



METRO ARTS

NASHVILLE OFFICE OF ARTS + CULTURE

Operating Support Grant Criteria & Guidelines

FY25 GRANT CYCLE | FOR ACTIVITIES TAKING PLACE Spring 2025

APPLICATION DEADLINE February 18, 2025, 11:59 p.m.

Previously Submitted by Monday, January 29, 2024, 11:59 p.m.

Resubmit all applications online at <https://mnac.submittable.com/submit>

For application assistance or for first time applicants contact, the Strategic Grants and Initiatives team at Arts.Grants@nashville.gov.

Metro Nashville Arts Commission

Mailing Address:

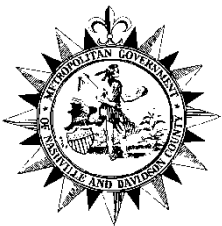
P.O. Box 196300

Nashville TN 37219-6300

615.862.6720 phone | 615.862.6731 fax

arts@nashville.gov | metroartsnashville.com

@metroartsnash on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter



Funding for this program is provided by the Metropolitan Government of Nashville & Davidson County

PUBLIC NOTICE: Nondiscrimination Policies, ADA Compliance & Accessibility

The Metropolitan Government of Nashville & Davidson County does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, religion, creed, or ability in admission to, access to, or operations of its programs, services, or activities. Discrimination against any person in recruitment, examination, appointment, training, promotion, retention, discipline, or any other employment practices because of non-merit factors shall be prohibited.

Questions, concerns, complaints, requests for accommodation, or requests for additional information regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act may be forwarded to Metro Arts' ADA Compliance Coordinator:

Vivian Foxx, Metro Nashville Arts Commission, P.O. Box 196300, Nashville, TN 37219-6300
Vivian.Foxx@nashville.gov (615) 862-6721, TTY Relay Service 800-848-0298

Individuals who have a hearing impairment and require auxiliary aids and services for effective communication in the programs, services, or activities of the Metro Nashville Arts Commission are invited to make their needs and preferences known to the ADA Compliance Coordinator. This notice can be made available in alternative formats through the office of the ADA Compliance Coordinator, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.

INTERPRETATION SERVICES: Should an individual need language interpretation, Metro Arts will secure assistance using a Metro approved over-the-phone or in-person interpretation service*

Si necesita ayuda con el idioma, háganoslo saber. Obtendremos un intérprete que puede ayudarnos a comunicarnos entre nosotros.

بعضنا مع التواصل في مساعدتنا يمكنه مترجم على نحصل سوف. بذلك إخبارنا فالرجاء ، لغوية مساعدة إلى بحاجة كنت إذا البعض.

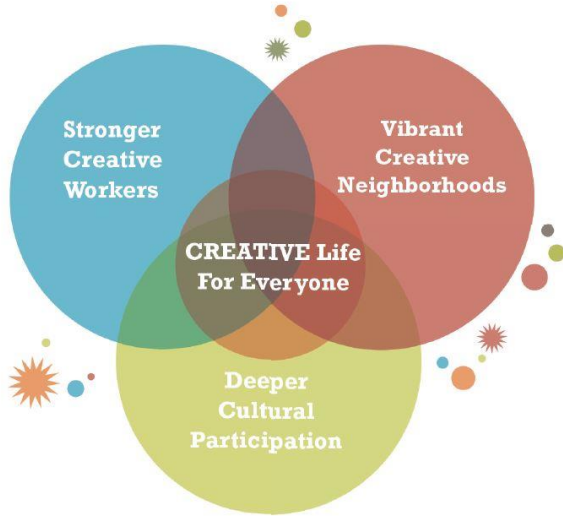
Ji kerema xwe em bizanin eger hûn bi alîkariya înglîzî re pêdivî ye. Em ê wergirtineke kurdî bibînin ku dikare alîkariya me bi hev re biaxivin.

Forward inquiries concerning nondiscrimination policies, other than ADA compliance, to:

Metro Human Relations Commission, 150 2nd Ave N., Suite 217, 37201 P.O. Box 196300, Nashville, TN 37219-6300

About Metro Arts Grants

A Creative Life For Everyone



Metro Arts' Grants Program funds nonprofit organizations of all sizes through Metro Council funding of the arts. Our Grants Program funds organizations engaged in work that addresses one or more of the community outcomes we seek to achieve:

- + Stronger Creative Workforce
- + Vibrant, Creative Neighborhoods
- + Deeper Cultural Participation

Metro Arts is guided by a [cultural equity statement](#). Our grants program, along with all Metro Arts programs, seeks to make opportunities and resources available to all Nashvillians in an equitable way.

