



Arts Partnership Program Guidelines | FY 2021-23

Arts Partnership Grants provide operating funds over a three-year period to arts organizations that offer year-round, high-quality arts programs and services that help to support the Council's mission to "cultivate and advance the arts and creativity throughout Vermont."

The strongest applicants for this grant will be from arts organizations that demonstrate a strong and consistent presence in their community as arts service providers. They deliver quality programming, support Vermont artists, provide educational/learning opportunities for Vermonters of all ages and abilities, and work in partnership with civic, nonarts, and/or educational organizations to support the economic, social, and cultural well-being of their communities.

Who May Apply

Organizations incorporated in the state of Vermont with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status or municipal arts agencies with a primary stated mission to serve the arts which have:

- operated continually for a minimum of five years
- received or have applied for a [D-U-N-S Number](#)
- retained at least one half-time (or half-time equivalent) paid staff member over the past fiscal year, and will retain at least one half-time (or half-time equivalent) paid staff member over the next three fiscal years
- provided year-round programming/services for at least the past fiscal year, and will continue to provide year-round programming over the next three fiscal years
- submitted all required reports on past Council grants
- facilities and programs that are accessible and welcoming to people with disabilities

Funding Amounts and Matching Requirements

Funding will be between \$3,000 (minimum) and \$9,000 (maximum) each year for three years beginning in FY2021 (September 2020). Partial awards may be granted; both merit and organization size will be factored into grant award decisions. A minimum 3:1 match of nonfederal funds is required.

This program operates on a three-year grant cycle beginning September 1, 2020. Support for the subsequent year will depend on the partner's ability to fulfill the terms of the grant contract and on the Arts Council's ability to maintain the program budget at the same level. Grant amounts are dependent upon federal and state funding and may be subject to change.

Arts Partners are required to demonstrate that they have fulfilled the contract terms annually by submitting an end-of-year report each year. Continued eligibility will be determined when the end-of-year report is filed.

This program will reopen for applications in FY2023. Applicants who do not become partners in this round may apply for Arts Impact Grant support in 2021. Arts Impact Grants are available on an annual basis.

What We Do Not Fund

Operating support provided through the Arts Partnership Program may not fund capital construction, the purchase of permanent equipment, the offset of previous operating deficits, fundraising events, food and beverages, lobbying expense, travel abroad, programs in which artists are not appropriately compensated, or activities that are primarily religious.

Application and Deadline

Applications for Arts Partnership Program must be [submitted online](#) no later than 5 p.m. on May 15, 2020.

Criteria for Selection

Eligible applications are reviewed by a panel of arts professionals. Panelists may come from outside Vermont. Submission of an application does not guarantee funding. Errors and omissions might affect a panel's evaluation of the application, so please follow instructions and prepare the application carefully.

The following criteria are used by reviewers to evaluate applications:

high-quality arts programming or services (30%)

- high-quality programs or services that demonstrate creativity and consistency with the applicant's mission, position in the community, and stated artistic context
- range and scope of activities that contribute to the artistic development of the general public, participating artist, and or the art form
- outreach to and/or inclusion of Vermont artists

response to community and audience (30%)

- programming and services that are relevant and accessible to the widest range of participants
- programs and practices that identify and address barriers to participation (e.g economic, geographic, demographic, physical, and cultural barriers)
- active efforts to develop strategic partnerships to engage underserved communities
- demonstrated commitment to accessibility and inclusion

sustainability and organizational capacity (30%)

- capacity to manage operations and resources as reflected in organizational stability, fiscal position, strong leadership, and sound practices
- quality of long-range plans with intentional inclusion of varied viewpoints to establish and achieve mission
- demonstrated ability to maintain a diversity of revenue sources, realistic budget projections, and an effective fundraising plan
- sound marketing plan that reflects understanding of audience

evaluation and measurable outcomes (10%)

- clarity of organizational goals and outcomes and a plan to effectively measure progress
- a continuous improvement orientation that includes board and staff and incorporate self-reflection and feedback to strengthen programs and operations

Access Compliance and Nondiscrimination Policy

The Vermont Arts Council is committed to supporting entities that maintain an environment free from discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, creed, national origin, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic bias, disability, citizenship, veteran status, or other category protected by applicable state or federal law.

Arts Council grant recipients who receive federal or state funds must be in compliance with the requirements of Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the ADA Amendment Act of 2008, and the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design along with 2010 ADA Title III regulations for nondiscrimination.

Questions?

Inquiries about the Arts Partnership program can be made by sending an [email to Amy Cunningham](#) or by calling 802.828.5423. Inquiries about using the online application system can be made by sending [an email to Meredith Bell](#) or by calling 802.828.3292.

See [Applicant and Grantee Information](#) for more information regarding requirements.