

Southwest Minnesota Arts & Humanities Council Program Guidelines

Special One-Time Opportunity for Individual Artists

Career, Development and Art Study Opportunity Grants

Deadline: May 15, 2008

Applications must be received by the SMAHC office no later than 4:30 p.m., May 15, 2008.

This is not a postmark deadline.

SMAHC Board Action: May 27, 2008

Earliest Project Start Date: June 15, 2008

Program Intent

A limited amount of funds has made it possible for us to add this special one-time grant opportunity for individual artists.

This program is designed to aid in career development and arts activities of artists living and working in the eighteen counties of southwestern Minnesota served by the Southwest Minnesota Arts and Humanities Council. The focus is on an individual's career development as an artist, not as an educator. It is made possible by funds provided by the McKnight Foundation.

Grant Amounts

The Individual Artist program is separated into three categories. See page 2 for category definitions.

1. The Career grant awards up to \$2,000 to aid area professional artists.
2. The Development grant awards up to \$1,000 to aid area emerging artists.
3. The Art Study Opportunity grant awards up to \$500 to aid area artists at all stages of development to take advantage of professional development opportunities.

Application Process

The application and necessary support materials **must be received by the SMAHC office no later than 4:30 p.m. on May 15, 2008.** Due to the short time-line applicants are asked to submit their application and support materials electronically. If it is not possible to submit your materials electronically you must provide a written copy of your materials to the SMAHC staff no later than 4:30 p.m. on May 15, 2008. This is not a postmark deadline. Applications received after 4:30 p.m. on May 15, 2008 will not be accepted for review. Read the grant guidelines and application forms carefully. Page 4 of the application form lists the required support materials. Keep a copy for your records.

Who is Eligible?

Any permanent resident in the eighteen counties of southwestern Minnesota who has no outstanding final reports due to the Southwest Minnesota Arts and Humanities Council and has not been granted funds under this program in the past two consecutive years. All arts disciplines are accepted. The SMAHC region includes the following counties: Big Stone, Chippewa, Cottonwood, Jackson, Kandiyohi, Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, McLeod, Meeker, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Renville, Rock, Swift, Yellow Medicine. Proof of residency may be required.

Program Category Definitions

Development category

The **Development category** of the Individual Artist grant program is designed for emerging artists. Emerging artists are defined as those who, for the most part are at an early stage in their career development. Other artists and arts professionals within their chosen field will not have acknowledged them as established artists. An emerging artist is expected to have a limited, yet clearly promising performance, publishing, or exhibition record. The term *emerging* refers to professional accomplishments and recognition, not to stylistic evolution. The artistic accomplishments documented on the resume are critical in making a judgment regarding eligibility as an emerging artist. Students are not eligible to apply in the Development category.

Funds awarded in the **Development category** may be used for a variety of activities designed to aid in public awareness of the artist's work (may include but are not limited to: costs involved in visual art show preparations, portfolio production, engraving for composers, producing a demonstration tape for a composer/musician or a video cassette for a choreographer, marketing or editorial assistance for a writer, purchase of supplies and materials [software, hardware, or reference materials] necessary for the completion of a body of work scheduled for submission to publishers, performance or exhibition, rental of facilities for presentation of a new work, or other activities).

Career category

The **Career category** of the Individual Artist grant program is designed to aid professional artists who have held significant solo shows or had significant performances or have been published in significant publications (i.e., peer reviewed or professionally edited publications). Eligible professional artists have achieved significant regional recognition in the past five years, and are in the process of progressing to a new level in their professional career. Career artists are defined as those who, for the most part, are at an advanced stage in their career development and have been acknowledged as established artists by other artists and arts professionals within their chosen field. An established artist is expected to have a significant performance, publishing, or exhibition record. The artistic accomplishments documented in the resume are critical in making a judgment regarding your eligibility as a career artist. Students are not eligible to apply in the Career category.

Funds awarded in the **Career category** may be used for a variety of projects/activities that will aid in the progression to, and/or exploration of, a new level in the artist's professional career (including, but not limited to: self-initiated projects, experimental work in a new medium, costs involved in mounting a visual art show or performance preparations, portfolio update, producing a high-quality tape for a composer/musician or a video cassette for a choreographer, research or compensated time for a writer working on a specific body of work, purchase of supplies [software, hardware, or reference materials], tools or equipment necessary for the completion of a body of work scheduled for performance or exhibition, rental of facilities for presentation of a new work, or activities designed to aid in public awareness of the artist's work).

