



2025 CITY ARTS PARTNERSHIP (CAP) GRANT GUIDELINES

APPLICATION DEADLINE	Friday, May 16, 2025 at 5:00 pm No applications will be accepted after this date and time.
PURPOSE	To provide unrestricted general operating funds to arts-and-culture organizations that demonstrate strong arts mission fulfillment, fiscal responsibility and sound management.
ELIGIBILITY	Arts-and-culture nonprofits with a 501(c)3 designation based in and serving Fargo and West Fargo, ND and Moorhead, MN <i>and</i> that have annual operating budgets of \$40,000 and above. <i>Further details on p. 2</i>
ON-LINE APPLICATION	The application portal will open on Tuesday, April 1. The link to the application, application preview with required questions and the scoring rubric used by the panelists can be found at theartspartnership.net/arts-hub/grants-and-funding/ under the CAP Grant button.
Q&A MEETINGS	TAP will offer two virtual meetings to answer questions and cover some basics for submitting your best application. Grant writers new to the City Arts Partnership grant application process are <i>strongly encouraged</i> to attend a meeting. Tuesday, April 8 from 8:00 – 9:00 am <i>OR</i> Thursday, April 10 from 5:30 – 6:30 pm Email Tania Blanich, Executive Director, at tania@theartspartnership.net by 5 pm on Monday, April 7 to indicate which meeting your organization’s grant writer will attend and we’ll send the Zoom link.
DRAFT APPLICATION REVIEW	Applicants may ask TAP staff to review their draft application up to one week before the application deadline.
QUESTIONS?	Contact Tania Blanich, Executive Director tania@theartspartnership.net

GENERAL INFORMATION

The City Arts Partnership (CAP) grants invest in the overall health and success of the Metro area's arts community and, by extension, the health and success of our community at large. CAP Grants provide general operating support (GOS) to our community's mid-sized to largest arts-and-culture entities.

We know how challenging it is to find general operating support, so The Arts Partnership wants to provide the arts sector with the unrestricted support it needs to do its mission-related work. The grants are funded by the Cities of Fargo, Moorhead and West Fargo.

In Fall 2023, TAP's Board of Directors added a fourth core value: *Advance equitable access to and inclusion through the arts*. For TAP's staff and board, these words will serve as a continual reminder to consciously and deliberately work to make our programs equitable and inclusive – and to encourage our Grantees, Partners and other colleagues in the arts sector to do the same. We hope that our support in the arts sector can ensure that *all* in our community – people who are BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, from the disability community, immigrants, from low-income families and from other underrepresented and underserved groups – can participate in and engage with the arts.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants must be based in and primarily serving Fargo and West Fargo, ND and Moorhead, MN and must:

- Be a stand-alone nonprofit arts presenter or arts producer or an arts-and-culture K-12 school program that serves all three of the Tri-Cities' school districts
- Have an *explicitly stated* arts-and-culture mission
- Have a 501c3 designation in good standing
- Have tax-exempt status in North Dakota or Minnesota
- Have an annual operating budget of \$40,000 or more

Additionally, CAP grant applicants must:

- Have received at least one CAP or Community Cultivation (CC) grant in the past 2 years
- Be up to date with all reporting requirements if a current CAP or CC grant recipient
- Demonstrate general fiscal responsibility and agree to use the grant funds to further the arts in our community
- If requested by TAP, provide financial statements audited or reviewed by an outside CPA and/or produced by an accounting system such as QuickBooks
- Submit a complete and accurate application by the stated deadline

Ineligible applicants include:

- Arts entities not located in and serving the Tri-Cities of Fargo and West Fargo in North Dakota and/or Moorhead in Minnesota
- Stand-alone arts-and-culture nonprofit with an annual budget *under* \$40,000

Eligibility

If you've never applied for a CAP grant, it's been more than two years since you've received a grant from TAP or you don't fit the criteria for eligibility to apply for a CAP grant, you may be eligible to apply for a Community Cultivation Grant. More info at theartspartnership.net/arts-hub/grants-and-funding/ or contact Tania Blanich at tania@theartspartnership.net.

