2023 Grant Reviewer Orientation Presentation

READING AND RATING PROGRAM SUPPORT & ARTIST SUPPORT GRANT APPLICATIONS
RAC Priorities
Mission and Vision

As the leading public catalyst for arts and culture in St. Louis, the Regional Arts Commission leverages the power of creativity to strengthen and enrich our community.

RAC envisions:

- A full creative life for every St. Louisan
- St. Louis as a growing and captivating arts and culture destination
- A community rich with opportunities and resources that promote and sustain artists
Guiding Principles & Core Values

GUIDING PRINCIPALS

• We invest in the region’s arts and culture through our grants, programs, and special initiatives
• We believe in diversity, racial equity, accessibility and inclusion
• We build partnerships that strengthen our community
• We are passionate champions that support and recognize artists
• We believe every child deserves a well-rounded education that includes the arts

Our CORE VALUES embody our culture, spirit, and dedication to living our mission. They keep us grounded and help us make good decisions about everything we do.

We are:

Passionate champions for arts and culture.
Accountable stewards of the public trust.
Committed to practices that promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.
Socially and civically engaged community catalysts.
Servant leaders.

RAC’s mission, vision, guiding principles, and core values are a balance between our passion and interests and the needs of our community.
The Grants Committee and Grants Team work to be sure the grants cycle reflects our mission, vision, principles, and core values...which helps ensure our process runs smoothly (as smoothly as possible!)
Program Support Overview
What is Program Support?

The Regional Arts Commission’s (RAC) Program Support grant category provides project-based support to arts and culture organizations and non-arts nonprofit organizations in the production and/or presentation of artistic activities.

These ongoing and one-time projects broaden and deepen audience participation and increase access to the arts for visitors and residents throughout the St. Louis region.
Local focus: Arts programs and projects must occur in St. Louis City or St. Louis County.

501 (c) (3) organization: In “good status” as a nonprofit corporation in the State of Missouri and 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) or be a unit of federal or local government such as a library, county, or municipal agency.

Arts programming: The proposed program’s primary purpose must be the creation, presentation, or utilization of art.

Timeframe: The program for which you are applying must take place between July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024.
### Categories in Program Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Arts and Culture Programs</strong></td>
<td>Performances, concerts, exhibitions, readings, publications, arts education, and other similar programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural Festivals, Parades and Special Events</strong></td>
<td>Events that enhance the economic vitality of St. Louis and increase the region’s visibility and desirability as a destination for out-of-town visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Arts Based Community Development</strong></td>
<td>Programs using the arts as a tool for social change and/or civic engagement</td>
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Artist Support Grant Overview
What is Artist Support?

The Regional Arts Commission’s (RAC) Artist Support Grant (ASG) serves as funding for the career advancement of individual artists. This grant provides direct funds for an individual artist’s or an artist collective’s projects, needs, or creative opportunities in all artistic disciplines. Direct support enables diverse artists of all disciplines to advance their careers and complete creative projects. It is designed to be flexible and accessible and to encourage creativity, innovation, entrepreneurship, and sustained commitment to artistic work.

Grant funds may be designated for (but not limited to) equipment and materials, rental space, arts-related travel, conference fees, project completion, salaries, professional and artistic development, training, and other resources for an individual artist of all disciplines.

Applicants can apply for up to $7,500
New this year: Artist Collectives

What is an Artist Collective?

- An artist collective consists of at least two consistent members who have a history of creating together for at least one year prior to the application submission date.
- 501(c)3 organizations are NOT eligible to apply for an Artists Support Grant.
- All members of the collective must meet the eligibility requirements outlined below.
- One member of the collective may submit the application and serve as the application contact. The applying member will ultimately be responsible for signing the application, and if awarded, the Terms & Conditions Agreement.
- Artists may apply for either an individual artist grant OR an artist collective grant, NOT both.
Artist Support Grant Eligibility Requirements

**Age Requirement**
- The artist is 19 years or older

**Non-Graduate Student Requirement**
- The artist is not enrolled as a full-time undergraduate student

**Local Focus**
- The artist is a current resident of St. Louis City or County and has maintained primary residence in St. Louis City or County for at least one year (documentation required)

**Current Work**
- For the Individual Artist: In the past three years, the artist has created and presented their own original works to the public or performed for the public (verifiable documentation required)
- For the Artist Collective: At least one of the artists has created and presented their own original works in the past three years AND the collective has created and presented together for at least one year (verifiable documentation required)

**Timeframe:**
- The program for which you are applying must take place between July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024.

