



Promoting the arts since 1974

**Southwest Minnesota Arts and
Humanities Council**

SMAHC
1210 E. College Drive
Suite 600
Marshall, MN 56258
(507) 537-1471
(800) 622-5284
smahcinfo@iw.net
www.smahc.org

Effective July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011

Art Project Grants Guidelines

Application Deadlines

Postmarked by

Round 1: August 16, 2010

Earliest Project Start Date: November 1, 2010

Round 2: February 7, 2011

Earliest Project Start Date: May 1, 2011

- ** It is your responsibility to make sure your application is complete and does not include errors. Incomplete or inaccurate materials may result in your application being deemed ineligible or reduce your request.

Proposals that are primarily educational projects for students should be submitted to the Arts & Learning Grant program.

**Due to the uncertainty of our State funding all current SMAHC programs and deadlines are subject to change. Contact the SMAHC office or check the SMAHC website to confirm what programs and rules are in place and to verify that you have the most current information.

receive a grant, they will still be responsible for any financial commitments made. Please note that this definition will be changed effective July 1, 2011.

Important Note: Effective July 1, 2011 the SMAHC definition for the start date for a SMAHC Arts Project Grant will be defined as the point at which commitments are made that set the project in motion e.g., rehearsals, contracts for and/or payment of administrative or artistic fees, public notification, acceptance of tuition or fees, ordering and/or paying for supplies or printed material. No funds can be expended prior to the project start date. SMAHC WILL NOT fund projects to which you have made a financial commitment BEFORE a grant is awarded. **Organizations that are planning projects that will begin before November 1, 2011 should apply on August 16, 2010 or February 7, 2011.**

Application Forms:

The application must be postmarked or received by 4:30 p.m. of the application deadline. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. Applications submitted by electronic transmission will not be accepted. Please read the grant guidelines and application form carefully. Submit the signed original with necessary support materials. Keep a copy for your records.

Application Assistance:

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit a draft of the application to SMAHC well in advance of the application deadline. A staff member will review your application, as time permits, and may offer suggestions for improvement. Staff will try to help all applicants who submit prior to the grant deadline but cannot guarantee assistance. Staff assistance 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 Art Project 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.

Who is Eligible?

The Art Project grant program is open to nonprofit organizations and units of government in the following eighteen counties of southwest Minnesota:

Big Stone	Chippewa	Cottonwood	Jackson	Kandiyohi	Lac qui Parle
Lincoln	Lyon	McLeod	Meeker	Murray	Nobles
Pipestone	Redwood	Renville	Rock	Swift	Yellow Medicine

Applicants must be nonprofit 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. Due to a 1985 Supreme Court ruling, parochial schools may not apply directly.

IMPORTANT! For additional eligibility requirements, see the Project Requirements on the Certification Page of the grant application form.

Review Process:

1. SMAHC staff reviews the application for accuracy, completeness and eligibility. Only complete applications will be forwarded to the Organization 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. **Review Panel:** A grant panel reviews all eligible applications. 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. Organizations submitting more than one application should note that only one may be given highest priority before geographical distribution is considered. The panel review meeting date is listed on page 1 of this document. Near the scheduled date of review you may contact the SMAHC office for time and location of the panel meeting. 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. 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 and first time applicants. Contact the SMAHC office to receive more information on the rating process.
5. The recommendations of the panel are submitted to the SMAHC Board of Directors for final approval. 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.
6. If the application receives partial funding, a revised project description and budget must be submitted within 30 days of notification.

Review Criteria:

Through majority vote, the organization panel makes a recommendation to the SMAHC Board of Directors for funding based on the established criteria. This is a competitive process.

