



Southwest Minnesota Arts Council

www.swmnarts.org • 507-537-1471 • info@swmnarts.org

Serving Big Stone, Chippewa, Cottonwood, Jackson, Kandiyohi, Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, McLeod, Meeker, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Renville, Rock, Swift & Yellow Medicine counties

OPERATING SUPPORT GRANTS

Fiscal Year 2022 Guidelines

Effective July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022

The grants described in this guide are dependent on appropriations to the SW MN Arts Council from the State of Minnesota's arts & cultural heritage fund.

Deadlines: submitted online by 4:30 pm

Required Pre-Application Deadline: Sept. 15, 2021 – Submit financial info to determine your allowed request amount

Deadline: October 20, 2021– Submit full application

Funding start date: January 1, 2022

The funding years for SMAC operating support grants will run from January 1 through December 31. The project end date for this two-year grant will be December 31, 2023, two years after the start date.

Program Intent & Eligibility

The intent of the Operating Support grant program is to strengthen and stabilize arts organizations that demonstrate programming of high artistic quality and efficient management. This program recognizes that organizations with an established record of programmatic service and administrative stability should have access to funds to support their organizational goals and objectives, rather than specific projects. Operating Support funding enables qualifying organizations to maintain their ongoing programs, services, and facilities without special emphasis on new initiatives as justification for funding.

Organizations are eligible to apply if:

- the organization is located in and serves the people of Big Stone, Chippewa, Cottonwood, Jackson, Kandiyohi, Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, McLeod, Meeker, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Renville, Rock, Swift or Yellow Medicine counties or tribal lands within the SMAC service area. We acknowledge that this region occupies the traditional, ancestral, and contemporary lands of the Dakota people, who have stewarded these lands throughout the generations.
- the organization's purpose and mission statement are focused clearly and solely on the arts.
- the organization has at least two years of completed arts programming and financials.
- the organization has current 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service and Articles of Incorporation on file with the State of Minnesota.
- total annual expenses of less than \$174,000

In addition to the restrictions listed in SMAC's general grant guidelines, following organizations and uses of funds are NOT eligible for Operating Support grants:

- Organizations receiving funding from the McKnight Foundation in the form of any operational support grant.
- Organizations that are eligible to receive funding from the Minnesota State Arts Board in the form of an operational support grant. (In fiscal year 2022 arts organizations with two-year averaged annual expenses of \$174,000 or over are eligible to apply for a Minnesota State Arts Board Operating Support grant.)
- SMAC operating support funds used as a match for other SMAC grants
- SMAC operating support grant recipients including pro-rated general operating costs in the budget for any other SMAC grant request covering the same time period as the operating support grant

- Activities that are primarily educational projects within a school system.
- Projects where artists are required to pay excessive entry or exhibition fees in order to exhibit or perform in the project for which funds are sought.

Before beginning an application, you are strongly encouraged to contact SW MN Arts Council to determine if this grant program is right for your organization.

Grant Amounts

Operating Support Grants are two-year awards based on the average eligible expenses of your organization over two past fiscal years, as verified by your pre-application Financial Statement form. This year, organizations may choose to use 2018 and 2019 to calculate their average, omitting 2020. Capital expenses such as major equipment purchases and facilities improvement projects, previous SMAC Operating Support grants, and any fiscal agent pass-through monies are excluded from your average eligible expenses. Your Financial Statement form will help you calculate this (available on the SMAC website and within the grant application).

Level One: Organizations with average eligible annual expenses under \$25,000 may request up to 35% of that average for year one and 35% for year two.

Level Two: Organizations with average eligible annual expenses of \$25,000 to \$173,999 may request up to 15% of that average for year one and 15% for year two.

For both levels, a competitive grant round may result in awards less than the requested amount.

Payments & Reporting

Year 1: 100% of the Year 1 grant funds will be paid in January 2022 after completion of the Year 1 grant contract. An interim report will be due March 1, 2023, 60 days after the end of the first funding period. All Year 1 funds must be expended by the end of the first funding period.

Year 2: 100% of the Year 2 grant funds will be paid in January 2023, on completion of the Year 2 grant contract. A final report is due March 1, 2024, 60 days after the end of the second funding period. All Year 2 funds must be expended by the end of the second funding period.

Review Criteria

The grant review panel will score your application based on:

- artistic quality and merit of the organization and its activities (33%)
- the organization's commitment to the community (22%)
- organizational stability and management (22%)
- the impact of the funding (22%)

Applicants will also be awarded one additional percentage point for each of the following criteria they meet:

- First time SMAC applicant
- Applicant organization led by or primarily serving BIPOC or LGBTQIA2+ communities or people with disabilities
- Applicant from a county that has received three or fewer SMAC grants in the last fiscal year

The panel's evaluation scoresheet is available on the SMAC website. Read more about the grant review process in the SMAC's general grant guidelines.

*Contact the SW MN Arts Council office with questions, for a draft review,
or if you need accommodations while applying for this grant:
507-537-1471 or 800-622-5284, info@swmnarts.org*