



FY25 Project Support Grant Guidelines

Deadline: July 15, 2024 at 7:00 PM ET

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Introduction

As Fairfax County's designated local arts agency, ArtsFairfax creates and nurtures an environment in which the arts and artists can flourish. Through partnerships with schools, individual artists, arts organizations, and other cultural and community groups, ArtsFairfax promotes and encourages excellence in the arts by initiating and supporting programs, activities, and policies that inspire, nurture, and reflect the cultural diversity of Fairfax County.

Purpose

The purpose of the Project Support Grants Program is to encourage the development and advancement of the arts in Fairfax County while serving the artistic and cultural needs of Fairfax County residents.

Goals

Through this program, ArtsFairfax seeks:

- To provide support for established arts organizations and the development of new organizations.
- To promote opportunities for individual artists and arts organizations of all disciplines to create, present, and celebrate their artistic endeavors.
- To be a catalyst for increased private sector support for arts organizations through leveraged public funding.
- To encourage wide participation in the arts through diverse cultural programming available to all residents of Fairfax County.

Organizational Eligibility

All applicants must meet the following criteria to apply to the Project Support Grant Program. Staff reviews all grant applications for eligibility prior to the review process.

An organization is eligible to apply if:

1. It has as a core mission the creation, exhibition, presentation, production, or performance of and/or education in an arts discipline and is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization with current or pending status.
2. It has regular activity in a minimum of four different months in the year or 120 days of the year.
3. It presents at least 51% of public arts activities within the geographical boundaries of Fairfax County, the City of Fairfax, or the City of Falls Church.
4. The organization must have an address of record within the geographical boundaries of Fairfax County, the City of Fairfax, or the City of Falls Church and satisfy ONE of the following three criteria for at least one year:
 - a. Meet, rehearse, exhibit, and operate within the geographical boundary of Fairfax County, the City of Fairfax, or the City of Falls Church.

- b. Have 51% of board of directors' members work or reside in Fairfax County, the City of Fairfax, or the City of Falls Church.
 - c. Verify that 51% of attendees at performances, exhibits, events, and activities reside in Fairfax County, the City of Fairfax, or the City of Falls Church evidenced through acceptable statistical data including but not limited to ticket analysis, subscription data, box office surveys, and audience surveys.
5. An eligible organization must:
- a. Be in compliance with all local, state, and federal laws; and
 - b. If an organization does not hold 501(c)(3) status in its own right, a fiscal sponsor that holds 501(c)(3) status may apply on its behalf. The fiscal sponsor must manage all grant funds and ensure compliance with the terms of the grant if an award is made.
 - c. An organization must have independently prepared financial statements such as an audit or a treasurer's report (audit required for organizations with expenses of \$750,000 and above).
 - d. The applicant must have submitted all required final reports for any grants received from ArtsFairfax during the previous fiscal year.
 - e. The applicant must maintain an ArtsFairfax Directory listing and list activities on ArtsFairfax events calendar.

The following are not eligible organizations:

- 1. Organizations that receive line-item funding from the State of Virginia.
- 2. Departments of George Mason University, and nonprofit organizations and foundations that support county agencies.

Eligibility Exceptions

An organization that does not meet eligibility requirements due to unusual circumstances may submit a written request for an exception to the Grants Manager at grants@artsfairfax.org. The request must be received two weeks prior to the application deadline and provide an explanation for special consideration. Staff will review the request and the Grants Committee will make final decisions on eligibility exceptions.

Grant Restrictions

All Project Support Grant Program grants must:

- 1. Support activities, programs, or projects occurring within Fairfax County, the City of Fairfax, or the City of Falls Church.
- 2. Have qualified artistic or scholarly, administrative, and management leadership (either professional or volunteer) capable of completing any grant-supported activities, programs, or projects.

3. Occur within the dates of July 1, 2024 and June 30, 2025. If needed, Grantee may request a two-year grant period. The request should explain the reason the two-year grant period is needed, and an interim report will be required documenting progress on the project and how funds have been spent to date.

Project Support Grant Program grants cannot be used for:

- Fundraising activities, such as capital campaigns or endowment campaigns.
- Construction or renovation projects.
- Political advocacy costs.
- Activities not open to the general public*.
- Debt retirement.
- Pre-grant Costs.
- Proselytizing and faith-based activities.

