

metro regional arts council



2017 Twin Cities World Refugee Day Festival, captured by Kurt Moses

Grant Guidelines 2018-2019

CAPITAL

Organizational support up to \$10,000 to purchase equipment and related supplies and services, or to make capital improvements

Deadline:

September 17, 2018

Earliest Start Date:

November 28, 2018

Review our guidelines, and contact MRAC with questions or for support. Translation available. MRAC will need 10 business days to obtain translation services.

Program Director:

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As one of 11 regional arts councils in Minnesota, MRAC is funded by an appropriation from the Minnesota Legislature and the Legacy Amendment Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund. In November, 2008, Minnesotans passed the Clean Water, Land & Legacy amendment to the Minnesota Constitution, which created the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund. Proceeds from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund "may be spent only on arts, arts education and arts access and to preserve Minnesota's history and cultural heritage."

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Capital grant program provides grants of up to \$10,000 to purchase equipment or other tangible asset and related supplies and services, or to make capital improvements for nonprofit arts groups within the seven-county metro area: Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott and Washington counties. Capital grant applications must show evidence that thorough planning has taken place.

Examples:

- Purchase of equipment (musical instruments, lighting board, video or sound equipment, etc.)
- Purchase of computer hardware and software
- Facility improvements to increase accessibility
- Facility improvements to performance or office space

IMPORTANT DATES

MRAC Fiscal Year	Application Deadline	Panel Review	Earliest Project Start Date	Latest Project End Date
July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019				
Capital	September 17, 2018 11:59 p.m.	Week of November 12, 2018	November 28, 2018	June 30, 2020

MRAC funds applications where arts and community intersect

ARTS MANAGEMENT

- Organizational Challenge
- Organizational Solution
- Ability



COMMUNITY

- Community Need & Support
- Equity & Inclusion



REQUIRED MATCH

10:1 match of dollars is required for this grant program. The match can be general operating funds, past surpluses, other grants, and earned revenue you plan to raise.

If you are requesting \$10,000 in funding, you must secure \$1000 from a non-state source.

See more details in the Project Budget Expense Section

BEFORE APPLYING - RESOURCES

The Metropolitan Regional Arts Council (MRAC) is a hands-on grantmaker and program directors want to help you prepare a strong application that will be ready for panel review. To that end, we strongly encourage you to reach out to the program director before you submit an application, especially if you are a first time applicant in the grant program. Additional assistance is provided in the following ways:

- a. **Program Directors**- MRAC Program Directors are available for questions on eligibility and program intent, project idea development, grant attachment verification, and also offer draft support for your grant application.
- b. **Grant Application Workshops**- MRAC offers free grant application workshops 4-6 weeks before the deadline to learn about the grant program and to discuss project ideas with program directors. Check the online calendar for dates and times: <https://mrac.org/events>
- c. **Grant Library**- Because MRAC distributes public funds, submitted applications are public information. MRAC maintains a library at our offices where you can review all previously submitted applications and their ratings. You may also visit www.mrac.org, click on "Grants" and follow links to "Recent Grant Awards" and request 3 previously successful applications to be emailed as pdfs; contact your program director to have these sample grants sent.
- d. **Online Resources**- Visit www.mrac.org/grants/grant-resources to access templates, technical how-tos for the grant interface, links to sites to find demographic information, and a glossary of terms.

HOW TO APPLY & ELIGIBILITY

MRAC grant applications **MUST** be completed and submitted online by **11:59:59 p.m.** We do not accept incomplete or late applications. Avoid last minute issues with the online submission by submitting early. Please read guidelines thoroughly to ensure eligibility.

- **All applicant groups AND art projects or activities **MUST** be located within the seven-county (Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, Washington) Twin Cities metro area.**

Applicant groups must be ONE of the following:

- Federally tax-exempt 501(c)(3) nonprofit arts organization with annual operating expenses of less than \$400,000.
- Informal and/or unincorporated arts-focused groups with a fiscal sponsor and one-time arts projects with expenses of less than \$400,000. The applicant group must have a board of directors or advisory committee that provides input on the project and oversight of the grant funds.

