

Cultural Sustainability:

Operational Impact Grants for Small Arts Organizations

Wallace 


US RAO
Regional Arts Organizations


MID-AMERICA ARTS ALLIANCE



ZOOM ETIQUETTE

MUTE YOUR MIC

CAMERA ON/OFF

CLOSED CAPTIONS

USE THE CHAT/Q&A

   A COMMENT

AGENDA

Welcome + Introductions

Cultural Sustainability Overview + Goals + Grant Guidelines

Technical Assistance + Evaluation

Application + Criteria + Eligibility

Needs Conversation

Closing





WHO WE ARE

Mid-America Arts Alliance is a nonprofit, Regional Arts Organization that serves Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas. We focus on strengthening communities and improving lives through extraordinary cultural experiences.

M-AAA exists to activate, empower, and amplify community through the arts. To do this, we make grants, provide career development, and support arts organizations and artists of all disciplines.



CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY

We at Mid-America Arts Alliance recognize the need to better support groups that face challenges with traditional grant programs.

Through the Cultural Sustainability pilot program we aim to broaden the range of operational structures eligible for funding. We will highlight the crucial role that arts and cultural organizations play in enriching both their local communities and the broader cultural landscape. These organizations, particularly those closely connected to underrepresented communities, are vital to fostering cultural diversity and sustainability.

M-AAA expects to distribute a total of \$1.1 million across the region, awarding 22 organizational grants of \$50,000 each.



PROGRAM GOALS

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Grantees will receive \$50,000 (nonmatching) to enhance their organizational capacity, expand their impact, and improve the well-being of both their organization and the communities they serve.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Through a series of monthly learnings and one-on-one consultations, grantees will engage in collaborative learning, resource sharing, and connect with new networks to develop innovative strategies that drive broad, sector-wide impact.

SHARED LEARNING

Via data collection, USRAOs will collaborate to explore and implement equitable grantmaking practices and refine their processes to best serve their respective regions.



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Technical assistance, also known as capacity building, will be provided in three-month cycles. Each cycle will include, but not be limited to, monthly cohort sessions, one-on-one consultations, and resource sharing, to connect grantees with new networks and develop innovative strategies that drive broad, sector-wide impact.

