Grant Guidelines 2019-2020

ARTS LEARNING

Project support up to $10,000 for arts education-based activities providing extended learning opportunities.

Round 1
Application Deadline: November 4, 2019
Earliest Grant Expenditure Date: January 29, 2020

Round 2
Application Deadline: February 10, 2020
Earliest Grant Expenditure Date: April 29, 2020

Program Director for Applicants in Hennepin County: Masami Kawazato
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Program Director for Applicants in Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington Counties: Jovan C. Speller
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Review our guidelines, and contact MRAC with questions or for support. Alternative formats and translation available. MRAC will need 10 business days to obtain translation services.

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 Arts Learning grant program provides grants of up to $10,000 for arts learning activities in any arts discipline to communities within the seven-county metro area: Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington Counties. Grant requests must outline specific activities that may include related costs for artists and personnel, supplies, equipment rental, and other expenses necessary to carry out the project.

This program is intended to serve as a catalyst for innovative projects in which organizations provide opportunities for Minnesotans of all ages and experiences over an extended period of time to develop knowledge, skills, and understanding of the arts. The arts learning opportunities can be single-discipline or multidisciplinary arts and can occur in a broad range of venues. The focus of these projects must be on the arts learner and not on a final presentation or community engagement.

MRAC funds applications where arts and community intersect

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REQUIRED MATCH

41 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 $2,500 from another source.

See more details in the Project Budget Income Section.
**BEFORE APPLYING - RESOURCES**

The Metropolitan Regional Arts Council is a hands-on grantmaker and program directors want to help you prepare a strong application that will be ready for panel review. **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:

1. **Program Directors** - MRAC Program Directors are available for questions on eligibility and program intent, project idea development, grant attachment verification, and can, upon request, review your application materials in advance of the deadline.

2. **Grant Application Workshops** - MRAC offers free grant application workshops 3-6 weeks before the deadline to learn about the grant program and to discuss project ideas. Check the online calendar for dates and times: [www.mrac.org/events](http://www.mrac.org/events)

3. **Previously Funded Grants** - You may visit [www.mrac.org](http://www.mrac.org), click on “Grants” and follow links to view “Recent Grant Awards” and request up to 3 previously successful applications per grant program to be emailed as pdfs; contact your program director to have these sample grants sent.

4. **Online Resources** - Visit [www.mrac.org/grants/grant-resources](http://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.

5. **First Fridays with Program Directors** - The first Friday of the month from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. there are open office hours where you can drop in and have conversation with MRAC Program Directors. No RSVP is needed. Please check MRAC calendar in case of changes.

**HOW TO APPLY & ELIGIBILITY**

MRAC grant applications **MUST** be completed online and received by MRAC no later than 11:59:59 p.m. To access the online portal, visit [www.mrac.org](http://www.mrac.org) and select ‘Manage My Organizational Grant.’

The online interface allows for Google Translate to access the application in a variety of languages. Groups should only use one organizational grant record, while there can be multiple users per organization. Contact MRAC with any difficulties accessing the online portal, but note that **technical assistance is available only until 5:00 p.m. on the deadline day.** We do not accept incomplete or late applications. Please read guidelines thoroughly to ensure eligibility.

**All applicant groups AND project activities MUST be located within the 7-county (Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, Washington) Twin Cities metro area.**

**Applicant group must implement and manage the proposed arts project.**
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.
- Federally tax-exempt non-arts organizations and community education units with annual arts programming expenses of less than $400,000. Arts budgets must be isolated from the larger entity's budget and have an advisory committee for the proposed project.
- Informal and/or unincorporated arts-focused groups and one-time arts projects with expenses of less than $400,000. The applicant group must have its own board of directors or advisory committee that provides input on the project and oversight of the grant funds and must have a Minnesota-based fiscal sponsor. Fiscal Sponsors must be registered with the IRS at a 501(c)3 nonprofit with a Minnesota address and be current with the Minnesota Secretary of State as a Nonprofit Corporation. See Fiscal Sponsor section on page 9 for more info.
- A public entity such as a unit of state, local, or tribal government with arts expenses of $400,000 or less. Arts budgets must be isolated from the larger entity’s budget and the group must have an advisory committee for the proposed project.

