

New Jersey State Council on the Arts

So that you may be fully informed, please be sure to read this entire document.

Funding Philosophy

The New Jersey State Council on the Arts, with a mission of service to the entire state, views the recipients of the funds entrusted to it as partners and co-producers in the delivery of arts programs, services, works and experiences that create and sustain public value to people and communities everywhere.

It views the funding it provides as investments in artists and organizations to help them bring the very best they have to achieve and offer to the most people possible and to build their capacity to sustain these achievements in the future.

As custodian of public funds, the Council insists on maintaining the highest standards of accountability both in its operations and in those of the persons and organizations in which it invests.

It is equally committed to the principles of fairness, equal access and funding determinations based on merit through processes of independent review and Council deliberation that are free of conflict of interest and outside influence and focused clearly on criteria of excellence and serving the needs of the entire state.

Moreover, the Council views itself as having a mandate for leadership of the field in encouraging high standards, best practices, collaboration and leadership; in providing assistance for growth and development; in stimulating and celebrating the very greatest artistic achievements possible; and in creating avenues, incentives and support to connect artists, the arts and the nonprofit arts industry to the fullest possible array of community needs, issues, opportunities and resources.

Types of Grants for Organizations offered for FY16

Please Note: General Operating/Program Support is not available until the next three-year cycle begins in FY17. Arts Project Support is available annually.

Arts Project Support (APS)

[Application Guidelines](#)

Support for a single arts event that upholds high standards of artistry, management and accountability and provides significant public benefit. A project is defined as a public activity or event that occurs once during the year either as a single day or weekend presentation, or a series of the same presentation occurring within a very limited and specific timeframe generally not exceeding 6 weeks. Examples include: a concert, an exhibition, a reading, the run of a single theatrical production, or a festival.

Please note: This category does not support on-going or multiple programs or an annual series of events or the general operations of the sponsoring organization.

The project must be wholly dedicated to the arts and the applicant should clearly demonstrate its commitment to the arts project through the allocation of its resources and funds raised from the community. Applicants unclear about the distinctions between a project and a general on-going program as defined here should contact the [Council staff](#).

Please note: *General Operating and General Program Support grantees or applicants are not permitted to also apply for APS grants except in Folk Arts.*

Projects Serving Artists (PSA)

[Application Guidelines](#)

Support for projects whose primary beneficiaries are artists who reside in New Jersey and whose work has or will benefit New Jersey residents. This category addresses the Council's priority to support New Jersey artists and their work and to encourage New Jersey's arts organizations and other non-profits to work with, serve the needs of, and present works by the state's artists. Projects must demonstrate a direct benefit to individual New Jersey artists. Support through this category may not be used to further compensate the artistic leadership of the applicant organization.

Please note: *This category does not support on-going or multiple programs or the general operations of the sponsoring organization.*

The project must be wholly dedicated to the arts and the applicant should clearly demonstrate its commitment to the arts project through the allocation of its resources and funds raised from the community. Applicants unclear about the distinctions between a project and a general on-going program as defined here should [contact Council staff](#).

Arts Education Special Initiative (AESI)

[Application Guidelines](#)

Support for new or expanded arts education projects that make substantial contributions to quality arts education in New Jersey public, public charter, private, parochial schools grades Pre-K through 12.

Please note: *This grant category is limited to organizations currently receiving General Operating Support (GOS) or General Program Support (GPS) in any category other than Arts Basic to Education (ABE).*

AESI is intended to help those arts organizations whose main focus and mission is not arts education to develop their full potential as community resources to educational systems throughout the state, and create a stronger infrastructure for arts education statewide. Initiatives may be localized (within a single county or town), or regional (multi-county). Partnerships with schools/school districts in developing the Initiative are strongly encouraged, as are partnerships with other community organizations. Eligibility centers on in-school programming that augments, but does not replace, arts curriculum and/or existing co-curricular programming (programs that occur during or outside of the school day that connect back to and compliment school curriculum). Initiatives should provide direct learning about the arts and the process of creating, including the skills, techniques and concepts of an art form(s), and make cross-curricular connections for students and teachers. Projects may focus on student learning and/or professional development for teachers. Collaborative training for teachers and teaching artists is encouraged. Teaching artist preparation is an essential component of an Initiative.

