

SUSTAINABILITY

General Operating Support for Arts and Cultural Organizations

The Sustainability program provides general operating support to arts and cultural organizations that make an important contribution to the health and vitality of Ohio communities. Sustainability grants ensure that public support of the arts continues to play an integral role in sustaining the rich past and vibrant future of Ohio through flexible and reliable funding for annual arts programming. A rigorous application and review process assures citizens and legislators that Sustainability grantees will use public funds resourcefully and responsibly. Organizations must demonstrate excellent artistic, educational and cultural value, responsiveness to their community, credible planning and evaluation strategies, and a high level of financial and managerial accountability. When these characteristics are in balance, organizations are well positioned to provide Ohioans with diverse opportunities to participate in the arts and enjoy their benefits throughout their lives.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

February 1 (odd-numbered years only)

WHAT THE PROGRAM SUPPORTS

The Sustainability program provides two-year grants to organizations for operating support. This program supports Ohio organizations that plan and conduct ongoing arts programs for either a full year of programming or recurring activities. Applicants to this category fall into two categories, those with budgets over \$1.5 million and those with budgets under \$1.5 million.

Allowable Expenses

OAC funds may be used for a wide variety of expenses incurred in the general operation of an organization. Organizations often choose to dedicate Sustainability funds to artistic or administrative expenses. Other allowable expenses include program planning, education and evaluation. Please refer to the [Funding Restrictions](#) section of the OAC *Guidelines* for a list of activities the OAC cannot fund. In addition to these restrictions, OAC funding cannot be awarded to:

Arts organizations that are receiving operating support from the legislature through a line item in the state's budget during the same fiscal year in which the legislative operating support is available.

Grant Awards

Grants in the Sustainability program are determined by a formula that takes into account a panel's evaluation of the organization and the organization's past income. Historically, grants to arts organizations with budgets over \$1.5 million have ranged between one percent and four percent of their total operating budget; grants to arts organizations with budgets under \$1.5 million generally range from 4 percent to 10 percent of their total budget. Grants to non-arts organizations range from 4 percent to 10 percent of their submitted arts program budget. These percentages are given as examples only and availability of funds will vary according to the OAC's allocation from the state legislature. Typically, no grant will be less than \$3,000. All Sustainability 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 must have nonprofit status.

Eligibility Requirements

Applicants to the Sustainability program must have:

- A last fiscal year income of at least \$30,000*;
- Received at least two OAC grants in the last four fiscal years.

*For non-arts organizations, including colleges and universities, this criterion is based on the organization's arts programming budget, not the overall organizational budget.

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;
- Repeated events such as annual festivals.

Additional Eligibility Information

Sustainability applicants fall into two categories, those with budgets over \$1.5 million and those with budgets under \$1.5 million. Regardless of budget size, the following types of organizations are not eligible for the

Sustainability (over \$1.5 million) category, but may apply to the Sustainability (under \$1.5 million) category:

- Organizations whose primary thrust is the awarding of academic credit, such as colleges, universities and other degree-granting institutions (including departments, divisions, centers and other sub-entities of institutions of higher education);
- Organizations that receive operating funds from other state agencies;
- Organizations whose main purpose is not the presentation or production of the arts;
- Divisions or departments of larger governmental entities (e.g., divisions of parks and recreation);
- National service organizations.

Additional Requirements for Organizations with Budgets Over \$1.5 million

In addition to meeting other program requirements, all applicants must:

- Be incorporated as a nonprofit 501(c) 3 organization in Ohio;
- Use a majority of artists who meet the definition of [professional artists](#). Local arts councils and centers are exempted from this provision;
- Produce programs of high artistic quality that are appropriate for the stated mission of the organization;
- Have an eligible operating income base of at least \$1.5 million excluding OAC's funds. The income level must have been attained in the organization's most recently completed fiscal year as evidenced by a certified, audited statement. Endowment, capital improvement or any other restricted funds may not be included as operating revenue and support. In-kind donations may not be included. Donated works of art should not be included as acquisition income;
- Have been in existence for five years, during which time a permanent, paid, professional staff including a business manager and artistic director have administered the organization's programming annually. Community arts councils, arts centers and presenting organizations need not have an artistic director, but presenting organizations must maintain a permanent, paid, professional staff whose primary function is to present professional artists in a seasonal format. The five-year criterion is measured from date of inception of the organization to the date when funds would become available if a grant were awarded (July);
- Serve a large audience that represents a broad cross-section of citizens, including those not regularly served by the arts, lower income groups, [specific populations](#) and other [under-served populations](#).

