

artisticINNOVATIONS

A SERVICE OF MID-AMERICA ARTS ALLIANCE

Artistic Innovations Grant Program Call for Applications

Deadline: 11:59 p.m. CST, Thursday, February 16, 2023

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.

This grant program is provided through generous support from the National Endowment for the Arts (CFDA #45.025 Promotion of the Arts Partnership Agreements). The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) 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.

[Read M-AAA's Strategic Plan](https://www.maaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/MAAA-Strategic-Plan-2020_low-res.pdf) to learn more about our plans, goals, and values at https://www.maaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/MAAA-Strategic-Plan-2020_low-res.pdf.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The objective of the Artistic Innovations Grant Program is to support the creation of new, original works of art by eligible in-region artists and organizations. See [Applicant Eligibility Requirements](#) on page 2 for more information.

The works of art culminate in at least two public-facing events: one, the premiere feature presentation and the second, an educational outreach event that occurs in M-AAA's six-state region between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024. See [Project Eligibility Requirements](#) on page 4 for more information.

M-AAA will incorporate principles of equity, access, and inclusion in our implementation of the Artistic Innovations Grant Program. Applications will be assessed for artistic merit and artistic excellence. See [Application Review and Project Selection Criteria](#) on page 6 for more information.

Awards will be made across the six-state M-AAA region, with at least two grants awarded per state (Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas). This program will disburse matching grants of up to \$15,000 to no less than twelve grantees.

M-AAA intends to make awards that encourage the spirit of experimentation, exploration, and benefit a broad constituency. We encourage applications from a variety of eligible applicants including:

- Artists and organizations that embody and/or 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,
- Artists and organizations from rural to urban communities, and
- Artists and organizations that may be applying to M-AAA for a grant for the first time.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Individual Artist Applicants *must*:

1. Not be an Artistic Innovations grant recipient or the featured artist/ensemble in another Artistic Innovations project between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023;
2. Not submit more than one application in a single application cycle;
3. Be at least 21 years of age on or before the application deadline;
4. Provide a valid Social Security Number if selected for funding;
5. Have a résumé that demonstrates at least three years of engagement in a creative practice prior to the application deadline. The creative practice is not required to have taken place during consecutive years. If the applicant's creative practice was affected or suspended due to COVID-19, the application may reference 2020, 2021, or 2022 activities that were canceled or reimagined due to the pandemic. Virtual activities are considered creative practice. The applicant may also choose to list creative practice from a year other than 2020 or 2021. For the purposes of defining eligibility, "three-years of engagement" refers to when the applicant began their creative practice independent of activities required in pursuit of an academic degree or other certification;
6. Apply directly on their own behalf. Applications through a fiscal sponsor/agent are not allowed;
7. Have lived in the M-AAA region full-time for at least three years prior to the application deadline and if awarded remain a resident during the entire grant period of activity;
8. Be in good standing with M-AAA and all federal agencies, with no delinquent reports and/or grant documents;
9. Commit to M-AAA's Grantee Assurance of Compliance and Federal Suspension and Disbarment Policy [<https://www.maaa.org/assurance-of-compliance/>]; and

10. Agree to acknowledge M-AAA and the NEA [<https://www.maaa.org/about/downloads/>] in all programs and press materials related to the project if funded.

Applicant Organizations *must*:

1. Not be an Artistic Innovations grant recipient or a featured artist/ensemble or partnering organization in another Artistic Innovations project between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023;
2. Not submit more than one application in a single application cycle;
3. Be a nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)3, US organization, a unit of state or local government, or a federally recognized tribal community located in the geographic US territories known as the states of Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, or Texas;
4. 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;
5. 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;
6. Have completed 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, 2021, or 2022 programming that was canceled or reimagined 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, 2021, or 2022. For the purpose 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;
7. Have arts and culture explicitly stated as central to the organization's mission. An organization that includes 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;
8. 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&rqn=div5) [<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=pt29.3.505&rqn=div5>];
9. Apply directly on their own behalf. Applications through a fiscal sponsor/agent are not allowed;

10. 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>];
11. Have and provide a valid UEI (Unique Entity Identifier) which will be verified in the [System for Award Management](https://sam.gov/content/home) [<https://sam.gov/content/home>];
12. Be in good standing with M-AAA and all federal agencies, with no delinquent reports and/or grant documents;
13. Commit to M-AAA's Grantee Assurance of Compliance and Federal Suspension and Disbarment Policy [<https://www.maaa.org/assurance-of-compliance/>]; and
14. Agree to acknowledge M-AAA and the NEA [<https://www.maaa.org/about/downloads/>] in all programs and press materials related to the project if funded.

