



Southwest
Minnesota
Arts & Humanities
Council

Promoting the arts since 1974

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



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in part, by an appropriation
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its arts and cultural heritage
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of the people of Minnesota on
November 4, 2008.*

SW Minnesota Arts & Humanities Council

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www.smahc.org

Effective July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012

Art Project Grant Program Guidelines

Application Deadlines

Round I: August 22, 2011

Earliest Project Start Date: October 15, 2011

Round II: January 13, 2012

Earliest Project Start Date: March 9, 2012

Round III: May 15, 2012

Earliest Project Start Date: July 1, 2012

Applications that are primarily educational projects within a school system should be submitted through the SMAHC Arts in the Schools Grant program. Applications for equipment & facilities improvement projects should be submitted to the Arts Organization Development Grant program.

SMAHC Art Project Grant Program Guidelines

July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012

The Southwest Minnesota Arts & Humanities Council (SMAHC) is the designated regional arts council for 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 and Yellow Medicine. SMAHC provides grants and services to nonprofit organizations and government units within these eighteen counties for projects that take place in our region. SMAHC is committed to the support of high quality arts activities in our region.

Program Intent:

The intent of this grant program is to provide funds to nonprofit organizations in southwest Minnesota to stimulate and encourage the creation, performance and appreciation of the arts in the region.

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

Applicants must make the case that their project fulfills SMAHC's program intent.

Art Projects may be arts activities produced by an organization and contracted for locally or produced by a local arts organization. Projects could include, but are not limited to:

- community theatre productions
- projects or performances involving community choirs, bands or orchestras
- music or dance performances
- art productions that tour area communities
- visual arts exhibits
- readings by authors
- environmental art
- public art
- arts festivals
- art classes for community members of all ages (excluding projects in schools)

Organizations considering a large scale project are encouraged to first apply for an **Art Project Planning Grant**, which is a separate grant program.

Applications that are primarily educational projects within a school system should be submitted through the SMAHC Arts in the Schools Grant program. Proposals for equipment & facilities improvement projects should be submitted to the Arts Organization Development Grant program.

Grant Amounts:

Art Project Grants are available for up to **\$5,000** or **75%** of the total project cash costs, whichever is less. Applicants with large-scale projects making a case that their project will create a legacy for arts in Minnesota can apply for up to **\$20,000** or **75%** of the total project cash costs, whichever is less. Applicant match must include a minimum of 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.

Important Dates:

Round I Grant Deadline: August 22, 2011*
Grant Writing workshop: Dates, times & locations will be posted on www.smahc.org
Panel Meeting: September 17, 2011 Board Action: September 27, 2011
Earliest Project Start Date: October 15, 2011

Round II Grant Deadline: January 13, 2012*
Grant Writing workshop: Dates, times & locations will be posted on www.smahc.org
Panel Meeting: February 11, 2012 Board Action: February 28, 2012
Earliest Project Start Date: March 9, 2012

Round III Grant Deadline: May 15, 2012*
Grant Writing workshop: Dates, times & locations will be posted on www.smahc.org
Panel Meeting: June 9, 2012 Board Action: June 26, 2012
Earliest Project Start Date: July 1, 2012

***Applicants requesting over \$5,000 must attend a grant writing workshop in person or via phone prior to submitting an application. Contact the SMAHC office for details or to schedule an appointment.**

Start Date:

Effective July 1, 2011 the start date for a SMAHC Arts Project Grant will be defined as the point at which the project is set in motion e.g., rehearsals, advertizing and public notification, payment of fees, ordering and/or paying for supplies or printed material, etc. No funds can be expended prior to the project start date. NOTE: Funds spent before the project start date, such as a deposit on a contract, cannot be included in the grant project budget.

End Date:

Projects must be concluded within a 24-month period from the Start Date and as described in the grant application and budget. Any changes must be requested and cleared in writing in advance with SMAHC. A final report must be submitted within 60 days of the project end date. When determining a project end date, applicants should allow time for all project bills to be processed.