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

Organizations applying for a Sustainability 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 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.

In the second year of a Sustainability grant, applicants are required to submit updated information regarding programming and budget. The organization will be given further instruction via e-mail (sent through OLGA to the organization's primary contact) when this updated information is required.

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.

The 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. The organization will be notified via e-mail (sent through OLGA to the organization's primary contact) when the support materials are received.

In the second year of a Sustainability grant, applicants are required to submit to the OAC updated financial documentation. The organization will be given further instruction via e-mail (sent through OLGA to the organization's primary contact) when this updated documentation is required.

Timeline

The timeline below presents a general outline of the grants process for Sustainability. 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	January 1
Final application deadline	February 1
Support material deadline	7 calendar days following the application deadline
Panel meeting	April
Grant award announcement	July
Signed grant agreement deadline	August 30
Grant period	July 1 - June 30
Final report deadline	July 30
Year 2 update available in OLGA	January 1
Year 2 update deadline	April 1
Year 2 grant award announcement	July
Year 2 signed grant agreement deadline	August 30
Year 2 grant period	July 1 - June 30
Year 2 final report deadline	July 30

Evaluation and Scoring

A panel consisting of arts and cultural professionals, educators, Ohio artists and other community members meets to evaluate and score Sustainability 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 last fiscal year income will be used in a formula 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 many 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 25 points.

- Applicant's activities demonstrate artistic, educational and cultural value for the community being served;
- Applicant's artistic, educational and cultural activities advance the organization's mission;
- Applicant's artistic, educational and cultural activities are strengthened by qualified personnel;
- Applicant's artistic, educational and cultural programming satisfies a unique need in the community;
- Applicant's artistic programming continues to evolve creatively;
- Applicant's educational and cultural programming meets or exceeds the organization's vision of success in those areas;
- Applicant's K-12 in-school educational programming must address the [Ohio's Arts Academic Content Standards](#).

Community Participation and Accessibility

The highest score for this category is 25 points.

- Applicant understands and is responsive to the diverse needs and interests of the community;
- Applicant has clearly described steps to increase cultural participation in its programs/activities;
- Applicant has identified and minimized barriers to cultural participation, including but not limited to barriers which prevent participation by people with disabilities;
- Applicant is recognized for the [public value](#) of its work and for the contributions it makes to the economic, educational and/or cultural well-being of the community;
- Applicant's working relationships within the community strengthen the organization's ability to fulfill its mission;
- Applicant effectively publicizes and promotes its activities to the community at large and the target audience.

Planning and Evaluation

The highest score for this category is 25 points.

- Applicant engages in long-range or strategic planning, developing clearly defined goals and identifying the means to reach those goals;
- Applicant's day-to-day planning procedures are comprehensive and clearly described;
- Applicant's staff and board involve community members, volunteers and artists in planning and evaluation;
- Applicant evaluates the impact of its' activities on the community;
- Applicant's evaluation strategies are appropriate for the participants and the activity;
- Applicant's evaluation results are used to guide current and future planning and programming.

Organizational and Financial Management

The highest score for this category is 25 points.

- Applicant demonstrates ability to develop and manage resources and other assets appropriately;
- Applicant demonstrates awareness of internal and external strengths and challenges;
- Applicant's staff, board and/or volunteers are qualified and demonstrate capacity to complete the proposed project or programming;
- Applicant's budget is realistic and correlates to the applicant's 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.