- a. **Artistic Quality and Merit** – Quality art, whether traditional or experimental, is challenging and original. Rooted in basic human values, it illuminates the human condition, serves the vital interests of communities, and moves the imagination and heart. Such work is well crafted and well performed. Special consideration will be given to projects that incorporate the humanities to give context to the arts activities proposed. Examples include program notes, speakers or panels, or “informances” that provide background information for the artistic experience, such as a description of the historical period in which a composer wrote a musical piece being performed, the politics of the time, influences that may have affected the creation of the piece. The humanities include, but are not limited to, history; literature; philosophy and ethics; foreign languages and cultures; linguistics; jurisprudence or philosophy of law; archaeology; comparative religion; the history, theory, and criticism of the arts; and those aspects of the social sciences (anthropology, sociology, psychology, political science, government, and economics) that use historical and interpretive rather than quantitative methods. The panel considers such factors as:
 - ◆ contributions to the artistic growth of the artists and audience
 - ◆ how the activities support the organization’s mission and complement and build upon past projects
 - ◆ the project’s contribution to the respective art form
 - ◆ the artists’ qualifications
 - ◆ how the project advances the stated goals of the organization and the organization’s stated goals of the project
 - ◆ how the humanities have been incorporated into the project to give context to the arts activity or experience
- b. **Ability** - The panel considers the ability of the applicant to accomplish this project including:
 - ◆ quality of the planning process (including evaluation)
 - ◆ project director’s qualifications
 - ◆ feasibility of the budget with income derived from a variety of sources

- ◆ quality of the promotional efforts
 - ◆ degree of fiscal accountability
 - ◆ quality of past projects
- c. **Collaboration and Support** - The panel considers both the demonstrated need for this project by the organization and by the community which it serves, including:
- ◆ the degree of community support and involvement as illustrated, in part, by in-kind contributions
 - ◆ the degree to which this project broadens awareness of the power of the arts to enrich our lives and ensure the vitality of our communities
 - ◆ whether or not the project duplicates other programs, complements existing programs or shows growth from applicant's past projects
 - ◆ and evidence of growth and/or diversity from past SMAHC funded projects

The panelists score each application based on the criteria using the rubric printed at the end of these guidelines. This is a competitive process. 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 and first time applicants. Contact the SMAHC office to receive more information on the rating process.

Appeals Policy and Procedures:

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. Occasionally, additional but clearly outlined conditions will be added to the contract. 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.

- SMAHC's financial assistance must be acknowledged on all publicity and promotional materials through the following credit line: **“This activity is made possible in part by a grant from the Southwest Minnesota Arts and Humanities Council (SMAHC) with funds appropriated by the State Legislature and/or by the Minnesota arts and cultural heritage fund as appropriated by the Minnesota State Legislature with money from the vote of the people of Minnesota on November 4, 2008.”**

The Final Report:

A letter will be sent to the grantee along with the initial grant award check and a final report form. The report requires information on the number of persons involved, the actual costs, and an evaluation of the project. The final report is an 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. *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.*

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 are considering might be eligible, talk about possible resources, 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 on our local line (507) 537-1471.

Grant writing workshops are tentatively scheduled for July 19, 2010 and November 17, 2011 in the SMAHC office, Suite 600, 1210 East College Drive, Marshall. If you aren't able to attend a grant workshop you are welcome to make an appointment to stop by our office for assistance. Check the web site to verify the dates of the workshops. Workshops are free but **pre-registration is required**. Call or email to register for a grant writing workshop.

Rubric for Art Projects

The panelists score each application based on the criteria using this rubric.

ARTISTIC MERIT

Needs Improvement 0-3	Satisfactory 4-7	Exemplary 8-10
1. Unclear narrative and inadequate documentation of the project plan and/or the project personnel; incomplete resumes or work samples that fail to address relevant skills and abilities needed to properly assess this project.	1. Clear narrative, complete documentation and resumes of all main artistic and administrative personnel including personnel's areas of expertise, and reviews from previous similar experiences. Personnel documentation is suited to the stated project.	1. Highly accomplished personnel suited to an articulately stated project plan. Documentation includes complete and up to date resumes for both artistic and administrative personnel. Documentation of positive feedback from similar previous projects included.
2. Not enough information to determine artistic quality or project is of questionable artistic merit and does not advance the stated goals or mission of the organization or stated goals for the project or fit the intent of this grant whose purpose is to stimulate and encourage the creation, performance and appreciation of the arts in the region.	2. Documentation clearly shows project has artistic merit and is appropriate to the organization's stated mission and stated goals for the project. Adequate and professional work samples	2. A high level of artistic merit is evident in the documentation and work samples provided.
3. Absence of documentation showing this project is building on rather than duplicating previous arts programming.	3. Documentation that shows project complements and builds upon previous arts programming.	3. Documentation that shows how this project is successfully building on previous arts programming and how it will challenge and stretch the organization. An excitement for the project is evident in the language of the narrative.
4. This project is inappropriate culturally, pedagogically or theologically.	4. This project fills an identifiable cultural void in this community.	4. This project successfully fills an identifiable cultural void in this community and demonstrates sensitivity to the needs of the entire population, diverse or not.

