

Vermont Arts Council - Artists in Schools Grantseeker Workshop -
07-11-2023

Captioned By: White Coat Captioning

>> TROY HICKMAN: Hi, Emily, thanks for joining, it's great to see you here.

>> Hi.

>> TROY HICKMAN: I was sure if anyone would be able to join us today. We had seven people registered. It may be just us. I'm going to give a couple of more minutes for other people to pop in. I'm going to record this, and so you're welcome to stay as long as you like, you're welcome to pop in with questions. But know that I'm going to record, and I'm going to go through --

>> That's totally fine, no worries.

>> TROY HICKMAN: Lee here will caption it and we'll get it up on the website for people to access. If you have questions as I go through the slide deck, you're welcome to jump in or if you want to wait until after we stop recording, we can have a chat, it's no problem.

>> Sure. I know that you know Amy Riley who I work with Full Circle with, so I'm here representing them, because we're putting up a show this week. I'm here to learn about the Artists in Schools grant and take notes to report back to everyone else there.

>> TROY HICKMAN: That sounds lovely, thanks for making that connection.

>> Of course.

>> TROY HICKMAN: I'll get started in just a minute, if folks join us, that's great, if not, we'll save some time at the end, and you and/or Amy can follow up with questions.

>> Awesome, thanks so much, Troy.

>> TROY HICKMAN: Thank you.

I'm going to go ahead and jump in and we'll get started. If others jump in, we'll add them and we'll just keep on going. So I'm going to go ahead and hit the Record button, I'll share my screen, and away we'll go.

Thank you for joining us today. My name is Troy Hickman from the Vermont Arts Council. I'm here today to talk to you about the Artists in Schools Program. I'll stay on after the call or after the presentation to answer any questions.

Again, if you have any questions, you're welcome to jump in, knowing that we're recording this. And I'll pause the recording and we can have a more relaxed discussion, answering questions you have at the end. Let's see. We are recording this, and we'll post the recording to the website. It will be accessible at the website.

This is being captioned by White Coat Captioning, so thank you, White Coat Captioning, for helping us with this work. I would also like to quickly start off with a land acknowledgement and acknowledge that I'm joining you today from the traditional and unsundered territory of the Abenaki people, particularly a region, an area of that territory now called Vermont. I just want to take a moment to recognize the presence of the Abenaki people here and acknowledge the historical and enduring contributions of the Abenaki ancestors to the land and to our culture, as well as current and future contributions.

We'll go through a slide deck, answering questions. Everything that I'm going to talk about today should be available on our website. I'm going to just drop a link into the chat real quick, to the landing page for

our Artists in Schools Program. You can find almost all of this information, certainly nice to hear it in a presentation and get it in a different way, but if you need to come back and find some information later, you can find most everything on this website.

What you'll find of interest is a link to the grant portal. The grant program is currently open. And you'll find links to program guidelines. And you'll find a link to an application preview document which lists all of the questions that are on the application, so that you can fill them out, start to fill those out in your own space, and then go into the grant portal, there's a nice tool you can use to work collaboratively if you choose to do that with teaching artists or with the school, however that works best for you.

And there's also a link to the final report. So for applicants that do receive a grant, there's a very short final report that we need to use for auditing purposes. These are Federal funds, a mix of State and Federal funds that we're providing. And so we need to have some documentation for that.

And it's also just great to hear back about what's happening through the program so that we can track a little bit of information and share out to our funders as well. So I'm going to scoot ahead.

At the most basic level, the Artists in Schools Grant Program aims to support quality multiday arts experiences in schools with Vermont teaching artists in residence. We seek to encourage collaborations between schools and youth and artists and art organizations, sort of nourishing that ecosystem that already exists.

The program is designed to support classroom construction and classroom teachers. Residencies can take place during the school day or in a sequential afterschool setting. If you are working with an afterschool setting, we do ask that there be a partnership with a local school or school district or supervisory union, and a plan for kind of integrating that, either into the classroom setting or into a larger afterschool program, goals and learning objectives.

