

METROPOLITAN



R E G I O N A L
A R T S C O U N C I L



Arts Learning

Grants of up to \$10,000 for arts learning activities in all disciplines

Grant Guidelines and Application July 2009 – June 2010

Metropolitan Regional Arts Council
2324 University Avenue West, Suite 114
St. Paul, MN 55114
651-645-0402

fax 651-523-6382

e-mail: mrac@mrac.org

website: www.mrac.org

MN Relay Service, dial 7-1-1 (or 1-800-627-3529)

This information can be made available in the following alternative formats: Braille, large print, audio tape and computer disk. We also can help your group find a language interpreter to translate these guidelines. To accommodate your request, the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council will need at least 10 working days.



WHO MRAC SERVES

MRAC serves Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott and Washington counties. We work in urban areas as well as greater metropolitan communities. We serve formal and informal groups with annual expenses less than \$300,000. Groups do not need to be classified as tax-exempt by the IRS in order to apply.

MRAC'S VISION FOR THE METRO AREA



MRAC'S MISSION

The Metropolitan Regional Arts Council promotes incorporation of the arts into the daily lives of all communities by providing leadership, advocacy, grants and services.

MRAC'S FUNDING SOURCES

As one of 11 regional arts councils in Minnesota, MRAC is largely funded by an appropriation from the Minnesota Legislature and the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund. MRAC also receives a generous grant from The McKnight Foundation.

WE'D LIKE TO GET TO KNOW YOU!

Call us - 651-645-0402

Stop by the office

2324 University Avenue West, Suite 114
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55114

E-mail us - mrac@mrac.org

Check out our website - www.mrac.org

Sign up for our monthly e-newsletter at our website www.mrac.org

WHAT MRAC OFFERS YOU

Grant programs

Community Arts—up to \$5,000 for arts activities in all disciplines. Recommended for smaller arts groups; newly formed groups; community-based and volunteer groups; or first-time initiatives.

Arts Activities Support—up to \$10,000 for arts activities in all disciplines.

Arts Learning—up to \$10,000 for arts learning activities in all disciplines.

Capital—up to \$10,000 to purchase equipment and related supplies and services, or to make capital improvements.

Organizational Development Project—up to \$10,000 for projects that strengthen the management or administration of nonprofit arts groups.

Creative Intersections—up to \$10,000 to support innovative and effective partnerships that integrate arts and culture into plans for community development and enrichment.

Management Consulting Fund—up to \$1,500 for small management consulting projects designed to strengthen the management or administration of arts groups.

Management Training Fund—up to \$600 for staff and volunteers of nonprofit arts groups to attend management workshops, classes or seminars.

Emergency ADA Access Fund—up to \$600 for unforeseen project or program costs to facilitate access for persons with disabilities.

Training, workshops and services

MRAC's grant application workshops help applicants learn how to write a successful MRAC grant.

MRAC's training programs and workshops provide opportunities to enhance management skills. All activities are detailed on our website.

MRAC's website also provides links to resources of interest to MRAC constituents including PDF versions of most MRAC publications.

Advocacy

MRAC is committed to giving voice to the needs of small and volunteer arts organizations throughout the metro area.

METROPOLITAN



R E G I O N A L

ARTS COUNCIL

CONTENTS

PART I GUIDELINES

Arts Learning Program	2
• Description	
• Overview	
• Requirements	
• Deadlines	
• Eligibility	
Before You Apply – Technical Assistance	6
What Happens After You Apply	6
Definitions	7

PART II GRANT APPLICATION

How to Apply	9
What to Include	10
Application Checklist	15
Application Forms	17

PART I GUIDELINES

Arts Learning Program Description

The Arts Learning Program provides grants of up to \$10,000 for high quality arts learning activities in any arts discipline to communities within the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area (Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott and Washington). Grant requests may include costs for artists and other personnel, postage, supplies, equipment, printing, local travel and other expenses necessary to carry out the project.

Overview

The Metropolitan Regional Arts Council's vision for the seven-county metropolitan area is a region in which

- Artists, arts organizations, and arts activities thrive;
- Public value of the arts is understood and acted upon by community members, leaders, and policy makers;
- Art is integrated into the social fabric and identity of every community.

To accomplish this vision, the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council (MRAC) works to make the arts an integral part of each community by cultivating the arts at the grassroots level and by extending the benefits of the arts to people throughout the region. MRAC recognizes the benefit of dynamic relationships among artists, arts organizations, and their communities in achieving this vision.

The advent of this program is a result of the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund as appropriated by the Minnesota State Legislature with money from the vote of the people of Minnesota on November 4, 2008.

