

BUILDING CULTURAL DIVERSITY INITIATIVE

Funding for Established and Emerging Culturally Diverse Organizations

Cultural diversity creates a rich and varied world. It increases the range of choices and perspectives, nurtures human capacities and allows individuals and peoples to express and share their ideas and values. The Ohio Arts Council (OAC) believes that communities are strengthened by the presence of arts experiences that reflect the viewpoints of Ohioans of all backgrounds and traditions. The Building Cultural Diversity program provides support to arts and community organizations whose mission, programs, staff and board are rooted in culturally specific communities and that offer Ohio citizens the opportunity to experience a full and vibrant cultural life. Organizations must provide artistic, educational and cultural value that is responsive to the needs of their community and be ready to put realistic strategies in place for planning, evaluation and management. A flexible application and staff review process is designed to help Building Cultural Diversity applicants succeed as they develop new skills and contribute to the vitality of the arts in Ohio.

Application Deadline

Applications are due on the second Friday of each month (June through April). The grant activity may start no sooner than six weeks after the application deadline.

What the Program Supports

The Building Cultural Diversity program provides grants to Ohio's culturally diverse arts organizations for continuing programming or project support, or for short-term professional development of emerging minority arts administrators.

Allowable Expenses

OAC funds may be used for a wide variety of expenses in the general operation or programming of an organization. Examples of allowable expenses include: artist fees, training or workshop costs, consultant fees, strategic planning, marketing, and evaluation and assessment costs. Please refer to the [Funding Restrictions](#) section of OAC Guidelines for a list of activities OAC cannot fund.

Grant Awards

Building Cultural Diversity applicants may request up to \$5,000. Actual grant award amounts are recommended by a panel of OAC staff members and will vary from year to year according to the availability of OAC funds.

All Building Cultural Diversity grants require a 50 percent match of the OAC request, half of which may be

from allowable, appropriate [in-kind](#) donations. Applicants should discuss the source of their in-kind donations with their [regional program coordinator](#) prior to submitting their application to make sure the in-kind support is appropriate and listed correctly.

Who May Apply

Culturally diverse arts, cultural, community-based and social service organizations doing arts programming whose mission, programs and staff are representative of the Black/African, Appalachian, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian, or other culturally specific populations may apply to this program. All organizations applying to this program should have nonprofit status or be nonprofit in intent.

Eligibility Requirements

Applicants to the Building Cultural Diversity program must have:

- At least 50 percent of their staff and board comprised of individuals from one or more culturally specific populations, AND
- A focus on the arts and culture of one or more culturally specific populations.

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;
- Repeat events such as annual festivals.

Additional Information

Organizations may receive only one Building Cultural Diversity grant per fiscal year. Please contact your [regional program coordinator](#) at the OAC if you have questions about your organization's eligibility.

How to Apply

Please refer to the [Grant Process for Organizations](#) 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 Building Cultural Diversity program must be submitted via the OAC [OnLine Grant Applications](#) (OLGA). No paper applications are accepted.

Organizations applying for a Building Cultural Diversity grant must notify their regional program coordinator of their intent to apply in order to gain access to the grant application. Organizations are also strongly encouraged to discuss their application with their regional program coordinator. This discussion helps the applicant develop a well-conceived, well-written proposal that increases the organization's chances of successfully competing with other applicants.

Organizations must submit their application electronically via OLGA by 5 p.m. by the deadline date (the second Friday of each month June - April). If the application is not 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

Application available in OLGA	June 1
Application deadline	Second Friday of each month June through April
Support material deadline	7 calendar days following the application deadline
Panel meeting	Last Friday of each month June through April
Grant award announcement	Generally within two weeks of panel meeting
Signed grant agreement deadline	Within 30 days following award announcement
Grant period	July 1 - June 30
Final report deadline	30 days after completion of grant activity

Evaluation and Scoring

Applications will be reviewed by a panel of OAC staff members. These reviews are not open to the public; however, program coordinators will report any panel comments about the application to organizations if requested. Following the review, each application will be given a score based on how well the organization meets the review criteria. This score, along with a funding recommendation, will be presented to the OAC executive director and deputy director for their review and approval. The review process is competitive; not all applications are funded. Due to limited funding, small, emerging and mid-sized arts and cultural organizations may be given funding priority.

Review Criteria

A competitive application will show that an organization meets the following criteria. Evidence should be demonstrated through the many components of the grant application, including OLGA responses and support materials, in addition to the organization's Web site and most recent Final Report, if applicable. 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 30 points.

- Applicant's activities demonstrate artistic, educational and/ or cultural value for the community being served;
- Applicant's artistic, educational or cultural activities advance the organization's mission;
- Applicant describes how its activities and programs authentically represent the arts and culture of one or more culturally specific populations.

Community Participation and Accessibility

The highest score for this category is 30 points.

- Applicant understands and is responsive to the diverse needs and interests of the community;
- Applicant has described steps to increase participation in its activities or programs, including participation by people of culturally specific populations and people with disabilities;
- Applicant's working relationships within the community strengthen the organization's ability to carry out its activities.

Planning and Evaluation

The highest score for this category is 20 points.

- Applicant engages in planning and has clearly defined goals;
- Applicant involves community members, volunteers and artists in planning and evaluation;
- Applicant has described how they intend to evaluate the impact of program activities on the community.

Organizational and Financial Management

The highest score for this category is 20 points.

- Applicant demonstrates awareness of strengths and the capacity to complete the proposed project or programming;
- Applicant's budget is realistic and aligns with the narrative;
- Applicant's budget reflects a broad base of revenue and support;
- If applicable, applicant has a plan to reduce any accumulated deficit.