Grant funding supports multiday projects, typically between three to ten days in length. And also there's support for the teachers, and supporting teachers with planning and thinking about doing arts integration in their classrooms or in their programs. So that's a quick overview of the grant program.

People or organizations can apply. So this grant program is designed for organizations to apply. If an application is awarded, the funds will go to the school or to the organization that is applying. Those funds are to be used to support artists' fees. Typically the artist then invoices the school, unless they're on staff with the organization, to access those funds.

Who may apply? Schools or districts recognized by the Vermont Agency of Education. In the guidelines there's a link to a list of all of these schools that are recognized by the Agency of Education. It's pretty straightforward, they're pre-K through 12, career tech ed programs, adult education programs, family literacy programs. It's a pretty broad range of schools that can apply.

Also nonprofit organizations, nonprofit arts organizations can apply. They're registered as a nonprofit in Vermont. Again, if it is a nonprofit organization that is applying, in the application we'll want to learn more about the partnership with the school or district that you're proposing to work with.

One thing to think about, if you're an organization working with the school, our preference is for these activities to take place certainly in an accessible setting. And knowing that schools are accessible spaces, that's our preference. If the activities take place off of school grounds, we'll probably ask for some more information, just to better understand the accessibility of the spaces and support students with being -- all students with being a part of these wonderful residency opportunities.

Artists in Schools grants, the most that any applicant can ask for is \$4,000. These fees primarily are designed to cover artist fees. Applicants are eligible -- so the funding, the way we determine how much an applicant can ask or eligible to apply for is based on a per-day rate. If you are working with an individual artist, a single artist, you are eligible to apply for up to \$400 a day to bring an artist into your school.

So \$400 a day at ten days, for a ten-day residency, would be the \$4,000 cap. If you're working with an individual artist on a smaller project, a three-day project, that would be \$1,200. If you're working with a group of artists, that's two or more artists in this residency, you can ask, you may apply for up to \$600 a day for an artist group.

And in some cases you may apply for an additional \$250. Again, the cap is \$4,000, but you may ask for an additional \$250 to apply towards materials. Some residencies are much more material-heavy than others. So certainly thinking, you know -- for example, a photography workshop or a weaving workshop that requires some looms, more heavily supply-dependent, consider reserving some funds for the request for materials. That would be helpful, I'm sure.

We get questions a lot about what to pay teaching artists. Teaching artists we work with, the rates vary tremendously. We do recommend if you're working with a teaching artist, to budget for at least \$100 per hour for classroom time, instruction time. And if the artist -- consider paying the artist for additional planning time and maybe if there's a culminating event or an exhibition that needs some prep time that isn't necessarily classroom face time, budgeting at least \$30 an hour for that time.

And certainly some artists that we work with have much higher rates. Some of them have lower rates. But keeping in mind, you know, kind of our recommendation for rates for teaching artists, but also that -- what you're eligible to request from us on that \$400 for an individual artist rate or \$600 for group rate, just kind of using those as a tool for budgeting and communicating with teaching artists, or the schools you're working with if you're a teaching artist, to help with any project, but specifically projects that are going to be part of a proposal for an Artists in Schools grant. I hope that makes sense.

Let's see. Next slide. Again, so applicants may propose projects to work with any Vermont-based artist to support applicants with putting together a proposal. We have a juried teaching artist roster, and that's accessible at our website. I can drop in a link to the chat for that here real quick.

So the teaching artist roster is available on our website and linked to the Artists in Schools page. Oh, I think I -- let me try this one more time. Yes, this is great. If you need to access the captions, I'm going to throw in a link here for the captions, if you want to access the captions in a browser format, if that's helpful for you, the captions will appear there as well as the CC button at the bottom of your screen on the menu. Here you have a link for the teaching artists roster.

The roster, the artists on the roster are juried, they meet standards

of artistic excellence. They have multiple years of prior teaching experience. What's really super helpful is if they have experience with planning and working collaboratively, especially in school settings.