Applicant groups cannot be:

- Organizations registered with the MN Secretary of State as a profit-making Minnesota business (e.g. Business Corporation, Limited Liability Corporation, Limited Liability Partnership, MN Public Benefit Corporations, etc.).
- Individuals.
- Public, private, alternative, charter, or home schools (this includes school support organizations such as PTAs, PTOs, school foundations, etc.).
- Organizations whose main purpose is to raise funds for another person, organization, or cause.

This program funds:

- Stand-alone single-discipline or multidisciplinary arts learning activities of all forms taking place in the 7-county metro area that actively engage a community over an extended period of time.
- Supplies, project overhead costs, promotional fees, ADA expenses, and artistic fees directly related and necessary to the project.

This program does NOT fund:

- Projects that have received or are seeking support from any other MRAC grant program.
- Requests in which any portion of the project is located outside of the 7-county metro area.
- Requests in which any portion of the project budget will be used to pay an artist or arts organization to provide essentially the same services that an ongoing teacher or arts specialist previously provided or would be expected to provide in a school setting.
- Requests in which the project will replace discontinued or nonexistent arts programs that should be fulfilling the state’s arts curriculum requirements in schools.
- MRAC does not reimburse costs incurred before the published Earliest Grant Expenditure Date. All expenses included in the grant proposal must be incurred after this date. Including expenses incurred prior to this date will deem the entire application ineligible.
- Project End Date: MRAC funds awarded in FY20 cannot have artistic or financial activities that
extend beyond June 30, 2021. Be aware that choosing this end date may affect eligibility to receive a grant in the FY21 fiscal year as groups cannot have more than one open grant in a grant program.

- Curriculum development. The curriculum used in these arts learning sessions should already be developed at the time of application.
- Public presentations and engagement with non-arts learners as a significant portion of the proposal.
- Murals, sculptures, purchase and/or installation of public art pieces, or publications without community input and participation.
- Capital improvements or construction, purchase of capital goods, purchase of real estate property, endowments, or the creation, purchase or installation of artwork when there is no accompanying community activity. See the project budget expense section for more information.
- Costs for fundraising events. This includes activities designed to raise funds for your own organization and on behalf of another person, organization, or cause.
- Activities that attempt to influence any state or federal legislation or appropriation; to support activities that are essentially for the religious socialization of the participants or audience; or discriminate against persons or groups.
- Travel expenses to or from Minnesota. You may engage an out-of-state artist within your project, but their travel expense to get to or from Minnesota cannot be included in a MRAC request.
- Expenses to purchase alcoholic beverages or to pay associated costs (servers, insurance, liquor licenses, etc.).

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

- 1 Arts Project Support grant
- 1 Arts Learning grant
- 1 Organizational Support grant (Organizational Development or Capital)
- 2 Management Consulting Fund grants

  - 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 a MRAC-funded project in process may apply for a subsequent grant in the same program category **if the project from a previous fiscal year is completed** before MRAC’s published earliest grant expenditure date for the new project. A Management Consulting Fund project must be complete before a new one is awarded.
  - 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 REQUIREMENTS

The following documents will be reviewed by the panel.

File Uploads
You will upload several files. Document uploads must be a MS Word, MS Excel, or PDF document. It is highly recommended to create an Application Packet within the grant interface to assure your documents uploaded correctly; errors in formatting may have an adverse effect on your application.

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)
- Use criteria headers within the document, but do not use Word function Headers or Footers as this affects formatting

CHECKLIST OF REQUIRED FILES:
- Narrative (one upload – no more than five pages)
- Project Personnel List (one upload – multiple pages)
- Board of Directors/Advisory Committee (one upload – one page)
- Project Expense Budget (one upload – one page)
- Project Income Budget (one upload – one page)
- Organizational Income and Expense (one upload – one page)
- Fiscal Sponsor 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: Arts Learning Project & Goals, Educational Value, Ability, Community Need & Support, Equity & Inclusion.