CYCLE 1

May 2025 –July 2025

CYCLE 2

September–November 2025

CYCLE 3

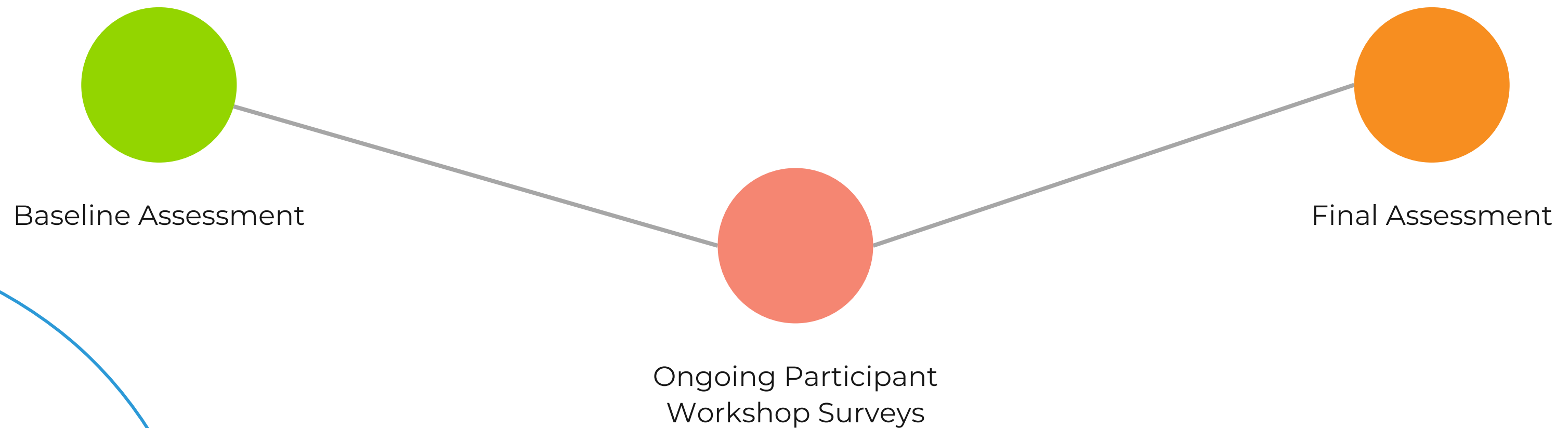
January 2026–April 2026

*monthly cohort meetings : every third Thursday of the month

EVALUATION

Guiding Question:

How do historically underserved arts organizations founded in underserved communities align their mission, organizational structures, and engagement with their communities to enhance their organizational well-being and that of the communities they serve?



ELIGIBILITY

Organization

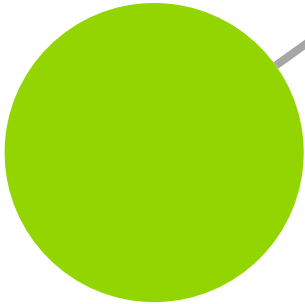
Be a **nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization; fiscally sponsored group; artist-centered or -led business** (LLC, S Corps, Limited or General Partnerships); **state or federally recognized tribal government**

Programming

3 years of arts programming
(does not have to be consecutive)

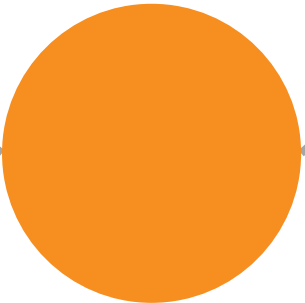
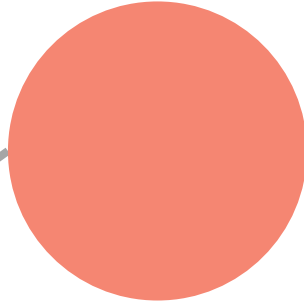
NOT Eligible:

Single-artist sole proprietorships; Individuals; units of local, state, or federal government; schools, including public or private preschools, K-12, colleges, and universities; and ArtsHERE grant recipients are not eligible for this initiative.



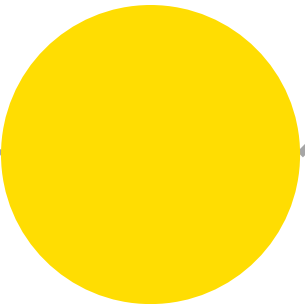
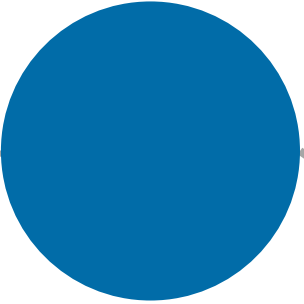
Location

Be located within Mid-America's six-state region of **Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas**



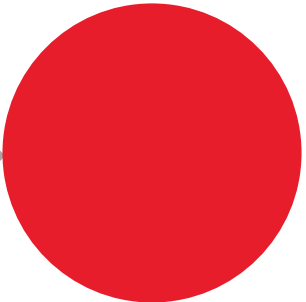
Communities

Self-identify as an underrepresented community. Underrepresented communities refers to those whose opportunities have been limited by factors such as geography, race/ethnicity, economics and/or disability.



Other factors:

Also encouraged to apply: first-time applicants or those who have received few or no grants from M-AAA; organizations with new leadership in key roles; organizations located in rural, remote, or isolated areas of the region





FUNDING ELIGIBILITY

Nonmatching, unrestricted funding to support the general mission of the organization, advance organizational goals including new programs and initiatives.

Funding can be used to pay for overhead expenses, such as rent, utilities, salaries, infrastructure, supplies, and day-to-day business expenses.