So that link and those artists on that roster, you're certainly welcome to reach out to any of those artists if you're a school, if you're interested in joining that roster as an individual artist we can talk more about that, you can contact me, I'll have my contact information up here shortly.

And what more do I need to say? So again, when putting in an application proposal through the Artists in Schools Program, you have that roster as a tool for you. If you have another artist you're working with that is not on the roster, a school can apply to work with artists not on the roster too, that's very good.

We do ask, there is a question in the application, to upload just a little background information about the artist, the artist group you're working with, so we have some sense of the artistry that that person or group of artists produces, as well as just some experience, resume, artist's statement, samples of work, would be super helpful for the panel to understand the project.

Applications are reviewed monthly by the panel. I believe I don't have the notes in front of me. It's on the website. We will open up the pool of applications and send the applications that we have on hand on July 25th to the panel for review. We will do that monthly at the end of each month.

Towards the end of each month, the deadlines are on the Artists in Schools page. We'll review those applications and notify schools or applicants as quickly as we can about the status of that application so that we can get projects rolling quickly. We will go through that process monthly until the funds are exhausted.

It's always hard to know how quickly those funds will go. There is a lot of interest in the program this year. So I would expect by October, we might be looking at the last of our funds. Again, that's difficult to assess. Feel free to check in with me if you have questions about availability of funding and deadlines. We send the applications to a panel for review. They use some criteria to make determinations about what to fund, what not to fund, and to give feedback to schools or applicants if it's helpful.

And we do that on a monthly basis. We do seek to include as many new schools as we can each year. We also seek to include as many teaching artists as we can each year. So for example, if we have ten schools applying to work with one specific teaching artist, we likely won't be able to fund all ten of those applications because, again, we want to engage as many teaching artists and get the funding out as broadly as possible. So that is a factor in consideration. We want to fund schools that haven't had a grant in a long time and we also want to include teaching artists, we want to include as many teaching artists as possible.

So glancing at the criteria, I'll just kind of dip into that a little bit. There are three broad criteria we're looking at. The first is artistry. Mostly we're looking at the strength of the project, creating the opportunity for students to go through the creative process, or to explore the arts.

And so, again, these are residencies that encourage students to take some leadership in the process, to make choices, to engage in the creative process or to engage in the arts more broadly. These can be project-based

learning, these can be performance-based, they can be arts appreciation. But again, they're multiday project-based residencies.

The next criteria is learning objectives. So we do ask in the application to list the learning objectives. Just thinking through what we expect the students to get out of this experience and listing those, and also then kind of briefly talking about what some of the activities are that will support those learning objectives.

Again, we can be very brief, but also just very clear about what some of those objectives and what some of those activities might be, just to paint a picture for the panel of what's going to happen in the residency.

And then the final criteria, just broadly, the project planning. So thinking about access, making sure that all of the youth have the ability to access the program within that setting. Thinking about support, working with parents when possible, or holding them in accessible spaces, things like that. So there's some questions around documenting access, again, briefly documenting access, briefly presenting a timeline, and also talking about the teaching team that will be a part of the residency.

So again, if you're working with parent educators or guidance counselors, behavioral interventionists, reading interventionists, classroom teachers, list as many people involved in the project as possible, also being brief about that, but we want to think clearly about how the project integrates into the school more largely or the afterschool program more largely.

So just talking about everyone who's involved and plays an important role and listing them, just to give the panel a sense that have, is very helpful. A quick list here of the Arts Council's general priorities around serving youth of all abilities. Creative place-making is one of our priorities. Certainly a multiday residency, it's very hard to pull off a full creative place-making residency. But I've seen many kind of place-making-like projects that come through these residency programs.

So projects that transform public spaces. And also projects that give students some leadership roles and engaging the community, whether it's a school community or a broader community. Those projects are incredible. If it's part of the proposal here, it certainly lines up with projects that support a creative economy.

So I'll move on. A quick note of who may not apply. We fund -- a school can only receive one Artists in Schools grant per year. There are some exceptional cases from time to time, but typically schools may just receive one grant per year. Who else may not apply are those that have received funding for the same project or artists for two or more years in a row. Applicants who have overdue or incomplete reports with the Arts Council.

