

GUIDELINES: ARTS ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

Eligibility

The Arts Organization Development grant program is open to nonprofit arts organizations as described in Section 501 (c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code with Articles of Incorporation on file with the State of Minnesota or an official unit of a city, county, or state government of the State of Minnesota. Any formal organization not meeting this requirement may apply through a fiscal agent.

A fiscal agent is an organization meeting the requirements listed above. A signed agreement spelling out the relationship between the applicant and the fiscal agent must be submitted with the application. A fiscal agent, if used, must sign the application and, if funded, sign the Arts Grant Contract, and is legally responsible for the completion of the project and for the proper management of grant funds.

The applicant must be an arts council, commission, or other entity whose principal purposes include planning, services, and development for arts organizations and artists. Applications submitted from schools are not eligible for this grant program. Requests for equipment & facilities improvements will be accepted from non-arts organizations as described above if the case can be made that the main purpose is to support community arts projects.

Arts Organization Development grant projects may include, but are not limited to:

- Training of staff or board members at workshops and conferences
- Hiring consultants
- Developing new arts programs and services
- Purchasing equipment
- Facilities improvement
- Filing fees for obtaining non-profit status

Applicants must make the case that their project strengthens their organizational capacity to fulfill SMAHC's program intent and commitments. The intent of this grant program is to provide grants for organizational development or management projects of community-based arts organizations serving a wide range of arts in local settings that will have a long-term impact on an organization's stability or development. SMAHC is committed to:

- Supporting artists and arts organizations in creating, producing and presenting high-quality arts activities
- Overcoming barriers to accessing high quality arts activities
- Instilling the arts into the community and public life in our region
- Supporting high-quality, age-appropriate arts education for residents of all ages to develop knowledge, skills, and understanding of the arts
- Supporting events and activities that represent the diverse ethnic and cultural arts traditions including folk and traditional artists and art organizations, represented in this region

The following projects and organizations are NOT eligible for SMAHC Arts Organization Development grants:

- Applications for projects in schools or educational institutions EXCEPT in the case where a non-profit arts group uses the school facility for rehearsal, classes, performances, or exhibitions, and it needs equipment or facilities improvements for its own work. The arts group could apply for and receive a grant, but must submit a cooperative agreement with the school that spells out how the arts organization will be assured access to the purchased items or improvements.
- Proposals for staff salaries.
- Applications that do not have an art focus.
- Activities of a for-profit project, organization, or business.
- Projects where funds are requested to account for deficits in projects or programs begun prior to the project earliest start date. In other words, payment of debts incurred before the grant activities begin or outside of the grant project scope of activity.
- Applicants with past due SMAHC final (or other) reports.
- Applications where funds are to be used to match other SMAHC grant applications.
- Requests for new building construction, purchase of real property, or endowment funds.
- Fundraising events.
- Activities which are not open to the public. Projects must be inclusive and accessible in their process and/or final product, considering economic, geographic, and physical accessibility, as well as the cultural, racial, ethnic, age, and gender make-up of the community.
- Religious organizations or projects which are for the religious socialization of the participants or audience.
- Applications submitted for the purpose of regranting, lobbying or scholarships.

- Projects that will not take responsibility for their publicity, media coverage, and public relations and that won't provide timely promotion of the project throughout the SMAHC region through use of the proper funding credit line and logo.

Grant Amounts

Grants under the Arts Organization Development program are available in these amounts:

- Up to \$5,000 for organization development
- Up to \$2,000 for organization start-up planning
- Up to \$15,000 for equipment and facilities projects

Arts Organization Development Grants are available for up to \$5,000 or 75% of the total project costs, whichever is less. Applicant match must include 25% of the entire project's cash cost. Although the minimum required cash match is 25%, note that applications that include a higher match will receive a higher score and may be more competitive in the process.

Startup Organization Planning Grants are available for up to \$2,000 with no cash match requirement for newly formed arts organizations to develop articles of incorporation, by-laws and apply for their 501(c)(3) nonprofit status. Limit one per organization, new organizations only.

