

FUNDING FOR ARTISTS

GRANT PROCESS FOR ARTISTS

The Ohio Arts Council wants you to understand its grant-making process from start to finish. Presented below is an overview of the life-cycle of a grant. Understanding this process is an important first step that will help you sharpen your grant writing skills, submit it through the [OnLine Grant Application](#) (OLGA) system and, if recommended for funding, manage your award.

If you have not already done so, you may wish to consult the [How to Use Guidelines: For Artists](#) section for more information about how best to use this publication according to your needs. Additional information about specific applications, support materials, evaluation and review criteria can be found in the “How to Apply” section within each program section.

Please note: Many tips for using and navigating OLGA and accomplishing the steps described here are included in [Appendix F: Ohio Online Grant Application Frequently Asked Questions \(OLGA FAQs\)](#).

Step One: Read the *Guidelines*!

Before beginning any application, you should familiarize yourself with the *Guidelines*, paying particular attention to each funding program for which you intend to apply. It is also very important to read [Appendix A: Legal Requirements and OAC Rules](#). While reading these sections, make a list of any questions regarding eligibility, what the program funds, criteria, etc.

Note: For Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program applicants only

All applicants to the Traditional Arts Apprenticeship program, especially those who have never applied before, should contact the Individual Artist Grant Programs and Services office at least eight weeks prior to the deadline. A program coordinator will help applicants by discussing eligibility and addressing any questions about the application process or the *Guidelines*. Applicants should refer to the OAC's [Staff Directory](#) to find contact information.

Step Two: Visit OLGA

All applications must be submitted electronically through the [OnLine Grant Application](#) (OLGA) system; the OAC does not accept paper applications. Before applying, please familiarize yourself with OLGA and its functions. You should begin each funding cycle by creating or updating your applicant profile in OLGA. It is critical that the OAC has your current contact information. Information about the application and grant updates are sent exclusively through e-mail to these contacts.

Technical questions about OLGA can be answered by contacting the OLGA Help Desk via phone 614/728-4449 during the customer service hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Step Three: Submit draft application (for Traditional Arts Apprenticeship applicants only)

For the Traditional Arts Apprenticeship program, applicants are strongly encouraged to complete a draft application. The draft application should be submitted electronically via OLGA by 5 p.m. EST on the funding program's draft deadline date, listed on the main page of OLGA. The draft deadline usually occurs 30 days before the final deadline. Please note that if a draft deadline falls on a Saturday, Sunday or state holiday, the deadline will be extended until the next business day.

To submit a draft application, applicants should follow the directions in OLGA through the last page of the application. On the last page of the application in OLGA (the "Final Submission" page), applicants should check the box next to the statement "Check this box to submit this application for DRAFT REVIEW by the OAC staff. This does not constitute final submission." Then, applicants should click the "Submit" button on the same page in OLGA by 5 p.m. EST on the draft deadline date.

No support materials are required for a draft application.

Program coordinators will provide feedback on draft applications via phone, email, fax or a scheduled appointment at the OAC office. Applicants are then permitted to revise their applications based on the program coordinator's feedback. This step helps applicants produce a well-written, thorough proposal that increases the chances of successfully competing with other applicants.

Step Four: Submit your application and send support materials

Your completed application must be submitted via OLGA by the deadline date listed on the OAC Web site. Applications are accepted until 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on the deadline date. If a deadline falls on weekend or state/federal holiday, the deadline is extended until the next business day.

[Support materials](#) and a signature page are a required part of the application process. They must be submitted in accordance with the directions in the last section of the OLGA application titled "Assurances/Support Material Checklist." Your materials must be received in the OAC offices within seven calendar days of the deadline date. If the support materials and signature page fail to arrive by the specified date, your application will be eliminated from consideration. Due to the amount of support materials we receive during this seven-day period, we are unable to confirm via phone or e-mail if the materials have arrived at our office. Please consider hand delivery or overnight shipping with notification if this is a concern.

Within three weeks after the deadline, the Office of Grants and Constituent Services will notify you regarding the date, time and location of your panel meeting. Most panel meetings are open to the public and applicants are encouraged to attend. The appropriate program coordinator will review the packet and may call you for any needed clarification of the application and/or related materials.

Step Five: Attend the Panel meeting—open to the public per Ohio’s Sunshine Law (optional but encouraged)

Panel meetings generally are scheduled within two months after a deadline. [Panelists](#) meet to discuss, evaluate and score applications in each program area. OAC staff members present the scores and a summary of each applicants panel comments to the OAC Board at one of three annual meetings for final funding decisions.

Note: For Traditional Arts Apprenticeships program applicants only

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 numerical score based on how well the applicant meets the review criteria. This score will be used to determine the panel’s funding recommendations to the OAC Board.

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.

Your score from the panel meeting will be e-mailed to you within three weeks after the panel meets. A summary of the panelists comments, however, will not be available until after the [OAC Board](#) meets. While you are not allowed to participate in the panel meeting discussions, you are encouraged to attend the panel meeting to hear the full discussion of your application and other applications within the same funding program. No formal announcement regarding a funding decision and/ or a grant amount will be sent to any applicant until after the [Council Board](#) meeting.