Those that are not eligible to apply include:

- For-profit organizations;
- Organizations whose primary focus, programming, and mission is not specifically arts related;
- State Arts Agencies;
- Fiscal sponsors; and
- Public television and other public media organizations.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

A great Artistic Innovations project is a work that has in-person experiences of art, art making, or artists at the heart of the endeavor and introduces a new original idea or artwork to the applicant's audience. M-AAA recognizes that in-person projects might not be possible given ongoing public health concerns surrounding COVID-19, but for the purposes of the application process we ask that the applicant plan for and describe the best-case scenario in which in-person experiences can take place.

Eligible projects must:

1. Be new and original artwork at any point in its creative development. Artwork may span one or more creative disciplines including, but not limited to:
 - Crafts (Clay, Fiber, Glass, Leather, Metal, Mixed Media, Paper, Plastic, Wood)
 - Dance/movement (Ballet, Ethnic, Jazz, Tribal, Modern)
 - Design Arts (Architecture, Fashion, Graphic, Industrial, Interior, Urban/Metropolitan)
 - Folk/Traditional Arts (Crafts, Visual Arts, Dance)
 - Humanities (Facilitated conversations, Compilation of historical documentation, Preservation of history)
 - Literature (Fiction, Memoirs, Non-Fiction, Playwriting, Poetry)

- Media Arts (Film Arts, Film Audio, Film Technology/Experiments, Film, Video, Podcasts)
- Music (Band, Chamber, Ethnic, Jazz, New, Orchestral, Popular, Solo/Recital, Song Writing)
- Music Theatre/Opera (Musicals, Opera)
- Oral Traditions (Spoken word, Stand-up Comedy, Storytelling)
- Theater (Mime, Puppet, Young Audiences, General)
- Visual Arts (Collage, Experimental, Graphics, Multimedia, Painting, Photography, Printmaking, Sculpture)

This list is not comprehensive. Please contact M-AAA staff at innovations@maa.org with questions regarding a specific art discipline that is not listed above.

2. Not have more than one application submitted for it in a single application cycle;
3. Include at least two public-facing events: one, the premiere or feature presentation of the work and the second, an educational or outreach event about the work;
4. Have public-facing events that occur in M-AAA's six-state region;
5. Have public-facing events that occur between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024;
6. Exclusively draw upon the talent of artists who reside in the M-AAA region at the time of application and throughout the grant period of activity;
7. Have a grant request of no more than \$15,000. Applicants are encouraged to request an amount that is reflective of the project and their capacity to manage the grant; and
8. Have a budget that reflects a 1:1 dollar-for-dollar match for the grant amount requested. Individual artists may meet the 1:1 match requirement through a combination of cash and in-kind contributions. Organizational applicants must show evidence of a cash match.
 - a. All funding, procured or pending, should be included in the budget. Federal and other M-AAA grant funding procured or pending for the project must be included in the budget. Federal funding cannot be used to meet the 1:1 match requirement. Indirect costs, debt repayment, trusts, endowment funds, or investments, fundraising activities, lobbying, capital outlay including construction projects, purchase or renovation of facilities and expenses associated with the project's opening or closing (e.g., receptions) are not allowable expenses in the project budget.
 - b. M-AAA grant funding must be used exclusively for direct project expenses incurred in the art-making process and production of public-facing events. Allowed expenditures include, but are not limited to commissioning fees, artists' fees, rehearsal or studio expenses, production or exhibition materials, as well as promotion and audience development for all public-facing events related to the project.

- c. M-AAA grant funding *cannot* be used for:
- Contracts with artists/personnel who reside outside M-AAA's region;
 - Compensation for applicant organization's board of directors;
 - Subgranting, regranting, or cash awards;
 - Indirect costs;
 - Expenses associated with the project's opening or closing (e.g., receptions); and
 - Expenses associated with benefits or fundraiser events.
- d. Grant funds may be used for expenses incurred starting on or after July 1, 2023, and must be totally expended on or by June 30, 2024.

Projects not eligible for consideration include:

- Engagement solely through online streaming content;
- Adaptations from one medium to another;
- Remounting of past work in a new venue;
- Traditional restaging of classic productions;
- Rereleases of previously published or recorded material;
- Acquisitions;
- Awards/fellowships;
- Facility construction, maintenance, renovation;
- Institution/organization establishment or support;
- Regranting;
- Repair/restoration, conservation;
- Student assessment;
- Stabilization/endowment/challenge;
- Art festivals or fairs;
- Art competitions;
- Scholarships or fundraisers;
- Projects that involve any artist who resides outside the M-AAA region;
- Projects with budgets that include indirect costs and/or expenses associated with the project's opening or closing (e.g., receptions); and
- Projects with more than one application submitted.

