



M-AAA American Rescue Plan Grant Guidelines

Mid-America Arts Alliance (M-AAA) strengthens and supports artists, cultural organizations, and communities throughout our region and beyond. We value equitable policies, inclusive practices, and celebration of the rich diversity of our region.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The objective of the M-AAA American Rescue Plan (ARP) Grant is to invest in and provide financial support to eligible organizations including but not limited to nonprofit arts organizations, arts service organizations, units of state or local government, federally recognized tribal communities or tribes, and a wide range of other organizations that primarily produce, present, promote, or serve the arts. [See Applicant Eligibility](#) for more information. This grant will help those entities and their employees endure the economic hardships caused by COVID-19.

Unlike other M-AAA grant programs that offer project-based support, the M-AAA ARP Grant intends to support day-to-day business expenses/operating costs, and not specific programmatic activities. [See Program Criteria for more information.](#)

M-AAA will incorporate principles of equity, access, and inclusion in its implementation of the M-AAA ARP Grant. Therefore, M-AAA presents this opportunity broadly and offers flexibility through non-matching general operating support. Applications will be assessed for artistic merit and artistic excellence. [See Review Criteria for more information.](#)

Applications will be assessed for artistic merit and artistic excellence in service to any or all of the following constituencies:

- Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC);
- LGBTQ+ communities;
- Low income communities;
- Remote and rural communities (communities with fewer than 50,000 in population and isolated from metropolitan areas);
- Individuals with disabilities;
- Individuals in institutions;
- Individuals below the poverty line;
- Individuals with limited English proficiency;
- Military veterans/active duty personnel including the National Guard and Reserves;
- Youth at risk

Awards will be made across the six-state M-AAA region, with at least one grant awarded per state (Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas). This program will disburse grants of \$10,000, \$20,000, and \$40,000 each to no less than forty grantees.

M-AAA intends to make awards that impact a broad constituency. We encourage applications from a variety of eligible organizations including:

- Organizations that serve populations that are underserved, such as those whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited by external forces such as cultural representation/relevance and accessibility
- Organizations with small-sized budgets no greater than \$500,000
- Organizations from rural to urban communities
- Organizations that may be applying to M-AAA for a grant for the first time

Further this funding is provided through generous support from the National Endowment for the Arts (CFDA #45.025 Promotion of the Arts Partnership Agreements) and made possible by the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act passed by Congress. The National Endowment for the Arts is committed to diversity, equity, inclusion, and fostering mutual respect for the diverse beliefs and values of all individuals and groups, including:

- Historically Black Colleges and Universities,
- Tribal Colleges and Universities,
- American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes,
- African American Serving Institutions,
- Hispanic Serving Institutions,
- Asian American and Pacific Islander communities, and
- Organizations that support the independence and lifelong inclusion of people with disabilities.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Applicants *must*:

1. be a 501(c)3 tax-exempt nonprofit organization, a unit of state or local government, or a federally recognized tribal community;
2. be a nonprofit organization that has its own Board of Directors with its own established bylaws, and manages its own budget independent of a parent organization;
3. be incorporated in and currently conducting business in one or more states in the M-AAA region, which includes Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas;
4. have a cash operating budget no greater than \$500,000 for the most recently completed fiscal year prior to March 2020 which is considered the onset of closures due to COVID-19;
5. have at least a three-year history of arts programming prior to the application deadline; Programming is not required to have taken place during consecutive years. If the applicant's programming was affected or suspended due to COVID-19, the application may reference 2020 or 2021 programming that was cancelled or reimaged due to the pandemic. Virtual programming, planning, and COVID-19 recovery activities are considered to be programming. You may also choose to list arts programming from a recent year other than 2020 or 2021. For the purposes of defining eligibility, "three-year history" refers to when an organization began its arts programming and not when it incorporated or received nonprofit, tax-exempt status);
6. have arts and culture explicitly stated as central to the organization's mission. An organization that include arts and culture as a primary and major focus of a larger mission may apply if their larger mission is centered in serving a specific cultural group;
7. compensate all professional artists or supporting professional personnel at no less than the prevailing minimum compensation in accordance with Part 505 of Title 29 of the

