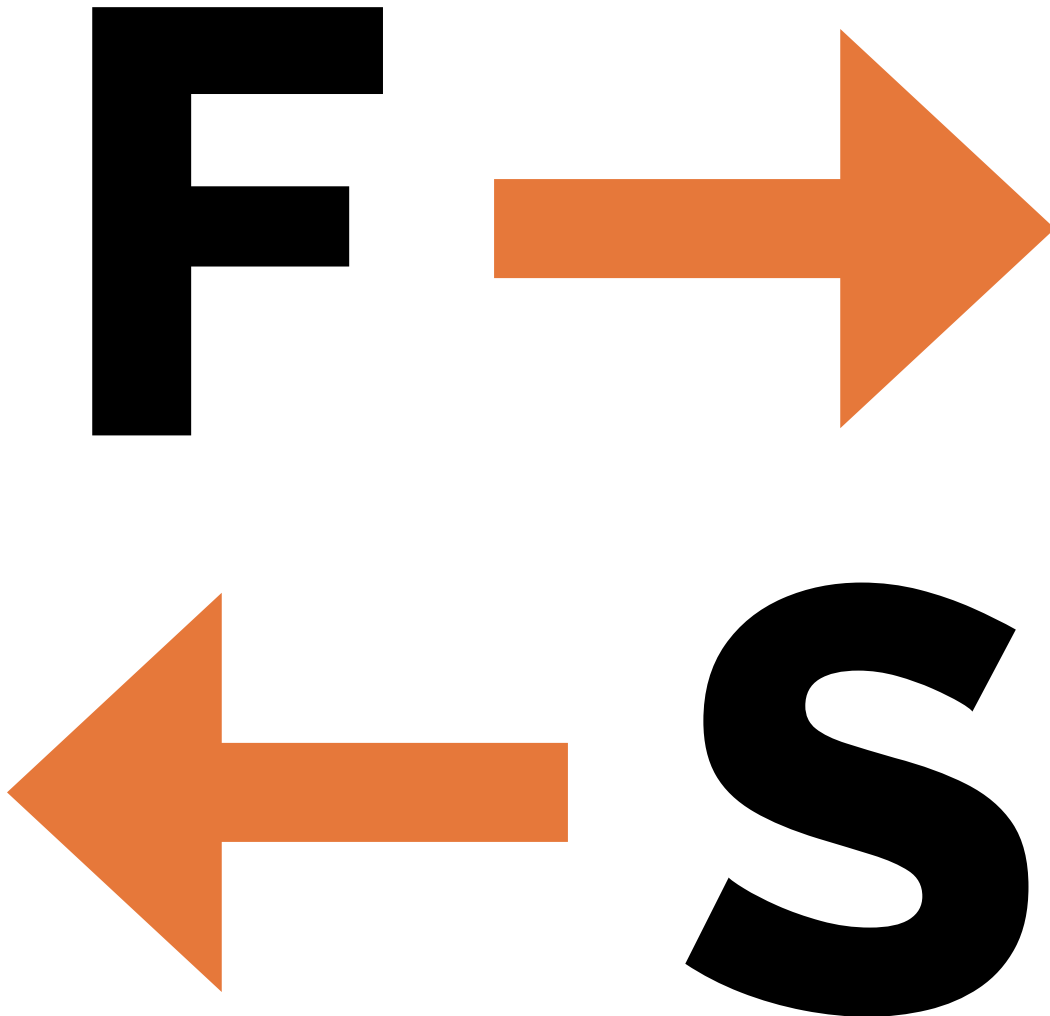
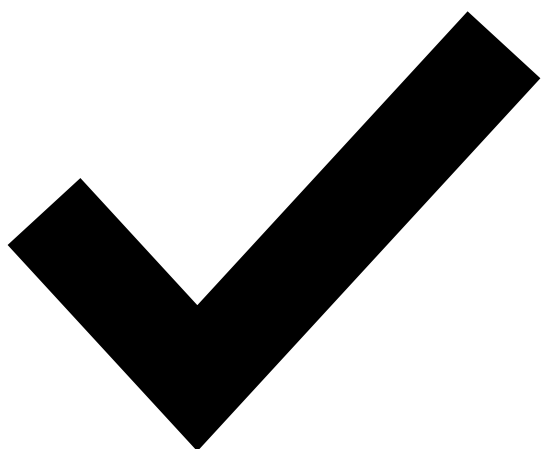


Grant Program Overview and Application Instructions



Flexible Support is made possible by the voters of Minnesota, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

Dates



For FY2026, Flexible Support will have two rounds. You may apply in either round, but if you are awarded a grant in Round 1, you may not apply again in Round 2.