This grant program is intended to serve as a catalyst for innovative projects in which arts organizations provide high-quality, age-appropriate arts education for Minnesotans of all ages to develop knowledge, skills, and understanding of the arts. These projects can occur in a broad range of venues; examples include, but are not limited to, public schools, community and adult education programs, parks and recreation programs, and others as appropriate to arts learning.

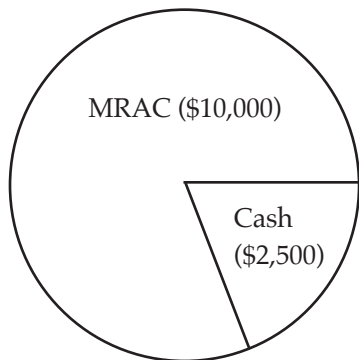
MRAC's goals for the Arts Learning Program are to cultivate creativity and deepen knowledge of and/or through the arts for children, youth and adults by engaging people in extended arts experiences and activities with clearly articulated learning objectives. Learning objectives may include objectives for learning about the arts and/or learning about things through the arts. Extended activities are those in which participants have multiple and/or repeated opportunities to experience and learn about and/or through the arts.

For example, a one-time performance in a school or similar venue is not considered an extended activity. A residency that includes contact with an artist or arts groups over several days, weeks, or months is considered an extended activity.

MRAC envisions that there will be a broad range of project outcomes. Applicants must clearly articulate the expected outcomes of their projects, and how they will measure and evaluate these outcomes.

Program Requirements

For every four MRAC dollars requested, you must match or raise one dollar from another source. In-kind donations can not be used to supply the match. Match sources may include general operating funds, earned income or revenue specific to this project, and other grants.



Example: with a total project budget of \$12,500, you may apply to the Arts Learning program for a grant of up to \$10,000. You must then match the \$10,000 request with at least \$2,500.

About matching funds: funds from other Minnesota state government grants to or contracts with the applicant organization and/or school(s) and/or other organization(s) involved in the project can not be used as a qualifying match.

About earned income: provide detail about how this money will be earned in the space provided on Project Budget/Income, page 21. Example: if your project includes a public performance, note the anticipated number of tickets to be sold, purchase price per ticket and total income projected.

Arts Learning Application Deadlines

	<i>Application Deadline*</i>	<i>Panel Review</i>	<i>Award Notification</i>	<i>Earliest Project Start Date*</i>
Fiscal Year 2009-2010	5 P.M. February 22, 2010	April 21 - 23	April 28, 2010	April 28, 2010

* MRAC will not fund projects that have already started. Please see page 7 for a definition of "earliest project start date."

Eligibility

To ensure eligibility, all applicants are strongly encouraged to read these guidelines thoroughly and attend an MRAC application workshop.

Who does this program fund?

- Nonprofit arts groups with annualized operating expenses less than \$300,000.
- Informal and/or unincorporated arts-focused groups and one-time arts projects with expenses less than \$300,000. If your group is not an IRS-tax-exempt organization, you must apply using a fiscal sponsor (see definition, page 7). The applicant group must have a board of directors or advisory committee that provides input on the project and oversight of the grant funds.
- Nonprofit, non-arts organizations with a history of arts programming and annualized arts programming expenses less than \$300,000 may apply if 1) the group's previous year's arts income and expense can be isolated from the organization's other costs and 2) the applicant can demonstrate clearly that the project is specifically and primarily intended to serve an under-served community (see definition, page 7).
- Community education units with arts budgets of any size when the applicant can demonstrate clearly that the project is specifically and primarily intended to serve an under-served community (see definition, page 7).

What does this program fund?

- Single-discipline or multidisciplinary activities that engage participants of any age group to learn about and/or through the arts over an extended period, and include, where possible, opportunities for participation and/or consumption by the general public. Activities may occur at a broad range of venues, including but not limited to public schools, after-school and summer program sites, community centers, parks and recreation sites, public housing and other congregate living facilities.

Who does this program NOT fund?

- Applicant groups located outside the seven-county metro area.
- For-profit organizations.
- Public, private, charter and home schools (activities may occur in schools, however schools and school support organizations such as PTA's, PTO's, school foundations, etc., can not be applicants).
- Past MRAC grant recipients who have not fulfilled final reporting requirements.

What does this program NOT fund?

- Activities located outside the seven-county metropolitan area.
- Projects that begin before the earliest project start date (see definition, page 7).
- Capital improvements or construction, purchase of capital equipment, purchase of real property or endowments, or the creation, purchase or installation of artwork when there is no accompanying community activity.
- Arts learning projects that supplant recently discontinued efforts, or are created to meet the State’s arts curriculum requirements. This includes compensation in full or part for ongoing school personnel, or compensation to arts organizations to provide essentially the same services that an ongoing teacher or arts specialist would be expected to provide.
- Costs for fundraising events.
- Activities that engage in political lobbying, serve the religious socialization of participants or discriminate against persons or groups.
- Projects that receive support from any other MRAC grant program.