And also organizations, if nonprofit that are applying, if you received operating support from Vermont Arts Council, that would make you ineligible for this grant program as well. So to put an application together, I think the very first step is to go to the website and to look through the program guidelines, follow up with any questions you might have.

Start to form that team if your school is thinking about staff that would be involved and reaching out to teaching artists, asking initial questions about fees and timeline, pulling that information together. Something that you should probably do sooner than later is to create an account in the grant portal. You would need an organization account to apply for the grants.

I'm going to drop in a link to the chat for accessing the grant portal. If you have not yet created an account, that's the first step. That needs to be manually moderated on our end. It takes within 24 hours, typically, then you'll have access to the grant applications.

Another type of account that people can create in our grant portal is as an individual or an individual artist. If you have one of those accounts, you may be able to access an application, reach out to us and tell us what organization you're working with and we can marry those accounts so you can access support in putting that application together and submitting that application.

Keeping in mind there's an account for individuals and accounts for organizations. And if you are using an individual account and you want to access an organization account, please let us know, we can help make that happen.

And another resource on our website is the application preview document, which lists all the questions so that you can prepare outside the portal and copy and paste into the portal, if that's easier for you. It's always nice to have that backup document, if you can open up a document and work outside of the document and transfer things over, sometimes that's easier.

The system we're working with now is pretty good about the information sticking if you put it in, and you're able to back out and come back and access it again later. I know I'm more comfortable if I have my information saved in another file on my local computer. The application is currently open. So once you get your account set up in the grant portal, you should be able to log in and access the application, which again will come back and pull those applications for review on the 25th of this month and then again monthly after that until the funds are exhausted.

So again, just as you're getting started, reaching out to teaching artists, talking about fees, timeline, planning processes. All of those kind of initial -- these are really great initial conversations to have as you put an application together. Something else to think about as the residency gets under way, we expect that there will be a teacher in the classroom with the artist at all times.

We also want to be mindful of the amount of contact time a teaching artist has in the classroom. We highly -- our guidelines say to not exceed five hours of contact time in a given day. And I think that's a great guideline. There are times, I know, where both the teaching artist and the school will agree to adjust that a little bit.

But really, I ask that if it does exceed five hours, that it be documented and people discuss it, so those expectations are very clear. Also then sometimes we are not able to fund a residency in full because the teaching artist's rates might be a little bit higher, or it goes longer than we're able to fund.

So if the proposal that you are putting forth needs to have additional funding behind it, it's nice and helpful for the panel to have an understanding of how those funds are going to be raised.

Next slide. If you are a new user, we do -- so in 2021, we switched to a new grant portal. If you're in the habit of using our grant portal previous to 2021, you'll find that this is a different space and you'll need to create a new account, so that will be your first step.

If you've used our grant portal since 2021, likely your account is still active. This is a typo. On August 15th, this is no longer true. The grant application is currently open and you can access the grant

application once your account has been approved. And this screenshot here, you'll find the application under the organization application tab.

Again, if you're an individual and you have an individual account, we can help merge your account with an organization so that you then can find the grant application under an organization applicant tab. So again, if you're not seeing that organization applicant tab, there's a reason for that. You can just reach out to me and we can support, or you can go in and create an organization profile in the grant portal.

Another tip, if you're coming back, looking for an application that you've begun, and you can go to the organization application tab, look under My Saved Applications to find that application. If you're not finding it, make sure that that search criteria is saying Show All to be able to get all of the applications and find the one you're looking for.

Organizations applying, because these are Federal funds, need to have a unique entity ID. We used to use a DUNS number. All schools have a UEI, unique entity ID, because schools receive Federal funds. So if you're working with a school, that UEI exists. I can help do some detective work if needed. I often can find them. But organizations that are not schools, if you do not have a UEI, there is information on the website to help you get started with that process. And I will be as helpful as I can be in that process.