APPLICATION REVIEW AND PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA

An application will be deemed ineligible by M-AAA staff if it is incomplete at the time of submission or does not meet the Applicant or Project Eligibility Requirements. Ineligible applicants will be notified by M-AAA with rationale to help the applicant adapt for future submissions.

If deemed eligible for consideration, applications are evaluated by an independent review panel on the basis of Artistic Merit Through Stewardship of Funding and Artistic Excellence through the Artwork.

Artistic Merit Through Stewardship of Funding

- Project Design: The application includes a realistic timeline, an appropriate budget, clear artistic-based objectives, and adequate risk management considerations.
- Project Management: The application indicates the ability of the applicant to implement the project as demonstrated by the qualifications of those involved, including appropriate paid and volunteer staff, and a proactive plan for audience development.
- Project Equity and Accessibility: The application reflects fair practices to access resources and an inclusive approach in the representation, participation, and creation of the artwork. The application reflects evidence that funded project services, information, and facilities, where funded activities are to take place will be accessible for individuals with disabilities, including but not limited to individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind, have difficulty speaking, have a physical disability including those that require the use of wheelchairs or prosthetics, visual disability, developmental disability, learning disability, mental illness, or chronic illness.

Artistic Excellence through the Artwork

- Project Leadership: The application indicates that individuals or arts organizations involved in the project design and execution demonstrate skills, expertise, and experiences that are central to the project as evidenced in the work samples.
- Project Impact: The application reflects how the project fits into the scope and mission of the applicant's body of work and demonstrates the project's reach and/or depth of engagement, including geographic and demographic characteristics and accessibility for individuals with disabilities through its execution and evaluation.
- Overall Grant Program and Project Alignment: The application demonstrates how the project aligns with the Artistic Innovations Grant Program objectives to support the creation of original, innovative and/or experimental artwork, and incorporates principles of equity, access, and inclusion, through at least two public-facing events in M-AAA's six-state region.

PANEL ADJUDICATION AND RANKING SCALE

Eligible applications will be reviewed by an independent discipline-specific advisory panel consisting of arts professionals, including artists, arts administrators, and lay persons, who reflect a regional geographic, ethnic, and minority representation as well as diverse aesthetic and cultural points of view.

Panelists reviewing applications use the follow 6-point scale for each of the Project Selection Criteria listed above:

6 – Exemplary: Fully achieves the stated criteria. Meets ALL of the review criteria requirements to the highest degree.

5 – Strong: Strongly achieves the stated criteria. Meets all the review criteria requirements to a significant degree.

4 – Good: sufficiently achieves the stated criteria. Meets all of the review criteria requirements to some degree.

3 – Fair: Moderately achieves the stated criteria. Meets most of the review requirements.

2 – Marginal: Minimally achieves the stated criteria. Meets some of the review requirements.

1 – Weak: Does not achieve the stated criteria. Inadequately meets the review requirements.

GRANT AWARDS

Matching grant awards of up to \$15,000 will be disbursed to no less than 12 grantees to support the creation and public presentation of new, original artwork. Grant projects must adhere to the Uniform Guidance under 2 CFR Part 200 and the NEA's General Terms and Conditions.

Artistic Innovations Grant Program funds derive from federal funds from the NEA. An organization or individual artist may not receive this award and a direct grant from the NEA or another Federal agency for the same project during the same or an overlapping grant period of activity.

If selected, the organization will enter into a grant agreement with M-AAA. The agreement will outline the terms and conditions, including federal regulations and project and crediting requirements of the Artistic Innovations Grant Program award.

GRANTEE REQUIREMENTS

Grantees must comply with all requirements as stipulated in the grant agreement, including, but not limited to the following:

- Grantees are required to carry out activities consistent with the application as approved for funding.
- Changes to funded activities must be proposed in advance by the Grantee and require written approval from M-AAA staff before those changes are implemented. Awards may be revised in light of such changes. Requests for changes are considered on a case-by-case basis; approval is not guaranteed.