Our Mission

Metro Nashville Arts Commission or "Metro Arts" is the office of Arts & Culture for the city of Nashville and Davidson County. We believe that arts drive a more vibrant and equitable community. We strive to ensure that all Nashvillians have access to a creative life through community investments, artist and organizational training, public art, and direct programs that involve residents in all forms of arts and culture. Metro Nashville Arts Commission was established in 1978 by Metro Charter.

Grant Eligibility Criteria

All funding approvals and levels are contingent on the budget allocated to Metro Arts.

Operating Support grants provide funding for the general operations of arts-focused nonprofit organizations based in Metro Nashville-Davidson County. An arts-focused organization is one whose primary mission is to directly support the performance, exhibition, or instruction of art. The word 'art' here refers to a number of artistic genres including dance, folk + traditional arts, literary arts, media arts, music, performance art, theater, and visual arts. Please contact Metro Arts staff if you have questions regarding the definition of an "arts-focused organization."

To receive an operating grant support from Metro Arts, the applicant must:

- Produce, present or directly support artistic programs, projects or works
- Have a primary mission to directly support the performance, exhibition, or instruction of art

- Be chartered in the state of Tennessee and tax-exempt under the IRS Code Section 501(c)(3)
- Have an IRS Letter of Determination with an effective date of exemption of January 15, 2024, or earlier for Operating Grants*
- Have a business address located in Metro Nashville & Davidson County and operate most of its programs in Metro Nashville
- Have evidence of non-discrimination employment and personnel practices in place
- Applicants must adopt an equity statement within the next 2 fiscal years

There are certain types of organizations that cannot receive operating grants from Metro Arts. They are:

- Non-arts organizations
- Organizations who receive operational budget amendments ("line items") from Metro, except for those that are provided by the Metropolitan Charter
- "Friends of..." organizations whose primary purpose is to support government agencies or initiatives
- Colleges or universities
- Public broadcasting stations
- Arts organizations that operate as a legal subsidiary of a non-art nonprofit organization

*Metro Arts will review additional grant eligibility issues not listed here on a case-by-case basis. Organizations with less than one year 501(c)(3) status may be considered eligible for operating support with evidence of operating with nonprofit fiscal sponsorship and/or artistic programming for at least one year. Please contact Metro Arts staff with any questions regarding eligibility.

Eligible Expenses

Metro Arts grant funding can only be used to pay for certain types of costs. Make sure your request includes expenses that can be covered by Metro Arts funds.

| Grant funds CAN be used for... | Grant funds CANNOT be used for... |
|--|---|
| Salaries | Capital Improvements |
| Artist Fees | Reduction of Debts |
| Program/Project Supplies | Activities & Programs with Religious Practices or Intent |
| Performance Space/Facility Rental | Political Lobbying Activities |
| Marketing and Promotion | Purchase of Real Property |
| Consulting Fees | |
| Equipment Rental and/or Purchase | |
| Fundraising Activities | |

Grant Cycle Time Frame

All eligible FY25 grant activities must take place between the time of the award and June 1, 2025. Final reports and closeout forms are due June 15, 2025.

Grant Payment Schedule

Applicants awarded a grant will be required to submit a brief FY25 budget during the contract phase. Awarded grant funds are distributed, upon Metro's receipt of grantee's signed contract, in one payment for the full grant amount. Awarded funds are distributed after execution of the grant contract. Please note that the contracting process typically takes 4-6 weeks as contracts require multiple signatures from Metro Government. Grantee-organizations must return their signed contract and grant spending plan promptly for grant funds to be distributed.

Matching Funds

Metro Arts Operating Support Grant awards do not require a cash match. Grantees are not required to show matching expenses.

Grant Categories

For the FY25 grant cycle, Metro Arts will only provide operating support grants to eligible nonprofit arts organizations within Davidson County. For project support, please see Thrive Grant Guidelines and Criteria.

Organization's budget size and the most recently completed fiscal year's revenue are considered when determining the appropriate grant category for each applicant. The information in the following pages will help you understand which grant category is the best fit for your organization. **Please note Metro Arts is using the data from the original application submitted by January 29, 2024.**

Micro Organizations – Represents the overall operations of nonprofit arts organizations that are based in Metro Nashville-Davidson County and had revenue of **less than \$25,000** during the most recently completed fiscal year. To qualify for an Operating Support Grant, organizations must have an IRS Letter of Determination with an effective date of exemption of January 15, 2024, or earlier.

Small Organizations – Represents the overall operations of nonprofit arts organizations that are based in Metro Nashville-Davidson County and had revenue between **\$25,000 to \$100,000** during the most recently completed fiscal year. To qualify for an Operating Support Grant, organizations must have an IRS Letter of Determination with an effective date of exemption of January 15, 2024, or earlier.

Medium Organizations – Represents the overall operations of nonprofit arts organizations that are based in Metro Nashville-Davidson County and had revenue between **\$100,000 and \$500,000** during the most recently completed fiscal year. To qualify for an Operating Support Grant, organizations must have an IRS Letter of Determination with an effective date of exemption of January 15, 2024, or earlier.