- An arts-and-culture organization that has not received at least one CAP or CC grant in the past 2 years
- An arts-and-culture organization based in the Metro that serves an entire region or state
- An arts department of a college or university, a program of an individual school or school district or an arts-focused department of a Metro Park District
- An arts-and-culture organization that is fiscally sponsored
- An organization that plans to submit a Community Cultivation Grant application

Use of Grant Funds

The CAP grants provide general operating support, which means that the funds are unrestricted. However, some activities may *not* be funded with these grant funds. Ineligible activities include:

- Activities that do not have arts/culture as their primary focus
- Endowment funds
- Capital expenditures
- Fundraising
- Reduction or elimination of accumulated deficits
- Activities that are primarily for religious socialization or political purposes
- Re-granting or scholarships

Grant Tiers

Applicants for the CAP Grants are grouped into two grant tiers:

- **General Operating Support I (GOS I)** – grant awards of \$5,000 and up
 - Annual budget of \$250,000 and above
 - Paid professional staff, full-time management
 - Year-round programming
 - Financial statements audited or reviewed by an outside CPA
- **General Operating Support II (GOS II)** – grant awards between \$3,000 and \$5,000
 - Annual budget between \$40,000 and \$249,999
 - Paid administrative full- or part-time staff (may be seasonal)
 - Year-round or seasonal programming
 - Financial statements professionally audited or reviewed by an outside CPA *or* a balance sheet and profit and loss statement produced by an accounting system like QuickBooks

GRANT REVIEW PROCESS AND CRITERIA

TAP is committed to a transparent grant review process and to that end, holds open, public meetings at which the grants are reviewed and discussed.

Applicants are encouraged to attend the panel discussion; however, they will not be able to participate in the discussion *unless* the panel has a specific question to ask an organizational representative.

The CAP grant review panel consists of individuals who are invested in the Metro’s arts community, whether as arts administrators, artists or participants/supporters. Panelists generally serve two-year terms. TAP observes strict procedures to prevent any conflicts of interest. Each panel member reviews all the on-line application submissions but recuses themselves from voting on an application for an organization for which they have a conflict of interest.

The panel uses the following criteria to assess all applications:

- Artistic quality, including the organization’s integrity and intention regarding its arts programming.
- Impact, existing or potential, on the communities and audiences the organization serves and/or plans to serve.
- Organizational capabilities: capacity, efficacy and organizational and fiscal stability.

Panelists score applicants in each of the criteria; those scores are averaged, providing a highest possible score of 30. Applicants receiving 20 to 30 points are considered for funding, based on their ranking. Applications that receive identical rankings will be additionally ranked by the panelists to determine the funding priority and amounts. Applicants receiving less than 20 points are not considered for funding.

FILLING OUT YOUR APPLICATION

- ***Make sure you are in the CAP Grants section*** at theartspartnership.net/arts-hub/grants-and-funding
- Read through the guidelines, application preview and scoring rubric thoroughly before starting the process – and use them as a reference while working on your application.
- Although the online application form allows you to save your work and return to it, we strongly recommend using the application preview document to draft your answers to the questions.
 - Working offline helps avoid technical glitches that could result in lost work.
 - If you would like TAP staff to review a draft application, it will be easier for both you and TAP to work with a Word document.
 - Once your narrative is ready, you can cut and paste the final narrative into the application form and upload the attachments.
- If you have any technical difficulties, try using a different web browser, for example Explorer instead of Chrome. Sometimes that’s all it takes to resolve the problem.

NOTIFICATION OF RECEIPT

Applicants will receive an email confirmation of submission. If you have not received an email within two (2) business days, contact Tania Blanich at tania@theartspartnership.net.

TAP staff review submitted applications for completeness and eligibility. Applicants are notified within five (5) business days if a proposal contains significant errors or omissions or is otherwise ineligible.

Panel Review Meeting

Details about the June meeting will be sent directly to applicants by May 30, 2025.

Review Criteria and Scoring Rubric

The rubric used by the panel to make their determinations can be found at theartspartnership.net/arts-hub/grants-and-funding/ under the CAP grant button.