



2026 COMMUNITY CULTIVATION (CC) GRANT GUIDELINES

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Friday, May 15, 2026 at 5:00 pm

No applications will be accepted after this date and time.

PURPOSE

To provide unrestricted support to arts-and-cultural heritage organizations that make an important contribution to the arts and cultural landscape of the Fargo-Moorhead-West Fargo Metro area.

ELIGIBILITY

Arts-and-cultural heritage nonprofits that are based in and serving Fargo and West Fargo, ND and Moorhead, MN are eligible to apply. Applicants may only apply for a single TAP grant program. *See additional eligibility requirements on p. 2.*

GRANT AWARD AMOUNTS

\$500 - \$2,500

ON-LINE APPLICATION

The application portal will open on **Wednesday, 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 Community Cultivation Grant button.

QUESTIONS/SUPPORT

Make certain to read these guidelines and the application preview thoroughly; if you still have questions, contact Tania Blanich, Executive Director, at tania@theartspartnership.net.

TAP will offer a virtual meeting to answer your questions and cover some basics for submitting your best application.

Wednesday, April 8 from 8 to 9 am

Grant writers new to the Community Cultivation grant application process are *strongly encouraged* to attend a meeting.

Email tania@theartspartnership.net by 5 pm on Monday, April 6 with the name and contact information of the person from your organization that will attend so that we can forward them the link.

Applicants may ask TAP staff to review their draft application up to one week before the application deadline.

Questions?

Contact Tania Blanich at
Tania@theartspartnership.net

GENERAL INFORMATION

Community Cultivation 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. The grants provide unrestricted general operating support to arts-and-cultural heritage nonprofits in our community and 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 **all** of the following:

- An organization that is a stand-alone, 501(c)3, tax-exempt, arts-and-cultural heritage organization
- Based in Fargo or West Fargo, ND or Moorhead, MN and primarily serving those communities
- Have an annual operating budget of \$99,000 or less or is otherwise ineligible to apply for a City Arts Partnership (CAP) grant
- Up to date with all reporting requirements if a current grant recipient of The Arts Partnership
- Demonstrate general fiscal responsibility and agree to use the grant funds to further the arts and/or cultural heritage in our community
- Submit a complete and accurate application by the stated deadline

Community Cultivation Grant applicants must meet the above requirements for eligibility and **may be**:

- A first-time arts-and-cultural heritage nonprofit applicant for a TAP grant, regardless of operating budget size
- An arts nonprofit that has not received a grant from TAP in the past two or more years, regardless of operating budget size

Ineligible applicants include organizations that:

- Do not have stand-alone 501(c)3 status or a pending application with the IRS for 501(c)3 status
- Do not have an explicitly stated arts-and-cultural heritage mission
- Are not based in and do not primarily serve the Metro area
- Do not regularly offer arts or cultural heritage programming as an integral part of its mission; such arts or cultural heritage activities must represent at least 15% of the organization's programming **and** of its operating budget
- Are a department of a college or university
- Are eligible for and plan to submit a 2026 City Arts Partnership grant application

Use of Grant Funds

The CC grants provide general operating support.

Ineligible activities include:

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

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 CC 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 no more than two consecutive years. 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 (and/or the project or program) 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 must receive 20 points or more to be considered for funding. Funding is based on their application's final ranking.

GRANT ADMINISTRATION

The grant period is for 12 months, beginning no earlier than July 1, 2026 and concluding by June 30, 2027.

The TAP Board approves the grant awards, based on the Grant Review Panel's recommendations. Applicants will receive email notification regarding whether or not the application has been funded,

Grant Review Meeting

Details about the meeting will be sent directly to applicants by May 29, 2026.

Review Criteria and Scoring Rubric

The rubric used by the panel to make their determinations can be found at <https://theartspartnership.net/arts-hub/grants-and-funding/> under the Community Cultivation grant button.

typically within forty-five (45) days of the application deadline. If the application is not funded, applicants may contact TAP staff to receive feedback.

If awarded a grant, the applicant must sign a formal grant agreement, which includes detailed information about funding distribution, reporting requirements (due by or on April 30 of the grant year) and recognition of support.

The grant funds are disbursed in late June.

If awarded a program or project grant, organization must request an extension from The Arts Partnership if the awarded program or the project is not completed by the expected date. If the extension request is not submitted prior to the end of the grant period, the grantee will be required to return the funds. While TAP is likely to approve the extension, it is not guaranteed.

FILLING OUT YOUR APPLICATION

- ***Make sure you are in the Community Cultivation 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 APPLICATION RECEIPT

Applicants will receive an email confirmation of submission. *Save and print this email to document the application submission date and time.* If you have not received an email within two (2) business days, contact Tania Blanich at tania@theartspartnership.net.

TAP staff reviews 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.