



ARTSFAIRFAX

Stay **Curious.**

Stay **Local.**

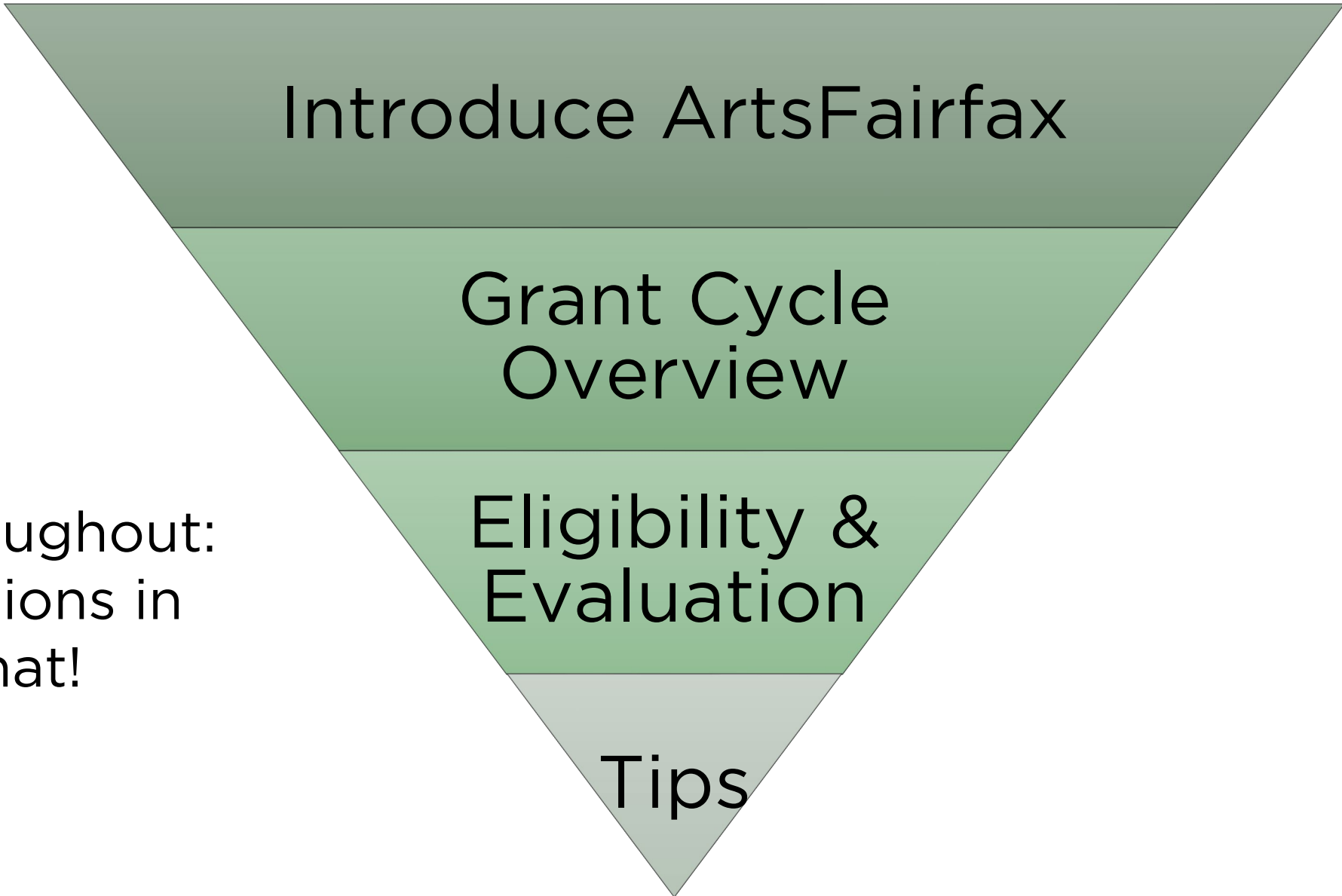


# FY27 Project Support Grant Information Session

May 28, 2026

# Agenda

Q & A throughout:  
ask questions in  
the chat!



Introduce ArtsFairfax

Grant Cycle  
Overview

Eligibility &  
Evaluation

Tips

# ArtsFairfax Team



**Stuart Holt**  
*President & CEO*



**Kelley Choi**  
*Director of Grants &  
Community Partnerships*



**Debbie Mueller**  
*Director of Development*



**Allison Mui Mitchell**  
*Director of Advocacy  
& Communications*



**Karan Bansal**  
*Technology Manager*



**Jill-Morgan Aubert**  
*Development Manager*



**Stella Hanson**  
*Advocacy &  
Communications Manager*



**Young Oh**  
*Business & Operations  
Manager*



**Nicole Powlison**  
*Grants Manager*



**Shannon Smith**  
*Artist & Community  
Partnerships Manager*



Spark your curiosity

& ignite your creativity



**\$799,026**

awarded in grants

**17,000+**

arts programs funded

**1M+**

arts participants

Representing over 200 arts organizations in the Fairfax region, ArtsFairfax amplifies the breadth and diversity of our local arts and culture scene to the 1.2M residents who call Fairfax home.