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FUNDING PRIORITIES

Successful applicants will help diversify M-AAA's historical grantmaking including:

- Organizations led by people of color or members of other underrepresented communities, either artistically or administratively
- Organizations with a demonstrated commitment to underrepresented communities
- Organizations located in rural, remote or isolated areas of the region
- First-time applicants or those who have received few or no grants from M-AAA
- Organizations with new leadership in key roles



APPLICATION

- Eligibility Questionnaire
- Applicant Information
- Narrative Questions
- Document Uploads (proof of your organization's status and your organization's budget)
- Applications will be accepted through M-AAA's online grant portal and reviewed by a panel of arts leaders, professionals, and practitioners who reside in the M-AAA region with experience and knowledge in one or more art forms.
- Grant materials are available in alternative accessible formats upon request. If you have accessibility needs for an alternate format or process for completing the application, please email us at culturalsustainability@maaa.org





APPLICANT SUPPORT



RECORDINGS

Applicants will have access to the overview portion of our roundtable discussions on our website at www.maaa.org and our YouTube Channel www.youtube.com/@midamericartsalliance.

FAQS

A list of frequently asked questions addressing aspects of the Cultural Sustainability Program can be found on our website at www.maaa.org.

OFFICE HOURS

Beginning in November, applicants can consult with staff before applying during office hours and help desk support. The office hours schedule and zoom link will be made available on the website at www.maaa.org. Please note that M-AAA staff will not review or provide comments on draft materials.





