

Mississippi Arts Commission – Project Grants Fiscal Year 2013 Program Guidelines

Next application deadline: Thursday, March 1, 2012

Applications must be submitted through eGRANT, postal mail, or delivered by hand to MAC's office by the due date. Faxed or emailed applications are not accepted.

Please submit Project Grant applications no earlier than 30 days prior to the March 1 deadline. Applications received prior to this date will be returned.

Overview

Much of the work done to expand arts activities across Mississippi is accomplished through projects taken on by arts and community-based groups. MAC supports these efforts through its Project Grant program, which funds a wide range of arts projects that support the main goals of the agency.

Award Amounts and Project Activity Dates

Project Grants range from \$250 to \$5,000 and require a dollar-for-dollar cash match from the applicant organization. Project Grant applications submitted by March 1, 2012 can support activities taking place between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013.

Who May Apply

Organizations who apply for a Project Grant must:

- Be based in Mississippi
- Be incorporated in Mississippi as a 501c3 nonprofit organization, OR
- Be a unit of local government, such as a school, library, or another county or municipal agency. Units of local government may be required to provide documentation of their status as a governmental agency.

Eligible organizations can apply for one large MAC grant (either a Project or Operating Grant) each year. Individuals are not eligible to apply for a Project Grant. First-time applicants are strongly encouraged to consult with MAC Program Staff (see list of contacts at the end of the guidelines) about their proposal before submitting an application.

Overview of Program Areas and Project Grant Examples

MAC awards Project Grants in each of its four program areas. Following are brief descriptions of each program, including examples of the types of projects that can be funded. For additional information on each program area, visit their pages on this site. If you are still unsure about which program you should apply under, contact MAC before submitting an application.

Arts-Based Community Development

Arts-Based Community Development (ABCD) looks to improve the social, economic and cultural conditions of Mississippi communities through meaningful, quality arts programming. Whether it is after-school programming targeting at-risk youth, public art refurbishing a blighted downtown area, or a music festival bringing together a diverse audience from the community, successful ABCD programming utilizes community-driven planning and the power of the arts to create stronger communities.

Examples of ABCD Projects:

- A Boys and Girls Club works with an artist to create a piece of public art; or
- A Main Street program, an arts council and city officials work with a planning consultant who specializes in small town development to generate and implement a public design plan that emphasizes the town's historic downtown or other resources.

Arts Education

Arts Education works to enable students Pre-K through 12th grade to receive a quality education that includes the arts. The program does this by fostering professional development for educators, enabling them to teach the arts more effectively and use the arts as learning tools in teaching non-arts curriculum.

Examples of Arts Education Projects

- A school (or a school district) hires a consultant to work with teachers to introduce or infuse the arts into the curriculum;
- A museum produces poster-size reproductions of items from its collection and, with assistance from arts educators, develops a lesson plan based on the works; or
- A school develops a year-long artist-in-residence program.

Arts Industry

Arts Industry works with discipline-specific arts and cultural organizations to expand their capacity to carry out their programs. This program also works closely with statewide arts services organizations that supports a particular segment of the arts community and involve the general public with their programs across the state.

Examples of Arts Industry Projects

- A single-discipline focused organization such as a theatre company, symphony, dance, or opera company presents a performance or season of performances;
- An organization such as a museum association or a university hires artists to exhibit, perform, present or conduct workshops; or
- A statewide arts organization produces a convening, such as a writer's conference, jazz festival, or theatre conference

Mississippi Heritage

Mississippi Heritage works to increase the awareness of and foster the continuation of the state's folk and traditional art forms. This is done through the Project Grant Program by encouraging and supporting projects that document or promote Mississippi traditional arts.

Examples of Mississippi Heritage Projects

- A community organization sponsors a blues festival that presents several musicians with strong ties to the area;
- A public library develops an exhibit that showcases the work of a local split oak basketmaker; or
- An arts collective presents a workshop for shape-note singers

Review Criteria

Project Grant applications are reviewed using the following criteria:

1. Project Goals and Outcomes (20 points)

- The applicant states the main goals that their organization has for the project
- The applicant describes the activities that are necessary to achieve their goals

2. Quality of Project Activities and their Artistic Excellence (30 points)

- The application lists the artists and artistic staff involved in the project and their qualifications
- The main project activities are adequately described with all critical information included

3. Public Participation and Access (30 points)

- The applicant describes everyone involved in planning and participating in the project
- The project planners and participants reflect the demographics of the community or the organization has explained how they are working towards that goal