Notice of Intent and Application Deadlines

***Please note:** All potential applicants must submit a Notice of Intent to Apply. The Council will not accept an application that was not preceded by a Notice of Intent to Apply, if required.*

The Council will review Notices of Intent to Apply to ensure that applicants meet all of the eligibility requirements of the grant program, especially in demonstrating multi-county or statewide impact, and to screen for potential problems before an organization submits a full application. The Notice of Intent to Apply is not binding. Council staff will notify the applicant if, from the information provided, it appears that an application may be problematic in any important aspect.

If not a current NJSCA grantee, the applicant must mail a copy of the applicant's IRS tax exempt determination letter, postmarked the same date as the Notice of Intent deadline.

If you have previously used SAGE (the state eGrant system) your organization is registered and you should use your established login and password.

If you have not previously used SAGE, you will need to pre-register on SAGE before you will be able to access the system. This process requires up to 72 hours for completion by the system administrator, therefore please pre-register as soon as you determine your interest in applying for a grant, preferably no later than December 5, 2014.

Deadlines for FY16 Organizational Grant Program:

Notice of Intent to Apply: Wednesday, December 17, 2014 for all grant categories

Completed Applications: Wednesday, February 4, 2015 for all grant categories

Mailed original signed documents and support material postmarked or delivered to the Council office by **Friday, February 6, 2015**.

***Please note:** Electronic deadlines are met by submitting by 11:59 pm on the deadline date. Signed original documents and support materials must be postmarked or delivered to Council office by 4:00 pm on the deadline date.*

Requests for extensions to the deadlines will be permitted only in extreme circumstances. To request an extension, complete the [Extension Form](#) at least one week prior to the deadline. Late applications that do not have an approved extension may be disqualified.

***Reminder:** Applicants who experience significant changes in staffing, programming, or finances after the application deadline should notify the Council in writing and discuss these changes with Council staff*

FY 16 Grant Period

The Grant Period for all FY16 grants under this program runs July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016.

Match Requirements

All grants require cash matches. In-kind contributions, which are important and demonstrate support, are not permitted as part of a match. Match requirements are as follows:

General Operating and General Program Support are 3:1, based on operating income. For each dollar received from the Council, the grantee must show three additional dollars raised and spent.

Arts Project Support, Projects Serving Artists, and Arts Education Special Initiative are 1:1, based on expenses. For each dollar received from the Council, the grantee must show one additional dollar spent.

By legislation, funds from the New Jersey Cultural Trust cannot be used to match Council grants, so expenditure of those funds must be subtracted before demonstrating the match.

In addition, Council grants and the required match may not be used to match other Council grants. Therefore, GOS and GPS budgets must demonstrate the match without the addition of other Council grants, including cosponsored grants.

The match may derive from all contributed, earned or parent institution funds specifically allocated for the program or project. Indirect costs may not be part of any match, although applicants should provide this information in the narrative to show sponsoring organization support.

Application Assistance Available

The following assistance is available to potential applicants:

- Application Workshops—check [Council's website](#) for the latest dates and locations
- Individual appointments with Council staff following workshops or scheduled appointments for an alternate date
- Applicants may make an appointment to review applications of previously successful applicants by written request to the Council
- [Council staff](#) members are available to answer questions by phone or e-mail

Grants Process

Applications are reviewed by peer panels of artists, arts administrators, arts educators, and financial and accessibility specialists. Panels are configured to provide a variety of different viewpoints within the discipline and a broad demographic representation. Panels use the Evaluation Criteria and Council Priorities/Identifying Best Practices and Models in assessing applications. Panels provide numerical ratings on applications and evaluative commentary that represent the group consensus.

These ratings and the consensus comments are forwarded to the Council's Grants Committee for further individual review. The Grants Committee carefully considers a wide variety of factors related to the criteria and areas of special interest in arriving at funding recommendations. These recommendations are forwarded to the full Council for vote at its annual meeting, usually held in

late July. Applicants are notified via mail of the Council's decision and are provided the consensus comments.