Mid-Size Organizations – Represents the overall operations of nonprofit arts organizations that are based in Metro Nashville-Davidson County and had revenue between **\$500,000 and \$3,000,000** during the most recently completed fiscal year. To qualify for an Operating Support Grant, organizations must have an IRS Letter of Determination with an effective date of exemption of January 15, 2024, or earlier.

Large Organizations – Represents the overall operations of nonprofit arts organizations that are based in Metro Nashville-Davidson County and had revenue **greater than \$3,000,000** during the most recently completed fiscal year. To qualify for an Operating Support Grant, organizations must have an IRS Letter of Determination with an effective date of exemption of January 15, 2024, or earlier.

Award Amounts

All funding approvals and levels are contingent on the budget allocated to Metro Arts. Award amounts are based on the organization's operating revenue as shown in the organization's most recently completed fiscal year IRS Form 990, and will range within the grant category they fall in. Award amounts will be determined by scaling the allocated budget across organizations.

1. Eligible Micro organizations will be awarded a minimum of \$3,000 to a maximum of 75% of \$25,000 (or \$18,750).
2. Eligible Small organizations will be awarded a minimum of \$3,000 to a maximum of 50% of \$100,000 (or \$50,000).
3. Eligible Medium organizations will be awarded a maximum of 25% of \$500,000 (or \$125,000).
4. Eligible Mid-Size organizations will be awarded a maximum of 17% of \$3,000,000 (or \$120,000).
5. Eligible Large organizations will be awarded a maximum of 1.8% of their operating budget with a maximum of \$200,000.

How to Update an Existing Online Application

Metro Arts utilizes an online application system called Submittable. All applications must be completed and submitted using this system. The Metro Arts grant application portal can be accessed at <https://mnac.submittable.com/submit>. **Only applications previously submitted by Monday, January 29, 2024, 11:59 PM will be eligible to update the original grant application.** Keep in mind that submitted applications are considered public record and can be reviewed by the public. An application may be disqualified at any time if an organization, proposal, or project is deemed ineligible.

Original applications will be retained, and updates are only necessary if your organization has undergone significant change, such as new leadership or major changes in programming or organizational focus. Resubmissions are not required if there are no updates.

Application Deadlines

All applicants with completed application from the original deadline will have the opportunity to update their application, if needed. Updated information must be submitted by February 18, 2025, 11:59 P.M. After that time, any in-process applications cannot be resubmitted for review. **Please resubmit if needed early to avoid any last-minute technical difficulties.**

Application Checklist (submitted by original deadline)

- Read the FY25 Operating Support Grant Guidelines
- If you have any questions, please contact arts.grants@nashville.gov
- Upload required attachment, copy of 990, 990N, 990EZ Postcard. Organizations new to Metro Arts funding will need to attach a copy of their IRS Letter of Determination with an effective date of exemption of January 15, 2024, or earlier.
- Submit application

Application Deadlines

All applicants with completed application from the original deadline will have the opportunity to update their application as needed. An updated submission is not required, except in the case of a significant change to the organization since the original submission. Updated information must be submitted by February 18, 2025, 11:59 P.M After that time, any in-process applications cannot be resubmitted for review. **Please resubmit if needed early to avoid any last-minute technical difficulties.**

Important Dates

| | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Update and resubmit applications, if needed | January 22 - February 18, 2025 |
| Staff technical review | February –19-21, 2025 |
| Application scoring by review panelists | February 24 - 25, 2025 |
| Grants Committee approval | February 26-27 |
| Commission approval | February 26-27 |
| Contracts signed and awarded | March 2025 |
| Grant period | Spring 2025 -June15, 2025 |
| Final spend date | June 1, 2025 |
| Final completion and closeout report due | June 15, 2025 |

****The effective date of grant contracts will be the date RS2025-961 is filed with the Metro Clerk***

Funding Determination

All grant applications are reviewed for technical eligibility by Metro Arts staff. Applicants scores are determined by a team of grant review panelist. Eligibility verification reviews containing panelist notes are kept electronically by Metro Arts. After the grant awards are announced, you may contact Metro Arts staff to get a copy of these scores and comments for your records.

Funding Criteria + Scoring

Panelists will use a Panelist Scoring Guide to evaluate each application.

Funding Formula

Access to resources and funding is a privilege. By honoring budget size in the formula, there is acknowledgement that smaller organizations have less access to resources and funding and require greater support of their total operating budget. Only applicants whose applications score at the **70 to 100 percent level** will be awarded funds in alignment with the base percentage for their funding category, scaled to the amount allocated to operating grants. **Award allocations will be made based on Metro Arts funding availability.**

Funding Approval

The panelists' scores and recommendations are reviewed by the Grants and Funding Committee and are used to determine which applications should be awarded funding. Lastly, the Metro Arts Commission reviews all recommended grant awards before voting to approve.

