



Finger Lakes Community Arts Grants

COMPLETE GUIDELINES: COMMUNITY ARTS GRANT APPLICATIONS (2018)

Finger Lakes Community Arts Grants

Auburn Public Theater

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**Council on
the Arts**

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OVERVIEW

Founded in 1977, the Decentralization Program (DEC) was developed by the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) to ensure that its cultural funding reaches every part of the state. Decentralization has become one of the council's most effective means of making arts support available to geographically, economically and ethnically diverse segments of the state's population.

The DEC program in Cayuga, Seneca, Yates, Wayne and Ontario counties is administered through the Finger Lakes Community Arts program, based in downtown Auburn, New York.

DEC grants have three distinct funding categories: Community Arts, Arts Education and Individual Artist.

Goals of the FLCAG Program

The Finger Lakes Community Arts Grants (FLCAG) program strives to make quality arts programming available to all communities within the five counties served. Its purpose is to provide funding to nonprofit community arts organizations and individual artists within these counties that are not currently funded directly by NYSCA. It focuses on assisting emerging arts organizations and supporting diverse cultural expression. The FLCAG program is committed to making arts programming accessible to underserved and minority communities.

Underserved Communities

Underserved communities represent individuals who may have limited access to arts programs, services or resources and may be marginalized due to geography, race, economic status, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability, or other factors.

Community Arts

Community Arts grants support arts and cultural projects of community-based organizations, groups, collectives, or artists in Cayuga, Seneca, Wayne, Yates, and Ontario counties. These grants provide partial funding to emerging artists and organizations whose projects promote an increase in arts activity and promise to enhance the cultural climate in communities and neighborhoods where they live and operate.

The primary criteria for a funded project are the creative vision for the project backed by sound infrastructure for its successful execution and the potential for resonance throughout the surrounding community.

Community Arts grants may support all forms of multidisciplinary projects including but not limited to: theater, dance, music, film, video, literary arts, visual arts and folk arts. All funded projects in this category must be community-based and open to the general public.

Eligibility

- Applicant organization, fiscal sponsor, or partner organization must be a governmental or quasi-governmental entity, a tribal organization or a New York State non-profit incorporated organization, or have a 501(c)(3) federal tax-exempt status. (*See "Proving Non-profit Status" section below for clarification.*)

- Applicant organization, fiscal sponsor, or partner organization must produce or present arts and cultural programming serving residents of Cayuga, Seneca, Wayne, Yates, or Ontario counties.
- Applicant organization, fiscal sponsor, or partner organization must have a board of directors or a governing body that meets to determine and review policy.
- Applicant organization, fiscal sponsor, or partner organization must conduct all activities in a way that does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religious belief, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability. Individual artists may apply directly under this program by (1) enlisting an eligible non-profit organization as a “fiscal sponsor” or (2) partnering with an eligible organization that shares its goals for the community. *(See the “Fiscal Sponsorship and Partner Organizations” section below for more information.)*
- Applicant organization or artist or fiscal sponsor must be legally located (i.e., not a seasonal resident or local branch of an organization registered elsewhere) in the county where the activity will take place. If working with a partner organization, both application organization/artist and partner organization must be based in the county where the proposed activity is taking place.
- Previous grantees must have submitted ALL required final reports from the previous grant cycle.
- A first-time applicant must attend an Informational Meeting or meet one-on-one with FLCAG staff

Project Requirements

- Project must occur in the same county as the applying artist, fiscal sponsor, or organization’s legal residence.
- Projects must be completed during the funding cycle.

What the Grant Can Cover

- Activities of local arts organizations
- Artist fees
- Marketing and publicity costs
- Direct administrative expenses
- Supplies and materials needed for the execution of the program

What the Grant CANNOT Cover

- NYS Agencies and departments (including SUNY schools)
- Public universities, colleges; and public, private or parochial secondary and elementary schools
- DEC site Staff or board members (see Conflict of Interest section)
- Unincorporated applicants without an eligible sponsor or partner organization(exception: Individual Artist category)
- NYSCA applicants, including fiscally sponsored applicants that have applied to NYSCA in the most recent cycle.
- Projects involving partners that apply directly to NYSCA