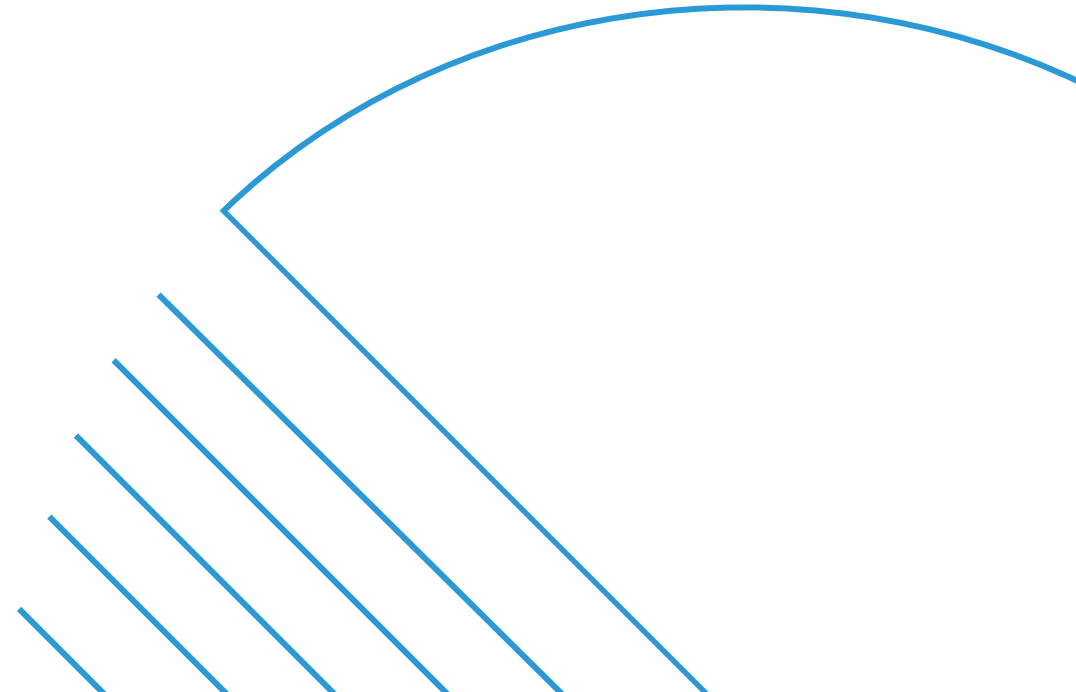
TIMELINE

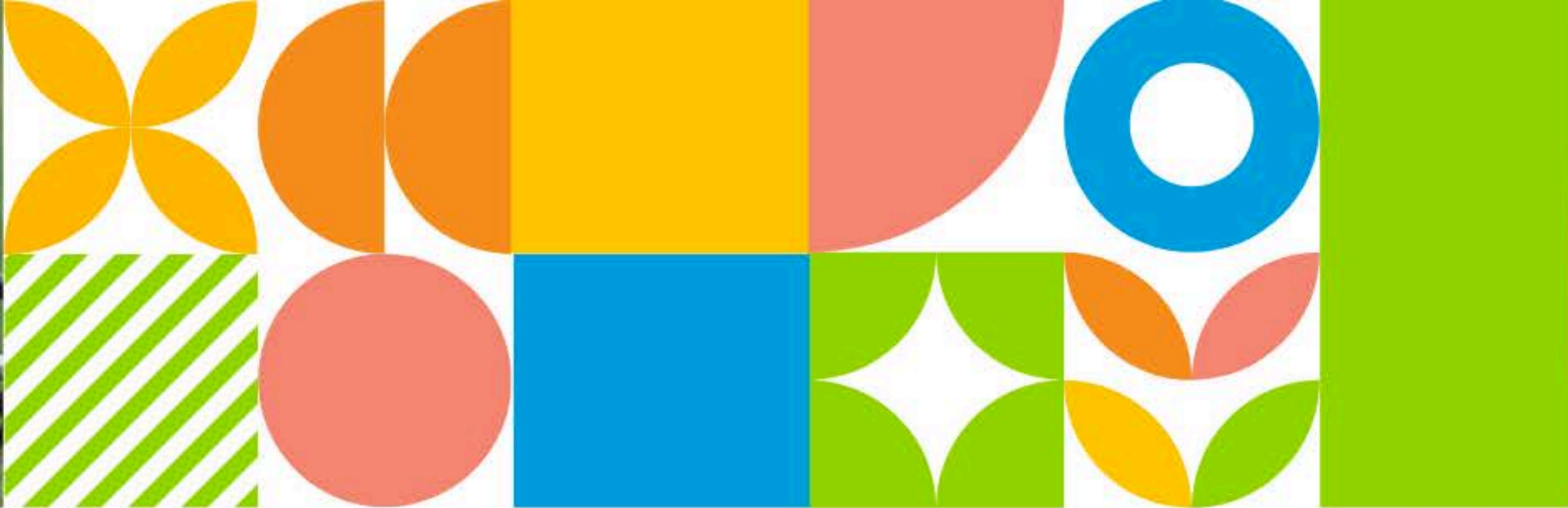
- Applications open October 30, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. CT
- Office Hours on most Wednesdays in November, from 2-4 p.m. CT
- Applications close January 10, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. CT
- Awards for Cultural Sustainability: Operational Impact Grants for Small Arts Organizations made April 2025
- Public announcement April 2025
- Technical Assistance begins in May 2025
- Final Report, June 2025

