

As Ohio continues to evolve, artists have a significant role to play. Now more than ever, creativity and innovation are pivotal to our state's ability to compete in the global marketplace. It will take skill and vision to release the potential of our people, communities, and state. Individual artists offer a doorway to the imagination and are the key to the expression of who we are and what we might become. The OAC seeks to be the catalyst to unlock our potential and support individual artists as they reflect our rich past and the promise of the future.

## INDIVIDUAL EXCELLENCE AWARDS

### Application Deadline

September 1

### What the Program Supports

Individual Excellence Awards are peer recognition of creative artists for the exceptional merit of a body of work that advances or exemplifies the discipline and the larger artistic community. These awards of excellence recognize their work in Ohio and beyond and encourage artists' growth and development. Awards are offered in the following areas: choreography, crafts, fiction/nonfiction, poetry, playwriting/screenplays, criticism, design arts/illustration, [interdisciplinary](#)/performance art, media arts, music composition, photography and visual arts. The awards are based solely on the quality of past work and are not project-based. The review process is anonymous. This [program](#) is highly competitive; approximately 8 percent of all applicants are granted awards.

### Grant Awards

Individual Excellence Awards are either \$5,000 or \$10,000. Grant amounts are determined by the review panel. All recommendations are reviewed and approved by the Ohio Arts Council's board.

### Who May Apply

To be eligible to apply for an Individual Excellence Award, an artist must be a resident of Ohio, have lived in the state continuously for one year before the September 1 deadline and remain an Ohio resident during the term of the award. The Ohio Arts Council defines an Ohio resident as someone who spends at least eight months of the year living and working in Ohio. The Board retains the right to determine if Ohio is an applicant's primary state of residence. An applicant may not be a student enrolled in any degree-or certificate-granting program. An applicant must be a creative artist; performing artists are ineligible to apply.

### Eligibility Requirements

All applicants should read [Appendix A: Legal Requirements and OAC Rules](#) before applying to this program.

Artists may submit only one application per fiscal year except in the area of criticism. Artists may apply to the criticism discipline and to a second discipline as long as the applications are based on two separate bodies of work.

Collaborative applications are accepted from artists who have a history of working together to produce the body of work submitted and plan to continue working together. No more than two artists may apply collaboratively. If they receive an award, each artist will enter into an agreement with the Ohio Arts Council and will receive an equal share of the total Individual Excellence Award. Collaborative artists each need to make an application, but only one set of support materials and one narrative is required.

### **Funding Restrictions**

Award recipients may not apply for the next two consecutive deadlines. Award recipients may not submit the same work with future applications. Resubmission of the same work will disqualify the applicant from the review process.

### **Additional Eligibility Information**

Artists awarded an Individual Excellence Award are required to sign a Grant Agreement with the OAC. Individual Excellence Awards may be used for any purpose designated by the receiving artists except to continue their education through a degree-granting program. Award recipients must remain residents of the state of Ohio throughout the grant period. When appropriate, the OAC encourages recipients to enhance their communities through activities that present their work in a public setting. Documentation of these activities will be requested in the final report to the program.

## **How to Apply**

### **Application**

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

A completed Individual Excellence Awards application must be submitted online by 5 p.m. on the September 1 deadline. At that time, the system locks and no further changes can be made to the application. Include with your support materials a signed copy of the completed application. Retain a copy for your records. For those applicants who have uploaded images, only a signed application is required.

NEW: For artists applying in the areas of visual arts, crafts, photography, design, interdisciplinary and media installations in the category of media arts, digital images must be uploaded to OLGA within seven calendar days after the deadline date by 5 p.m.

For choreography, music composition, media arts, design arts, interdisciplinary and literature send the required [support materials](#) listed below. These must be received in the OAC office within seven calendar days after the deadline date by 5 p.m. If the support materials do not reach the OAC within this timeframe, the application will not be accepted. You will be notified via your online account when materials are received.

### Support Materials

Support materials such as scores, librettos, audiotapes, videotapes, CDs or DVDs submitted with applications will be returned if a mailer large enough to hold them is included with the application. The return mailer must have the appropriate amount of U.S. postage. Do not send cash, checks or Federal Express mailers for the return of materials. If an addressed, stamped mailer is not included with the application, support materials will be kept for one year and then discarded.



**NOTE:** Manuscripts submitted in Creative Writing categories will not be returned to applicants. If you receive an Individual Excellence Award in Design, [interdisciplinary](#)/performance art, media arts, music, composition or choreography, your support materials will be kept by the Individual Artist Grant Programs and Services Office as a permanent record.