Contact

flexiblesupport@mrac.org

Important Dates

R1

Grant Round 1 application opens in Submittable
July 7, 2025

Deadline for Grant Round 1

**Monday, August 18, 2025,
12 noon CDT**

Eligible funding period for Grant Round 1

December 4, 2025–May 31, 2027

R2

Grant Round 2 application opens in Submittable
January 5, 2026

Deadline for Grant Round 2

**Tuesday, February 17, 2026,
12 noon CST**

Eligible funding period for Grant Round 2

June 2, 2026–May 31, 2027

Parts

1.

Part 1: Grant Description and Eligibility Overview: what types of organizations/groups can apply, what kind of proposals are eligible, and other commonly asked questions.

2.

Part 2: Application Content Overview: the questions you will be asked in the narrative section of your application, budget information you will provide, and the application's budget plan spreadsheet.

3.

Part 3: Preparing to Apply and Application Instructions: what you need to begin your application and how to use Submittable, our online application portal.

Contents

The following is the information you need to fill out an application for the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council's 2026 Flexible Support grant. Read this document thoroughly.

Once you submit your application through our online portal, you **cannot make changes** and **cannot resubmit an application in whole or in part**. If your proposal is funded, parts of your application are considered public information.

4.

Part 4: Organization/Group Eligibility Breakdown: all eligibility rules related to organization classification, fiscal sponsorship, leadership lists, open MRAC grants, and ineligible groups.

5.

Part 5: Eligible Expenses and Funding Period Breakdown: what expenses grant funds can cover (including examples), ineligible proposal activities and budget items, funding period information, and incurred expense definition.

6.

Part 6: Application Assistance and Additional Resources: MRAC staff contact information for application assistance and resources such as templates and the scoring guide.

1.

Part 1: Grant Description and Eligibility Overview

Part 1: Grant Description and Eligibility Overview

What does this grant provide funds for?

The Flexible Support grant provides up to \$25,000 to help **organizations/groups** create and sustain **Minnesotans' access to the arts**.

Who is eligible to apply for this grant?

The Flexible Support grant is for organizations/groups. Each organization/group may submit only one application.

All applicant organizations/groups must meet the following requirements:

1. Maintain a primary address in one of the seven metro area counties: Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, or Washington.
2. Meet one of the following classifications:
 - a. Arts nonprofit organizations with total annual cash expenses of \$400,000 or less during the most recently completed fiscal year.
 - b. Cultural or non-arts/non-cultural 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations with annual cash expenses for arts programming of \$400,000 or less during the most recently completed fiscal year. These groups must isolate their arts programming expenses from non-arts financial activity.
 - c. Community education units of a school district with annual cash expenses for arts programming of any size during their most recently completed fiscal year. Community education units must isolate their arts programming expenses from non-arts financial activity.
 - d. Public entities such as units of state, local, or tribal government with annual cash ex-

penses for arts programming of \$400,000 or less during their most recently completed fiscal year. The public entity must isolate their arts programming expenses from non-arts financial activity.

- e. Groups not registered as a federally recognized tax-exempt 501(c)(3) nonprofit may apply with an eligible fiscal sponsor. The group applying with a fiscal sponsor must have total annual cash expenses of \$400,000 or less during its most recently completed fiscal year. In addition, eligible fiscal sponsors must be registered with the IRS as a federally tax-exempt 501(c)(3) nonprofit, have a Minnesota address, and have an active registration with the Minnesota Secretary of State as a nonprofit organization.
3. All applicant organizations/groups must have a minimum of three (3) people in a leadership position. At MRAC, a leader is an individual with the authority to make final decisions about the organization/group's operations, direction, goals, or mission.

For a detailed explanation of all organization/group eligibility rules, please see [Part 4: Organization/Group Eligibility Breakdown](#) (pages 12–16).

