



Cultural Facilities Grant Application | FY2025 Notes and Terms

Multipurpose Facilities

Eligible applicants with multi-purpose facilities, such as libraries, town halls, and churches, will compete more successfully in the review process if they are able to demonstrate a significant commitment to cultural activities that are open to the public. For example, a local church is used regularly for non-religious activities by a local community theater group for rehearsals and a local choral group for performances. If a facility is not currently being used for cultural activities, an organization's vision and plan for the use of the space should be addressed in the project narrative. Evidence of the demand and/or need for the space should be included by submitting letters of support from cultural organizations or artists.

Historic Facilities

[Historic preservation standards](#) and guidelines do not preclude code or accessibility improvements but do require they be done in a manner that minimizes loss of the building's historic character. If your project is for restoration work, including major structural repairs to an historic building, it may be more appropriate to apply to the [Historic Preservation Grants Program](#). Contact Caitlin Corkins, grants coordinator at the Division for Historic Preservation, National Life Building, Floor 2, Montpelier, VT 05620-1201 at 802.828.3047 if you have questions.

Privately Owned Buildings

Facilities that are privately owned are not eligible for funding. On a case-by-case basis, nonprofit organizations that operate from a privately owned facility that can demonstrate a long-term lease (minimum 15 years) with the property owner and provide ongoing cultural activities to the public may be considered for funding. **Applicants in these circumstances should talk with the Arts Council program staff before applying.**

Multiple Improvements to a Facility

Applicants are encouraged to focus their proposals on a specific improvement to the facility (e.g., a new heating system or elevator) with a corresponding budget that reflects that specific project. Generally, proposals that include a shopping list of items without an overall focus or connection to one another do not compete well in the review process.

New Construction

New construction is not eligible for funding but may be considered if it is the only option for making access improvements to an historic building. Only expenses directly related to the project's Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility component can be considered as part of the grant request.

Accessibility Projects

Applicants are encouraged to complete the [ADA Checklist for Existing Facilities](#) based on 2010 Standards for Accessible Design during your planning phase. You will not be required to submit the document at the time of application, but if questions arise, staff may ask about the specific dimensions, materials, and current conditions that will be changed or altered to improve the facility's accessibility.

Fixed Equipment

Generally, “fixed equipment” refers to items such as theatrical lighting and/or sound systems, multimedia equipment, and assistive listening systems that are permanently affixed to the building. Equipment may include portable elements, such as microphones for a sound system, or transmitters/receivers as part of an assistive listening system but the organization must have a plan and policy in place for securing the equipment for use only within the building and not subject to transfer outside of the facility. The equipment may not be for personal office or administrative spaces.

Permanent Display Cases and Furniture

Display cases for the exhibit of art, artifacts, or other collections may be considered if they are affixed to the building and custom built for the facility. Portable shelving, display cases, gallery walls, vitrines, chairs, tables, desks, appliances, etc. would be considered furniture and are not eligible for this program.

Energy Efficiency Projects

Lowering operating costs and reducing environmental impacts are relevant to the ongoing needs and sustainability of arts and cultural organizations and their ability to use existing facilities for arts and cultural programming. Projects that increase energy resilience, reduce energy use and operating costs, and curb greenhouse gas emissions—such as insulation, renewable energy, exchanging an existing hot water heater to an electric one, battery storage, LED lighting, etc.—are eligible for support. Projects must meet the existing eligibility requirements and funding criteria for the program including minimizing impacts to important historic features of facilities listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Hazard Mitigation Projects

Projects that help to reduce risks from future disasters such as fires, floods, or theft etc., are eligible for support. Examples include the installation of floodwalls or floodgates; elevating equipment or systems above known flood levels; drainage projects that help reduce the impact from flooding, such as sump pumps; installation of dehumidifiers to reduce mold; air filtration systems to improve air quality; safety features such as fire escapes, sprinkler systems, or security systems, etc. Projects must meet the existing eligibility requirements and funding criteria for the program including minimizing impacts to important historic features of facilities listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.