



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

GENERAL GRANT GUIDELINES

Fiscal Year 2022: July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022

Program Intents & Commitments

Grant projects must support SW MN Arts Council's (SMAC's) program intents (specific to each program), one or more of its commitments, and at least one of the MN Arts Outcomes.

SMAC Commitments

- Supporting artists and arts organizations in creating, producing and presenting high-quality arts activities
- Overcoming barriers to accessing high quality arts activities
- Instilling the arts into the community and public life in our region
- Supporting high-quality, age-appropriate arts education for residents of all ages to develop knowledge, skills, and understanding of the arts
- Supporting events and activities that represent the diverse ethnic and cultural arts traditions including folk and traditional artists and art organizations, represented in this region

MN Arts Goals

The Minnesota State Arts Board and regional arts councils are working toward the following goals for MN arts funding:

- The arts are interwoven into every facet of community life
- Minnesotans believe the arts are vital to who we are
- People of all ages, ethnicity, and abilities participate in the arts
- People trust Minnesota's stewardship of public arts funding
- The arts thrive in Minnesota

Through your grant projects, the specific MN Arts Outcomes below support these goals. Your proposed outcomes, evaluation plan, and the actual results detailed in your final report are required by State Legislation and will be reported to a central website, available to the general public, maintained by the Legislative Coordinating Commission.

MN Arts Outcomes

Arts Access

1. Regional residents experience increased access to the arts via a reduction in geographic, cultural and/or physical barriers.
2. Regional residents experience a change in knowledge, attitude, behavior or condition due to public art, arts festivals or arts events
3. The capacity of those providing arts experiences is increased or strengthened by changing, expanding, or enriching the ways in which they connect to their communities through the arts.
4. Regional artists expand and improve their work and the way in which they create it.
5. Regional artists connect to new audiences and/or build relationships that provide artistic growth.
6. The infrastructure of arts organizations is strengthened through access to operating funds, professional development and best practices sharing.
7. Minnesota's Arts Sector grows in reach and impact through programs and strategies that improve the health and operations of regional arts organizations.

Arts Education

8. Regional residents learn new arts skills & techniques.
9. Regional residents gain awareness and appreciation for a variety of artistic disciplines and mediums.
10. Regional artists build their capacity through professional development.

Arts & Cultural Heritage

11. Regional residents build connections to their own and others' cultural heritage through regional arts and cultural events and/or activities.
12. MN Folk and traditional artists/arts' audiences are expanded.
13. MN Folk and traditional artists see an increase in demand for work.

Eligibility

The following projects and organizations are NOT eligible for SMAC grants:

- Applications that do not have an art focus.
- Activities of a for-profit project, organization, or business.
- Payment of costs for projects that will take place outside the geographic boundaries of the state of Minnesota or costs related to travel outside the state of Minnesota, including performer, artist, or consultant travel. (Does not apply to Individual Artists receiving McKnight Foundation funds)
- Costs for relocating the applicant's legal address/residence outside the state of Minnesota.
- Projects where funds are requested to account for deficits in projects or programs begun prior to the project earliest start date. In other words, payment of debts incurred before the grant activities begin or outside of the grant project scope of activity.
- Applicants with past due SMAC final (or other) reports.
- Applications where funds are to be used to match other SMAC grant applications.
- Requests for new building construction, purchase of real estate, or endowment funds.
- Fundraising events: Grant funding should allow projects to break even, not make a profit.
- Activities which are not open to the public. Projects must be inclusive and accessible in their process and/or final product, considering economic, geographic, and physical accessibility, as well as the cultural, racial, ethnic, age, and gender make-up of the community. (Does not apply to Individual Artists or youth grantees)
- Activities essentially for the religious socialization of the participants or audience.
- Activities that attempt to influence any state or federal legislation or appropriation.
- Applications submitted for the purpose of regranting, lobbying or scholarships.
- Projects that don't provide timely promotion of the project throughout the SMAC region with use of the proper funding credit line and logo.

The applicant must not exceed 90% of the total project's cash expenses in combined support from the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Southwest Minnesota Arts Council.

