



**ORANGE COUNTY
ARTS COMMISSION**

GRASSROOTS ARTS PROGRAM
2024 Guidelines & Information



ABOUT OUR GRANTS

Grassroots Program Grants (GAP) Funded by the NC Arts Council (NCAC) and Orange County, these grants fund arts programs, projects, and services through area nonprofits, schools, and municipal organizations.

Artist Project Grants (APG) Funded by Orange County, these grants fund artist-led projects and programs that positively benefit the greater community.

ABOUT OUR GRANTS

AVAILABLE FUNDS

- Fiscal Year 2023-24 Funds: \$74,140 for GAP; \$28,800 for APG
- Maximum request limits:
 - Programmatic Requests: \$5,000
 - Operations Requests: \$5,000

TIMELINE

- All grant applications due by 11:59PM on Sunday, June 30
- Applicants will be notified in August, funds dispersed September
- September, 2024: Presentation at Board of County Commissioners meeting

ELIGIBILITY

- All projects/programs must take place in **Orange County** for the benefit of **Orange County** residents
- Projects/programs must take place between **July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025**
- Applicant must be
 - **Nonprofit** organization OR group sponsored by nonprofit organizations (fiscal agent)
 - Public or private **school** in Orange County; parent/teacher organization for OCPS/CHCCS
 - Entity of town or county **government**

ELIGIBILITY

- Organizations serving multiple counties can only apply to the Grassroots program in the county where they are **physically located**.
- Must have been in operation for **one year**
- Organizations with an annual operating budget of **over \$2M** may only request programmatic support, not operations.
- Recipients of general support funds through **NC Arts Council** or **NC Dpt of Natural & Cultural Resources** may not receive Grassroots grants

WHAT THE GRANTS WILL FUND

- **Program expenses** such as professional **artists' fees** and travel, space rental, advertising, marketing and publicity, website and electronic media, scripts, costumes, sets, props, music and theater equipment rental.
- **Operating expenses** for qualified **arts** organizations. These can include salaries, office supplies, printing, postage, rent, utilities, insurance and equipment rental.

WHAT THE GRANTS WILL NOT FUND

- Art, music, and dance therapists
- Artifacts
- Purchase of artwork
- **Capital expenditures**
- Contingency funds
- Deficit reduction
- **Equipment**
- **Fundraising events**
- **Food or beverages**
- School band activities or equipment
- **Internal school activities or supplies**
- Lobbying expenses
- Oral history and history projects
- Tuition for academic study
- Interest on loans, fines or litigation costs
- **Scholarships**
- Religious content

GUIDELINES

- **Artistic merit** is extremely important!
- Matching Requirement: One-to-one cash match **REQUIRED.**
- Provide proof of partnerships, community support and responsiveness to community needs, such as **letters of support** from anyone or any organization mentioned in your application.
- **Operations requests** are allowed from arts organizations only
- **Be mindful of accessibility:**
 - All grant-funded projects are required to take place in a fully accessible, ADA-approved location.
 - Consider audio descriptions for those with low vision and closed captioning for those with hearing difficulties
 - Consider sensory-friendly performances for the neuro-diverse
 - Consider name badges with preferred pronouns (if appropriate for your program)

PRIORITIES FOR FUNDING

For Grassroots Applications

1st Priority: **Arts organizations** like symphonies, galleries, theaters, art guilds, choral societies, dance companies and music presenters

2nd Priority: Arts learning and **Arts in Education programs** conducted by qualified artists.

3rd Priority: Civic, municipal or **community-based organizations** providing quality art experiences for the greater community.

HOW APPLICATIONS ARE EVALUATED

- A Financial Review panel will review organization's financial documents
- Three review panels (visual, literary, performing arts) with OCAC Advisory Board members + guest artists will review apps
- Funding decisions are based on the **quality of the grant application**, not panelists' knowledge of the organization
- Panelists review each grant application and **score applications** on specific criteria
- Full OCAC Advisory Board will be presented scores and decide funding decisions

HOW APPLICATIONS ARE EVALUATED

Considerations...

- **Artistic quality** of the proposed project or program
- **Community impact** of project or program
- **Multicultural aspect** of the program
- **Educational impact** of the program
- Ability to **plan and implement** project
- Stability and **fiscal responsibility** of the organization
- Integration into **curriculum and/or enrichment** (schools only)
- **Need** (schools only, based on percentage FRL%)

HOW APPLICATIONS ARE EVALUATED

Scoring rubric:

Nonprofits, municipalities:

1. Artistic Merit – 30%
2. Community Impact – 25%
3. Program Management – 15%
4. Financial Review – 10%
5. NCAC Priority of Funding – 10%
6. Compliance --10%

Schools:

1. Artistic Merit – 40%
2. Integration in curriculum and/or enrichment – 40%
3. Need (FRL%) – 20%

IF YOU GET FUNDED...