** Arts Education projects taking place in schools are considered **Open to the General Public**.*

Funding Categories

Project Support Grants are non-recurring grants used to support eligible nonprofit arts organizations, both established and developing, in providing activities that engage new audiences in the arts and contribute to the vibrancy and quality of life in Fairfax County. Applicants may request \$1,000-\$30,000. These grants will not fund operating expenses. Finally, these grants encourage wide participation in the arts through diverse cultural programming available to all residents of Fairfax County.

Project Support grants support activities that would not normally be part of your organization's usual activities. For example, if your organization provides after-school arts instruction, then this funding could support the design and implementation of a new class offering that has not been offered before. If your organization occasionally hosts a guest artist, then funding could support bringing an artist who might normally be financially out of reach. This funding is not intended to support ongoing activities that your organization does on a regular basis as part of your mission. You do not have to create a program that is brand new to your organization; however, for existing programs, your proposal should explain how the funding would enhance or expand the scope of your program offerings.

There are four grant subcategories within the Project Support Grant Program. An organization can submit one grant application in a single subcategory. The grant subcategories are:

I. Arts in Education:

Arts in Education projects provide high-impact art experiences. Projects may take place in schools, after-school programs, or nonprofit agencies such as art centers, social service agencies, and parks and recreation facilities that provide services to youth and/or adults. Projects can support artist's fees and travel, space rental, transportation, advertising, publicity, scripts, costumes, sets, props, music, art supplies, and equipment rental or purchase.

II. Opportunity:

Opportunity projects provide the resources to allow an organization to take advantage of an atypical or out of the ordinary opportunity that otherwise would be out of reach. Opportunity projects should further the growth and development of the applicant organization or engage audiences in new arts experiences. Projects can support performances by guest artists, activities, or infrastructure enhancements including programs, exhibitions, and performances for diverse populations (including, but not limited to age, race, cultural background, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, national origin, marital status, disability, socio-economic status, or neighborhood of residence) and/or in underserved areas of the County.

III. Partnerships with Individual Artists, Artist Teams/Cooperatives, and/or non-501(c)(3) Arts Groups:

Partnerships enable a nonprofit arts organization to collaborate with an artist, artist teams/cooperatives, and/or non-501(c)(3) Arts Groups. The nonprofit arts organization must serve as the applicant. Projects can support the production of public art, performances, exhibitions, workshops, commissions, arts in education projects, and culturally unique projects that directly benefit artistic development and recognition.

IV. Arts Access

Arts Access projects strengthen arts engagement by allocating resources to underserved and economically disadvantaged communities and districts. These projects provide arts programming and reduce the costs of or distance to high quality arts experiences (theater productions, concerts, presentations, exhibitions, learning, workshops, etc.) in communities where limited arts access has been documented. Arts and cultural organizations located in these communities as well as organizations from throughout the County and Cities of Fairfax and Falls Church may apply.

Review Process

Following the grant application deadline, ArtsFairfax staff determine whether an applicant is eligible and whether an application is complete. Staff may contact applicants for additional information or clarification needed to make an eligibility determination. If an applicant is determined to be ineligible as an official applicant, the application will be

rejected without evaluation. Incomplete applications are subject to rejection without evaluation. If an application is rejected, the applicant will be notified by email.

All eligible applications for the Project Support Grant Program are evaluated by panel review. Panelists are arts professionals with a particular knowledge or expertise of the segments of the arts community that are eligible to apply to ArtsFairfax for funding. ArtsFairfax selects panel members who have no conflicts of interest and represent diverse backgrounds.

Panel Meetings are open to the public for observation via livestream. Applicants will be notified of the schedule and are encouraged to observe. Staff notes summarizing the panel review will be available.

The ArtsFairfax Board of Directors makes the final funding decisions on the basis of the evaluations by the panels and the overall goals of the Project Support Grant Program and of ArtsFairfax.

Evaluation Criteria

Panelists will evaluate each grant request based on five core criteria (6 points each) and three priority elements (1 point each).