What types of grant requests are eligible?

Eligible requests could include funding for operations and/or organizational capacity, certain capital expenses and/or facilities improvements (with restrictions), and/or arts programming.

Refer to [Eligible Expenses](#) (page 17) for qualifying funding, including examples. Also review [Ineligible Proposal Activities & Budget Items](#) (page 18).

How much grant funding can our group apply for?

All eligible groups may request up to \$25,000.

Additionally, a portion of funds for this grant will be set aside for organizations/groups whose leadership team includes a majority of individuals who identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or a person of color (BIPOC); and/or a person with a disability; and/or lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ+); and all organizations/groups from Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Scott, and Washington counties.

Refer to [Leadership Identity Information](#) (page 14) for more.

When can our proposal happen?

If you are applying in Round 1, the eligible funding period is December 4, 2025–May 31, 2027 (approximately 18 months).

If you are applying in Round 2, the eligible funding period is June 2, 2026–May 31, 2027 (approximately 12 months).

If any proposal activities outside of the eligible funding period are included in the application, the entire application may be deemed ineligible.

When can we spend the grant funds?

For Round 1, all grant funds must be spent and all expenses incurred between December 4, 2025, and May 31, 2027.

For Round 2, all grant funds must be spent and all expenses incurred between June 2, 2026, and May 31, 2027.

← Flexible Support →

If any expenses (both incurred and spent) or reimbursements made outside of the eligible funding period are included in the application, the entire application may be deemed ineligible.

Refer to [Definition of Incurred Expenses](#) (page 18) for a detailed explanation.

Where can I execute my proposal?

All proposal activities must take place in the geographical borders of Minnesota. Ineligible proposal expenses include costs for relocating the applicant's legal address/residence outside the state of Minnesota, travel expenses to or from Minnesota, and procuring visas.

Note: you may engage an out-of-state artist or consultant within your proposal, but their travel expenses to or from Minnesota cannot be included in your proposed budget.

How do I submit an application?

All applications are filled out and submitted through Submittable, our online application portal. Refer to [Application Instructions](#) (page 11) for a Submittable overview.

Applications in other formats will not be accepted without prior approval and arrangement with a program officer. Refer to [Application Assistance](#) (page 19) for contact information.

What types of proposals have been funded in the past?

Please see our award announcement for the [2025 Flexible Support Grant](#).

Part 1: Grant Description and Eligibility Overview

How are the funds for this grant allocated to applicants?

Funds will be awarded to the highest scoring applications.

A portion of the funds for this grant have been set aside for organizations/groups whose leadership team includes a majority of individuals who identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or a person of color (BIPOC); and/or a person with a disability; and/or lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ+); and for all organizations/groups from Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Scott, and Washington counties.

How are applications reviewed and scored?

MRAC trains community members and peers to become review panelists. This includes artists, arts professionals, and other individuals from all seven metro counties. The [Application Scoring Guide for Review Panelists](#) (page 19) shows the criteria used to evaluate each application.

Applications are grouped by county, and then 4–8 panelists score each application. The scores from each panelist are averaged, and that average score determines the application's ranking. Grant funds are awarded based on these panel score rankings and MRAC Board-approved budget allocations. The MRAC Board of Directors awards as many applications as possible until the allocated funds for Flexible Support run out. Based on annual budget changes and application volume, the funding rate for MRAC grants fluctuates from year to year.

What if we have received a Flexible Support grant before?

Organizations/groups may not have more than one **open** Flexible Support grant at a time. A grant is not considered closed until you have submitted your **Final Report** and it is approved by MRAC staff. For grants prior to FY26, your Final Report is due two months after your Proposal End Date.

If your organization/group received a FY24 or FY25 Flexible Support grant, please refer to [Groups with Open MRAC Grants](#) (page 15) for important information about your eligibility.

2.

Part 2: Application Content Overview

Part 2: Application Content Overview

This section includes the questions you will be asked in the narrative section of your application as well as information about how you will provide your proposal budget. It does not include every application question.

When the application window opens, we encourage you to review all the questions by starting an application in Submittable. You can also download the [Application Questions and Explanations](#) document (page 20) at that time.