- Non-incorporated chapters of organizations whose “parent” is incorporated outside the DEC area
- Start-up or seed funding for the establishment of a new organization
- General operating expenses
- Requests greater than applicant’s project expenses minus total project income
- Past re-grantees that have failed to submit final reports
- Operating expenses of privately owned facilities (e.g. homes or studios)
- Events that take place in private homes
- Non-arts activity including:
 - Galas, benefits or fundraising events including entertainment costs for receptions, food or fundraising events.
 - Entertainment such as balloons, clowns, magicians
 - Projects that are recreational, therapeutic, rehabilitative or religious in nature including at risk/social service programs when the purpose is primarily for rehabilitative, therapeutic or worship
- Acquisitions of works of art
- Contingency funds
- Permanent equipment or capital improvements
- Creation of textbooks or classroom materials
- Lobbying expenses
- Programs in which children are used as professional artists (paid a fee)
- Regrants by applicants to fund other activities
- Cash prizes, juried shows, fellowships, scholarships and other awards to students
- Stand-alone assembly programs, single performances, or one-time visits to cultural institutions
- Programs for which selected students are taken out of regular classes or are self-selected for participation.
- College-level courses, contests or performing groups.

Frequently Asked Questions

If I have received funding in the past, may I apply again?

Of course! If you have received funding in the past, you are eligible to apply again. However, prior funding does not guarantee continued support. Each application is reviewed in the context of the current program guidelines, funding priorities, and evaluative criteria. The review panel will also consider compliance with the previous contract and reporting requirements.

When reviewing projects that have received funding in the past, priority will be given to projects that are able to successfully demonstrate growth, artistic expansion, community support, and/or continued community need.

How much of the total project is the grant intended to cover?

Grants are not intended to cover the complete cost of the proposed project. In recent years, grants for Community Arts projects have ranged from \$500 to \$5,000. Historically, the average grant has been approximately \$1,200.

Community Arts regrants should fund up to 50% of the project's total cash expenses but never more than 75% of the total cash expenses. You may apply for a maximum of **75%** of the total cost of your proposed project. Your project budget must demonstrate that a minimum of **25%** of the proposed project income comes from other funding sources. This can include in-kind contributions. In-kind contributions must be noted on the budget page.

May I apply for funding for more than one project?

A single applicant is able to submit up to three (3) project requests for Community Arts, Arts Education grants and Individual Artist categories. The maximum total request amount cannot exceed \$5,000.

Sponsored applications are exempt from the three-request limit; however any artist also applying for an Individual Artist Grant cannot request more than \$2,500 in Community Arts and/or Arts Education grants.

Must I attend an informational workshop?

Attending an informational workshop is required for all first-time applicants and **highly** encouraged for previous grantees. In lieu of attending a workshop, an applicant may meet face-to-face or via Skype with the DEC coordinator. The purpose is to give a personalized overview of the DEC program and to familiarize the applicant with the grant guidelines. It also gives applicants the opportunity to consult with the DEC coordinator on the specifics of their projects and to get feedback before applying.

Fiscal Sponsorship and Partner Organizations

Individual artists may only apply to the Individual Artists Tier if they do NOT have either (1) the support of a fiscal sponsor or (2) a partner organization. Individual artists and non-incorporated collectives wishing to apply for the Community Arts grants may apply through enlisting the sponsorship of an eligible non-profit or by partnering with an eligible organization.

Fiscal Sponsorship

A fiscal sponsor must be a non-profit organization in the county where the arts activity is taking place, which meets the requirements listed above. The fiscal sponsor will receive the grant funds and distribute them to the artist(s) or non-incorporated collective. An organization may serve as a fiscal sponsor for an unlimited number of applicants.

A letter of agreement between the two parties must be submitted with the application stating the willingness of the supporting organization to fulfill the obligations and duties of serving as fiscal and administrative agent for a grant award. In addition, the letter of agreement should specify the roles of each party.

A direct DEC applicant may serve as a fiscal sponsor and may sponsor more than one applicant, as the sponsored requests do not count towards the 3-request limit or \$5000 maximum. Direct NYSCA applicants, however, may not serve as a fiscal sponsor for DEC applications.