Core Criteria:

- 1. Quality of Programs** (Organization's ability to create quality, mission-driven work that engages and inspires its community including aesthetic attributes of risk-taking, resourcefulness, adaptations to support access and inclusion, sustained resonance, impact, and value.)
 - a. Does the applicant demonstrate artistic excellence as shown by the qualifications, background, experience, and supplemental materials of the artists?
 - b. Will the project include quality, mission-driven work that will engage the community?
 - c. Does the project offer the public greater opportunities to enjoy both culturally diverse and/or underrecognized artists and art forms?
 - d. Are there clear examples of positive critical response to the organization's performances, exhibits, programs, and other artistic work?

- 2. Feasibility of Project**
 - a. How well is the project designed?
 - b. Does the project align with the applicant's mission?
 - c. Does the applicant demonstrate the ability to successfully plan and manage the project?

- d. Have enough details been defined within the project to assure some level of success in reaching the outlined goals of the project?
- e. Is the project feasible within the time frame and budget?
- f. Does the applicant describe how they intend to evaluate the impact of program activities on the community?

3. Community Engagement *(an organization's ability to meaningfully engage with its community to achieve its mission)*

- a. Does the project contribute to the quality of life and cultural vitality of Fairfax County?
- b. Does the applicant use knowledge of the community including data and demographics to drive and inform their project?
- c. Do the applicant's community relationships and partnerships strengthen the organization's ability to carry out the project?
- d. With respect to planning and programming, does the applicant demonstrate understanding and respect for all people represented by its community? Has the applicant outlined measures to create access for underserved populations?
- e. Does the applicant involve community members, volunteers, and artists in planning and evaluation?
- f. Regarding promotion and outreach, does the applicant describe steps to increase participation by culturally diverse** communities and underserved*** groups?

*** Diversity includes age, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, national origin, marital status, disability, socio-economic status or neighborhood of residence and other characteristics*

**** Underserved refers to populations who face barriers in accessing the arts, and includes, but is not limited to, populations underserved because of geographic location, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, race or ethnicity, ability, or age.*

4. Category Specific

- a. For the **Arts in Education** category, consider:
 - i. Are the project's artistic and educational goals clear and appropriate for the grade level(s), community served, and/or state standards of learning?
- b. For the **Opportunity** category, consider:
 - i. Does the project respond to an atypical or out of the ordinary opportunity that otherwise would be out of reach?
- c. For the **Partnerships with Individual Artists** category, consider:
 - i. The quality of partnership between organization and artist/artist team.

- ii. The quality of artistic resources.
- iii. Does the project prioritize Fairfax artists, artist cooperatives, non-501(c)(3) arts groups?
- d. For the **Arts Access** category, consider:
 - i. Is the target community under resourced or underserved by the arts?
 - ii. If the applicant is outside the community served, is there at least one community-based partner?

5. Budget Feasibility

- a. Is the budget appropriate to complete the project activities?
- b. Is the budget reasonable, clear, and complete? Are the figures accurate?
- c. Is the budget appropriate for the scale of the program and the size and characteristics of the intended audience?
- d. Is there a diversity of funding sources?

Priority Elements:

6. Diversity *(Diversity includes age, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, national origin, marital status, disability, socio-economic status or neighborhood of residence and other characteristics.)*

- a. Does the project support the diverse cultural arts of Fairfax's communities?
- b. Has the applicant engaged a diverse team of arts professionals and artists to complete the project?
- c. Does the project promote awareness, appreciation, and connectedness to diverse and/or underserved or under-represented cultures in Fairfax?
- d. Does the applicant describe how its activities and programs authentically represent the arts and culture of one or more culturally specific populations?
- e. Do the project activities demonstrate artistic and/or cultural value for the underserved or under-represented community being served if the project is targeted to meeting a specific community's needs?

7. Creative Placemaking *(Integrating arts and culture to improve a public space, create a sense of place and make it more of a destination and shared gathering place.)*

- a. Does the project build on the distinctiveness of a place using arts or cultural assets?
- b. Does the project demonstrate a potential to stimulate economic or community growth through the arts?
- c. Will the project deploy art or artists to address a community planning or development challenge or opportunity?