Note about the Appeals Policy (For Traditional Arts Apprenticeship program only)

An applicant that disputes a review panel’s recommendation on grounds of procedural errors may request a review of that recommendation by the [Council Board](#). Procedural errors include miscount of votes and failure of a panelist with a known conflict of interest to leave the room for the discussion and vote on the application. Appeals may not be made on the basis of an applicant’s disagreement with the panel’s assessment of the artistic quality or merit of the applicants work. To file an appeal, the applicant must submit a letter to the Executive Director at the OAC office within 30 days of the panel meeting stating the reasons for the request for review. Appeals will be reviewed and acted on by the Executive Committee of the [Council Board](#) after

consultation with Ohio Arts Council staff. Such action will be ratified by the Council Board, whose decision is final.

Step Six: OAC Board reviews grant recommendations—open to the public per Ohio’s Sunshine Law

The OAC Board is the only body empowered to issue grants on behalf of the agency. Award recommendations and panel comments are reviewed by the OAC Board at one of three annual meetings open to the public (typically in late June, late September and late February). The OAC Board’s funding decisions are final.

Formal announcements of grant awards are made following each OAC Board meeting (typically in July, October and March). You will be informed via e-mail of the Board’s funding decision.

Note: For Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program applicants only

Also at this time, a summary of panel comments will be available in OLGA. The OAC asks that you await this formal announcement before inquiring about grant amounts and panel comment summaries or announcing the grant to the media.

Step Seven: Review and Return your Grant Agreement

If your application receives a favorable recommendation for funding, you must enter into a legally binding agreement (contract for services) with the State of Ohio. Agreements cannot be altered without prior approval from the Director of Grants Administration and Constituent Services.

Upon receiving formal announcement of a grant award via e-mail, you must download and complete your grant agreement via OLGA. If you have any questions regarding the grant agreement, please contact the OAC immediately. When the agreement has been satisfactorily reviewed, it must be signed (original ink signature required) and sent to the OAC. Until a grant agreement is received by the OAC, no funds are officially committed.

Note: For Individual Excellence Award recipients only

Excellence Award grant awards are processed once all necessary forms (W-9, Vendor Information Form and signed Grant Agreement) are received in our offices. A check will be sent directly from the State Accounting office in about six weeks from receipt of forms.

Step Eight: Fulfill your credit and publicity responsibilities

As part of your grant contract with the state you are required to credit the Ohio Arts Council as a funder in your print and marketing materials, advertisements and, if applicable, curtain speeches. The requirements differ depending on the type of grant you receive. Please consult [Appendix E: Credit and Publicity Responsibilities](#)

for details. In addition, because your OAC grant is an investment of public tax dollars we encourage you to inform the media and your legislators about the value of these dollars to your work and your community.

Step Nine: Submit your Final Report

Most OAC grants are reimbursements. As the grantee, you must successfully complete the project or program and submit the OAC Final Report Form in OLGA for the Office of Grants and Constituent Services for approval before payment is made. The Final Report form will be accessible via your OLGA account after the Grant Agreement is received. Once the final report is received and approved, final payment of the grant will be processed. Processing a grant payment may take up to six weeks.

If the OAC does not receive your Final Report within 30 days of your project or program's end date as noted on your grant agreement, we may cancel your grant. Requests for extensions are reviewed case by case and may be granted if a written request is submitted before the due date of the Final Report.

Former grantees who have failed to submit required and acceptable Final Report packages for any grant may not receive any other OAC funding for five years following the due date of the Final Report they failed to submit or until an acceptable Final Report is submitted, whichever occurs first. Until the former grantee meets one of those conditions, the OAC will accept no further applications.

A signature page and support materials are required to complete the final report package and must be received in the OAC office seven calendar days following the final report online submission. The final report will not be reviewed and the grant will not be paid (Traditional Arts Apprenticeship only) until the signature page and support materials reach the OAC.

To access the signature page via OLGA, grantees should click the "Preview Application" button from any page in the online final report or the "View Final Report PDF" link from the "Manage Current Grants/Applications" page of OLGA. The first page of the PDF is the signature page, which should be printed, signed and sent to the OAC offices with support materials. Final reports without signature pages or support materials will not be accepted.

The OAC will review the entire final report package upon receipt of the support materials. A program coordinator or grants associate may contact the applicant for any needed clarification of the final report and support materials.

Former grantees who have failed to submit required and acceptable final report packages for any grant may not receive any other OAC funding for five years following the due date of the final report they failed to submit

or until an acceptable final report is submitted, whichever occurs first. Until the former grantee meets one of those conditions, the OAC will accept no further applications.

Note: For Individual Excellence Award recipients only

Since the Individual Excellence Awards are recognition awards for completed work the required Final Report is due by December 31 of the grant year. The Final Report should highlight the award's effect on the recipients artistic work.