- Grant **Contract**
- **Final report** with audience numbers + demographics
- Demonstrated use of proper **NC Arts Council logo and credit line and OCAC logo** on promotional materials and programs

This project was supported by the N.C. Arts Council, a division of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.



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Arts
Council
Fifty years
of leadership



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- **Letters** to local legislators and commissioners
- **Willingness to participate** in activities that showcase your project, or contribute to the betterment of the arts community of Orange County.

F.A.Q.'s

Q: What are the funding priorities for 2024-25?

A: Programs, especially those hiring multicultural artists. Operations funding will be limited in 2024-25.

Q: We applied for a grant through the NC Arts Council and aren't sure if we will be funded. Should we still apply for an OCAC grant?

A: We were hoping by moving back our grant cycle by a month, we would hear who is being funded by the state and therefore isn't eligible for OCAC funding, however that hasn't happened yet. If you have the staff time to apply, we would suggest you do. We do have a small amount (\$29k) that is not state-funded and can therefore be granted to state-funded organizations, but this small amount will not go very far.

F.A.Q.'s

Q: Is there a limit on how much funding I can ask for?

A: Yes, you can ask for up to \$5,000 per programs or operations request.

Q: I need funding for multiple projects or programs. Should I compile all requests into one application, or submit multiple applications?

A: For the sake of clarity, we would prefer for you to submit one application per program. Be as clear as possible with your request; we never want the grants panel to ask, "What exactly are they asking for?"

F.A.Q.'s

Q: What about matching funds? Can artists' time count towards an in-kind match?

The dollar value of in-kind donations of goods and services MAY be used for matching funds; however, a “donation” of artists' time may not be used as matching funds. Artists' time is a valuable resource and we want artists to be paid.

Q: Why must my project expenses equal my income?

If your project income was more than your expenses, then it would be a revenue-generating project, which is not the intention of this grant program.

If your expenses were more than your income, questions arise regarding the project and if it was well thought-out. You don't want to plan – and our board doesn't want to fund – a project that results in financial loss.

F.A.Q.'s

Q: What are the main tips you can offer to help me submit a great application?

A: First, understand the purpose of the N.C.Arts Council Grassroots Arts Program: to ensure that every citizen has access to **quality arts experiences**. Your grant should help fulfill this goal, either through programming or through operational support that allows your arts organization to serve the public.

Second, be **clear and concise**. Quality is much more important than quantity!

Third, **try new things**. Generally, the OCAC board prefers to fund evolving, innovative projects each year rather than the same project multiple times.

Fourth, focus on the identified needs of our arts community: **space** and **equitable access**.

F.A.Q.'s

For Grassroots Applications

Q: What role does multicultural programming play in your grant decisions?

A: A big one! Orange County will be required to allocate **67%** of GAP grant funds to support multicultural programs. Note that this is reference to who is **being hired**, not the population being served. Priority will be given to programs hiring high quality artists who are black, Asian American, Latinx, or Native American.

Q: Can we submit applications for BOTH operations and programmatic support?

A: Yes, but depending on the applicant pool, both requests may not be funded. We suggest picking your highest priority need and submitting only that request.

F.A.Q.'s

For Grassroots Applications

Q: How do I answer “organization race”

A: This is a National Standard for Arts Information Exchange data collection project to document state arts agency grantmaking activities. This information is not used in making grant decisions. Organizations should choose the one code that best represents 50 percent or more of their staff, board and membership (if applicable).

Q: How do I find high quality artists, performers or instructors for my arts program?

A: Several organizations, including the OCAC, can help you find performers. Local schools are encouraged to work with the Durham Arts Council’s CAPS Program and United Arts Council of Raleigh & Wake County’s Artists in Schools Program to secure high quality, vetted teaching artists.

F.A.Q.'s

For Grassroots Applications

Q: Does the zero-based budget apply to my organization's financials?

A: This applies to programming requests and applies only to the budget you submit for the program/project. We do not expect your organization's income to exactly match your expense, but make sure you explain in your application if your organization has a significant deficit or surplus.

Q: Can I request funds for scholarships for classes or camps?

A: No. While we understand there are costs associated with your educational programs, often times these costs are subjective and hard to determine. Grants should cover the hard costs of your programs or organization, rather than offset revenue. We suggest requesting funding to cover the salary of your instructor, allowing your organization to offer more scholarships.

WHEN
to submit your application

Applications due
Thursday, June 30 by 11:59PM

www.artsorange.org/grants

QUESTIONS?

Need help? Have questions? Confused?

Katie Murray, Director

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