### Specific Support Material Requirements by Discipline

#### Choreographers

The panel will review a minimum of five and maximum of 10 minutes of the sample in their first review. The panel will look at work in the order it is listed on the application. Work more than five years old will not be accepted. The OAC requires:

- Two complete works on 1/2" videocassette (VHS) or DVD; each work must be on a separate cassette or disc;
- One 10-minute sample consisting of sample sections of each of the two submitted works;
- Screening notes may be added to aid the audio/visual person in showing your support materials.



**NOTE:** At least five minutes and up to 10 minutes will be shown in the initial review round. Total time viewed is up to the discretion of the panel and may in some cases be less than 10 minutes. Keep this in mind as you select and cue materials for the sample.

#### Craftspersons, Photographers and Visual Artists

Submit a minimum of nine but not more than 12, digital images of at least nine different works. See [Preparing and Uploading Images](#), for instructions on attaching your image to your OLGA application. Discs with images will not be accepted. Images must be uploaded to OLGA. Work more than three years old will not be accepted.

### Designers/Illustrators/Book Artists

Submit a minimum of nine but not more than 12, digital images of at least nine different works. See [Preparing and Uploading Images](#), for instructions on attaching your image to your OLGA application. Discs with images will not be accepted. Images must be uploaded to OLGA. Work more than three years old will not be accepted.

Additionally, designers may submit either work that has been produced or constructed or drawings or proposals for work that has not been produced. Illustrators may submit the publication in which the work has been included. In addition to the support materials listed in this section, architects, designers, landscape architects and urban-metropolitan designers may submit clearly identified blueprints, specs or maquettes. Clothing and costume designers may include illustrations and drawings along with fabric swatches. CD ROMs/DVDs also will be accepted that show schematics.

### Interdisciplinary and Performance Artists

Submit at least two but no more than three works, which may be a combination of digital images (no more than 12), videotapes (VHS), audio tapes, CD-ROMs, DVDs, manuscripts and scenarios. If movement is an important part of a piece, include a videotape, CD-ROM or DVD. You must also include screening notes with all audio-visual materials. Work must have been created in the past three years. If sending digital images please see section [Preparing and Uploading Your Digital Images](#) for submission instructions.

### Media Artists

The media arts category is for artists working in film, video, audio, media installations and new technologies (computer-based work) that have primary responsibility for the finished product and are the originators of the artistic concepts of the pieces.

## **Required Medium-Specific Support Materials**

### Audio artists

- At least two but no more than three complete works, each on a separate audio cassette tape, CD or CD ROM. The work must have been completed within the past three years;
- A 10-minute sample, to include an excerpt from each work submitted.

### Filmmakers

- Two works, one from the past three years, the others from the past five years. Each work must be on videotape (VHS) or DVD;
- A 10-minute sample, to include an excerpt from each work submitted.

### Media Installation Artists

One or two works with a combination of digital images, videotape (VHS), CD-ROMs, DVDs and diagrams that best document the work. The work must have been completed within the past five years. If sending digital images please see section "Preparing and Uploading Your Digital Images", below, for submission instructions.

### Video Artists

- Two works on videotape (VHS), CD-ROMs or DVDs. The work must have been completed within the past five years;
- A 10-minute sample, to include an excerpt from each work submitted.



**NOTE: At least five minutes and up to 10 minutes of the sample will be shown in the initial review round. Total time viewed is up to the discretion of the panel and may in some cases be less than 10 minutes. Keep this in mind as you select and cue your sample.**

### **Preparing and Uploading Your Digital Images**

It is essential that the digital images of your artwork are of the highest professional quality. The standards that apply to traditional slide documentation also apply to the digital image format.

The OAC's [OnLine Grant Applications](#) system (OLGA) uses ZAPP technology which makes use of the sRGB color space. While saving your images in the sRGB color space isn't essential, you will have a more consistent result to what panelists will ultimately view. As with slides, what the panelists will see will be affected by environmental factors such as ambient light and throw distance of the projectors.

### **Image Specifications for OLGA**

To apply to the Excellence Award deadline through OLGA, please size your images to the following dimensions using a photo imaging software such as Photoshop:

Dimensions: 1920 pixels horizontal /1920 pixels vertical

File Format: Baseline JPG (do not use progressive JPG format)

Compression: The image file size must be less than 1.8 MBs. To determine your file size please view the properties of your image file size while it is closed and not in Photoshop. Larger is not necessarily better. Please consult a professional vendor to determine if compression for your artwork is needed. **PLEASE DO NOT SAVE YOUR JPG AS A PROGRESSIVE JPG FILE. Progressive JPGs will be read by the Web site. However the large format images used during the jury will not display properly if the files are saved as progressive files.**

Please size your image to be 1920 pixels on both edges. If your image is not square, please mask your image with black to bring your image to 1920x1920 pixels. No other size will be accepted for panel use. If your image is vertical, please format with black vertical bands on the left and right. If your image is horizontal, please format with black horizontal bands on the top and the bottom. Please view more detailed instructions on how to format your digital images and specifications at

[www.oac.state.oh.us/grantsprogs/guidelines/StaticPages/ImagePreparation.pdf](http://www.oac.state.oh.us/grantsprogs/guidelines/StaticPages/ImagePreparation.pdf).

