

Individual Excellence Awards

Recognizing Individual Artistic Achievement

The Individual Excellence Awards program recognizes outstanding accomplishments by artists in a variety of disciplines. Awards give artists the resources to experiment and explore their art forms, develop skills and advance their careers, and receive affirmation and acknowledgment for outstanding work. Competitive applications focus on the merit of past artistic work.

GRANT AWARDS: Individual Excellence Awards are \$5,000.

ELIGIBILITY: Creative artists who are residents of Ohio may apply to this program.

- Applicants must be at least 18 years of age.
- Students attending high school or students pursuing undergraduate or graduate degrees at the time of application may not apply.
- Applicants must have lived in Ohio for one year prior to the September 1 deadline and must remain in the state throughout the grant period.
- Artists may submit only one application per calendar year (excludes Criticism applicants)

Note: Artists applying in the Criticism discipline may submit a second application for a separate body of work, but an applicant may only receive one Individual Excellence award per year even if panels recommend the applicant in both disciplines.

After receiving an Individual Excellence Award, recipients are not eligible to apply at next deadline (e.g., a FY 2023 music composition award recipient may not apply at the FY 2024 deadline in photography, etc.). Past work that resulted in an Individual Excellence Award may not be resubmitted at future deadlines; resubmission of funded work will result in disqualification from the review process.

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS: Individual Excellence Awards recognize the exceptional merit of an Ohio artist’s past body of work. Awards celebrate the creativity and imagination that exemplify the highest level of achievement in a particular artistic discipline. Awards may be used for a variety of expenses related to an artist’s growth and development. Awards may not be used for enrolling in or continuing a degree-granting program, and recipients must remain a resident of Ohio during the grant year.

HOW TO APPLY: Individual Excellence Awards program applications must be submitted via the [ARTIE](#) system. Please refer to [ARTIE: Individual Artist Grant Applications](#) for a description of the process.

- **Collaborative Applications:** Up to two artists who worked together to create a body of work may apply collaboratively, with each artist retaining creative ownership of the completed artwork. Both artists must be Ohio residents. Only one artist should apply; if awarded an Individual Excellence Award, each artist will receive half of the award.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

September 1 (annually) at 5 p.m.

In odd-numbered calendar years (e.g., 2023, 2025), applications are accepted in **choreography; criticism; fiction; non-fiction; music composition; playwriting/screenplays; and poetry.**

In even-numbered calendar years (e.g., 2024, 2026), applications are accepted in **crafts; design arts/illustration; interdisciplinary/performance art; media arts; photography; visual arts 2D; and visual arts 3D.**

STAFF CONTACT

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EVALUATION AND SCORING: Applications are reviewed through an anonymous review process. An open review conducted by a panel of diverse and nationally known professionals ensure that a wide range of Ohio's outstanding artists are recognized. Panels meet virtually to evaluate and score applications in each Individual Excellence Awards discipline. Panel meetings are open to the public through a free video conferencing platform. Applicants are strongly encouraged to listen online. For details on panel meeting dates, times, and instructions for participating, visit the OAC online grants calendar (oac.ohio.gov/Grants/Grants-Calendar).

During the virtual panel meeting, panelists discuss how well each application satisfies the program's evaluation criteria, highlighting strengths and weaknesses of the support materials/art works and narrative statements. Panelists use a simple scoring system to evaluate and score applications, with each of seven criteria rated as: 1) not competitive, 2) adequate to strong, or 3) exemplary. Following the public discussion, each panelist enters a final score for each application. These scores are then used by OAC staff to determine funding award recommendations. The OAC Board is the only body authorized to make final funding decisions and must approve grant awards.

REVIEW CRITERIA: Panelists use the following criteria (presented in no particular order) to make funding recommendations:

- Work exemplifies the highest level of achievement in a discipline
- Outstanding technical proficiency or craftsmanship is displayed
- Body of work is consistently high in quality
- Creative or inventive use of the medium advances the art form
- Work compares favorably to other work in the field, either regionally or nationally
- Artist narrative provides context for the body of work
- Supporting materials are relevant and of high quality

SUPPORT MATERIALS: Support materials are a critical part of each Individual Excellence Awards application. Materials are submitted electronically to the ARTIE system with your completed application by the program deadline date. Due to the anonymous nature of the review process, applicants **MUST** remove any instance of their name and all biographical information from both submitted work **AND** narrative statement.