*This data is from July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025*

We connect arts workers to opportunities

## Free Resources

- Artist Calls
- Arts Directory
- Events Calendar
- Job Board



# Basic Grant Eligibility

- Eligible

- Nonprofit organizations (or applicants with a fiscal sponsor)
- Core mission in an arts discipline or Arts divisions/programs within a larger nonprofit 501(c)(3)
- Based in Fairfax County, City of Fairfax, or City of Falls Church

- Not Eligible

- Line-item funding from Commonwealth of VA
- Departments of George Mason University, or nonprofits and organizations supporting county agencies (e.g. Parks, Libraries, FCPS)
- Individual Artists
- PTAs & Booster Groups

ArtsFairfax funds the arts through advocacy & grantmaking

## FY26 GRANTS

AT A GLANCE

**82**

AWARDS

**\$793,285**

FUNDS AWARDED

**61**

ORGANIZATIONS FUNDED

**Project  
Support**

**Ticket &  
Participation  
Subsidy**

**Operating  
Support**





# FY26 Funding Acceptance Rate

| Grant Program     | Funds Received                                           | Funding Outcomes                          |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Operating Support | Grantees received between 5%-87% of the award requested  | 100% of eligible applications were funded |
| Project Support   | Grantees received between 50%-70% of the award requested | 43% of eligible applications were funded  |

# Changes for FY27

- Organization Profile for Grant Applicants
  - Goals and Strategic Plan question has been tightened: focus on Top 3 Goals for the application year
- Audit requirement
  - Align with VCA
  - Organizations with income over \$1,000,000 for two consecutive Fiscal Years will be required to submit an opinioned audit
- Interim Report for Project Support Grants

# Project Support Grant Guidelines

<https://artsfairfax.org/project-support-grants/>

➔ Guidelines & Eligibility

# Panel Insights

Strong applications include these characteristics among others:

- **Use data** to support your storytelling.
- Programs meet the **unique needs and interests** of the community.
- **Demographics** are used to support program design and community outreach.
- Share details on **strategic priorities** and give examples of how they will be executed.
- Budget includes **diverse revenue streams** balanced with a variety of unearned and earned sources, as well as board giving.



# Panel Insights, continued

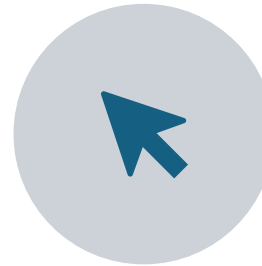
The panel comments also reflect how well the proposal showcases the quality of programs, organizational effectiveness, and community outreach. They also underscore the weaknesses in applications.

- **Demonstrate awareness of your community**—include details on how community needs are identified, or specific strategies to attract these audiences.
- **Differentiate yourself as an organization**—tell us why your organization is special.
- **Consider diversity as holistic, not just one aspect of an organization**—discuss board/leadership diversity, artistic/ensemble diversity, and audience diversity.

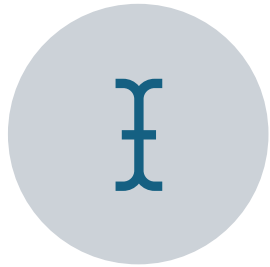
# Grant Writing Tips: Process



Start your application early!



Save often and log out of Submittable when you are not actively working in the application.



Create and edit text outside of Submittable, then copy and paste into the online application.



ArtsFairfax Staff does not participate in panel discussions. Applications must stand on their own merits.

# Grant Writing Tips: Mechanics



Write clearly and concisely. Keep your answers brief but specific. Watch suggested word counts.



Avoid using jargon and define acronyms at first use.



Verify that all contact information in your application is correct.



Financial information referred to in the narrative should match your financial documentation.

# Grant Writing Tips: Write for the panel



Panelists reading your application may know nothing about your organization or your programs.



Use quantitative and qualitative data.



Do not repeat information in different narrative sections.



Use the evaluation criteria to guide your answers.

# Final Notes

- 7pm application deadline is absolute – no exceptions
- Optional in-person working session in June: bring your questions and drafts
- Request accommodations or translations for application materials at least two weeks in advance of deadline.
- Contact us anytime with questions!



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Thank you!