### Upload instructions for OLGA

Specifics on how to upload your images to the OLGA will be available through the OLGA application and at the [Individual Artist Grant Programs and Services](#) page on the OAC Web site.

### Creative Writers

The following information is for all writing categories. Refer to the specific discipline area for more information about submitting manuscripts.



**NOTE:** Manuscripts submitted in Creative Writing categories will not be returned to applicants.

Submit four copies of a typed manuscript, rather than the published work. Photocopies from publications will not be accepted. All manuscripts must be clear and legible.

Use type no smaller than 11 points, and leave at least a 1" margin at the top, bottom and each side.

Collate and staple poems and manuscripts into sets; bind plays and scripts. Put your name and address on a cover page of each collated set of materials. Your name may not appear anywhere else in the manuscript.

List the contents on a second title page. All submissions should be ordered sequentially.



**NOTE:** Writers concerned only with doing research on art history are not eligible to apply.

### Fiction and Nonfiction Writers

Submit four copies of one recent work or a series of smaller works. The work must be a minimum of 20 and a maximum of 30 pages on single-sided 8.5" x 11" sheets, double spaced. Work must have been completed within the past three years.

### Poets

Submit four sets of the same poems. The work must be a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 15 pages of poetry on single-sided, 8.5" x 11" sheets, single or double spaced, no more than one poem to a page. Work must have been completed within the past three years.

### Playwrights and Screenwriters

Submit four copies of each script. There is no page limit in this discipline. The work must be one complete play or two complete one-act plays on single-sided, 8.5" x 11" sheets, single or double spaced. If the play is a musical theater piece, submit one copy each of the libretto, score, book and audio sample. Scripts must have been completed within the past five years.

### Critics

Submit four copies of each manuscript. The work must be a minimum of 30 and a maximum of 50 pages of work on single-sided, 8.5" x 11" sheets, double spaced. The category of criticism supports critical writing that investigates, evaluates or analyzes modern and contemporary art activity, including the visual arts, photography, crafts, dance, music, theater, literature, design arts and illustration, media arts and the traditional arts. Work must have been completed within the past five years. Writers whose concern is solely historical are not eligible to apply in this category.

### Music Composers

These awards are for the composition of music, not performance. Submit a score with each piece, and include a lead sheet for jazz compositions, popular and traditional forms. A computer [rendering](#) must be included for computer-generated work. The OAC requires:

- Two complete works on separate audiocassettes or CDs. Mark the recordings #1 or #2 to correspond to the listing on the application. On each recording list the title, date composed and total playing time. No work should be more than three years old.
- One audiocassette or CD with a 10-minute sample recording that consists of samples from each work submitted.

A score or lead sheet. Your name should appear only on the outside cover of each score or lead sheet. Indicate exactly where the material on the sample begins and ends, or list tracks.



**NOTE: At least five minutes and up to 10 minutes of the sample will be listened to in the initial review round. Total time viewed is up to the discretion of the panel and may in some cases be less than 10 minutes. Keep this in mind as you select and cue your sample.**

### Timeline

Application Deadline	September 1
Panel Meetings	Early December
Grant Award Letters sent by e-mail	Early January
Council Meeting to approve recommendations	Mid-March
Grant Agreements sent by OLGA	Early April
Final Reports due for recipients	December 31

### Evaluation and Scoring

Individual Excellence Award panels recommend applicants to the Ohio Arts Council Board; the Board makes all final grant decisions. Panels use a simple voting process to begin discussion on applications. After elimination rounds narrow the pool of applicants, panel discussion becomes the major factor in funding. The scoring process is a tool to aid discussion and not the primary mechanism for funding. The following scores are used:

- 1 - Work is not competitive
- 2 - Work merits further consideration
- 3 - Work is exemplary

Panelists use a combination of the following criteria to make award recipient recommendations:

- Creative and inventive use of the medium;
- Innovation in style and/or concept;
- Technical proficiency or craftsmanship;
- Relationship of the work to the field, regionally and nationally;
- Consistency of the body of work;
- Relevance and quality of audio-visual materials.