Discipline-Specific Support Materials

Screening notes may be included with the support materials to aid the presentation of the materials for applications in choreography, music composition, media, and interdisciplinary disciplines. If submitting digital images or work samples, see the ARTIE Support Materials tab for formatting details.

Choreography

- Two complete works, completed within the last five years, in separate uploaded files

Music Composition

- Two complete works, completed within the last three years, in separate uploaded files
- Score or lead sheet for each composition in a separate uploaded file. Your name should not appear anywhere in the score or lead sheet. A computer rendering must be included for computer-generated work, uploaded to ARTIE. *For assistance with oversized documents, please contact an OAC Artist Programs staff member.*

Interdisciplinary/Performance Art (concept-based performance art, not performing arts) applications are accepted from a single artist working in multiple disciplines on a single body of work (e.g., installation-based work including sculptural elements as well as sound, video, or movement).

- Two to three works, completed in the past three years, which may be a combination of up to 12 digital images, plus audio or video work samples, manuscripts, or scenarios, in separate uploaded files. If movement is an important part of a work, include appropriate documentation.

Media Arts Applications come from artists working in film, video, audio, media installations, and new technologies (e.g., computer-based work) that have primary responsibility for the finished project and are the originators of the artistic concept of the work.

- **Audio Art** – Two to three complete work samples, completed within the last three years, in separate uploaded files
- **Film** – Two completed works, one completed within the last three years, and one within the last five years, in separate uploaded files
- **Video** – Two complete works, completed within the last three years, in separate uploaded files
- **Media Installation** – One or two complete works, completed within the last three years, which may be a combination of up to 12 digital images plus audio or video work samples, and diagrams that best document the work, in separate uploaded files

Crafts, Design Arts/Illustration, Photography, Visual Arts 2D, and Visual Arts 3D

Nine to 12 digital images of at least nine different works, completed within the last three years. No video or audio files are accepted in these disciplines. If your body of work includes audio, video, or movement you should apply in the interdisciplinary discipline.

- **Design Arts/Illustration** – Applicants may submit either work that has been produced and constructed, or drawings and proposals for future work in separate uploaded files. Illustrators may submit the publication in which the work has been included in separate uploaded files. Architects, designers, landscape architects, and urban-metropolitan planners may submit clearly identified blueprints, specs, or maquettes in separate uploaded files. Clothing and costume designers may include illustrations and drawings in separate uploaded files.

Fiction, Non-Fiction, Poetry, Playwriting/Screenplays, Criticism

Manuscript format for all literature disciplines:

1. **IMPORTANT:** Applicant name must not appear within the body of manuscript or on cover sheet.
 2. Cover/title page of manuscript must have application number and listing contents of manuscript.
 3. Documents should be formatted to print on 8.5" x 11" paper, with 1" margins on all sides, and all fonts used should be no smaller than 11-point.
 4. All manuscripts should be uploaded as one PDF as required by the discipline (see ARTIE Support Materials tab for details).
- **Fiction and Non-Fiction** – manuscripts should be 20-30 pages, double-spaced, of either one recent work, a selection of short stories or essays, or a selection of chapters from a larger work completed within the last three years.
 - **Poetry** – manuscripts should be 10-15 pages, single- or double-spaced, no more than one poem to a page, completed within the last three years.
 - **Playwriting/Screenplay** – manuscripts may be single- or double-spaced and should consist of one complete play or screenplay or two complete one-act plays or screenplays, completed within the last five years. This discipline has no page limit. Musical theater plays must include one copy each of the libretto, score, book, and audio sample in separate uploaded files.
 - **Criticism** – manuscripts should be 30-50 pages, single- or double-spaced, completed within the last five years. The category supports critical writing that investigates, evaluates, or analyzes modern and contemporary art activity; manuscripts whose focus is solely historical art analysis are not accepted.

TIMELINE: The following timeline outlines the Individual Excellence Awards grant lifecycle. Any deadline falling on a Saturday, Sunday, or state holiday is extended until the next business day.

Task/Deadline	FY 2024 Applications	FY 2025 Applications
Application Available in ARTIE	June 1, 2023	June 1, 2024
Application Deadline at 5 p.m.	September 1, 2023	September 1, 2024
Grant Award Announcement	January 2024	January 2025
Grant Agreement Deadline	February 28, 2024	February 28, 2025
Final Report Deadline	December 31, 2024	December 31, 2025