8. Innovation *(Nontraditional or inventive approaches to art forms and engaging audiences in the arts in unique ways)*

- a. Does the project demonstrate innovation in addressing the needs of the community?
- b. Will the project inspire the community to think creatively or differently by demonstrating new ways of thinking about complex issues?

Conditions of the Grant

Grant recipients must agree to comply with the following conditions of the Project Support Grant.

1. Use of Funds

The Grantee will use the funds solely for the purposes approved by ArtsFairfax as described in the Project Support Grant Guidelines. Grant funds may not be used for fundraising activities, such as capital campaigns or endowment campaigns, construction or renovation projects, political advocacy costs, activities not open to the general public*, debt retirement, pre-grant costs, proselytizing, promoting any one faith over another or events that would be inappropriate for a diverse, multicultural and multigenerational audience. All revenues generated with project funds during the grant period must be reported as program income and all listed expenses must be incurred during the grant period.

** Arts Education projects taking place in schools are considered **Open to the General Public**.*

2. Amount of Grant

Project Support Grant Program grants range from \$1,000 to \$30,000. ArtsFairfax will review and negotiate budgets as necessary. Applicants may be granted an amount less than requested.

3. Addendum

If there are substantial changes in the organization's programming, staffing, and/or funding after the application has been submitted, the organization may submit an addendum form explaining these accomplishments and/or challenges and how this effects the application. The addendum may be submitted during the time after the application deadline until 1 week before the panel meeting.

4. Announcement of Award

No information about the status of an application will be released until all applications have been reviewed and all negotiations are concluded. ArtsFairfax will notify applicants of final decisions in October 2024.

5. Payment and Reporting Procedures

Grants recipients will receive 70 percent of the award within one month of the grant announcement. Grantees are required to submit a final performance report and a final financial report at the end of the grant period (due August 1, 2025). Upon approval of the final report, the remaining 30 percent of the award amount will be disbursed to the grant recipient.

The final report is to be submitted online at <https://ArtsFairfax.submittable.com> including copies of all materials distributed to the public such as catalogues, programs, brochures, flyers, press releases, and other publicity materials. The materials may be scanned and attached to the final report or sent to ArtsFairfax before the end of the grant period.

6. Duration of a Grant

All grant activities shall take place within the fiscal year for which the grant was awarded. If needed, Grantee may request a two-year grant period. The request should explain the reason the two-year grant period is needed, and an interim report will be required documenting progress on the project and how funds have been spent to date.

7. Acknowledgement of ArtsFairfax Funding

ArtsFairfax requires acknowledgement of ArtsFairfax’s support for all public programs and services. In order to raise the visibility of your organization as well as that of the arts and nonprofit cultural organizations in Fairfax County, ArtsFairfax requires the following:

- a) Credit ArtsFairfax as a donor on your website and all printed materials through the use of ArtsFairfax logo and the statement, “This program is funded in part by ArtsFairfax.”
- b) Grant recipients are required to follow the instructions in the [Grant Communications Kit](#) and send copies to ArtsFairfax of all materials that are distributed to the public.
- c) Grant recipients are required to acknowledge ArtsFairfax funding on at least one social media platform—tag @artsfairfax on their social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and follow ArtsFairfax and use #ArtsFairfax.
- d) Include an ArtsFairfax grant award announcement in the printed program for the project for the duration of the grant period in accordance with your sponsorship recognition policy. The three suggested sizes are commensurate with your award amount: over \$10,000 full page, \$5,000-\$9,999 half page, and under \$5,000 quarter page. The announcements are available in both color and black and white.

8. Required Directory and Event Listings

Create an Arts Directory listing on the ArtsFairfax website: <https://artsfairfax.org/>
Grantees are also required to list their public events and activities on the ArtsFairfax Events Calendar throughout the grant period.

9. Organizational Eligibility

Grant recipients must continue to meet all Project Support Grant Program eligibility requirements during the grant period. Grant recipients are required to notify the ArtsFairfax Grants Manager in writing of any major financial, leadership, or programmatic changes to their organization.