The Council maintains an appeals process based on an applicant's ability to demonstrate that the panel misunderstood or misinterpreted information contained in the application.

One-year grant agreements are forwarded to grantees covering a period of July 1 through June 30. Grant agreements obligate grantees to comply with all pertinent laws and regulations, audit requirements, acknowledgment of Council support, and any special requirements. All grantees must submit interim and final reports. Applicants interested in receiving more detailed information on the process should contact the Council's Programs and Services Office.

Fundamental Evaluation Criteria

The following basic criteria will be used to measure the merits of all applications. Each grant type though will contain certain important, specialized considerations. See grant categories for further detail:

- High artistic quality in pursuit of a mission that provides/creates public benefit and value
- Significant public benefit and broad accessibility based on sound understanding of who is/will be served that is clear, measured, and documented
- Sound governance, management, and operations based on sound strategic planning
- Fiscal soundness and accountability with evidence of broad and diverse financial support
- Commitment to arts education and to providing opportunities for meaningful arts learning
- Commitment to raising public understanding and value of the arts, artists and arts education and advocating for their support
- Leadership in meeting statewide Council priorities and developing and sharing models and best practices (see below)

Council Priorities/Identifying Best Practices and Models

The Council seeks to foster a strong, vibrant New Jersey arts community that offers diverse public programs and services and provides the people of our state with the greatest public benefit possible. Through the statewide planning process, the arts community has resolved to become a better “community of learning and practice.”

Toward that goal, the Council has committed to help identify and reward leadership in priority areas and communicate models and best practices. The following is a list of Council Priorities. These are areas of potential leadership from which the Council seeks to identify exemplary ideas, methods, models and practices for tackling specific challenges and doing business better.

Applicants will be asked to provide information in this regard and panelists will be asked to identify them from each application. All consideration will be placed within the context of the applicant's mission.

- Serving the needs of artists, particularly New Jersey artists with exemplary programs, opportunities, services, or presentation of their work
- Presenting new works of art that strive to make significant contributions to the advancement of the art form
- Preserving and conserving art forms and cultural heritage through public presentation

- Promoting cultural diversity and diversifying cultural participation
***Please Note:** The involvement of and benefit to communities of diverse cultures are considerations in the Council’s evaluation of programs. The wide range of ways applicants can demonstrate a model or best practice includes program marketing and outreach to culturally diverse audiences and communities; programming that is responsive to community needs and to the need to provide audiences with access to culturally diverse programming; support of arts organizations whose composition reflects the community served and/or the art forms produced; and support of ethnically specific arts and modes of expression.*
- Advancing and advocating for arts education in New Jersey schools as a basic part of school curriculum and education reform through the arts
- Offering new and increased opportunities for life-long learning in and through the arts
- Demonstrating and promoting the public value of the arts
- Advocating for greater and broader support for the arts
- Broadening, deepening or diversifying participation among arts stewards (trustees, donors, volunteers), art creators (artists) or arts audiences by addressing the practical, perceptual or experiential impediments to arts participation, especially among underserved communities throughout New Jersey
- Promoting accessibility to the arts for people with disabilities
- Forging new and expanded partnerships and collaborations that connect the arts to other sectors in more effectively addressing community issues and challenges including, but not limited to economic development, tourism, social services, law and public safety, health and healing, etc.
- Adhering to the highest standards and innovative practices of operational excellence including governance, management, planning, use of technology, and resource development
- Demonstrating exemplary contribution to the implementation of one or more strategies outlined in the statewide plan for the arts, Arts Plan New Jersey, or planning for organizational strategic development within the context of Arts Plan.