*Each of these requirements must be met by each member of the artist collective

*Previous RAC Grant Recipient Requirement Removed*
Review Criteria
Overview
# Grant Application Review Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural &amp; Artistic Essentials</th>
<th>Community Benefit</th>
<th>Capacity &amp; Sustainability</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural &amp; Artistic Essentials</td>
<td>Community Benefit</td>
<td>Capacity &amp; Sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(40% weighting)</td>
<td>(30% weighting)</td>
<td>(30% weighting)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Artist Support Grants

- **Cultural & Artistic Essentials**
  - A culturally and artistically significant practice or work that contributes to the creative life of the artist and ultimately to St. Louis.

- **Community Benefit**
  - Artist demonstrates broad community benefit with a practice or work and contributes to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in the community.

- **Capacity & Sustainability**
  - Artist is intentional about artistic/practice capacity and sustainability.

## Program Support Grants

- **Cultural & Artistic Essentials**
  - An organization that produces or presents culturally and artistically significant work that supports a full creative life for every St. Louisian.

- **Community Benefit**
  - A program that demonstrates broad community benefit and contributes to advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in the community.

- **Capacity & Sustainability**
  - An organization that intentionally plans for program capacity and sustainability.
Application Overview
Program Support Application

Organizational Information
- Upload: Board of Directors List
- Upload: Fiscal Sponsorship Letter (if applicable)

Program Information

Cultural and Artistic Essentials (40%, 3 Questions)
- Essentials
- Cultural & Artistic Significance
- Program Goals
- Upload (optional): DEI Statement, Policy or Plan

Community Benefit (30%, 3 Questions)
- Audience
- DEIA
- Community Engagement
- Upload (optional): DEI Statement, Policy or Plan

Capacity and Sustainability (30%, 3 Questions)
- Budget
- Organizational Health
- Sustainability
- Upload: Budget
- Upload: Organizational Financial Statements
- Upload: Organizational Health Worksheet

Upload: Work Samples & Critical Review (optional)
Artist Support Application

- Artist Applicant Information
  - Upload: Proof of Residency

- Collective Information (if applicable)
  - Upload: Proof of Residency for all collective members (if applicable)

- Project/Request Information

- Cultural and Artistic Essentials (40%, 3 Questions)
  - (1) Essentials (2) Artistic Significance (3) Goals
  - Upload: Artist Statement

- Community Benefit (30%, 3 Questions)
  - (1) Audience (2) DEIA (3) Community Engagement

- Capacity and Sustainability (30%, 3 Questions)
  - (1) Budget (2) Artist Capacity (3) Sustainability
  - Upload: Budget
  - Upload: CV/Resume

- Demographic Information

- Upload: Work Samples
Application Reading and Rating Process
Process for Rating an Application
Steps 1-4

Step 1) **Know the application structure.** (3 review criteria x 3 questions each = 9 total narrative questions).

Step 2) **Use the rating scale** (preview next slide) to rate each narrative question on the application. At this step, you may provide written feedback for each question if you choose.

Step 3) **RAC staff:** Application **ratings are averaged** amongst reviewers of the same application.

Step 4) Applications receive a final rating to be used in the **Application Rating Key** (upcoming slide).
### Cultural and Artistic Essentials (40% weighting)
An organization that produces or presents culturally and artistically significant work that supports a **full creative life for every St. Louisan.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application Question</th>
<th>Review Criteria</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Rating Definition</th>
<th>What do the ratings mean?</th>
<th>Point Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essentials: Provide an overview of your program(s). What is the purpose of the program for which you are applying? How does the program support the mission of your organization?</td>
<td>Cultural and/or Artistic Essentials</td>
<td>Describes the program, resources necessary to carry out the program, and the impact.</td>
<td>Exemplary</td>
<td>Applicant provides overwhelming evidence of essentials.</td>
<td>14-16 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conveys all aspects of the program, including clearly articulated plans such location, dates, frequency, etc. (who, what, when, where, and why)</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Applicant provides strong evidence of essentials.</td>
<td>11-13 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Applicant provides sufficient evidence of essentials.</td>
<td>8-10 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Needs Work</td>
<td>Applicant provides limited evidence of essentials.</td>
<td>4-7 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>Applicant provides little to no evidence of essentials.</td>
<td>0-3 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Each question in the application is assigned corresponding points based on the review criteria weightings. Cultural and Artistic Essentials questions are worth more points because that review criteria is weighted at a higher percentage (40% to 30% and 30%).
- You will go through each narrative response looking for evidence of the review criteria (noted in the “Review Criteria” column). Then you will choose a rating based on the “Rating Definition” and assign each question a point value based on the rating.
- It may seem confusing but it’s easy when you follow the question row all the way across!
Once you have rated each question and provided optional feedback for each of the three review criteria, you will have an overall application rating out of 100 possible points.

- **RAC staff:** Your rating will be averaged with that of other reviewers for a total application rating out of 100 possible points.