Grantee will keep its tax-exempt status as a recognized Section 501(c)(3) and Section 509(a) organization current throughout the period of this grant and will comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations that govern the use of funds from private foundations to the Grantee organization. This includes but is not limited to the prohibition against activities described in Section 4945(d) of the IRS Code and limiting the use of the grant funds to the appropriate taxable purposes as described in IRS Code section 170(c)(2)(b).

10. Record Keeping

Grantee shall maintain an accurate record of the grant received and all expenses incurred under this grant and retain such books and records for at least four years after completion of the use of this grant.

11. Cancellation

ArtsFairfax reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to discontinue funding if it is not satisfied with the progress of the grant or the content of any required written report. In the event of discontinuation or at the close of the grant period, any unexpended funds shall immediately be returned to ArtsFairfax, except where ArtsFairfax has agreed in writing to an alternative use of the unused funds.

12. Mandatory Participation in Research

During the grant period, ArtsFairfax may request grantees participate in local, regional, or national arts studies. The studies may be related to, but are not limited to: audience spending, organization management, or facility usage and planning. Grantees are required to assist ArtsFairfax by completing these studies.

13. Advocacy Requirements

Grantees are required to write a note to both the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors and the Supervisor for your organization's magisterial district thanking them for appropriating the grant funds. The letters should provide information about how the grant funds were used to support your organization, and the community impact. Grantees should also invite their District Supervisor to the funded programs.

Grant Preparation Assistance

ArtsFairfax will conduct a free grant information session to instruct prospective applicants on how to complete a Project Support Grant Program application. ArtsFairfax strongly

encourages participation by all potential applicants. An applicant's attendance at an information session will not affect the evaluation of the application.

An online information session will be held at noon on June 13, 2024, and run approximately 1 - 1.5 hours depending upon questions. The presentation and video recording will also be posted on ArtsFairfax's website. To register visit the Project Support Grants [page](#).

Grant Writing Tips

- Write clearly and concisely.
- Although there is no matching requirement, these funds should be a catalyst for increased private sector support, used to leverage additional dollars.
- Do not use jargon.
- Remember that the people who are reading your application may know nothing about your organization or your programs.
- Check narrative and other text for grammar and spelling errors.
- Do not repeat information in different narrative sections.
- Keep in mind that ArtsFairfax staff does not participate in panel discussions. The application must stand on its own merits.
- Be sure that when a reader has finished reviewing your grant application, they will know your organization and understand the project.
- Verify that all contact information in your application is correct, including email addresses and phone numbers.
- Financial information referred to in the narrative should match the numbers on the Budget Form.
- Save your application often. Log out of your account when you're not actively working on the application.
- Be concise and mindful of the suggested word count.
- Use ArtsFairfax as a resource. If you have any questions, please contact the Grants Manager, by email at grants@artsfairfax.org or by telephone at (571) 395-4625.

Uploads

Submission of Required Documents, Work Samples, and Supplemental Materials is mandatory. Work Samples and Supplemental Materials should describe recent (within the last two years) activities. You may provide links to images, audio clips, and/or online video (1280x720 resolution) samples. You can submit **up to three** Work Samples and three Supplemental materials. Uploads may include installation shots, programs, brochures, catalogs, study guides, posters, newsletters, other promotional materials, newspaper reviews, articles, testimonials, letters of support, and awards. Online media entry is limited to a maximum running time of five total minutes. Acceptable file upload types are listed with each question.

Required Documents:

- IRS Letter of Determination for your organization and/or your parent organization
- Treasurer's Report or Audit for most recently completed fiscal year (audit required if applicant's expenses exceed \$750,000). In the case of the audit, organizations with expenses of \$750,000 and above would have been at that level for one full fiscal year.
- Board List with addresses (please note Fairfax residents and employees)
- Most recent IRS 990 submission (do not include schedules)
 - View a sample 990 [here](#).
 - View a sample 990EZ [here](#).
 - View information about the 990-N [here](#).
- [VA form 102](#) Remittance for Charitable Organization -
- List of Key project staff, Board Members, and consultants with bios

Submit required documents in PDF, DOC, DOCX, JPG, XLS, or XLSX format.