Ineligible Uses of Council Grant Funds

- capital improvements and acquisitions
- hospitality costs
- foreign travel
- deficits or replacement of funds normally budgeted for the activity
- fundraising events
- student publications or scholarship funds
- support for “The Nutcracker” or any organization whose sole activity/season is based on “The Nutcracker”
- programs and projects of sister agencies in state government other than state colleges and universities; Co-sponsored activities are possible, but require prior discussion with Council and staff

Colleges, Universities, Other Educational and Religious Institutions

These organizations may apply for support if:

- the activity is marketed to and open to the general public
- the activity is supplemental to any curriculum and separate from any religious observance
- neither the grant nor the matching funds are used to pay salaries of faculty or members of the clergy, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that such salaries, or a prorated share of them, expressly underwrite the project

Please Note: Each department of a higher educational institution is considered an eligible unit under Multiple Applications Eligibility. Religious institutions may submit one application per year.

Arts Programs in Social Service, Historical or other Settings

The Council will continue to fund high-quality arts projects in social services, historical settings, healthcare institutions, or other settings provided the outcome is primarily artistic and artistic outcomes are measured and documented. The Council will not fund projects that are primarily history events or recreational, rehabilitative or therapeutic in nature.

Multiple Applications Eligibility

General Operating Support (GOS), General Program Support (GPS), and Local Arts Program (LAP) grantees or applicants may also submit a limited number of additional applications in specific Council grant programs over the three-year period of GOS and GPS or LAP support. These are as follows:

GOS/GPS: Up to three applications in Arts Education Special Initiatives, Arts Project in Folk Arts only, or other project grant categories as offered

LAP: Up to three in any other available grant category except General Operating Support

Please Note: Council cosponsored projects, Local Arts Staffing Initiative or Southern New Jersey Staffing Assistance Initiatives do not contribute to the total applications as set forth above.

GOS and GPS applicants/grantees may not apply for GPS or APS except in the Folk Arts panel category.

Current GOS/GPS/LAP grantees may submit only one additional application per category each year.

Non GOS/GPS/LAP applicants may submit only one application each year.

Council Funding Considerations

Fundraising and Budgets

A healthy non-profit cultural organization, program, or project derives its income from a variety of sources. Over-reliance on any one source puts the organization at risk. Council funding should be viewed as a modest, but important, portion of the overall income picture, which it is hoped leverages other forms of support. In fact, the Council's matching requirements (3:1 for GOS and GPS, and 1:1 for projects) express the Council's viewpoint on what the upper limit of a healthy on-going relationship of Council dollars to other dollars is. Inflated budgets are easily discernable as are unrealistic income projections and will negatively impact evaluation. But

applicants should also bear in mind that funding from the Council to the maximum level is a great rarity and should be prepared to receive and operate with less.

Long Range Planning

The Council believes strongly that sound long range organizational or program planning is essential. All GOS and GPS applicants must submit a long range plan for the operation or the program. The plan should include statement of goals and strategic steps to realize those goals, assign responsibility for implementation of tasks, consider the resources (both human and financial) needed to realize goals, and be placed on a realistic implementation timeline. The plan should cover all essential areas of the organization such as artistic vision, governance, human resources, audiences and all forms of public participation including artists and volunteers, fundraising, marketing and outreach, advocacy, educational activities, etc. In the absence of such a plan, or if between plans, use the narrative to detail the process for developing the long range plan, include a timeline for that process and its current status. The strength of an applicant's long range planning will be considered in the evaluation process.

Incomplete Applications

Incomplete applications are subject to disqualification. In order to avoid that disappointment, call the Council staff with all questions and review the checklist carefully before submitting your application.

Compensating Artists

The Council is committed to appropriate compensation of artists, and applications should show evidence of commitment to this principle. The Council strongly discourages the practice of charging artists fees to have their work included in exhibitions, publications, performances, or other events.

Context of Total State Support

The Council will consider all other state support to which an organization has access or which the applicant has received, including direct line item appropriations from the State Legislature, when considering funding, unless the support is provided for purposes for which Council funding is not available.

