation & Accessibility

The highest score for this category is 25 points.

- Applicant has a clearly described and creative strategy to build cultural participation in its proposed activities;
- Applicant understands and is responsive to the diverse needs and interests of the community;
- Applicant has identified and minimized barriers to cultural participation, including but not limited to barriers which prevent participation by people with disabilities;
- Applicant shows evidence it will effectively publicize and promote its proposed activities to the community at large.

Planning and Evaluation

The highest score for this category is 20 points.

- Applicant's planning procedures related to the proposed activities are comprehensive and clearly described;
- Applicant's staff and board involved community members, volunteers, artists and other outside professionals appropriately in planning the proposed activities;
- Applicant is making an effort to evaluate the impact of their proposed activities in their community;
- Applicant's evaluation strategies are appropriate for the participants and proposed activities.

Organizational and Financial Management

The highest score for this category is 20 points.

- Applicant demonstrates awareness of internal and external strengths and challenges;
- Applicant demonstrates ability to develop and manage resources and other assets appropriately;
- Applicant's staff, board and/or volunteers are qualified and demonstrate capacity to successfully complete the proposed activities;
- Applicant's budget for the proposed project is realistic and correlates to the application narrative;
- Applicant's budget reflects a broad base of revenue and support from earned, private, government and in-kind sources;
- If applicable, applicant has a viable and documented plan to reduce any accumulated deficit.