All Capital applicants must also:

- Have demonstrated two-years of programming or service history by the grant deadline
- Be registered in the state of Minnesota as a nonprofit by the grant deadline, even if not a 501(c)3 nonprofit. Groups may apply for state incorporation at <https://mblsportal.sos.state.mn.us/>
- If the group has an in-progress MRAC Organizational Development or Capital grant, all activities and expenditures must be complete in their entirety by November 28, 2018.

Applicant groups cannot be:

- Organizations registered with the MN Secretary of State as a profit-making Minnesota business (e.g. Business Corporation, Limited Liability Partnership, MN Public Benefit Corporations, etc.).
- Individual artists.
- Public, private, alternative, charter, or home schools (this includes school support organizations such as PTAs, PTOs, school foundations, etc.).
- Community education units may not apply for management related grants for their arts programs. However, a community education unit may serve as a fiscal sponsor.

This program does NOT fund:

- Production or presentation of arts events.
- Purchase of land or buildings, endowments, debt reduction or cash reserves.
- Projects that have received or are seeking support from any other MRAC grant program. However, groups may utilize a Management Consulting Fund grant as a precursor for a Capital project, in which case the MCF grant must be complete prior to the Capital earliest project start date.
- **Project Start Date:** MRAC does not fund projects that are already under way. MRAC defines a *project's start date* as the point at which the intended community is engaged, any items in the project budget have been expended, or financial and other commitments are made that set the project in motion (e.g. contracts are signed, materials printed or distributed, meetings have taken place, jobs have been posted).
- **Project End Date:** MRAC funds awarded in FY19 cannot have activities that extend beyond June 30, 2020.
- Activities that engage in political lobbying, serve the religious socialization of participants, or discriminate against persons or groups.

During each MRAC fiscal year (July 1 – June 30), groups may receive:

- 1 Project Support grant (Arts Activities Support or Community Arts)
- 1 Arts Learning grant
- 1 Organizational Support grant (Organizational Development or Capital)
- 1 Management Consulting Fund grant for Metro organizations (2 for Suburban groups)
 - ◆ Groups may apply to any 2 of the 4 Project Support deadlines (Arts Activities Support or Community Arts) but may receive only one Project Support award per MRAC fiscal year.

- ◆ Groups can apply to both Organizational Support deadlines (Organizational Development or Capital) but may only receive one Organizational Support award per MRAC fiscal year.
- ◆ Eligible groups that have an MRAC-funded project in process may apply for a subsequent grant in the same program category if the first project is completed before MRAC's published earliest project start date for the new project.
- ◆ Groups may not apply for funding in multiple grant programs for the same project. Each project may ONLY be funded by one MRAC grant program.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

File Uploads

You will upload several files. The upload process is similar to attaching a file to an email. Document uploads must be a MS Word, MS Excel, or PDF document.

Format ALL upload documents as follows:

- US Letter paper size (8.5 x 11) in portrait orientation with at least ¾ inch margins
- A text font equivalent to Times 12-point or larger (15 characters per inch)

CHECKLIST OF ELIGIBLE FILES (bold are required of all applicants):

- Narrative (one upload – no more than five pages)**
- Equipment Purchase Bids (one upload – maximum one page)**
- Letter from Landlord (if applicable) (one upload – one page)
- Consultant Resume (if applicable) (one upload – maximum two pages)
- Project Personnel List (one upload – multiple pages)**
- Board of Directors/Advisory Committee (one upload – one page)**
- Project Budget Expense (one upload – one page)**
- Project Budget Income (one upload – one page)**
- Organizational Income and Expense (one upload – one page)**
- Fiscal Agreement Letter (if applicable)

1. Narrative (one upload – no more than five pages)

The narrative portion of your application is designed to help you outline your organization's mission and history as well as address each of MRAC's five criteria: **Community Need & Support, Equity & Inclusion, Organizational Challenge, Organizational Solution, Ability.**

Provide enough information to help the review panel evaluate your project in relation to EACH criteria. Assume the panel is not familiar with your group, your discipline, nor the community you intend to serve, and use the narrative to provide this information. The panel will apply ALL five criteria to the application as a whole.

Mission and history

- In one paragraph, summarize your group's purpose/mission and your arts programming history. How will this project advance your group's mission?