NOTE: Sponsoring organizations must check with their accountants/financial personnel regarding tax liabilities and IRS reporting relative to sponsoring projects that are not directly related to the sponsoring organization's mission. Sponsoring organizations are responsible for all IRS required reporting including the creation and distribution of 1099 forms where applicable.

Partner Organizations

An individual artist or collective may also apply directly for decentralization funds if working in partnership with a community-based non-profit. A letter of commitment from the community-based non-profit partner confirming the partnership with the applicant artist is required. The commitment letter must outline the scope of the partnership and each partner's investment or contribution (in-kind and/or cash) towards the proposed project.

In the case of a partnership, the grant will be sent directly to the awardee, and the partner organization does not act as a fiscal sponsor.

FLCAG can introduce artists and organizations to facilitate collaborations.

Application Process

Application Components

Community Arts Grant Application Questionnaire

All applications must be submitted through the online submissions platform Submittable. Applicants must visit www.flcag.org and will be directed from there to register for Submittable. We will NOT accept handwritten applications. Application forms **must** be filled out completely.

Project Budget

The budget form, included in the application form, should be completed in full. Please indicate other secured and anticipated funding sources. Please list in-kind as well as cash contributions. Total costs should equal total expenses.

Narrative Responses (Project and Budget Narratives)

The project and budget narrative questions are included in the application form. The combined length of the narratives should not exceed 3 pages (single-spaced, 12-point font). Be clear and concise.

Proof of Non-Profit Status for Applicant Organizations, Fiscal Sponsors, or Partner Organizations

Your organization must submit **ONE** of the following documents to prove non-profit status:

- Letter of Determination from the IRS indicating tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3)
- Documentation of charter by the New York State Board of Regents under section 216 of the New York State Education Law
- Documentation of incorporation under Section 402 of the New York State Not-for-Profit

Corporation Law

- Current New York State Bureau of Charities (Office of the Attorney General) filing receipt
- Official authorization as an arm of local government (i.e., a formal letter on official stationary signed by the appropriate county, city, town, or village executive)

The address on the document **must** be an address within one of the five designated counties.

NOTE: A New York State Tax Exemption Certificate from the Department of Taxation and Finance is **NOT** considered proof of non-profit status and should not be submitted.

Letter of Agreement between Fiscal Sponsor and Applicant, if applicable

See “Fiscal Sponsorship and Partner Organizations” section above.

Letter of Commitment from the Non-Profit Partner, if applicable

See “Fiscal Sponsorship and Partner Organizations” section above.

Organization’s, Fiscal Sponsor’s, or Partner Organization’s Board Member List

Please include a complete list with affiliations, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses.

Organization’s, Fiscal Sponsor’s, or Partner Organization’s most current Audited Financial Statement and Budget

Project Manager’s Resume and/or Bio

Artist’s/Artists’ Resume(s) and/or Bio(s), if applicable

Work Samples

Work samples assist the panel to determine artistic merit of the project. These are not required, but they are highly encouraged. Work samples should represent work from the last 3 years. Work samples should be submitted in the following forms:

1. Audio Work Samples:

Please upload one MP3 file that includes up to 10 minutes of original composition. The file may include as many songs as you want, but the total length must not exceed 10 minutes.

2. Video Work Samples:

Please upload one 10-minute video excerpt or two 5-minute video excerpts from previously completed work. Two 5-minute clips may be from two different works. Files should be .mov, .mp4, or .wmv. You may also include a link to a website with one 10-minute excerpt or two 5-minute excerpts.

3. Image Work Samples

Upload up to 10 digital images using the following specifications:

- File type: JPEG

- Dimensions: No larger than 1240 pixels x 1240 pixels
- File Size: Each image must be under 4MB
- Resolution: 72dpi

4. Written work samples

Upload a writing sample. Evaluators will read the first 10-pages of the work AND any additional 10-page section that you indicate.

- File Size: No larger than 4MB
- File format: PDF or Microsoft Word

Letter(s) of Support (Optional)

You may include letters of support from community members expressing the need for the project and/or showing support.

Application Review

The DEC Coordinator is happy to review application drafts. Reviewing an applicant's draft proposal is for the purpose of providing technical assistance and does not guarantee that it will receive funding. Drafts must be received by FLCAG by ***Friday, October 6, 2017***.

Application Deadline

Applications must be received by the DEC Coordinator by 11:59 P.M. on Friday, October 13, 2017.