Grants for equipment and facilities improvement are available up to \$15,000 with a 35% cash match required for organizations that can identify how the grant will enable the organization to leave a legacy. (Example: A community-supported theater needs new speaker equipment to enhance their stage productions; therefore enabling them to leave a legacy of high-quality theater experiences for years to come.) Grant requests for purchases over \$100 are required to submit a minimum of two competitive bids (two separate vendors) for equipment & facilities improvement costs, including labor.

Additional requirements for requests over \$5,000:

- Must attend a grant workshop in person or via phone
- Requests for more than \$5,000 can't be for business as usual, e.g. yearly requests for essentially the same project
- Must detail how the community and/or organization will grow as a result of the grant
- Must include a 5-year plan and detail sustainability through long-term planning
- A community partner must contribute time and/or money and sign application

Application Assistance

It is always best to contact SMAHC staff prior to submission of a grant application to determine grant eligibility. A staff member will review the application, as time permits, for eligibility and completed requirements. Staff review does not imply that a grant request will be funded. Project quality, content, budget, and accuracy of an application are solely the responsibility of the applicant. Free grant writing assistance workshops are scheduled for organizations interested in applying to the SMAHC Arts Organization Development grant program. To sponsor a workshop in your area, please contact the SMAHC office 507-537-1471, toll-free 800-622-5284 or e-mail smahcinfo@iw.net to make arrangements for a workshop.

Grant Review

1. SMAHC staff reviews the application for accuracy, completeness and eligibility. Only complete applications will be forwarded to the grant review panel. Grant applicants may not discuss their application with SMAHC panelists or board members following the grant deadline until after the board has acted on the application. Communication regarding an application with SMAHC board or panelists during this time will result in the application being ineligible for funding consideration.
2. A grant panel reviews all eligible applications based on the review criteria. Panelists 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. Geographic representation, ethnicity and gender are also considered to ensure the panel reflects the diversity of the region. The time and location of the panel meeting will be posted on the SMAHC website at www.smahc.org. SMAHC follows the State of Minnesota open meeting guidelines. Applicants are welcome to attend the meeting to hear the panel deliberations and audit proceedings. Interaction between applicants and panelists is not allowed.
3. Board and panel members with a conflict of interest in regard to a specific applicant or project declare such and abstain from comment and rating of that application.
4. The recommendations of the panel are submitted to the SMAHC Board of Directors for final approval. Grants will be awarded to the extent of funds available to applications meeting the criteria. The SMAHC board will consider the geographic distribution of available funds, number of grants received from an applicant, and first time applicants. Organizations submitting more than one application during a fiscal year should note that only one may be given highest priority before geographical distribution is considered.

5. All applicants will receive a notification letter of acceptance or rejection after final review of the application by the Board of Directors.
6. If the application receives partial funding, a revised project description and budget must be submitted within 30 days of notification.

Appeals Policy

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 artistic quality or merit, ability or need. 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. Eighty percent (80%) 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 percent (20%) of the grant award will be sent to the applicant upon receipt and approval of the Final Report. Grants of \$5,000 or more may involve a scheduled series of payments.

Acknowledgement of Financial Assistance

IMPORTANT: SMAHC's financial assistance must be acknowledged on all publicity and promotional materials through the following credit line:

This activity is funded, in part, by a grant from the SW MN Arts and Humanities Council through appropriations from the Minnesota State Legislature with money from the State's general fund, and its arts and cultural heritage fund that was created by vote of the people of Minnesota on November 4, 2008.



The Legacy logo, as shown here, must be incorporated, where practicable, into printed and other materials. The "Clean Water Land and Legacy Amendment Logo Usage Guidelines" and electronic versions of the approved logo are located at www.legacy.leg.mn/legacy-logo.

Final Report

A final report must be filed within 60 days of the project end date. The online form can be accessed from the SMAHC website: www.smahc.org. The report requires information on the number of persons involved, the actual costs, and an evaluation of the project. Failure to submit a final report within 60 days of the end of the project without a prior request for an extension will result in a forfeit of the remaining 20% of grant funds and 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.