



COMMUNITY ARTS GRANTS / GRANT GUIDELINES FY26

Community Arts Grants Objectives

The Community Arts Grants program is an effort of the Dorchester Center for the Arts, (DCA) as the designated county Arts Council, to support and expand arts programming throughout our county. These funds, allocated by the Maryland State Arts Council, are intended to encourage arts programming and arts participation across the county. Supported arts disciplines include dance, theatre, visual arts, music, film/media arts, literary arts, folk/heritage/traditional and multi-disciplinary arts programming.

Review Process

All grant applications will be reviewed by our Community Arts Grant Committee, a body that may be comprised of DCA Board Members, the Executive Director, arts professionals and community representatives. Your organization will be notified of funding within two weeks of the grant submission. Individual grants will average \$250-\$2000. Although the DCA attempts to fund all qualified applicants, not all may receive funding in any given granting cycle. We do expect a robust response for FY26.

Evaluation Criteria

The Community Arts Grants Committee reviews each application according to the following guidelines:

Artistic Merit: The artistic quality of the proposed program.

Organizational Effectiveness: The organization's ability to develop, fund and implement the proposed activities, and/or the capacity for advancing the mission and vision of the organization.

Service to the Community: The degree to which the organization and/or the project demonstrates a commitment to the community.

Requirements

Organizations receiving funds from the DCA must:

Be located in or producing the program in Dorchester County and be incorporated/organized as a not-for-profit organization or be in the process of 501c(3) certification (**with documentation**) as determined by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service(IRS). Units of government, colleges and universities are also eligible to apply.

Comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) which states that no otherwise qualified person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination related to, the arts.

Comply with Title IV, Section 1681, of the Education Amendment of 1972, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Section 6101, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex or age.

Comply with Title VI, Section 601 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which states that no persons, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination related to, the arts.

Notify the DCA of any inability to complete the program, any major changes in the project or organization's mission or plans as outlined in the application, and secure approval prior to implementing the changes.

Acknowledge the DCA funding in all promotional materials, advertising programs, and posters. A camera-ready copy of the DCA's logo and acknowledgment text will be made available.

Upon request, provide up to two complimentary tickets for use by the DCA's Board of Directors, Grant Committee members or staff for purpose of evaluation.

Keep accurate financial records showing how grant funds were used. These records must be made available to the Grants Committee for review upon request.

Failure to comply with any of these conditions may require the return of the grant funds.

Restrictions

Dorchester Center for the Arts grant funds, including general operating grants, are intended to support cultural arts programming and may not be used for the following purposes: profit making ventures, retirement of existing debt, fundraising events, re-granting funds or scholarships.

Reporting Requirements – NEW - PLEASE NOTE

Organizations receiving grants must submit:

A Final Report upon completion of the project or expenditure of funds, due within two (2) months of program completion and or funds expenditure. **The remaining 20% of the grant award will not be released until receipt of final report.** Applications may not be considered from grantees that have failed to submit a Final Report for the previous year.