Eligibility

The Art Project grant program is open to nonprofit organizations and units of government in the eighteen counties of the SMAHC service region. 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.

What Is Not Eligible for Funding:

The SMAHC Art Project Grant Program will not or can **NOT** fund:

- Applications that do not have an art focus.
- Equipment requests not specifically tied to the proposed project.
- Equipment requests greater than \$15,000.
- 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 that are primarily educational projects within a school system.
- Applications for arts events with less than a \$4.00 admission fee. A waiver may be granted in special circumstances by contacting the SMAHC office prior to submitting an application. Visual arts exhibitions and readings are excluded from this requirement.
- 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 where artists are required to pay excessive entry or exhibition fees in order to exhibit or perform in the project for which funds are sought.
- 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.

Additional requirements for applications >\$5,000

- Required to attend 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 festival or 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
- Require a community partner who contributes time and/or money – partner must sign application

Applicants are encouraged to contact the SMAHC office to answer any questions you might have regarding eligibility. Contact us via email at smahcinfo@iw.net, call us toll free (800) 622-5284, or on our local line (507) 537-1471.

Grant Review Process:

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 (listed below). 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.

Review Criteria:

The review panel makes a recommendation to the SMAHC Board of Directors for funding based on the established criteria:

1. **The ARTISTIC QUALITY AND MERIT of the project or program.**

Grant review considerations used to address this criterion may include:

- How does this proposal instill the arts into the community and public life?
- How does this proposal provide a high quality arts experience in the SMAHC region?
- What is the degree to which this project broadens awareness of the power of the arts to enrich lives and ensure the vitality of communities?
- How does this proposal help to develop knowledge, skills, and understanding of the arts?
- Do the artist résumé and any work samples submitted substantiate high artistic merit & quality?
- How does this project contribute to the respective art form?

If the application is determined to be of sufficient artistic quality and merit to warrant further review, then the following criteria will be applied:

2. **Applicants must demonstrate a DEMAND OR NEED for the grant project or program in the community served.**

Grant review considerations used to address this criterion may include:

- Does the application demonstrate community involvement and support for the project?

- Is there evidence of collaboration? Have new partnerships been formed? Are there in-kind contributions?
- How does the project meet the artistic needs of the applicant and the community served?
- How will the project benefit the “underserved” in their community?
- How does the budget demonstrate a financial need?
- How does this proposal support the organization’s mission and complement existing programs or show growth and/or diversity from the applicant’s past projects?
- Does this project duplicate other programs or existing activities in the community?

3. The ABILITY of the applicant or organization to accomplish the project or program goals as presented.

Grant review considerations used to address this criterion may include:

- Did the applicant explain the planning process for the project?
- Is the project (and organization, if applicable) budget feasible and demonstrate fiscal responsibility? Is the income derived from a variety of sources?
- Are the marketing and publicity plans appropriate for the project and applicant?
- If this applicant is a past SMAHC grant recipient have the projects been successful and were all reporting requirements followed?
- Do the project director and all key personnel résumés substantiate organizational ability?
- Is the outcome evaluation plan appropriate for the project and applicant and is it included in the project budget?

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. 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.



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

The Final Report:

A final report form must be filed within 60 days of the project end date. The form is available on 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.*

Grant Application Instructions:

- Access the ART PROJECT Grant application form on our website:
http://www.smahc.org/organizational_grants.htm

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. This program is a competitive process. You are encouraged to be articulate, precise and accurate in filling out your application.

The application must be postmarked or received by 4:30 p.m. on 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. Be sure to review the application checklist. Submit the signed original with necessary support materials. Keep a copy for your records.

Applications submitted by electronic transmission will not be accepted. SMAHC is working on implementing an on-line grant application process. Check the SMAHC website or contact our office to determine when the on-line application process takes effect.



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 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.