About the Proposal Narrative

You will answer the following questions in Submittable. Each textbox will display a character limit (**inclusive** of letters, numbers, spaces, and paragraph breaks).

Do not include hyperlinks in narrative text boxes, as the review panelists will be limited to the content of your application. Any hyperlinks will be deleted and may affect your application's eligibility.

You can use the [Narrative Drafting Document](#) (page 20) to work on rough drafts of your answers.

List of Narrative Questions

- What is the name or title of your proposal? (50 characters max, about 8–10 words)
- Provide a short description of your proposal (200 characters max, about 30–40 words)
- *About Your Organization and Experience:* What is your organization/group's mission or overall goals? What audiences or communities do you typically serve? What experience does your organization/group and/or staff have in creating arts access for Minnesotans? (2,500 characters max, about 350–450 words)
- *Proposal Goals and Activities:* What are the primary goals of the proposal? What specific activities will you undertake with this grant funding? How do these activities meet the

← Flexible Support →

goals stated in the previous question? (3,000 characters max, about 450–600 words)

- *Arts Access*: How will this proposal create (or contribute to your capacity to create) meaningful access to the arts for Minnesotans? Who are the participants or communities that will be served by your proposal? How will this proposal respond to the specific needs or interests of the participants or communities? (3,000 characters max, about 450–600 words)
- Where do you envision proposal activities taking place? (600 characters max, about 75–100 words)
- Provide a timeline* of the activities funded by the grant. Please provide months and years (for example, “July 2026: Theater performances”). (2,500 characters max, about 350–450 words)

*Must take place within the eligible funding periods:

Round 1: December 4, 2025–May 31, 2027.

Round 2: June 2, 2026–May 31, 2027.

About the Budget Plan

General Budget Information

Your request for MRAC funds **may not exceed \$25,000**. You may request less than \$25,000 if that will cover your expenses. There is no advantage or disadvantage to asking for an amount smaller than the maximum. Budget expenses should clearly align with your proposal narrative.

Funding for this grant comes from Minnesota's arts and cultural heritage fund through a legislative appropriation. As required by the Minnesota State Arts Board, these funds may be granted for an entire proposal or for part of a proposal, as long as the recipient accounts for the entire cost and can demonstrate that they have adequate resources to complete the entire proposal.

Part 2: Application Content Overview

MRAC Funds vs. Total Proposal Cost

You will state the total amount of funds you are requesting from MRAC and describe what these funds will be used for.

If the amount you are requesting from MRAC **will cover your entire proposal**, that is all you need to include.

If your proposal requires funds **beyond those requested in your MRAC grant application to be completed successfully**, you will need to provide a list of additional funding amounts, funding sources, and whether that funding is secured or pending.

Submittable Budget Plan Spreadsheet

In the Flexible Support application in Submittable, you will input your budget into the Budget Plan Spreadsheet. It will include columns for the Expense Description and Dollar Amount. You can use the [Budget Plan Drafting Sheet](#) (page 20) to estimate your expenses before inputting them into Submittable.

The application will ask if your proposal requires additional funds beyond your MRAC request to be completed. If you answer “yes,” you will enter the additional funding amounts, funding sources, and whether that funding is secured or pending in a separate spreadsheet.

Note: listing a funding source as pending **does not** render your application ineligible.

3.

Part 3: Preparing to Apply and Application Instructions

Preparing to Apply

The most successful proposals are well conceived before starting the application process in Submittable. Take time to plan your request and consider compiling the following information before you begin.

The Flexible Support application is divided into the following parts:

1. **Organization/Group Information:** your organization/group's name, address, phone number, names and positions of leaders, information about your most recent fiscal year and total arts expenses, and details about your organization/group's annual arts participation numbers. If you are a group applying with a fiscal sponsor, you will provide information about the sponsor here, including a formal request form sent directly to your sponsor via Submittable. It will be optional to provide demographic information about your organization/group's leadership team. See [Part 4: Organization/Group Eligibility Breakdown](#) (pages 12–16) for more details.
2. **Proposal Narrative:** your organization/group's overall mission, audiences you serve, and experience. You will answer specific questions about your proposal, including its goals, related activities, location, timeline, participants and/or beneficiaries, and ways it creates or supports the creation of meaningful access to the arts for Minnesotans. Refer to [List of Narrative Questions](#) (page 8) for full list.
3. **Budget Plan:** the total amount of funds you are requesting and the expenses that will be covered by the funds. If your proposal requires funds beyond the MRAC grant to be completed successfully, you will need to provide a list of additional funding amounts, sources of that funding, and whether that funding is secured or pending. This is a requirement

← Flexible Support →

from the Minnesota State Arts Board. You can review information about eligible and ineligible expenses in [Part 5: Eligible Expenses and Funding Period Breakdown](#) (pages 17–18).