Art Study Opportunity category

The **Art Study Opportunity category** of the Individual Artist grant program is designed for artists of all ages. Use of funds for the **Art Study Opportunity category** may be used for training purposes (i.e., workshops, conferences, transportation to professional training sites, development of mentorship/ apprentice relationships with professional artists).

Review Process

1. The SMAHC staff reviews applications for accuracy, completeness and eligibility. Only complete applications will be forwarded to the SMAHC Board. Grant applicants may not discuss their application with SMAHC board members following the grant deadline until after the board has acted on the application. Communication regarding an application with SMAHC board members during this time will result in the application being ineligible for funding consideration
2. Review --- The SMAHC Board of Directors will review all eligible applications. Board members are chosen for their knowledge and expertise in the arts and nonprofit management, and their ability to interpret the guidelines and review criteria equitably and fairly to each application.
3. Board members with a conflict of interest in regard to a specific applicant or project declare such and abstain from comment and the rating of that application.

Review Criteria

1. The SMAHC Board members will score each application based on the established criteria:
 - Overall excellence of work and demonstration of exceptional talent**
 - Evidence of serious commitment**
 - Project's contribution to the artist's professional growth**
2. Grants will be awarded to the extent of funds available to applications meeting the criteria. This is a highly competitive process. Contact the SMAHC office to receive more information on the rating process.
3. All applicants will receive a notification letter of acceptance or rejection within 15 days after final review of the application by the Board of Directors.
4. Financial awards are publicized. Granted awards will, upon contractual acceptance, receive 80% of the grant funds prior to the start of the project, and the additional 20% upon successful completion and return of the Final Report form.

The Appeals Procedure

Any applicant who can show cause that established grant review procedures were not followed, or can show that the policies of the program are not equitable to all applicants, may file an appeal in writing, within ten (10) days of notification of the Board's decision on that application.

There is no right of appeal to dispute decisions in respect to program criteria. Contact SMAHC at 800.622.5284 or 507.537.1471 for a copy of the appeal process.

Grant Contract and Distribution of Funds

Awarded grantees must sign and return a contractual agreement within 30 days of notification. Failure to provide any required documents within the prescribed time can result in the cancellation of a grant commitment. Occasionally, additional but clearly outlined conditions will be added to the contract. Eighty (80) percent of the grant award will be sent to the grantee upon receipt of the signed contract and within thirty (30) days of the project start date. The remaining twenty (20) percent of the grant award will be sent to the applicant upon receipt and approval of the Final Report.

The Final Report

A final report form will be sent to the grantee with the letter containing the initial 80% grant award check. The final report is an extremely important document. SMAHC realizes that as projects develop, some minor differences may arise, but applicants should take every precaution to insure implementation, operation, and evaluation of the project as promised. *Applicants who fail to provide a final report within 60 days of the end of the project without prior request for an extension will result in a loss of the remaining 20% of grant funds. This may result in the applicant being ineligible to apply for a SMAHC grant for a period of up to 3 years from the date the final report is filed.*

Work Samples

The work sample is one of the most crucial parts of any application. It is important because it helps the Board of Directors determine the artistic quality of the proposed artist's work. Work samples, with accompanying written description, are required. Make sure the work sample adequately reflects the quality of your work. The written description of your work sample should include title, medium, size, and date of each piece. The works and rights to works resulting from grants given to applicants by SMAHC are the sole property of the grantee. Please submit work samples electronically if possible.

- ♦ **Written materials:** submit one copy of up to ten pages of literary work.
- ♦ **DVD or CDs:** Submit one DVD or CD of a single work or a series of works not to exceed a total running time of five minutes. Label the disc with the artist's name. On a separate sheet list the name of selected work sample piece, running time, and year it was produced.
- ♦ **Digital Images:** Images may be submitted in digital format on a CD-ROM. Submit 5-10 images for Study Opportunity grants or 8-10 images for Development & Career grants. Images should be in JPEG format and should be at least 800 X 600 DPI (dots per inch). Images should be titled appropriately with the name of the work represented. On a separate sheet list the images in order, including name of piece, media, size and year it was produced.

Applicants are encouraged to contact the SMAHC staff for assistance before submitting an application. We can answer your questions, let you know whether the project you're considering might be eligible, and even help walk you through the grant forms. You can contact us via email at smahcinfo@iw.net, call us toll free 800-622-5284 or 507-537-1471.

**This is a very competitive process.
Keep in mind the review criteria (see page 3). Be sure your application clearly describes your project and how it will contribute to your professional growth. Be sure that your work samples present your work in the best possible light. Letters of support from artists knowledgeable in your discipline and your artist resume can strengthen your application.**