### Application Rating Key

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Rating Definition</th>
<th>Point Range</th>
<th>Percent Eligible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exemplary</td>
<td>Applicant provides overwhelming evidence of all three review criteria. Application is exemplary.</td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>100% of ask</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Applicant provides strong evidence of all three review criteria. Application is strong.</td>
<td>89-69</td>
<td>100% of ask</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Applicant provides sufficient evidence of all three review criteria. Application is good.</td>
<td>48-68</td>
<td>100% of ask</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs Work</td>
<td>Applicant provides limited evidence of all three review criteria. Application needs work and is not eligible for funding.</td>
<td>20-47</td>
<td>0% of ask</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>Applicant provides little to no evidence of all three review criteria. Application is weak and not eligible for funding.</td>
<td>0-19</td>
<td>0% of ask</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 5) Based on the final rating, Artist Support Grant applicants are deemed eligible for a percentage of their ask. Program Support applicant final ratings are analyzed by RAC staff and moved to a panel review process for those applications with a large variance in reviewer ratings.

Step 6) Program Support reviewers are reconvened for a virtual review meeting (details next slide) if applicable.

Step 7) Program Support ratings are finalized, and applicants are deemed eligible for a percentage of their ask. These percentages are shared with the applicants, and if necessary, they may file an appeal with RAC staff.

Step 8) Appeals are reviewed by RAC staff and appeal calls (upcoming slide) are held, if applicable.

Step 9) Final Program Support and Artist Support Grant amounts are shared with the public. Reviewer honorariums are disbursed through Bill.com.
Program Support ONLY: Virtual Review Meeting

Before this meeting RAC Staff will average all panelists ratings for the organization average rating. Only those with a great variance in the reviewer scores will be reviewed at this meeting.

What will happen in the meeting?
• Applications with a large scoring variance will be reviewed
• Opportunity to move an organization up or down on the rating scale
  o Under rare circumstances a large move can be made, if a clear error has been made
• Once adjustments, if any, are made the organization will be sent the final rating and reviewer comments
• Once the organization has their ratings, they have the opportunity to appeal
• The Review meeting will be recorded and published to the website
Program Support ONLY : Appeals Process

- Applicants must have solid grounds for an appeal.
- Dissatisfaction with a rating or denial of an award is not sufficient grounds for an appeal. Solid grounds for an appeal are based on a misstatement of fact made during the review meeting and reviewer comments that can be evidenced by written information found in the application; or if the applicant can demonstrate that the review of the application was based on criteria or application requirements other than those appearing in the RAC guidelines.
- New information not originally included in the application cannot be offered as evidence of the misstatement.
- If an applicant has grounds for an appeal an appeal form may be filed with RAC staff.

- Staff will review and approve all requests for appeals before convening reviewers for consideration. However, staff approval does not guarantee that the appeal will be approved by the review panel or that the original rating will change.
- Should RAC approve the filed appeal, in a second virtual meeting, RAC staff will submit the appeal to the reviewers.
- The appeal calls will not be open to applicants.
- The panelists may vote in favor (majority rules) of approving an increase to the final rating.
- The results of the appeals call will be shared with the applicant the following week.
Tips and Tricks for Reviewing Applications
Reviewer Role & Responsibilities
Role and Responsibilities

Role

- 3 weeks to complete
- Eligible reviewers will receive $200 honorarium (meaning application ratings must be complete and on time)

Responsibilities

- Prior to reading and rating any assigned applications, declare all actual or apparent conflicts of interest
- Read written applications and view supplementary materials provided
- Rate all assigned applications fairly, based on the review criteria, and avoid bias (upcoming slides)
- Provide detailed notes for each application review criteria
- Commit to completion and finish by communicated deadline
While Reading & Rating be...

**Objective:**
- Review only the application materials provided by the applicant
- Leave outside knowledge of organizations/artists/collectives at the door
- Use only the provided review criteria as the basis for rating

**Consistent:**
- Be consistent in your rating. Use the same rigor with each application
- Consider all materials when rating
- Consistently apply all review criteria to each application

**Confidential:**
- During the reading period, don’t discuss applications with other readers
- Don’t share applicant information or artist ratings with applicants or the general public
While **Notetaking**...

- Be succinct and use direct language
- Be objective and factual, not interpretive
- Write as if they’ll be read by the applying organization/artist/collective

*Keep in mind, your comments can be shared anonymously with the applicants upon request.*

**Remember, the purpose of your notes is...**

- To help you, the reviewer, identify the reason for your rating
- To inform RAC staff and/or the Grants Committee of your reasoning
Other Items

Confirmation Form
• Orientation & Bias Training confirmation
• Website Mentions
• Honorarium Confirmation

Conflict of Interest Form
• Process Overview
Thank You!

Questions?