4. Ability to Achieve Goals and Evaluate Success (20 points)

- The staff or project leaders are described, including their qualifications
- The project is supported by the community
- Appropriate partnerships with other organizations (when applicable) have been arranged
- Proper financial controls are in place
- The plans for promoting and evaluating the project are included

How to Apply

Please submit one original and one collated copy of the following items in the order listed:

- Project Grant Application Form
- Narrative (three-page maximum) in which you provide an overview of your organization and address the Project Grant review criteria
- Budget Itemization that explains in greater detail each expense and source of income included in the Budget section of the application (a sample budget itemization is included in the application form)
- A list of your board of directors indicating ethnic make-up and members with disabilities. Public schools should submit a list of their current school board members. Governmental entities should submit a list of their municipal or county level governing boards.

- Current biographies (one half page maximum for each) of your organization's key artistic and administrative personnel, including both paid and volunteer. Do not substitute bios with resumés.
- A copy of the letters of agreement or signed contracts between your organization and the artists or consultants, should this contract be a part of the project. If your project is taking place more than six months after the application deadline and your arrangements with artists or consultants have not yet been finalized, please note this in your narrative and provide as much information as possible about the type of performer(s) or artist(s) you will hire. This should include names of artists you've hired in the past, the relative level of experience or name recognition you will require, the fee range, or any other information that will help the review panel to understand the types of artists you plan to hire.
- A current brochure for the artist(s) or the full resumé of the consultant (including a client list with phone numbers) whose work will be supported through the grant. If the artist is a member of an adjudicated roster run by another state or regional arts organization, send a copy of the page on which the artist is featured, along with a copy of the roster's cover page.
- If your project involves a partnership with another organization (or organizations), please provide letters of intent from these partners. The letters should clearly explain each partner's role in the project.
- If your organization is applying to MAC for the first time: a copy of your official IRS 501(c)3 determination letter. You do not need to send a copy of the letter if your organization has applied for a grant from MAC in the past three years. If you are unsure whether or not your organization has applied recently, please call and check with MAC Program Staff before submitting an application. Public schools, libraries and other agencies of local government are exempt from this requirement.

Please do not bind or staple these application materials.

Applications should be complete, including all required information and materials. Incomplete applications, defined as applications missing one or more of the above-listed documents, will not be considered for funding and will be returned to the applicant.

Supplementary Materials

In addition to the above items, you should also submit supplementary materials that will help panelists understand your organization and its programs. Supplementary materials should relate to the proposed project activities and should support the claims made in your narrative. The materials can be referenced in your narrative.

These materials may include:

- A copy of sample programs, brochures, educational materials, or other promotional materials that relate to the proposed project activities;

- News clippings that relate to the proposed project activities, such as response to your organization's past programs or the artist with whom you plan to work;
- Letters of support for the project (A maximum of five letters may be included); and
- Work samples from artists you are presenting, if the artist is not a member of MAC's Artist Roster. This can include CDs, DVDs or links to artist websites, if the sites include work samples (such as audio, video, or photo samples). The samples will allow the review panel to determine the level of quality of the proposed artist(s).

Please submit your supplementary materials in a three-ring binder with your organization's name on the cover in order to expedite panel review. The binder should not exceed 25 pages of material and the items included should be no larger than 8.5 x 11 inches.

Return of Support Materials and Work Samples

Applicants who would like their supplementary materials and work samples returned by mail must provide a self-addressed mailer with sufficient postage affixed to it. They may also be picked up between July 1st and August 30th at MAC's office during regular business hours. Please make arrangements with the program director managing your application before visiting the office. All support materials will be discarded after August 30th if no instructions are given for their return.

Dates to Remember

March 1, 2012 – Project Grant application deadline

April 2012 – Review of applications by the grant panel (specific panel dates will be available by mid-March. Grant applicants are allowed to attend panels. Contact Program Staff for the date your application will be reviewed)

June 2012 – MAC Board meets and makes final funding decisions on all applications

July 2, 2012 – Applicants are notified whether their application was funded or not. No information on the grants will be available from MAC prior to this date.

Staff Contacts

For more information on applying for a Project Grant, contact the MAC Program Director who oversees the area most closely tied to your organization's main goals:

Arts-Based Community Development - Allison Winstead, (601) 359-6546 / awinstead@arts.state.ms.us

Arts Education - Kim Whitt, (601) 359-6037 / kwhitt@arts.state.ms.us

Arts Industry - Diane Williams, (601) 359-6529 / dwilliams@arts.state.ms.us

Mississippi Heritage - Mary Margaret Miller, (601) 359-6034 / mmiller@arts.state.ms.us