4. **Data, Outcomes & Evaluation:** artistic disciplines, an estimated number of participants and their demographics, outcome goals, and evaluation plans. This is considered public information, and your responses are shared with the Minnesota State Arts Board. If awarded funds, you will be required to submit a final report that includes whether you achieved your stated goals and the results of your evaluation plan.

Application Instructions

- Step 1. Create an account with MRAC's online Submittable portal

MRAC uses Submittable for all our grant applications. If you are a first-time applicant, you should create a Submittable account with your email address. **Use an email address you check frequently**, as all our correspondence about your application will be sent through Submittable.

Note: Be sure to "safelist" notification emails from Submittable and check your inbox frequently. You can learn how in this [Submittable safelist email explanation article](#). MRAC staff may reach out with questions or request additional information. If we do not hear from you within the timeline provided in the email, your application may be deemed ineligible.

If you are considering applying, we encourage you to make an account and review the application in Submittable (available once the application window opens). Familiarizing yourself with the Submittable interface can be useful when you are ready to fill out the information there!

Part 3: Preparing to Apply and Application Instructions

- Step 2. Fill out the FY26 Flexible Support Application in Submittable

The application in Submittable includes questions with checkboxes, date selection boxes, dropdown boxes, number input boxes, and text boxes for written answers. Additionally, you will need to type your proposal's planned expenses into the Budget Plan Spreadsheet.

Each text box will display a maximum character count, which is **inclusive** of letters, numbers, spaces, and paragraph breaks. There are no formatting options (bold or italics).

Do not include hyperlinks in narrative text boxes, as the review panelists will be limited to the content of your application. Any hyperlinks will be deleted and may affect your application's eligibility.

Certain application questions are only made available to view after you have answered prior questions, so it is best to fill out the application in order.

Submittable will auto-save your work every few minutes, and there is also a "save" button at the bottom of the form.

- Step 3. Complete the application and hit "Submit"

You must answer every question marked as required to complete the application. Be sure to double check all your answers, including budget amounts and totals, before you submit your application.

Once you submit your application, you **cannot make any changes** and **cannot resubmit an application in whole or in part**.

4.

Part 4: Organization/Group Eligibility Breakdown

Learn all the eligibility rules related to organization classification, fiscal sponsorship, maximum cash expenses, location and leadership requirements, open MRAC grants, and ineligible groups.

Part 4: Organization/Group Eligibility Breakdown

Group Requirements

Where eligibility requirements differ, we note requirements for *organizations* and for *groups with a fiscal sponsor*.

Definition of Organizations vs. Groups with Fiscal Sponsors

For Flexible Support, *organizations* include 501(c)(3) nonprofits (arts, cultural, or non-arts/non-cultural), community education units of a school district, and public entities such as units of state, local, or tribal government.

If your group does not have federally tax-exempt status or otherwise does not meet any of these classifications, you may apply after securing a *fiscal sponsor*.

What is a fiscal sponsor?

A *fiscal sponsor* is a federally tax-exempt 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that receives MRAC grant money directly and manages the financial aspects of the project for your group if you receive a grant.

Specific Requirements for Fiscal Sponsors

A group's *fiscal sponsor* must meet the following requirements:

1. Registered with the IRS as a federally tax-exempt 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. This includes religious institutions.
2. Has an address within the state of Minnesota (You can use the [**IRS's Tax Exempt Organization Search**](#) to confirm your sponsor's status and address).
3. Have an active nonprofit organization registration with the Minnesota Secretary of State. You can [**search the Secretary of State database**](#)

← Flexible Support →

to confirm their registration. (If you are having trouble finding the organization, change the “search scope” to “contains.”)