Please provide enough information to help the review panel evaluate your project in relation to EACH criterion. 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
- Briefly (in about one paragraph), summarize your group’s purpose/mission and your arts programming history. If your project is a first-time initiative, please so indicate. In what ways will this project advance the mission of your group?
Arts Learning Project & Goals

- Describe the concept and design of your project (who, what, where, when). How many learning sessions will be presented? How many learners will benefit? Be specific.
- What are your artistic goals? How do you define artistic success for this project? Be specific.
- Who are, or will be, the artists and project leaders? How are, or will, the artists be selected?

Educational Value

- What are the learning objectives for your project? What learner needs are you seeking to address and what specific outcomes will occur?
- How will your project provide arts learning opportunities over an extended period?
- If you are partnering with another organization for this project, how will your partner(s) contribute to the learning objectives?
- Describe the focus of your project. Where will artistic energies/resources be directed – primarily on process (participant learning, creating or otherwise engaging in the arts experience), or on the quality of the artist product, or both? Explain.
- Describe the qualifications of the artists and project leaders to provide high quality arts learning experiences and activities.
- In what ways will your project be artistically, culturally, and/or educationally challenging for the artists and participants?

Ability

- Describe the planning process for your project. In what ways will your board of directors or advisory committee be involved? How are teaching artists engaged in the planning?
- What is the timeline for your project (e.g., give deadlines for major activities)?
- How will you evaluate the project and its outcomes in relation to your stated artistic and community goals? What types of evaluation methods will be used?
- How will you promote your project?

Community Need & Support

- How do you define your community? Describe the individuals this project will serve (i.e. artists, attendees, participants, etc.). Your community/communities are the people who are served or engaged by your project. Describe the community this project will serve by describing the diversity of people within this community (e.g. racial, ethnic, cultural, age, gender, ability, geographic, and/or economic, etc.).
- Describe the community this project will serve by describing the diversity of people within this community (e.g. racial, ethnic, cultural, age, gender, ability, geographic, and/or economic, etc.). The panel will be asked to provide comments about the diversity of your community.
- 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

- Within the context of your community, describe how your project identifies and 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 (Indigenous people and People of Color 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 and/or refugees
  - economically disadvantaged individuals
  - people with disabilities
  - LGBTQIA (Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual) people

- Explain how your organization or group is best positioned to engage with and support the community you have described.
- In what ways does your project engage and support members of the community you have described? How are they represented among your leadership, artists, and decision-makers?
- In what ways has your group made attempts to be more equitable and inclusive?
- If you are an organization or group that primarily serves people identified above, what are the unique ways in which you are engaging with members of your community who are not yet connected to your work?
- In what ways does your project ensure that people with disabilities can participate? Examples might include ADA accessible venue, ASL interpretation, audio described performance, large print programs, sensory tours, etc. How will accessibility options be conveyed to the community? The panel will be asked to provide comments about inclusion of people with disabilities for this project.
- If there are financial costs associated with your project, what considerations are made for those who may find such costs a barrier? Examples might include ticket discounts, scholarships, waived membership dues, transportation reimbursements, stipends, etc.

2. Project Personnel (one upload – multiple pages)
Upload a list of the key people and groups involved in your project. Briefly describe their qualifications for the project. Do not include the mission or history of your organization in this section. You may submit up to one page of information per person/group. Multiple pages must be submitted in one upload. Individuals and organizations named on this list and in the narrative must know at the time of the application that they are included in the project.

3. Board of Directors/Advisory Committee (one upload – one page)
You are required to have a board of directors or advisory committee, encompassing three individuals as a minimum. Upload a one-page list of your board/committee members indicating
their profession, organizational affiliation and/or area of expertise. This is a public document so you may choose to omit contact information.

4. Project Expense Budget (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 detailing expenses. Include all cash expenses (cash expenses are defined as money, i.e. cash, credit card, check, being spent). Do not include unrealized income such as scholarships or in-kind support. Purchase of capital goods or capital improvements over $500 are not allowed. Expenses included on this form should directly relate to the proposed project and only the proposed project. MRAC assumes that your entity does other programming and has additional expenses, but for the sake of this grant proposal, only include items on the budget that are project focused. Please reach out to your program director with questions.

➢ Capital goods MRAC does not fund the purchase of capital goods in the Art Learning grant program in excess of $500. Capital goods are defined as any piece or pieces of equipment that have a usable life beyond the scope of the project. Please contact your program director if you are unclear about whether MRAC would consider your purchase to be capital goods.