Q&A



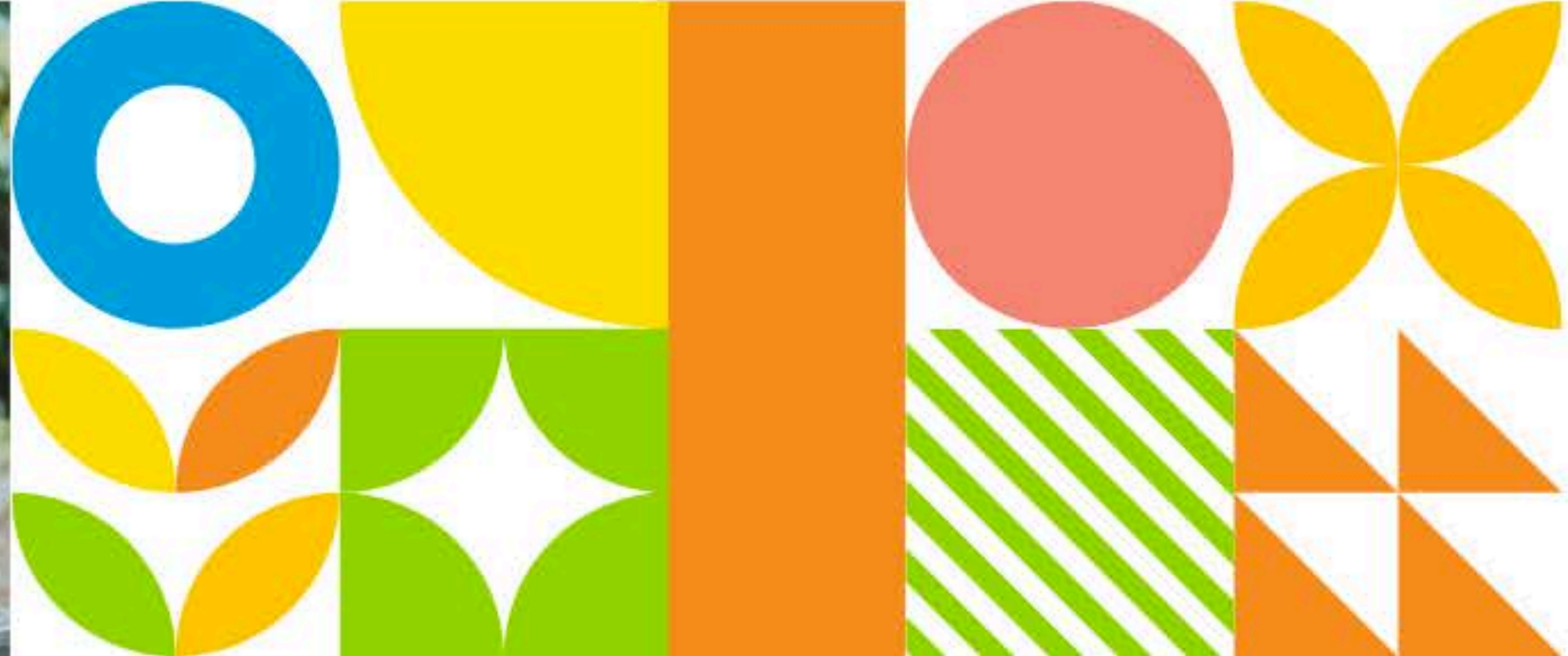
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THANK YOU

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT
CULTURALSUSTAINABILITY@MAAA.ORG



