



Artist Development Grant – Sample Applications

Hiring Professional Services

Eligible expenses (*excerpt from grant guidelines*): Eligible expenses include, but are not limited to: contracting professional services including photographic documentation of work, contract preparation or business incorporation, creation of accounting systems, developing e-commerce on a website, creation of marketing materials, etc.

An example of a successful application has been provided below, with commentary (*italicized in blue*) describing what worked, and how the artist's answers met the grant criteria.

Project Description: to support a professional photoshoot for fused glass artwork

Narrative Section:

Question: Describe your status as an artist and your current goals.

Response: (*Artist provides a brief summary of their status as an artist along with relevant business details*) I have been working in fused glass since 2014, and in 2018 I decided I was ready to turn my glass hobby into a business. I registered myself as a sole proprietor at (name of business), and created an online presence, including a website, social media outlets, and an online shop. I have also been active in local artist markets, including the (name of market). Recently I participated in a program at (name of institute) to develop a product idea I had for fused glass pendant lighting. I am currently working on a revamp of my online shop, which I plan on launching in June 2020. I have recently signed a lease for a new workshop space where I plan on increasing my production level, allowing me to participate in more markets this coming year. (*Artist then describes goals and how they tie into the background provided and to their funding request*) My goals include developing a product line which I can offer at retail locations, and seeking out galleries interested in displaying my unique pieces. I also plan on expanding my customer base by participating in artist markets outside of northern Vermont, and doing some collaborations with other artists. Selling my glasswork is currently a part-time business for me, but I would like to turn it into a full-time job.

Question: Describe your proposed activity and how it will advance your craft or business.

Response: I am in need of professional photographs of myself as an artist, and my current body of artwork. These images will be used in my marketing materials, website, online portfolio, social media presence, and e-commerce shop. I want to be able to show potential clients and galleries what goes into what I make, and give people a clear idea of my brand. (*Artist describes why their current images and strategies aren't effective*) Quality images are essential to accurately represent myself and my current body of work, void of bad lighting, and incorrect color balances that are issues I struggle with when I

photograph my glasswork myself. Improving the photographs in my online portfolio will give my work and website a professional feel. Currently, I have almost no photographs of myself working, and I have no head shots. The addition of these types of photographs will help showcase myself as an artist and my brand by adding a face to go along with the artwork. I believe this improvement to my online presence will increase my likelihood of being accepted into artist markets, galleries, shops, and other related events. *(Artist demonstrates they have researched professionals to do the work and has a clear understanding of the work entailed)*. I reached out to (name of photographer), and we decided on a photography shoot that includes a pre-branding consultation to plan the direction and goal of the sessions, and 90 minutes of shooting broken up into two sessions. The first session will begin immediately and will cover head shots, and my current body of work. The second session will happen at the end of summer / beginning of fall, and cover any additional new work that I have completed during the last few months.

Question: Why is this particular activity important to achieving your goals?

Response: *(Artist effectively addresses why professional photography is critical to achieving their goals, what their current challenges are, and why they're not able to do it themselves)* In today's society your website is often the face of your business. I want to accurately represent my artwork and myself through my web presence. As a visual artist there is no better way to do that than through high quality images. I want to have a beautiful, and professional portfolio to submit to art-related markets, shops, and galleries in order to effectively expand my reach, and increase my art sales.

Glass is particularly difficult to photograph because the material isn't very forgiving when it comes to lighting, and shadows. Transparent glass can take on many shades depending on how it is showcased, and I struggle with getting an accurate photograph of my work on a daily basis.

I also frequently work alone, which means I don't ever take photographs of myself working. Additionally, I am terrible at remembering to talk about myself, which is very important when developing your brand, especially when you are your own brand. I believe some high-quality portraits, and while working shots will give my business a professional feel and appeal to someone looking to support the handmade, shop-small culture.

I'm excited about the idea of working with a professional photographer who will be able to offer their opinions and feedback when it comes to the composition and subject matter in each image we take.

Key Individual Section:

(Name of Photographer) will be photographing myself and my body of artwork. They have a beautiful online portfolio, and I have heard positive testimonials from local artists who have used their services. Additionally, they have experience with successfully photographing glass, and understands how to capture images that convey a story/brand (for social media use). Their website is found at (website listed) *(Artist demonstrates that they have researched the photographer they hope to hire; explains why the photographer's skill is appropriate for the proposed project; and provides a link to the photographer's website)*.

Budget Section:**Anticipated Expenses**

Consultant fees and services - \$500

Expense Total \$500

Anticipated Income

Grant request - \$500

Income Total \$500

(Balanced budget provided: total expenses = total income)

Budget Narrative Section:

Question: Explain how you arrived at each of the numbers in your budget.

Response: *(Artist has researched, selected and procured actual cost estimates from the photographer)* I reached out to (name of photographer) and requested a quote for a photoshoot that included head shots and artist-at-work shots, as well as photographs of my current body of work. We discussed specifics briefly and she emailed me a custom quote.

Question: The grant will pay for which specific expense(s) in the project budget?

Response: The grant will pay (name of photographer) for a pre-branding consultation, 90 minutes of shooting, and high-resolution images in a downloadable, online gallery. *(All expenses covered by grant are eligible for funding. Eligible expenses may be found in the grant guidelines)*

Support Materials Section: *(Artist provides evidence of costs, research, and artistic practice)*

- Copy of Photographer's estimate/proposal uploaded
- Artist's resume uploaded
- Branding proposal uploaded
- URL for photographer's website is listed