It does take some time to do that. So if you do not have a UEI, and you are applying for a grant, that would be something you would want to get started with soon, and then just check in with me about getting the UEI. I'll certainly be as helpful as I possibly can be in that process.

Again, if you're working with an artist that is not on the roster, just a reminder, it's really helpful to prepare an artist bio to upload into the application. It gives us a sense of the experience and the art form of the artist you're working with. It's helpful if we have some understanding of their background and education as well, but just things like artist statements, resumes, and photos or images or audio files, links to videos, any of that, to give us a sense who have that artist is and what they do, that's very, very helpful.

So I think that concludes most everything that I wanted to talk about. I'm just going to let this slide open for just a second. So again, my name is Troy Hickman, my email address and phone number is there. Meredith Bell, who works in our office, is super helpful with accessing the grant portal. She spends a lot of her time working with the grant portal.

She can help troubleshoot issues you might be having accessing applications, as can I, but honestly, Meredith is super helpful. If you were to ask me, I might ask her, so I'll probably loop her into this conversation. Her email address and phone number is there as well and you're welcome to reach out to either of us with any questions that you have.

And I thank you for your time. And just know that if you're putting an application together, I know a lot of people who are planning to be at this meeting today and were not able to do so for obvious reasons, totally understandable reasons. This will be posted on the website. You're likely watching it on the website. Know that if you have any questions, please call me, and if we're able to schedule another workshop, we will do that, if we can do it.

So please feel free to reach out for any questions. And thank you for your time. I will stop recording.

>> I'll turn on my screen. So we've been chatting with both BHS in

Burlington and JFK Elementary in Winooski about doing some programming with them. And I have just a couple of questions from Amy and then a couple of questions myself.

>> Yes.

>> So from Amy, her question, which I think you sort of answered, but I just want to clarify, so multiple schools could apply for this programming, but it sounds like that wouldn't be prioritized. Is that the case?

>> TROY HICKMAN: When you say multiple schools --

>> So like if we wanted to do this programming over the course of the year, like BHS wants to do some level in the fall, and Winooski wanted to do some level of it in the spring, could both schools apply? Or is that sort of just like, we're one entity, so we most likely would only get funding for one of those programs?

>> TROY HICKMAN: That's a great question. I think you have some options. And so one of those options is that each school apply individually for up to \$4,000. And so depending on how long those programs are, two schools, \$4,000, up to \$8,000.

The other option is, and I do believe that you all have -- do you have 501(c)(3) status?

>> Yes.

>> TROY HICKMAN: Another option would be that you could apply as an organization and propose to work with multiple schools. Again, that would just be a single grant at up to \$4,000.

>> Mm-hmm. And those are sort of an -- that was Amy's other question, was those were sort of an either/or, right? It's like you're either having the school apply for our programming, or we apply to do the programming at multiple schools, but we can't like double-dip and both apply.

>> TROY HICKMAN: Yeah, that's a great question. That's something we'll need to think through in the future. At this point, I think that yes, correct, you could apply as an organization for a single grant. If it's helpful for you, you can apply for one and one of the schools could apply for another too.

>> I see, so whatever school maybe has more bandwidth to do the application themselves.

>> TROY HICKMAN: Yes. Yes.

>> That makes a lot of sense. Okay. That was the messaging I was getting from you. So it was pretty clear, I just wanted to clarify that.

>> TROY HICKMAN: It's not very clear at all. We're working through it, we're learning.

>> No, it's tricky. We're still working through a lot of, you know -- like I've applied for grants that, you know, were just in different sectors, so like I'm coming in and trying to apply my knowledge of that to also being like, okay, so this is tied to Federal funding, and what does that look like, and it's a little different.

So I totally get that you we're all kind of learning together, figuring it all out. So each school can apply, other option is for us to apply for one. Great. My question too is like, as far as objectives go, is it best to like tie them to the national core arts standards, is that something that y'all aren't too tied to?

Like is framing in that way, great performers, helpful? Or is framing it for own objectives a bit easier?

>> TROY HICKMAN: I think you have some flexibility there.

>> Okay.