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) [Part 505 of Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\)](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=pt29.3.505&rgn=div5) [https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=pt29.3.505&rgn=div5]

8. apply directly on its own behalf. Applications through a fiscal sponsor/agent are not allowed;
9. have and provide a valid EIN which will be verified using the [IRS Tax Exempt Organization Search Tool](https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/tax-exempt-organization-search) [https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/tax-exempt-organization-search];
10. have a valid [Data Universal Numbering System ID \(DUNS #\)](https://www.dnb.com/duns-number/lookup.html) [https://www.dnb.com/duns-number/lookup.html] or UEI (Unique Entity Identifier created in the [System for Award Management](https://sam.gov/content/home) [https://sam.gov/content/home]
11. be in good standing with M-AAA, with no overdue or delinquent reports and/or documentation;
12. commit to [M-AAA's Grantee Assurance of Compliance and Federal Suspension and Disbarment Policy](https://www.maaa.org/assurance-of-compliance/) [https://www.maaa.org/assurance-of-compliance/]; and
13. agree to acknowledge [M-AAA and the NEA](https://www.maaa.org/about/downloads/) [https://www.maaa.org/about/downloads/] in all marketing and communications materials related to this grant.

Those that are not eligible to apply include:

- Individuals
- For-profit organizations
- Organizations whose primary focus, programming, and mission is not specifically arts related
- Government agencies and University/Community College departments and affiliates
- K–12 schools or school districts
- State arts agencies
- Auxiliary or friends groups
- Fiscal sponsors
- Public television and other public media organizations

PROGRAM CRITERIA

Financial Support is limited to any or all of the following:

- Salary support, full or partial, for one or more positions that are crucial to the organization's mission. These may be existing jobs, new jobs, or the restoration of jobs that were furloughed or eliminated due to the pandemic.
- Fees for artists and/or contractual personnel to support the services they provide for specific activities critical to the organization's day to day business.
- Facility operational expenses, including mortgage principle, rent, and utilities (exclusive of home office expenditures and capital upgrades).
- Costs related to the purchase of health and safety supplies for either the organization's staff or its visitors/audience (e.g., personal equipment, cleaning supplies, hand sanitizer, etc.).

Please note that if your organization is receiving federal ARP relief from the National Endowment for the Arts, your State Arts Agency, or the Small Business Association, the organization may not use this grant funding for the same purpose(s) during the same period of time. Each grant should be tracked to its own eligible expenses and the funds kept separate from other awards (no

commingling of funds). Grantees should implement their own internal tracking to prove that no double charging took place.

GRANT AMOUNT AND TERMS OF SUPPORT

- Each applicant may submit one application for a fixed grant amount of \$10,000, \$20,000 or \$40,000. Cost share/matching funds are not required. Applicants are encouraged to select a grant amount that is reflective of their overall organizational size and internal capacity.
- Grant funds may be used for expenses incurred starting on or after July 1, 2021, and must be totally expended on or by June 30, 2022. This is a one-time grant opportunity and may not be renewed or extended.
- This grant does not require a dollar-for-dollar cash match.
- Funding awarded through this program must be used exclusively for operational expenses. [See Program Criteria above.](#)
 - Funding is not available for:
 - contracts with artists/personnel who reside outside M-AAA's region;
 - compensation for the applicant's board of directors;
 - subgranting or regranting through programs the applicant manages; and
 - project expenses, including those associated with benefits or fundraiser events.

Please note that if your organization receives federal relief from the National Endowment for the Arts, your State Arts Agency, or the Small Business Administration in either a PPP (Paycheck Protection Program Loan) or EIDL (Economic Injury Disaster Loan), you may not use this grant for the same purpose(s) during the same period of time.

Grantees will be required to:

- Fully execute a M-AAA ARP Grant Agreement which indicates compliance with established program rules and requirements per the M-AAA Grant Terms and Conditions and Assurance of Compliance.
- Retain all records, receipts, and proof of expenses for a minimum of three years following the grant period and provide these documents to M-AAA or the NEA upon request.
- Expend all funds between July 1, 2021 and on or by June 30, 2022.
- Complete and submit a M-AAA ARP final report form on or before July 31, 2022.