How many MRAC grants may a group have at one time?

The following policies cover concurrent grants in MRAC’s major grant programs.

Arts groups are eligible to receive one grant from each of the following programs...

- Arts Learning
- Creative Intersections
- Arts Activities Support OR Community Arts
- Organizational Development OR Capital

...every MRAC fiscal year.

Non-arts organizations and community education units are eligible to receive...

- 1 Arts Learning* grant
AND
- 1 Creative Intersections* grant
AND
- 1 Arts Activities Support* grant
OR
up to 2 Community Arts grants IF the projects clearly serve different, underserved constituencies
AND
- 1 Organizational Development OR 1 Capital grant IF they have an independent and sustained arts program

...every MRAC fiscal year.

*Non-arts organizations and community education units may apply to these program IF 1) the group’s previous year’s arts income and expense can be isolated from the organization’s other costs and 2) the applicant can demonstrate clearly that the project is specifically and primarily intended to serve an under-served community

Before You Apply – Technical Assistance

Staff Assistance

For questions and assistance, please contact Jeff Prauer, jeff@mrac.org or 651-523-6390.

Application Workshops

MRAC offers free application workshops that address the process and criteria specific to each grant program. You are encouraged to attend a workshop to learn about changes in programs, get questions answered and discuss project ideas with program directors and other arts colleagues.

Grant Library

Because MRAC re-grants public funds, submitted applications are public information. MRAC maintains a library of these grant applications and recorded panel discussions. Applicants are encouraged to review grant applications and panel discussions to enhance their understanding of the process and improve their applications. If you call ahead, your program director can identify the successful applications most relevant to your project.

Website

Visit www.mrac.org to find additional information about MRAC programs, workshops and events, and to register for application workshops.

What Happens After You Apply

- MRAC staff reviews all applications for eligibility. Errors may reduce the size of your award or make the application ineligible. All late and incomplete applications are ineligible.
- A peer review panel considers all eligible applications. In the spirit of the Minnesota Open Meeting Law, the panel meeting is open to the public. Applicants are encouraged to attend to enhance their understanding of the application review process and to hear the panelists' comments directly. All applicants will be notified of the meeting.
- The panel submits its recommendations to the MRAC board of directors, which makes the final decisions on funding.
- Within 30 days of the panel review, applicants receive a letter notifying them of the board's decision. A list of funded applications is also posted on the MRAC website. If you want more insight on your application's review, you may call your program director for feedback.
- The board's funding decisions may be appealed solely on alleged procedural errors. There is no right of appeal based on the size of the grant awarded or on disagreements with the review panel's assessment of your application. Appellants must request an appeal in writing within 30 days of notification of the board decision. Call MRAC at 651-645-0402 for a copy of the appeal process.

Definitions

What does MRAC mean by an under-served community?

Under-served is a term MRAC uses to encompass 1) those who traditionally have not had access to the arts for reasons of physical access, geography or economics, and 2) those who do not generally have the opportunity to see their lives, culture or experiences reflected through the arts. This includes, but is not limited to, diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, age and gender groups, persons with disabilities and groups located outside the Minneapolis and St. Paul city limits.

What is a fiscal sponsor?

A *fiscal sponsor* is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization that receives MRAC grant monies and manages the financial aspects of the project on behalf of a group that does not have tax-exempt status. Your fiscal sponsor must be based in Minnesota; it may be an arts or social services organization, school, city or government agency.

What does in-kind mean?

In-kind refers to non-cash donations of goods and services for which your group would otherwise have to pay. In-kind goods and services may not be included in the budget for your Arts Learning grant application.

What determines a project's start date?

MRAC does not fund projects that are already under way. MRAC defines a project's start date as the point at which financial or other commitments are made that set the project in motion (e.g. rehearsals begin, contracts are signed, materials are printed). Because MRAC is a distributor of a legislative appropriation, and requires that all printed materials acknowledge the legislature as a funding source, grantees must wait until award notification before printing publicity materials. Please call MRAC if you are unclear about whether MRAC would consider that your project has started.

What is an ADA access plan?

ADA refers to the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act. This federal law makes access to cultural programs and services for persons with disabilities a civil right. In the spirit of that law, MRAC believes that the receipt of public money obligates its grant recipients to ensure that people with disabilities can fully participate in and enjoy arts activities.

One approach to understanding the many ways a group can become more accessible is to develop an ADA access plan. Such a plan serves to assess the accessibility of an organization's programs, services and facilities and define strategies for improvement. Completing an ADA access plan will help you to address the criterion of access in your grant application. MRAC has published an ADA access planning guide. Call 651-645-0402 to request a copy or download it from www.mrac.org.