With few exceptions, MRAC grantees are not permitted to change their fiscal sponsors for the duration of an MRAC-funded project. Once a grant project is complete, grantees re-applying for future MRAC funding may select a new fiscal sponsor.

If you have questions about fiscal sponsorship, please contact flexiblesupport@mrac.org.

Cash Expenses Requirements

Flexible Support is meant to provide funding to organizations and groups with smaller arts programming budgets. Your organization/group's finances must be within the following annual spending caps.

Fiscal Year Definition

Note: all totals should be calculated for **the most recently completed fiscal year**. Completed means that you have all available official financial information. Fiscal years typically run either January 1–December 31 or July 1–June 30.

For example, if your group's fiscal calendar runs January 1–December 31, and you are applying in *Round 1* (deadline August 18, 2025), your most recently completed fiscal year would have ended December 31, 2024. If you are applying in *Round 2* (deadline February 17, 2026), it would have ended December 31, 2025.

If you have questions about what this means for your group, please contact flexiblesupport@mrac.org.

Part 4: Organization/Group Eligibility Breakdown

Total Cash Expense Limits

The cash expenses for your most recently completed fiscal year may not exceed the following limits:

Arts 501(c)(3) nonprofits

- Total annual cash expenses must be \$400,000 or less

Cultural or non-arts/non-cultural 501(c)(3) nonprofits

- Annual expenses for arts programming must be \$400,000 or less
- You must isolate your arts programming expenses from non-arts financial activity.

Community education units of a school district

- Annual expenses for arts programming of any size
- You must isolate your arts programming expenses from non-arts financial activity.

Public entities (units of state, local, or tribal government)

- Annual expenses for arts programming must be \$400,000 or less
- You must isolate your arts programming expenses from non-arts financial activity.

Groups with a fiscal sponsor

- Total annual cash expenses must be \$400,000 or less
- This refers to your **own cash expenses**, not the expenses of your *fiscal sponsor*.

Location Requirements

All organizations and groups must maintain a primary address in one of the seven metro area counties: Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, or Washington.

Organizations

For all 501(c)(3) organizations, MRAC will verify that the address you provide is the same as what is on file with the IRS. You can use the [IRS's Tax Exempt Organization Search](#) to confirm your organization's status and address. You may provide a P.O. box if that is what is on file with the IRS **and** the P.O. box is within one of the seven metro area counties.

Organizations of all other classifications (public entities and community education units) must also have a primary address in one of the seven metro area counties.

Groups with a Fiscal Sponsor

The group applying for Flexible Support must have **its own address** in one of the seven metro counties. P.O. boxes are not acceptable. The address of the *fiscal sponsor* may be anywhere within the state of Minnesota. Because the *fiscal sponsor* must be a federally tax-exempt 501(c)(3) nonprofit, it may provide a P.O. box if that is what is on file with the IRS **and** the P.O. box is within Minnesota.

Leadership Requirements

You are required to fill out a Leadership List. This list will include the names and roles of people that **lead the organization/group as a whole**. You should not list individuals that will only lead proposal activities.

Generally, a leader is a person with the authority to make final decisions about the organization/group's operations, direction, goals, or mission. Individuals on your Leadership List must know that they are part of the leadership team and that a Flexible Support application is being submitted.

Part 4: Organization/Group Eligibility Breakdown

All organizations/groups applying for Flexible Support must have **at least three (3) people** in leadership positions.

Leadership list requirements vary based on the type of organization/group:

All 501(c)(3) nonprofits

- Your list must include and identify by name and role **every member*** of your board of directors.
- You must also list your **executive director** (and/or their equivalents) regardless of whether they are volunteer or paid. An equivalent position might be artistic director, creative director, or similar. If you do not have an executive director (or equivalents), list the board member(s) who fulfill this role.

*Per Minnesota state law, nonprofit organizations must have at least three board members, including a chair and treasurer.

Public entities or community education units

- Your list must include and identify by name and role all your organization's leaders.
- You must also list your **executive director** (and/or their equivalents) regardless of whether they are volunteer or paid. If you do not have an executive director (or equivalents), list the organizational leaders who fulfill this role.

Groups with a fiscal sponsor

- Your list must include and identify by name and role the **leaders of your own group**. **Do not include** staff members of your *fiscal sponsor*.