NOTE

Special consideration will be given to projects that incorporate the humanities **to give context to the arts activities** proposed. Our funding for Art Projects Grants is specifically for arts programming. A project with a high quality humanities component that lacks a high quality artistic component should not rank above a project with a high quality artistic component but no humanities component.

ABILITY TO ACCOMPLISH THE PROJECT

Needs Improvement 0-3	Satisfactory 4-7	Exemplary 8-10
1. Absence of documentation that shows the organization is prepared to comprehensively plan, carry out and evaluate the project in a timely manner. Incomplete (or no) schedule. Incomplete identification of team structure and member responsibilities.	1. Evidence the organization has a clear plan with reasonable time lines and personnel who are capable and committed to carrying project out.	1. Detailed, comprehensive application showing the organization has a clear plan with reasonable time lines. Personnel participating are capable, well suited and committed to carrying project out. Evaluation tool included.
2. The budget narrative does not match the budget page or correspond to line items.	2. Budget narrative matches budget plan and line items and is easily understandable.	2. Budget narrative reflects budget plan and line items. All is easily understandable and comparable. This budget accurately reflects the needs of a carefully thought out project.
3. Application is missing required support materials or questions are not answered fully.	3. Application includes all support materials and questions are all answered.	3. Application is complete and all questions are answered clearly.
3. Budget not fiscally responsible, is unrealistic or contains frivolous items (parties, dinner). Itemization is not clear or complete. Math is inaccurate. Funded only through ticket sales & SMAHC grant.	3. Budget is fiscally responsible. Math is correct, with no inconsistencies. Funded through at least one source other than SMAHC grant or ticket sales.	3. Budget is fiscally responsible. Math is correct, no inconsistency. Funding comes from a variety of sources.
4. Inadequate publicity and promotional plan. Not enough lead time or budget. Publicity venue(s) are unspecified or inappropriate.	4. Publicity and promotional plan reflect the scope of the project and the demographics and flavor (how do people find out about events?) of the region.	4. The promotional plan includes more than one form of publicity. (example: poster, radio spots and mailer or blanket e-mail etc) based on some basic regional research insuring a wide and broad community is invited to participate in the project.
5. No evidence of similar successful projects in the past or insufficient evidence that planning personnel are qualified to plan a good project.	5. Organization has documentation that they have had the commitment and support to carry out a successful similar project in the past.	5. A comprehensive, organizational history of past completed projects.

COLLABORATION OR SUPPORT FOR THE PROJECT

Needs Improvement 0-3	Satisfactory 4-7	Exemplary 8-10
1. Absence of diverse community support and involvement	1. Adequate representation of community support and involvement	1. There is substantial support from a wide range of community organizations, businesses and community members
2. Project offers little difference in broadening awareness of the arts in their power to enrich communities and lives.	2. Project stretches the organizations programming and details how it will impact artists, the arts community, and region.	2. Project stretches the organizations programming and details how it will impact artists, the arts community, and region in significant way.
3. Evidence of growth from past projects not documented	3. Evidence of growth from past projects	3. Documentation that shows how project builds on growth from past projects.
4. Duplicates without enriching upon other existing projects in the community	4. Project expands the community's artistic experience or awareness	4. Evidence that this is an innovative project that stretches the organizations artistic or organizational skills or awareness.