Community Need & Support

- How do you define your community? Describe the individuals your organization serves (i.e. artists, attendees, participants, etc.). Describe the community that your organization or group serves by describing the diversity of people within this community (e.g. racial, ethnic, cultural, age, gender, ability, geographic, and/or economic, etc.).
- What shared interest, need, or demand exists within this community as it relates to your work? How will your project benefit the community that you have described?
- In what ways have members of the community shown their support for your project (e.g. collaborations and partnerships; financial contributions; volunteer time; in-kind donation of services, supplies or space)?

Equity & Inclusion

- Describe how your organization and activities proactively addresses barriers to engaging historically marginalized, targeted, and underserved people and identities that may otherwise have limited access to your proposed activity. Examples might include:
 - IPOC (**I**ndigenous people and **P**eople **o**f **C**olor including Native American, Black/African/African American, Afro Latinx, Caribbean, Chicanx/Mexican, Central American, South American, Middle Eastern/North African, Southeast Asian/Asian/Pacific Islander, Immigrants, Refugees, and Muslim individuals)
 - economically disadvantaged
 - youth and seniors
 - people with disabilities
 - LGBTQIA (Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual)
- Explain how your organization or group is best positioned to engage with and support the community you have described. How are they represented among your leadership, artists, and decision-makers?
- If you have defined your community based on geography, how are the above people and identities represented throughout your neighborhood/city/region/etc.?
- In what ways does your organization or group ensure that people with disabilities can participate? Examples might include ADA accessible venue, ASL interpretation, audio described performance, large print programs, sensory tours, etc.
- If there are financial costs associated with your organization or group what considerations are made for those who may find such costs a barrier? Examples might include ticket discounts, scholarships, waived membership dues, transportation reimbursements, etc.

Organizational Challenge

- Describe the underlying situation – problem, opportunity, issue, or need – that your project intends to address. You must be able to name the problem/opportunity before you can accurately define a project.
- What is compelling about this situation? How will addressing this important opportunity/need have a significant, long-term impact on your organization? How might this project lead to an enhanced ability for you to accomplish your artistic vision? Why is this a priority at this moment in time?

Organizational solution

- What is the solution your group proposes to address the organizational challenge?
- What is your work plan and timeline? What are you going to purchase or what improvements are you wishing to make? How did you arrive at the specific equipment configuration and/or specific capital improvements you are requesting? Who was involved in the planning? What are the specific activities or steps in this capital project? When will these activities take place and how long will they take to complete? Who will participate in this project (e.g. purchasing, installing and end-users)?
- Who are the key personnel involved in this project? If current employees or volunteer staff will carry out the project, explain how it will be integrated into their workloads (e.g. shift of responsibilities, extra hours).

Ability

Do you have a demonstrated ability to carry out this project? Use this section to provide any additional useful information to demonstrate that this is a well-planned project that your group can clearly achieve. The panel will consider such things as:

- Are the group's employees/volunteers, board/advisory committee members adequately involved and qualified for their roles in this project?
- Was there a reasonable process for selecting a vendor or contractor?
- How will the acquired items be cared for to ensure long-term benefit to the organization?
- Is the project clearly "doable" given your group's resources, project budget, timeline, etc.?
- If you plan to make changes to a leased space, describe the permission granted to do the work and long-term plans for using the space.
- If using a consultant, how the consultant was selected, and their role in the project. What specific skills, prior consulting experiences, or familiarity with your community make this consultant the best fit for this project?
- How will you evaluate the project and its outcomes in relation to your stated organizational goals?
- How do these outcomes reflect that this is the best solution for the situation, challenge, or opportunity?

2. Equipment Purchase *(required) (one upload – maximum one page)*

Use the template on the online application or one you create to describe the equipment and related supplies and services, with estimated costs. Provide a summary of the names and total costs of at least three vendors from which you have obtained competitive estimates or bids on all equipment. Do not include the actual bids. Include a brief statement explaining with which vendor your group intends to proceed.

3. Landlord Letter *(if applicable) (one upload – one page)*

If you are requesting funds to install permanent equipment or to make capital improvements to a space or facility you do not own, include a signed letter from your landlord granting your organization permission to do the work detailed in the application.