>> TROY HICKMAN: The panel likes to see arts objectives, right? So often we'll get an application for an integrated project in a classroom that's really focused on literacy standards and that has no arts standards. So it's helpful to have a mixture.

Whether it's a national core arts standard, I think that's great, but if you have your personal programming as well, so it can go either way. I guess my answer is, there's flexibility there. And certainly the more you can make reference to, you know, some artistry ovens, that that's super.

>> The panel would be, like, knowledgeable about those standards, and that could be helpful to frame it in that way?

>> TROY HICKMAN: Yeah, it can be. Other things that are super useful, and I don't know what you might present, but things around social/emotional learning is super important, those are really great objectives as well. And, you know, also, if you're working in a non-arts classroom, it's nice to be able to show that you understand what the teacher is trying to do.

>> Yeah. And so I mean, a little more context, what we're sort of hoping to propose for either of these programs, whether it be the high school or the elementary school, is collaborating with the teacher in the classroom to be like, what unit would this be most helpful in, and then we can take our programming and kind of tie it to any sort of literature in relationship to, yeah, could be Shakespeare, or it could simply be a book that you are reading in English class right now, and how can we use our knowledge of theater to learn more about a character and to delve into that.

>> TROY HICKMAN: Absolutely. One objective would be, this person learns more about this character through this process.

>> Exactly, yes.

>> TROY HICKMAN: Activities that might help them do that, right?

>> Exactly, yes. That's that question. Okay. Final question is, as far as like timeline for this programming, say like Winooski, JFK can give us, oh, well, we know we'll want to do it in this unit, but what if this unit gets pushed back two weeks, is that okay?

>> TROY HICKMAN: I'll say one thing about the pandemic, it's really kind of stretched my ability to embrace change and ambiguity and all of those things. So when you're putting together the proposal, your best understanding of when and how and where.

I think what's most helpful is just kind of seeing what that process looks like, right, and what that timeline looks like. And if it needs to be pushed back, yeah, that's probably going to happen, you know. So in some cases, we're certainly in the habit that have happening.

So I hope that answers your question. I think what's most important is just like laying out kind of that process and the timeline, giving some start dates and some end dates, with the understanding that if we need to push it back, just let me know, if you receive the grant, and you need to push it back, reach out and keep me in the loop.

>> Awesome. We're pretty accessible, I'm working with the program coordinator at WSD right now on this application and we're sort of trying to be like, okay, this team of teachers are probably the ones that may be most receptive, but right now this one's on vacation and this one's doing this. And it's like, we probably want to do it in November. It's like, oh, okay.

>> TROY HICKMAN: Yeah.

>> Just that level of, you know, putting down a date of when we hope it would happen, knowing that, you know, it may change.

>> TROY HICKMAN: Yeah. And obviously give yourself a little flexibility, if you're applying in November and need to push it back to March, as opposed to scheduling it in March.

>> Exactly, making sure it still happens.

>> TROY HICKMAN: Yes.

>> So those are my questions. Other than that, I think I'm good.

>> TROY HICKMAN: Sounds great. I'm glad you made it on.

>> Me too.

>> TROY HICKMAN: Thanks for sticking with me for your questions.

>> I very much appreciate it. I scheduled some time in my day to do this anyway so it was lovely to get a bit more information. Because some of it, you know, I had read on the website, but you gave some key details that were super helpful, so I really appreciate that.

>> TROY HICKMAN: And know too, it's open, it's going, you have the deadline. I'm going to step away during part of this time for some vacation. So, you know, I'll do my best to be responsive, but I think I'm stepping away like right after the 25th when those applications are coming in.

So if you have questions, up to that point, check in, feel free to call or email or whatever. And then there's a little time before the next one, the next deadline, where I'll be away from the office and a little less responsive, but I'm happy to answer any questions when and if I can, for sure.

>> Great. Thank you so much, Troy. I'm going to step off now. Have a good rest of the day.

>> TROY HICKMAN: You too, thank you.

>> Bye-bye.

>> TROY HICKMAN: Bye.