



New Jersey State Council on the Arts New Jersey Heritage Fellowship Fiscal Year 2024 Special Guidance for Nominators

This document is also available [in Spanish](#). (Este documento también está disponible [en español](#).)

This information is provided to support the [Program Guidelines](#), and to help potential nominators determine if an artist they are considering nominating is appropriate for the program.

If you need assistance with the program, guidelines, or application, please contact Kim Nguyen, Program Officer for Folk & Traditional Arts at 609-292-4495 or by email to kim.nguyen@sos.nj.gov.

The process for nominating an artist for a New Jersey Heritage Fellowship mirrors the process of the National Endowment for the Arts' Heritage Fellowship program. This alignment allows State Arts Council staff the potential to seamlessly nominate New Jersey Heritage Fellows for national recognition. For this reason, the required support materials need to be submitted in very specific formats. Additional information on submitting a full and complete nomination will be provided to nominators once the Notice of Intent to Nominate form has been approved.

The process to nominate an artist is as follows: (Please Note: All forms must be submitted in English.)

Step 1 – Submit the [Notice of Intent to Nominate form](#).

Step 2- Council staff will review the Notice of Intent to Nominate form against the checklist and scale below, and then contact the nominator with either authorization to nominate and further instructions, or a declination notice.

Step 3- *Once a Notice of Intent to Nominate has been approved*, Council staff will contact the nominator with authorization to submit a full and complete nomination. Submission instructions will be provided at that time. The instructions will include a username and password to log in to the SAGE system to access the complete nomination application, and to upload all materials to complete the nomination.

Full details on materials required to be submitted can be found in the [program guidelines](#).

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Following is the checklist and scale the Council staff will use in evaluating Notice of Intent to Nominate forms:

Heritage Fellowship Notice of Intent to Nominate Evaluation Checklist and Scale

1. Is the Notice of Intent to Nominate form complete?
2. Is the artist nominee a permanent NJ resident?
3. Is the nominee an active and contributing member of the community and currently practicing the art form and/or teaching it in a community setting?
4. Is the nominator able to provide, or is the nominee able to demonstrate artistic excellence via support materials?

For questions #5 and #6, the scale below the questions will be used to determine the scoring.

5. Is the art form appropriate for a Heritage Fellowship, and is the nominee engaged with the folk group of origin?

Folk and traditional arts exist in communities, which can include families, geographic regions, religious groups, clubs, schools, ethnic, occupational or recreational groups and more. Folklorists call these different communities “folk groups.” The folk group of origin would be the folk group in which the traditional art form is rooted.

Members of a folk group share aesthetics, insider knowledge, language, and a similar worldview. Is this art form rooted in a community? Is it clear that the art form the nominee practices, is rooted in a *folk group*? Is the artist engaged deeply with the *folk group* of origin?

Art form clearly not rooted in a community or folk group	Art form/artist loosely rooted in a community (i.e. they say a city name)	Art form rooted in a community; unclear how the artist is part of the community mentioned	Artist and art form are clearly deeply engaged with the folk group noted
0	1	2	3

Is this art form learned only through person-to-person instruction?

The core of folk and traditional art is the way in which it is learned and shared – *through informal (as opposed to academic) modes of transmission within communities.*

Folk and traditional arts are artistic expression that are shared *informally within a folk group* and are essential to that group’s cultural identity.

If you can study this art form in a secondary education setting, it is most likely not a folk and traditional art form.

Art form clearly not learned only from informal modes of learning;	Art form learned in part from person-to-person, but not solely learned that way (I.e. can also take classes somewhere for this specific art form, but this artist learned in the community.)	Learning of this Art form rooted in community instruction; unclear how the artist has learned this art form	Artist clearly has extensively studied in an informal folk group setting; community study with gurus or other masters is acceptable, as is one-to-one training with master artists
0	1	2	3

6. Is the artist likely to be considered a master of this art form?

Is the nominated artist a “master” of their craft?
 Is their experience in this art form measured in decades, not years?
 Have they learned their skills from informal training with predecessors who were also masters?
 Do they have an extensive history of exhibition, performances, or publications as well as documented sharing of their art with the public through community sharing, teaching, etc.?
 Master artists and tradition-bearers are exemplary practitioners of a folk group’s art forms. Their “master” status is determined by other members of the group. Are there members of their own folk group/community who will recommend and provide support for the nomination?

Artist clearly not a master of their craft; or information is not provided to demonstrate achievements and engagement with the community	Art form learned randomly, self-taught, and/or not for any extensive time or depth of study. Or, artist does not exhibit, perform, publish, teach or share their work to the level of a master artist.	Learning of this Art form well documented; unclear how the artist has demonstrated community engagement (e.g. teaching, exhibiting, performing, etc.)	Artist clearly is a master artist; long term investment in the art form and in the community is demonstrated
0	1	2	3

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Score Outcome

Scale scores: 1-5: not eligible to apply

6-9: eligible to apply for a Heritage Fellowship

All yes answers to questions 1-4, plus scale score of 6 or higher will demonstrate that an artist is eligible to move to application process. Scores below that range will not be advanced to the application process.