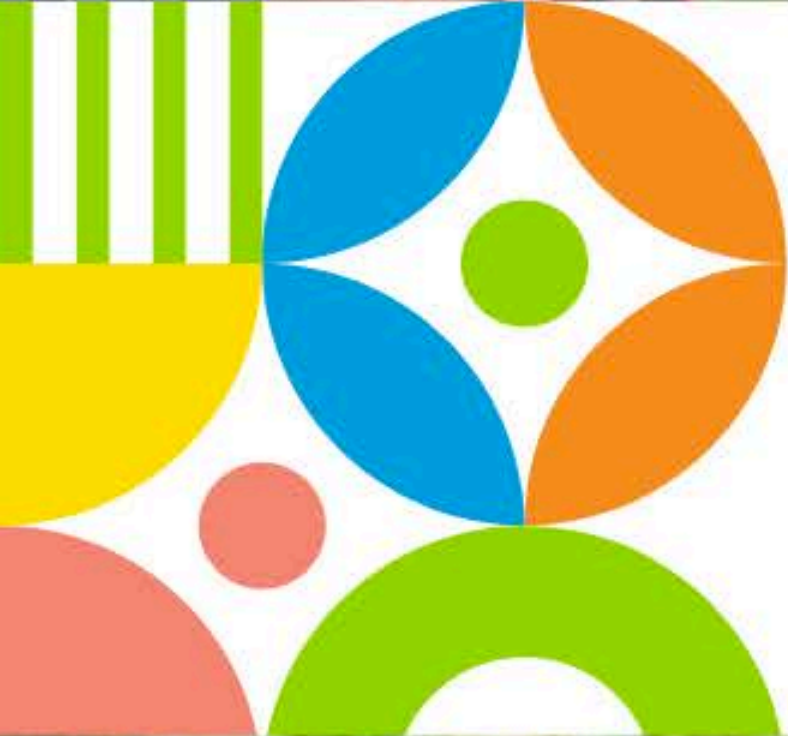
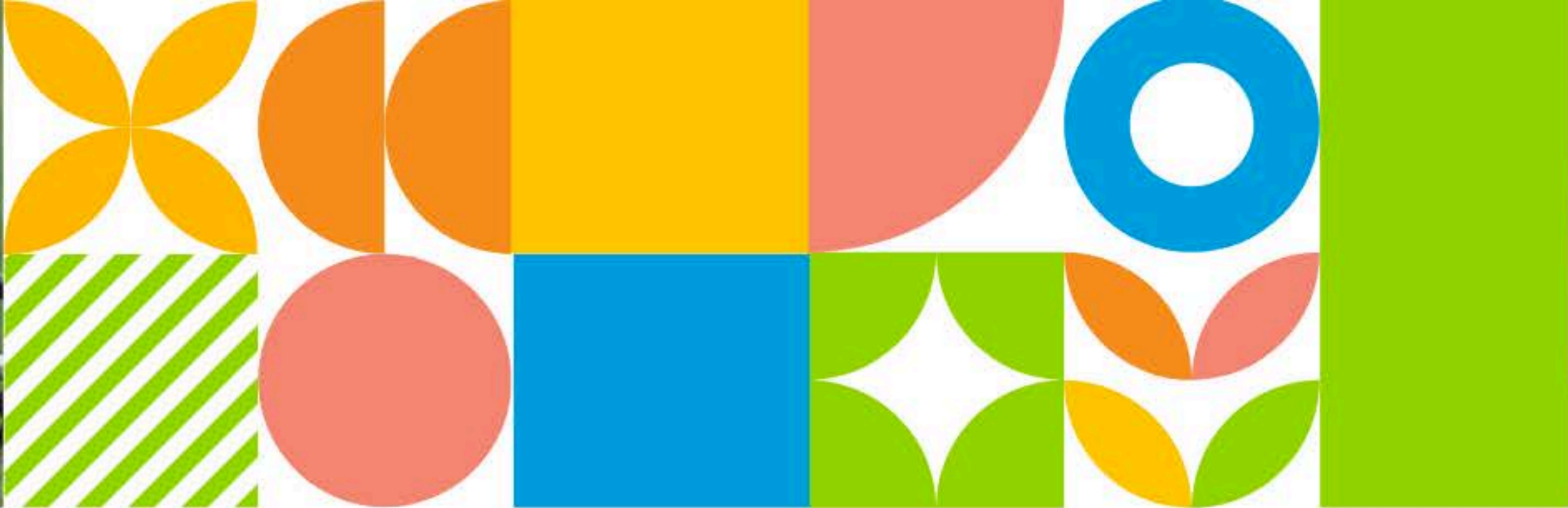


WHAT DO YOU NEED FROM THE CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM?



QUESTIONS:

- 1) Fundraising aside, what professional development needs are pressing for you and/or your organization as a nonprofit and/or as a for profit entity?
- 2) What resources and practices are most critical to your organization's sustainability and resiliency?
- 3) What challenges or opportunities exist for your organization at this moment?
- 4) What do you envision being offered through a cohort experience?
- 5) Is there anything else you would like to share with Mid-America Arts Alliance?



THANK YOU

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