REVIEW CRITERIA

Review of application materials will focus on:

- Artistic Excellence through programming offered to the community (50%)
 1. Access and Equity
Reviewers will consider how the organization is committed to cultural equity, accessibility, and social justice. We recommend you use examples and describe how this commitment informs organizational operations and engagement where asked.
 2. Artistic and Cultural Merit

Reviewers will consider how your organization celebrates diverse cultural practice, fulfills its mission, and supports arts and artists. We recommend you use examples and describe how this aligns with M-AAA's goals and extends M-AAA's reach in the region.

- Artistic Merit through stewardship of funding (50%)
 1. **Demonstrated Need:** How the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the operations and programs of the organization. M-AAA will consider the reasonableness of the grant request amount.
 2. **Public and Community Benefit:** Consider and describe the organization's unique role as it serves, engages, and partners with its broader community. M-AAA will consider the organization's capacity to manage the grant in the current environment.

PROGRAM TIMELINE

- Applications will be available on Monday, October 4, 2021.
- Applications are due by 11:59 p.m. CDT on Monday, November 1, 2021.
- Applications will be reviewed by M-AAA staff.
- Funding notification will be made the week of December 20, 2021.
- Grant agreement and funding distribution on or after January 4, 2022.
- Grant period of activity spans July 1, 2021–June 30, 2022.
- Final Report due no later than July 31, 2022.

Applicants may consult with M-AAA staff prior to applying, but staff members will not review or provide comments on draft materials.

Once submitted, the application is reviewed by a panel of M-AAA staff with respect to the criteria noted above. Applicants will receive grant status notification by email the week of December 20, 2021.

Grant recipients will receive grant agreements and initial grant payments in January 2022. Funding will be distributed through two payments: 80% upon execution of the Grant Agreement and 20% upon successful review of the Final Report submitted by the grant recipient, which is due no later than July 31, 2022.

FINAL REPORTING

M-AAA will provide an online Final Report form. Grant recipients must complete and submit one no later than July 31, 2022. Mid-America Arts Alliance (M-AAA) and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) will require information regarding the positions and salaries paid from the M-AAA ARP funds. Grant recipients must maintain records that accurately reflect the work performed by vendors, artists, other contractual personnel, and/or salaried employees which are charged, in whole or in part, to M-AAA ARP funds. Documentation will be required in the Final Report. Further, grant recipients must maintain all documentation related to the M-AAA ARP grant for three years following the submission of the Final Report.

M-AAA POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Grant recipients must comply with the Federal policies and legal requirements, statutes, and regulations as stated in [M-AAA's Assurance of Compliance](#).

Grant recipients are required to make accommodations for constituents with disabilities at grant-funded activities upon request. The National Endowment for the Arts has [resources to assist arts organizations in making accommodations](#).

Grant recipients must compensate all professional performers and related or supporting professional personnel at no less than the prevailing minimum rate of compensation. This requirement is in accordance with the regulations issued by the Secretary of Labor in part 505 of Title 29 of the [Code of Federal Regulations](#). Part 505 does not provide information on specific compensation levels.

Grant awards are considered income. Grant recipients are responsible for all tax obligations under federal, state, and local laws. M-AAA recommends that all recipients consult a tax accountant or local Internal Revenue Service office with questions or concerns regarding deductions and reporting.

Grant recipients who fail to properly acknowledge Mid-America Arts Alliance and the National Endowment for the Arts' support in programs, websites, press releases, and other communications materials for the supported activities may not be considered for future funding opportunities.

All changes related to grant funding must be submitted in writing to M-AAA staff in a timely manner. Awards may be revised or revoked in light of such changes.

APPEALS PROCESS

M-AAA ARP award decisions are discretionary and are not subject to appeal. Given the expedited nature of the review, M-AAA will not provide review comments for any applications.

HOW TO APPLY

Applicants must submit an application by 11:59 p.m. CDT on November 1, 2021 through M-AAA's online application form found here:

<https://www.tfaforms.com/49333399>

The following is the Grant Application At-A-Glance. Use it to prepare your responses. Data entered into the online form can be saved for editing later.