



REGIONAL ARTS
COMMISSION
OF ST. LOUIS

RAC

Grantmaking

2027-2030

2026 Due Diligence

- Due Diligence Meetings
 - RAC conducted meetings between February and April 2026
 - 80 out of the 122 organizations that received 2025 Organizational Grants
- No new applications in 2026



St. Louis Shakespeare Festival

What We Learned:

- General Operating Support / Unrestricted Funding is Vital
 - Allows for flexibility and ability to support new opportunities
 - Aids in financial planning
 - Helps build capacity and sustainability



Opera Theatre of St. Louis

Since the Pandemic

- Organizations have had to scale back and limit programming
- Rising venue costs & limited availability



Marley Billie D, St. Louis Mural Project

Funding Landscape Concerns

- Decrease in available funding & difficulty diversifying
 - Public
 - Foundation
 - Corporate
- Loss of federal funding may have a downstream impact across sector

Priorities and Challenges

- Key Priorities we heard:
 - Sustaining full-time roles for lead staff
 - Working towards fair compensation for artists
 - Adapting to audience changes/preferences
- Key Challenges we heard:
 - Finding affordable space post-pandemic
 - Recruiting and engaging board members
 - Finding new philanthropic dollars

Goals of 2027-2030 Grantmaking

- Continue funding a breadth of arts organizations while setting guardrails for responsible grantmaking
 - Restructure grant tiers and add in percentage-based restrictions for RAC's annual Organizational Grant cycle
 - Introduce a model of guaranteed annual grants for large arts organizations

2027-2030 Grants to Organizations

Organizational Grants

Annual unrestricted funding,
open to arts and culture
organizations in St. Louis City
and County by application

Pillar Grants

Multi-year general operating
support, open to arts and
culture organizations with
budgets over \$1,500,000 in
St. Louis City and County
by invitation

Changes to Grants to Organizations

- Introduce New Grant Tiers
 - Tiers determined by expense average for the last three fiscal years
- Introduce Max Percentages
 - Grants may not exceed a set percentage of the organization's expenses (determined by grant tier)
 - Creates a sustainable ramp for organizations as their budgets grow
- Model to be adjusted annually over time to reflect available grant dollars

Organizational Grant Tiers: 2027-2030

	2027		2028-2030	
New Grant Tiers	Max Amount	Max Budget %	Max Amount	Max Budget %
Under \$50,000	\$15,000	50%	\$10,000	50%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	\$20,000	30%	\$15,000	25%
\$100,000 - \$249,999	\$25,000	20%	\$25,000	20%
\$250,000 - \$499,999	\$35,000	10%	\$35,000	10%
\$500,000 - \$1,499,999	\$50,000	7%	\$50,000	7%
\$1,500,000 +	\$100,000	-	\$100,000	-

Grant Tier determined by average of expenses for three most recent fiscal years.

Pillar Grants

- Stable and reliable funding for large arts and culture organizations in St. Louis City and County (Expenses of at least \$1.5 million)
- Reporting includes trackable metrics and deliverables beyond what is required for RAC's annual Organizational Grants
- Organizations will be invited to apply for 2027-2030 cycle

Pillar Grant Organizations (2027-2030)

- Contemporary Art Museum STL
- Center of Creative Arts/COCA
- Counterpublic
- Craft Alliance
- Jazz STL
- Laumeier Sculpture Park
- The Muny
- Opera Theatre STL
- The Repertory Theatre of STL
- The Sheldon
- St. Louis Symphony Orchestra
- STAGES STL
- Saint Louis Ballet
- The Black Rep
- STL Shakespeare Festival

Pillar Grant Criteria

- Application required for first year organization is eligible, organization must continue to meet criteria
- History of at least five years of providing artistically significant programming to large and diverse audiences
- Average of last three years of expenses must be over \$1,500,000
- Minimum of 5 full-time staff (or full-time equivalent)
- Conduct an annual independent audit
- Have a board-approved strategic plan and/or stabilizing or growth plan
- Organization follows equitable hiring and fair compensation practices for all employees and contractual creatives
- Contributes to and/or implements strategies designed to increase cultural tourism and attract visitors and businesses
- Organization remains in good standing with RAC, communicating any shifts in governance, financial condition, or reputation
- Organization delivers programming that celebrates St. Louis's identity as an inclusive and accessible cultural destination
- Organization conducts a minimum of two youth-focused education programs annually as part of a larger community outreach initiative
- Organization is encouraged to engage in one or more creative partnerships with small or mid-sized nonprofit arts organizations annually

2027-2030 Program Support Grants

Program Support Grants

Grants to non-arts organizations that collaborate on and present arts programming across St. Louis City and County AND fiscally-sponsored projects

2027-2030 Artist Grants

Artist Investment Grants

Grants for high-impact, innovative, mid-career to established artists to support their artistic practice

Artist Project Grants

Grants for individual artists and artist collectives to support project-based work with a public component in St. Louis City and County