Accessibility and ADA Compliance

Among the highest Council priorities is ensuring that programming supported by the Council is available to the widest possible audience. This includes access for people with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law in 1990 and requires that all providers of public-funded programs and services make those offerings equally accessible to all people regardless of any individual's physical or mental disability. Recognizing that the removal of barriers that keep people with disabilities from full participation can be a costly proposition, the ADA allows for the gradual removal of barriers, taking into account an organization's available resources. Having a transition plan to guide your efforts is therefore essential. Even if an organization does not seek or receive Council or other public funding, it is still responsible under the ADA for addressing its accessibility.

General Operating Support and General Program Support Applicants are not required to submit an ADA plan with the application; however, organizations that receive funding will be required to submit a board-approved ADA plan based on completing the comprehensive self-assessment survey tool developed by the Cultural Access Network of New Jersey (CANNJ). Incorporating what has been learned as the ADA has been interpreted in court cases and from various self-assessment tools from around the country, CANNJ has developed this comprehensive document to aid organizations in understanding their compliance status and accessibility in all key areas: facilities, programs, marketing, employment, sensitivity training, policy, and handling grievances.

Using this self-assessment, organizations will be required to develop and submit their ADA plans online using the ADA Plan at: www.njtheatrealliance.org/access.

Project Applicants must complete the Project Accessibility Checklist in the SAGE system. The checklist should focus on the project for which funding is being sought. Applicants are cautioned that any evidence that is found to be contrary to what is noted on the checklist could be grounds for rescission of any grant awarded. Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the CANNJ self-assessment survey tool available on the Council website to review the accessibility of facilities to be used for the project and programmatic access.

Need ADA Assistance?

Contact the Cultural Access Network of NJ c/o NJ Theatre Alliance 973-731-6582; or e-mail jmcewen@njtheatrealliance.org; or via NJ Relay Service 711

Contact the Council's designated Access Coordinator, Don Ehman at 609-984-7023 or via email at Donald.ehman@sos.state.nj.us; or via NJ Relay Service 711

“Design for Accessibility: An Arts Administrator’s Guide is a comprehensive and invaluable manual on access and the ADA. Multiple copies are available for loan through CANNJ, the Council, County Arts Agencies and the following service organizations: NJ Theatre Alliance, VSA Arts of New Jersey, NJ Association of Museums, and South Jersey Cultural Alliance.

Designations

Major Arts Institutions (MAI)

A designation for three-year General Operating Support grantees that are arts producing organizations (see definitions) with operating budgets over \$1,000,000 which demonstrate a solid history of artistic excellence, a substantial level of programming, serve a large number of people, and receive a superior review through the panel process. MAI’s must also demonstrate statewide leadership in strongly meeting one or more of the priorities in addition to serving as strong advocates for the arts.

There is no need to apply for this designation. GOS applicants that are arts producers, have a prior history of Council funding, and who meet the budgetary threshold will be considered through the panel process. Information addressing the above criteria should be provided in the

GOS application narrative. This, along with information already on file from previous years, will be used to make decisions. Designation will be conferred for a three-year period.

Major Presenter and Service Organizations (MPSO)

A designation for three-year General Operating and General Program Support grantees that are arts presenting (see definitions) or arts service organizations with operating budgets of over \$750,000, which demonstrate a solid history of artistic or service excellence and a substantial level of programming or service, serve a large number of people, and receive superior review through the panel process. MPSO's must also demonstrate statewide leadership in strongly meeting one or more of the priorities in addition to serving as a strong advocate for the arts.

There is no need to apply for this designation. GOS and GPS applicants that are arts presenters or service organizations, have a prior history of Council funding, and who meet the budgetary threshold will be considered through the panel process (those currently designated but below the new budgetary threshold will be considered for continued designation). Information addressing the above criteria should be provided in the GOS or GPS application narrative. This, along with information already on file from previous years, will be used to make decisions on designation. Designation will be conferred for a three-year period. County Arts Agencies are also eligible for this designation on the basis of their Local Arts Program application.

***Please Note:** Organizations currently holding these designations whose budget may now fall below the financial threshold will still be considered for continuation of the designation if all other criteria are met.*

Citations of Excellence

All FY16 applicants that receive the highest evaluation by the grant review panels may be accorded a Citation of Excellence. Designation is conferred for the same period as the funding commitment of the grant for which it is received.