*File naming Key for required documents:

- TR = Treasurer's Report
- A = Audit
- IRS = IRS Letter of Determination
- 990 = 990 Tax form
- 102=VA form 102

Work Samples:

Applicants are required to submit samples of their work including performances, lectures, lesson plans, exhibition installation shots, and publications. The samples should reflect the best quality work of the organization and technical quality, i.e., good sound and video presentation. The panel's judgment of artistic merit will be based upon the quality of the work submitted.

Describe each work sample including the applicant's name, the work's name, as well as the dates of creation and performance/publication if appropriate. Panelists will view a maximum of 5 total minutes of recordings/videos. Specify start and end times for listening or viewing.

Submit **up to three** recent examples of original work with the following considerations:

- Samples may be excerpts or complete works.
- Submit work produced in the **last two years**.
- Samples may be uploaded to this application OR hosted publicly online. Ensure links are live and samples can be viewed without an email, account, or subscription. Include the applicant's name, title of work and date of completion, as well as a brief description of the piece and applicant's role in the development and execution of the

work.

- Name the file Work-Sample_Organization Name_01.
- Submitted files of recorded work samples should not exceed an overall total of five minutes.

Supplemental Materials:

Submit **up to three** Supplemental Materials that describe recent activities (within the last two years).

- Supplemental materials could include, but are not limited to programs, brochures, catalogs, posters, newsletters, other promotional materials, newspaper reviews, articles, testimonials, letters of support, or awards.
- The samples should support and illustrate how your programs and services engage diverse Fairfax County, City of Fairfax or City of Falls Church residents, organizational effectiveness in terms of planning and evaluation, and critical response to performances/exhibitions/activities.
- Multimedia is limited to five minutes total. Panelists will view a maximum of 5 total minutes of recordings/videos. Specify start and end times for listening or viewing.
- Name each file SM_Organization Name_01.
- List supplementary materials in the text box the cover sheet with a brief description.

Submitting Your Application

All Project Support Grant Program applications must be submitted via the online application system no later than **Monday, July 15, 2024 at 7:00 PM ET**. Late applications will not be accepted. Hard copies of supplementary materials will not be accepted.

Appeals Process

Unless there are grounds for an appeal, all funding decisions of ArtsFairfax are final.

ArtsFairfax funding decisions may be appealed only upon the following grounds:

- The Applicant's grant application was denied based on criteria other than those set forth in the applicable guidelines, where the application of such improper criteria was open and obvious and there was also no legitimate basis for denial under the applicable guidelines;
- The Applicant's grant application was denied based on the grant panel's failure to apply the applicable guidelines, where such failure is open and obvious and not merely a subjective evaluation of the merits of the application;
- The Applicant's grant application was denied based on the grant panel's failure to consider relevant evidence presented in support of the grant application, where such failure was both open and obvious and not merely the result of the Applicant's failure to properly identify or present such evidence; and/or

- The Applicant's grant application was denied as the direct result of an undisclosed conflict of interest between the Applicant and a member of the grant panel, where, but for such conflict, the Applicant's grant application would not have been denied.

Other than the grounds listed above, there are no other grounds for an appeal, including, but not limited to, general dissatisfaction with the process, dissatisfaction with the amount awarded, dissatisfaction with the qualifications of the members of the grant panel, disagreement with an opinion of a member of the grant panel, or the Applicant's desire to submit additional evidence.

To file an appeal, an Applicant must submit a written appeal request directly to ArtsFairfax. Such appeal must be received by ArtsFairfax within thirty (30) calendar days of the date of the applicant's notification letter from ArtsFairfax with regard to the funding decision being appealed. An appeal must state the grounds for the appeal and provide clear and convincing evidence in support of such grounds. No evidence or supporting materials which could have been provided as part of the Applicant's original grant application will be considered.

All appeal requests will be reviewed by the Grants Committee of ArtsFairfax's Board of Directors. Appeals will be reviewed within sixty (60) calendar days from the date the written appeal request was received by ArtsFairfax. If the Grants Committee determines that there exist grounds for an appeal, the Grant Committee will re-evaluate the application. All decisions of the Grant Committee with regard to any re-evaluation will be final. If the Grants Committee determines that there are no grounds for an appeal, then the original decision of the grant panel shall become final without further recourse or reconsideration. All decisions of the Grants Committee with regard to appeal requests are final without further recourse or reconsideration.