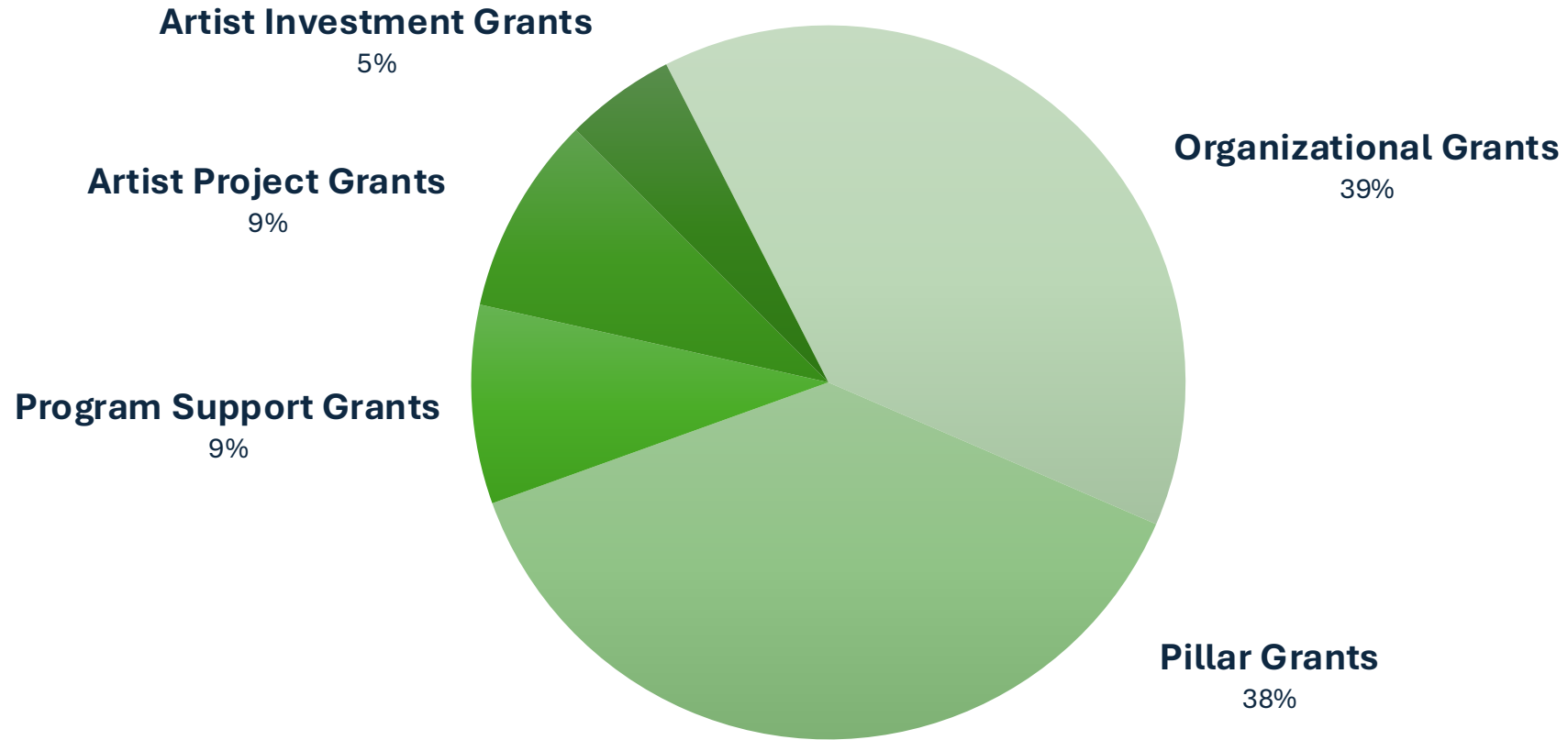
Structure of Artist Grants

Artist Investment Grants	Artist Project Grants
Purpose: Support high-impact, innovative, and mid-career to established artists. Amount: Up to \$25,000 Number: Up to 10 awards annually	Purpose: Support project-based work with a public component in St. Louis City and County Amount: Up to \$5,000 (Individual) or \$10,000 (Artist Collective) Number: Approximately 70–80 awards annually
•Panel review process •Publicly communicated criteria •City and County Representation •Guidelines and eligibility will be communicated late Fall 2026	

Additional Process Improvements

- Develop more rigorous reviewer training
- Policy to determine grant amounts based on RAC's actual revenues
- Define score variation review process (Organizational Grants)
- Letter of Inquiry required for new applicants (Organizational Grants)
- Remove appeals process (Organizational Grants)
- Move to in-person meetings for Due Diligence and Final Reports(Organizational Grants, Program Support Grants, Pillar Grants)

2027-2030 Proposed Grant Allocation



2027 – 2030 Grantmaking Process

- Unanimously Approved by the Regional Arts Commissioners on 7/16/2026
- RAC is committed to:
 - Continue public funding for arts and culture
 - Continue and refine a trust-based grantmaking model
 - Attend events, programs, and performances
 - Communicate with you

**Additional questions?
Email grants@racstl.org**



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