Leadership Identity Information

You will also be given the option to identify the number of leaders on your list that identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or a person of color (BIPOC); and/or a person with a disability; and/or lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ+) (**you**

← Flexible Support →

do not need to identify them by name). This information allows MRAC to track our funding distributions as well as meet and maintain our goals for equity in grantmaking.

All applicants may request up to \$25,000. A portion of funds for this grant will be set aside for organizations/groups with 51% of leadership positions filled by individuals who identify as any of the above, in addition to all organizations/groups from Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Scott, and Washington counties, regardless of leadership identities.

Groups with Open MRAC Grants

Organizations/groups may not have more than one **open** Flexible Support grant at a time. A grant is not considered closed until you have submitted your **Final Report** and it is approved by MRAC staff. For grants prior to FY26, your Final Report is due two months after your Proposal End Date.

Further, grant proposal timelines cannot overlap, i.e. the Proposal End Date of one grant must occur before the Proposal Start Date of the next grant.

Organizations/groups may not include proposal activities and/or expenses that are included in another open MRAC grant, as a proposal can only be funded by one MRAC grant.

If your group received a **FY24 or FY25 Flexible Support grant**, you should carefully consider the following as you apply for FY26 Flexible Support:

FY24 Flexible Support Grantees

All Final Reports were due on or before July 31, 2025. Organizations/groups with overdue MRAC final reports are ineligible.

Part 4: Organization/Group Eligibility Breakdown

You must submit your FY24 Final Report and have it approved **prior to submitting an application** for FY26 Flexible Support.

FY25 Flexible Support Grantees

If you are applying for FY26 Round 1 (deadline August 18, 2025)

You must submit your FY25 Final Report and have it approved before to the Proposal Start Date of your FY26 application.

If you are applying for FY26 Round 2 (deadline February 17, 2026)

If you are awarded a grant in FY26 Flexible Support Round 1, you may not apply in Round 2.

All FY25 grant-funded activities must be complete and all funds must be spent by May 31, 2026. You must submit your FY25 Final Report and have it approved before the Proposal Start Date of your FY26 application.

Ineligible Groups

The following organizations/groups are ineligible to apply for Flexible Support:

- Organizations/groups located outside of Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, or Washington county.
- Public, private, alternative, charter, transitional, or home schools (this includes school support organizations such as PTAs, PTOs, school foundations, etc.). Schools are defined as groups/organizations providing K–12 education that meet state education requirements and post-secondary education leading to a degree or accreditation.
- Organizations/groups whose main purpose is to raise funds for another person, organization, or cause.

← Flexible Support →

- Organizations/groups that will not be the entity with primary responsibility for managing the proposal activities.
- Organizations/groups who receive a legislative appropriation or legislatively mandated grant from Minnesota's arts and cultural heritage fund are ineligible to receive MRAC funding for the year they received the appropriation.

If you have questions about what this means for your group, please contact **flexiblesupport@mrac.org**.

Individuals are also ineligible for Flexible Support. Individual applicants should instead consider **Creative Connections** or **Next Step Fund**.

Part 4: Organization/Group Eligibility Breakdown

5.

Part 5: Eligible Expenses and Funding Period Breakdown

Review all eligibility rules related to allowable expenses and budget items as well as spending timeline requirements.

Eligible Expenses

Flexible Support proposals may request funding for the following:

1. Support of the organization/group's **operations and/or organizational capacity** to directly provide arts access to Minnesotans.
 - *Examples of eligible funding requests:* paying rent or utilities for a space, software subscriptions, website updates, salaries or benefits for staff, insurance.
2. Capital expenses, including **facility improvements and/or equipment purchases**, with the following restrictions:
 - a. Organizations/groups may only request up to a maximum of \$5,000 for capital expenses.
 - b. Equipment must be directly related to and necessary for creating arts access.
 - c. Facility improvements to properties not owned by the applicant organization/group will require written permission from the property owner.
 - d. Facility improvements may not be made to any residential properties, including any structures, pavements, fencing, and/or landscaping on residential lands.
 - *Examples of eligible funding requests:* new chairs for theater audience members, specialized printing equipment, ADA accessibility improvements.
3. **Arts programming** activities in Minnesota, whether a single event or a series, and/or the **purchase of art supplies**.
 - *Examples of eligible funding requests:* theater production, series of music concerts, arts day for kids, paint and paintbrushes for arts day.