Early submissions are encouraged. Incomplete, handwritten, or late applications as well as applications from ineligible organizations will not be considered. All applications must be submitted through the online submissions platform Submittable. Applicants must register for the www.flag.org site and will be directed from there to register for Submittable.

After the Deadline

Grant Review Process

Applications are reviewed for eligibility, completeness, and accuracy by FLCAG staff. It is your responsibility to submit a complete and accurate application. As part of the review process, FLCAG staff may contact you by telephone or e-mail to clarify and review information.

A panel of artists, arts administrators, educators, community leaders, and business people coordinated by FLCAG will then evaluate each application and recommend a level of funding based on the evaluation criteria, the funding priorities, and the grant guidelines. Upon request, panelists will be furnished with final and interim reports as well as audit information, prior panel comments, and correspondence when considering organizations/individuals who have applied or have been funded in prior years. The panel's recommendations are submitted to and reviewed by NYSCA, which has the final authority for all decisions.

Panel Criteria

Awards are based on a **competitive** review process. Due to the strict guidelines, limited funds, and the competitive nature of the process, **not all applicants will receive funding**. Each application is reviewed on the basis of its own merits and against others in the application pool.

The panel will make funding recommendations based primarily on the following criteria:

- Artistic merit including artistic and program quality and the expertise of the artists.
- Community demonstration of interest, support and benefit - without duplicating existing programs. Seek to serve a broad constituency.
- Adherence to application guidelines, with clarity and completeness.
- Feasibility - clearly defined project objectives, project implementation and management:
 - Demonstrated ability of personnel to administer project
 - Reasonable project budget
 - Potential effectiveness of proposed promotional efforts throughout the community
 - Applicant's history with program success and contract compliance.

Funding Priorities

- Activities of local arts organizations
- New, emerging, and grass-roots organizations, particularly those that serve diverse and underserved individuals
- Projects that reflect the cultural traditions or contemporary creative expressions of a particular ethnic group
- Applicants that provide a detailed marketing plan to reach/promote their project to underserved communities

Low Priority Projects

- Projects that do not utilize or pay professional artists
- Applicants who have not confirmed the artists to be utilized in the project
- Projects that do not benefit underserved communities
- Projects that contain minimal or poor marketing plans to reach underserved audiences
- Previously funded projects that do not exhibit further growth, artistic expansion, community support, and/or community need
- Projects that duplicate already existing and successful projects/services

Award Notification

FLCAG notifies all applicants by email regarding the status of their application after panel review. This

will occur in late November.

Grant checks are issued after a review of the panel comments with FLCAG staff and receipt of the signed contract and all other requested information.

Appeals Process

In the event that your program is not funded, or funded partially, the below guidelines are set in place to ensure a fair and equal opportunity to all applicants.

Applicants should first consult with the DEC Coordinator to review the considerations that went into the panel decision. If, after consultation, the applicant wishes to pursue an appeal, the applicant must do so in writing with all the material supporting the appeal, addressed to the Executive Director, Auburn Public Theater. The Executive Director must receive the written appeal within fifteen (15) calendar days from the issue date of the denial letter. The applicant will receive a written response and the appeal will be assigned to a different panel who will meet to examine the grounds of the appeal. The new panel will provide a recommendation to the Auburn Public Theater's Board for final Approval.

The only grounds for appeal are:

1. Non-presentation of application information by staff or panelist.
2. Misrepresentation of application information by staff or panelist.
3. Improper procedure by staff or panelist.

Note: dissatisfaction with the amount of support or the recommendation of "no funding" cannot be used as a basis for an appeal.

Responsibilities of Grant Recipients

All awarded organizations must sign and return a contract, which outlines all agreements with regard to fulfilling obligations and the procedures for providing the following materials:

- A Final Program Report
- Notification of your event(s) at least 2 weeks in advance with two complimentary tickets, if applicable. Projects may be audited by FLCAG staff, panelists, or other appointed persons.
- Credit to FLCAG for support on all publicity and printed materials. Suggested acknowledgement language is on the FLCAG website.
- Immediate notification if a project cannot take place or if there are any changes in project plans.
- Awarded funds must be returned before October 31, 2018 if a project cannot take place.