- Grantees 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/];
- Grantees must complete an online interim and final report form provided by M-AAA. The interim report denotes any new project developments that took place between the time of application and the start of the grant period of activity. The online final report form summarizes grant-funded activities and accomplishments at the end of the project activity period or at the end of the period of support, whichever occurs first;
- Grantees must acknowledge [M-AAA and the National Endowment for the Arts](https://www.maaa.org/about/downloads/) [https://www.maaa.org/about/downloads/] in all marketing and communications materials that specifically reference the project including printed, electronic materials and websites (program, catalogs, postcards, posters, newsletters, leaflets, publication, etc.);
- Grantees are responsible for and must retain all records, receipts, and proof of expenses for a minimum of three years following the grant period of activity and provide those documents to M-AAA or the NEA upon request; and
- *If awarded*, the Grantee will not be eligible for a grant of \$1,000 or more through any other M-AAA granting programs during the term of the Artistic Innovations grant agreement;
- Grantees must expend all funds between July 1, 2023 and on or before June 30, 2024.

PROGRAM TIMELINE

- Application will be available no later than Friday, January 9, 2023.
- Applications are due by 11:59 p.m. CDT on Thursday, February 16, 2023.
- Applications will be reviewed by M-AAA staff for applicant and project eligibility in February and March 2023.
- Discipline Specific Advisory Panel Review underway in April 2023.
- Funding notification will be made the week of Monday, June 12, 2023.
- Grant agreement and funding distribution will take place in July 2023.
- Grant period of activity spans July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024.
- Final Report due no later than July 31, 2024.

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

Once submitted, applications will be screened by M-AAA staff for Applicant Eligibility and Project Eligibility. See [Applicant Eligibility](#) and [Project Eligibility](#) above for more information.

Eligible applications will be reviewed by advisory panels for artistic excellence and artistic merit. See [Review Criteria](#) above for more information.

Grantees will receive grant agreements, an online interim report form, W9 Form and an initial grant payment in July 2023. Funding will be distributed through two payments: 50% upon execution of the Grant Agreement, Interim Report and W9 Form. The balance will follow the successful review of the online final report, which is due no later than July 31, 2024.

FINAL REPORTING

M-AAA will provide an online Final Report form. Grantees must complete and submit one no later than July 31, 2024. The Final Report form requires a summary about the project, attendance numbers, photos of the project and other documentation including proof of NEA and M-AAA acknowledgment in online and print materials. A Final Report at a Glance document will be provided with the Grant Agreement for ease of reference when collection during the grant period.

Grantees must document purchases, the work by vendors, artists, and other contractual personnel which are charged, in whole or in part, to the Artistic Innovations Grant funds. Further, grantees must maintain that documentation for three years following the submission of the Final Report.

M-AAA POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Grantees must comply with the Federal policies and legal requirements, statutes, and regulations as stated in M-AAA's Assurance of Compliance.

Grantees are required to make accommodations for constituents with disabilities at grant-funded activities upon request. The NEA has resources to assist arts organizations in making accommodations.

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

Grantees who fail to properly acknowledge M-AAA and the NEA's support in programs, websites, press releases, and other communications materials for the supported activities may not be considered for future funding opportunities.

HOW TO APPLY

M-AAA accepts grant applications via an online form. Google Chrome is the recommended web browser to use when working in the online application form. Occasionally it is useful to clear your browsing data or clear your cookies to maximize the functionality of the application platform.

The following is the Grant Application At-A-Glance. Use it to prepare your responses in Microsoft Word, Google Docs, or a similar note taking application to ensure you have a backup for reference as you proceed. While draft applications can be saved online, technology is not flawlessly reliable, we strongly recommend you prepare your narrative responses before working in the application form.

Data typed in the online application form can be saved for editing later by clicking "Save my progress and resume later" at the top or bottom of the application form webpage. Each time you save your application you will be asked for an email address and a password. And each time you save your application you will be sent an email with new instructions on how to resume your draft application. To resume the most recent version of your application refer to the most recent email in your inbox.

If you have accessibility needs for an alternate format or process for completing the application please contact: Angelette Severt, Operations and Accessibility Coordinator at angelette@maa.org or (816) 421-1388 ext. #216.

Applications are due before 11:59 p.m. CDT on Thursday , February 16, 2023 through M-AAA's online application platform.

The application for Individual Artists can be found here:

<https://www.tfaforms.com/4973907>

The application for Organizations can be found here:

<https://www.tfaforms.com/4973502>

We urge you to submit your application early to ensure your materials are properly received. The application platform may experience slower processing times when user traffic is higher as the deadline nears. The form will close promptly at midnight.

If you have any questions or concerns about the Artistic Innovations Grant Program email innovations@maa.org.