All commissioners and panelists are asked to disclose any conflicts of interest prior to approving grant allocations. Metro Arts makes every attempt to identify any conflicts in advance. If a conflict of interest is identified, a commissioner will be asked to abstain from allocating an organization's funding.

Appeals

An organization can submit an appeal to the Commission to change their vote only if the applicant believes there was a problem with the grant process. To file an appeal, email the Metro Arts Executive Director with the basis and specifics of your appeal. The appeal procedures are outlined below:

- + The Interim Executive Director of Metro Arts must receive the appeal in writing within fifteen (15) days of the announcement of the funding decision.
- + Each written appeal must specifically state the exact nature of the claim. Written appeals that do not specifically provide this information will be dismissed summarily.
- + The Interim Director will bring the appeal to the Commission for review within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the appeal, or the next scheduled meeting.
- + The Commission will review and vote on the appeal.

Managing an Awarded Grant

Award Notification

Grant award notifications will be emailed to the contact person listed in the application. Instructions for signing contracts are sent via email after funding decisions are made. Grantees are responsible for notifying the proper channels for any changes in address or contact information. If you have any questions, please contact arts.grants@nashville.gov. The contracting process typically takes 4-6 weeks as contracts require multiple signatures from Metro Government.

Grant awards will also be publicly announced via press release.

Mid- Point Check in

Given the abbreviated grant period, Metro Arts staff will check-in with grant recipients as it allows both the recipient and Metro Arts to ensure the project is progressing well and confirms that funds are being used in alignment with the grant's objectives before the project's completion.

Final Closeout Report

Final closeout reports and all supporting materials must be submitted by June 15, 2025. The final closeout report includes program goals, outputs and outcomes; participant demographic information; jobs supported; and other metrics specific to the grant category. The report also includes detailed financial information about grant expenses. Organizations must maintain financial records that clearly show the use of all grant funds. Metro Arts staff will provide more information about the final report as part of the award notification process.

We understand that proposed budgets may change. All program and/or budget changes must be submitted as a contract amendment request at the earliest possible date. Please contact the Strategic Grant & Initiative Manager at Arts.Grants@nashville.gov to request a contract amendment.

Metro Arts will either approve or disapprove the change. We will make every attempt to allow reasonable adjustments, **but given the shortened grant period, it is preferred that updates to the application will have incorporated anticipated changes.** Metro Arts reserves the right to cancel any grant contract if the project is not administered as proposed in the application and may request the return of all or a portion of the grant funds awarded. Please note that if an expense shows a variation of more than 10% from what is included application budget, the grantee's Final Financial Reports will be returned for corrections. At Metro Arts' request, each grantee may be asked to provide documentation of expenditures including, but not limited to, letters of agreement, contracts, purchase orders, invoices, and bills.

Logo Usage and Credit Policy

All recipients of Metro Arts funds are required to include the Metro Arts logo on all online or printed publicity materials. The credit policy and logo files are available on the [Partner Tools | Metro Arts Nashville](#) page of the Metro Arts website.

Maintaining Good Standing

Remaining in good standing with Metro Arts is very important. A grantee maintains good standing by:

- Meeting all requirements stated in the guidelines and grant contract (including spending grant funds as described in the grant contract)
- Following the [Metro Arts logo and credit policy](#)
- Submitting grant information (including contracts, final financial reports, closeout reports, and any other information that Metro Arts may request) on or before the stated deadline
- Communicating project or budget changes in a timely manner

An organization's subsequent grant application may be denied eligibility if these requirements are not met.

If an organization loses its good standing status for any of the reasons above, the organization will be sent documentation in writing of what requirements have not been met and what steps need to be

taken to return to good standing status. If an organization is not in good standing at the at the end of a grant cycle, future grant funds may be withheld until such time as the identified issues are resolved.

Monitoring

As a department of Metro government receiving federal funds, Metro Arts is required to review and monitor up to 10% of distributed funds annually. If an organization is selected for monitoring, a site visit with Metro Arts staff will be scheduled at which time the organization may be asked to provide:

- Year-to-date grant expenditures
- Payment records
- Payroll records
- Electronic and printed promotional materials showing Metro Arts logo usage according to the Metro Arts Credit Policy.

Metro Arts will provide a detailed list of items that will need to be collected and reviewed prior to the scheduled site visit. A written report of the monitoring visit will be provided to the organization after the review is complete. Metro Arts staff may report negative findings to the Arts Commission. Unresolved or recurring negative findings will result in a change to the organization's good standing status.

For further assistance, please contact Sydnie Davis, Strategic Grants & Initiatives Manager

[| arts.grants@nashville.gov](mailto:arts.grants@nashville.gov)