If you have questions about whether your proposal would fall into these categories, please contact flexiblesupport@mrac.org for an eligibility review.

Ineligible Proposal Activities & Budget Items

The following activities, purchases, and expenses are ineligible:

- Activities and/or expenses that are included in another open or pending MRAC grant, as a proposal can only be funded by one MRAC grant. Refer to [Groups with Open MRAC Grants](#) (page 15) for more.
- Proposals that violate applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, regulations, and ordinances.
- Proposals that attempt to influence any state or federal legislation or appropriation.
- Proposals that support activities that are essentially for religious socialization of the participants or audience.
- Proposals that discriminate against persons or groups.
- Activities and/or expenses that take place outside of the state of Minnesota, including travel costs, costs of visas, and/or costs for relocating the applicant's legal address outside Minnesota. You may engage an out-of-state artist or consultant within your proposal, but their travel expenses to or from Minnesota cannot be included in an MRAC application.
- Unrealized income and expenses such as scholarships or in-kind support; the purchase of real estate property; or the development of endowments, funds toward debt reduction, and/or building cash reserves.
- Expenses to purchase alcoholic or THC-infused beverages or to pay associated costs (servers, insurance, licenses, etc.).
- Proposals designed to raise funds/regrant/donate funds on behalf of another person, organization, or cause. MRAC funds cannot be donated to another organization or person.

- These dollars cannot substitute other state dollars. This includes:
 - 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, teaching staff, or arts specialist previously provided or would be expected to provide in a school setting.
 - Requests in which the proposal will replace discontinued or nonexistent arts programs that should be fulfilling the state's arts curriculum requirements in schools.

Eligible Funding Period

For Round 1, all grant funds must be spent and all expenses incurred between December 4, 2025, and May 31, 2027.

For Round 2, all grant funds must be spent and all expenses incurred between June 2, 2026, and May 31, 2027.

Definition of Incurred Expenses

Incurred expenses are promises to pay. Because grants are not guaranteed, applicants may not make any *promises to pay* (i.e. incur an expense) before the grant funding period begins. As such, all grant-related contracts or agreements must be **both entered into (signed) and executed (paid or fulfilled)** within the funding period.

Examples include bookings with artists or venues, artist fee agreements, and any other formal agreement for goods or services where payment is promised, whether or not cash changes hands at the time the agreement is signed.

If any expenses (both incurred and spent) or reimbursements outside of the eligible funding period are included in the application, the entire application may be deemed ineligible.



Part 6: Application Assistance and Additional Resources

Part 6: Application Assistance and Additional Resources

Application Assistance

Email us at flexiblesupport@mrac.org with any questions.

Application assistance for Flexible Support Round 1 opens Monday, July 7 at 9 am and closes Friday, August 15 at 5 pm.

Application assistance for Flexible Support Round 2 opens Monday, January 5 at 9 am and closes Friday, February 13 at 5 pm.

MRAC staff are dedicated to creating an accessible application process for everyone. If you have any questions about accessibility or need an accommodation, please reach out to flexiblesupport@mrac.org at least two weeks before the application deadline. You can get assistance according to your preference, usually over email, phone, or Zoom.

To keep the process fair and balanced, staff may only provide application reviews related to eligibility. They cannot review content or make recommendations for improving the strength of the application.

Additional Resources

Below is a list of resources that can help you prepare your application. You can find all of them on the [Flexible Support webpage](#) once the application window opens.

Application Scoring Guide for Review Panelists

All eligible applications will be reviewed and scored by panel participants according to this guide.

Application Questions and Explanations

This document presents all the sections and questions so that you can read through them beforehand. It also describes the reasons behind each question. The reasons for each question are provided in Submittable as you fill out the form online as well.

Please note that this is **not the application**. You will need to fill out the form in Submittable.

Narrative Drafting Document

You can use this document to work on rough drafts of your narrative answers.

Please note that this is **not the application**. If you use this document to draft your answers, you will need to transfer your answers to Submittable.

Budget Plan Drafting Sheet

You can use this spreadsheet to estimate your expenses before inputting them into Submittable.