5. Project Income Budget (one upload – one page)

Your project’s total income must equal your project’s total expense.

Download and complete the Excel budget form from the MRAC website 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. Include all cash income (cash income is defined as money, i.e. cash, credit card, check, being received).

➢ Project Expense Matching Funds

For every four MRAC dollars requested, you must match or raise one dollar from a cash source. Match sources may include general operating funds, past surpluses, other grants, or revenue you plan to raise specifically for this project. The MRAC grant request must be included in your Project Budget Income.

❑ Check your math and budget figures carefully. Project budget errors or ineligible expenses, including in the notes section, may affect your MRAC request or result in your application being deemed ineligible.

6. Organizational Income-and-Expense Statement (one upload – one page)
→ **Arts groups with a history of programming:** Download and complete the Excel Spreadsheet form with income-and-expense amounts for your last fiscal year (must be a 12-month period). Include the dates of your last fiscal year (the entirety of this date range must be in the past). Please describe the circumstances surrounding a substantial year-end surplus or deficit in the space provided on the Excel Spreadsheet, or within your Narrative.

→ **First-time initiatives:** New arts groups and first-time projects of informal arts groups are **not** required to submit an Organizational Income-and-Expense Statement.

→ **Nonprofit, non-arts organizations:** Download and complete the Excel Spreadsheet with **only arts programming income and expenses** for your last fiscal year (must be a 12-month period). Include the dates of your last fiscal year (the entirety of this date range must be in the past). Or, generate your own annual statement with the same information in the same format and on one page. This must isolate your arts spending only and must fit on one page.

   ➢ This document should be an accurate overview of income and expenses for the organization or group and **MRAC expects to see surpluses or deficits on this form.**

7. **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, be registered with the IRS with a Minnesota address, and must be active as a Nonprofit Corporation with the Minnesota Secretary of State.

You will need to upload a letter on the fiscal sponsor’s letterhead that outlines the agreement between your organization and the fiscal sponsor. The letter must include the following:

- The name of the organization and the project being proposed
- Fiscal sponsor’s EIN which is also known as a Federal Tax Identification Number
- The mission of the applicant group
- Signature of the fiscal sponsor contact
- A date within three months of the grant deadline

**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 policy.
OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION

Within the online grant interface, in addition to demographic information about your group and intended participants, you will be asked to submit the proposed outcomes and the evaluation plan for the project. This is for reporting and tracking purposes and is not shared with the panel, but is shared with the Minnesota State Arts Board. It is important for the application to also include this information within the grant narrative.

Outcomes Proposed
In two sentences, describe the measurable outcomes you hope to achieve through this project. What skill, knowledge, attitude, behavior or condition will change? Who will be affected by the change? Your answer may be brief. Examples of outcomes may include: “Student surveys showed that 65% of respondents developed new skills in this art form” or “95% of the students indicated their ability to express themselves creatively was enhanced.”

Evaluation Plan
In two sentences, describe your methods for evaluating your anticipated outcomes. Examples of evaluation methods may include, but are not limited to: Audience/participant counts, Audience/participant surveys, Artist surveys, Post-performance feedback, etc.

IF FUNDED

• An authorized signer for your group or organization will need to complete an online grant agreement.
• A W9 form will need to be uploaded by the applicant. If fiscally sponsored you will need a W9 from your fiscal sponsor.
• Funds are sent via check to the address on file in the online account within one month of the signed agreement being signed. Make sure the address is current with all necessary information and mail can be received at this location.
• The group will need to use the appropriate language and logos on all promotion of the funded activities.
• Groups are required to spend the entirety of the MRAC grant award. In cases where a match was required, groups are required to raise and spend the match requirement as well the grant award.
• An online final report is due 2 months after the project end date that was entered at the time of application. You must show expenditures at or greater to the budgeted amount or funds will need to be returned.
• Any project changes to the activities, timeline, or budget need to be approved in writing by the program director. Reach out with any questions or changes to the project before changing the project, as not all project changes can be approved.
• Overdue final reports may affect future eligibility to apply for and/or receive MRAC funding.