4. Consultant Resume *(if applicable) (one upload – maximum two pages)*

Upload a maximum two-page biography or resume of your consultant. This information should include details that demonstrate the consultant's ability to carry out your organization's proposed project.

5. Project Personnel *(one upload – multiple pages)*

Upload a list of the key people/groups involved in your project. Briefly describe their qualifications for the project. You may submit up to one page of information per person/group. Multiple pages must be submitted in one upload. Do not list personnel who are not informed collaborators.

6. Board of Directors/Advisory Committee *(one upload – one page)*

You are required to have a board of directors or advisory committee. Upload a one-page list of your board/committee members indicating their profession, organizational affiliation, or area of expertise, and how they will be involved in the project.

7. Project Budget Expense *(one upload – one page)*

→ Your project's total expense must equal your project's total income.

Download and complete the Excel budget form or generate your own form with the same information in the same format. Once completed, upload a one-page project budget expense.

Include all cash costs. Do not include unrealized income such as scholarships or in-kind support.

- If you request funds for more than one item, all items must be clearly related. Example: lighting board, installation costs, and lighting instruments.
- Personnel expenses may include only 1) services directly related to equipment, installation, and set-up or 2) contractor fees and labor associated with capital improvements.
- One-time expenses related to the maintenance or acquisition of a capital purchase may be included (e.g. shipping, shipping insurance, warranty purchase or other service agreements)
- You may **not** request funds for administration or planning of the project, as it is expected that those activities have already occurred.

- Your request may not be part of a larger capital campaign. If your total project budget exceeds \$50,000, you must call MRAC staff and receive written approval before applying.

→ **Project Expense Matching Funds**

For every ten MRAC dollars requested, you must match or raise one dollar from a cash source other than Minnesota State funding sources. Match sources may include general operating funds, past surpluses, other grants, and earned income or revenue you plan to raise specifically for this project.

- If you have received or are applying for project support from other Minnesota State arts funding sources for the same activity, you cannot receive more than 91% of the total cost of the project from the combination of MRAC and other State funds. Examples of other state arts funding include the Minnesota State Arts Board and other Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund sponsored organizations.

8. Project Budget Income *(one upload - one page)*

→ **Your project's total income must equal your project's total expense.**

Download and complete the Excel budget form or generate your own form with the same information in the same format. Once completed, upload a one-page project budget income. Do not include in-kind goods and services.

- **Check your math and budget figures carefully. Project budget errors or ineligible expenses may affect your MRAC request or result in your application being deemed ineligible.**

9. Organizational Income-and-Expense Statement *(one upload - one page)*

Download and complete the Excel Spreadsheet form with income-and-expense amounts for your most recently completed fiscal year (must be a 12-month period). Or, generate your own annual statement with the same information in the same format. Please describe the circumstances surrounding a substantial year-end surplus or deficit in the space provided on the Excel Spreadsheet, or in your Narrative.

10. Fiscal Sponsor Agreement or Letter *(one upload - for informal groups ONLY)*

A *fiscal sponsor* is a 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 a federally tax-exempt 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization located in Minnesota; it may be a school, city, government agency, or an arts or social services organization.

You will need to upload your agreement or a letter of agreement between your organization and the fiscal sponsor which must include the following:

- If submitting a letter, it must be written on the letterhead of the fiscal sponsor

- Dated within a year, and date must be on/before grant deadline
- Fiscal sponsor's EIN which is also known as a Federal Tax Identification Number
- Signed by fiscal sponsor contact
- Contain name of the fiscal sponsor and the MRAC applicant group

REVIEW AND DECISION PROCESS

1. **Staff:** MRAC staff review all applications for eligibility.
2. **Panel:** A peer review panel reviews all eligible applications. The panel meetings are ALL open to the public; and applicants will be notified of the meeting; and are encouraged to attend. Panel recordings are shared in your grant record within one-week of review.
3. **MRAC Board of Directors:** The panel submits its recommendations to the MRAC board of directors who make the final decision on funding.
4. **Appeal:** Appeals must be made in writing within 30 days of the notification of the board decision. Contact MRAC for a copy of the appeal process.