Application Assistance

It is always best to contact SMAC staff prior to submission of a grant application to determine grant eligibility. To request a review of your application prior to submission, contact staff at least two weeks prior to the deadline. A staff member will review the application, as time permits, for eligibility and completed requirements. Staff review does not imply that a grant request will be funded. Project quality, content, budget, and accuracy of an application are solely the responsibility of the applicant. Free grant writing assistance workshops are scheduled for organizations interested in applying to the SMAC grant programs. To sponsor a workshop in your area, please contact the SMAC office 507-537-1471 or 800-622-5284, or e-mail info@swmnarts.org to make arrangements.

Applicants may fill out and submit their application in several ways:

- through our online grant system, accessed on our website (swmnarts.org)
- in a Word document, submitted by email along with required attachments (info@swmnarts.org). The document can be found on the Artist Equity Grant page of our website.
- on paper with required attachments, submitted by mail or dropped off at our office (PO Box 55, 114 N 3rd St, Marshall, MN 56258). Print out a questions document from our website, or contact us to request a paper copy.

Grant Review

1. SMAC staff reviews the application for accuracy, completeness and eligibility. Only eligible, complete applications will be forwarded to the grant review panel. Grant applicants may not discuss their application with SMAC panelists or board members following the grant deadline, until after the board has acted on the application. Communication regarding an application with SMAC board or panelists during this time will result in the application being ineligible for funding consideration.
2. A grant panel reviews all eligible applications based on the criteria for the grant program. See program guidelines for specific criteria. Panelists are chosen for their knowledge and expertise in the arts and nonprofit management, and their ability to interpret the guidelines and review criteria equitably and fairly to each application. Geographic representation, ethnicity, and gender are also considered to ensure the panel reflects the diversity of the region. The time and location of the panel meeting will be posted on the SMAC calendar at www.swmnarts.org. SMAC operates in the spirit of the State of Minnesota open meeting guidelines. Applicants are welcome to attend the meeting to hear the panel deliberations and proceedings. Interaction between applicants and panelists is not allowed.
3. Board and panel members with a conflict of interest in regard to a specific applicant or project declare such and abstain from comment and rating of that application.
4. Applicants will 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 LGBTQIA2S+ communities or people with disabilities
 - Applicant from a county that has received three or fewer SMAC grants in the last fiscal year
5. The recommendations of the panel are submitted to the SMAC Board of Directors for final approval. Grants will be awarded in ranked order to applications meeting the criteria, to the extent of funds available.
6. All applicants will receive email notification of acceptance or rejection after final review of the application by the Board of Directors.
7. If the application receives partial funding, a revised project description and budget must be submitted within 30 days of notification.

Appeals Policy

Any applicant who can show cause that established grant review procedures were not followed, or can show that the policies of the program are not equitable to all applicants, may file an appeal in writing, within ten (10) days of notification of the Board's decision on that application. There is no right of appeal to dispute decisions in regard to each program's respective criteria. Contact SMAC at 800-622-5284 or 507-537-1471 for a copy of the appeal process.

Grant Contract and Distribution of Funds

Organization grantees must provide their EIN, which is used to prove their organization's (or fiscal sponsor's) 501(c)(3) status before a contract can be issued. All awarded grantees must sign an electronic contractual agreement within 30 days of notification. Grantees who are individuals must provide a completed W-9 form before a grant check can be issued. Failure to provide any required documents within the prescribed time can result in the cancellation of a grant commitment. Eighty percent (80%) of the grant award will be sent to the grantee upon receipt of the signed contract and within thirty (30) days of the project start date. The remaining twenty percent (20%) of the grant award will be sent to the applicant upon receipt and approval of the Final Report.

Interim Reports

You may be asked for an interim report if you have multiple outstanding grants from the SW MN Arts Council.

Acknowledgement of Financial Assistance

SMAC's financial assistance must be acknowledged on all publicity and promotional materials through the credit line included in your grant contract. The grant contract will direct you to the specific credit line to use and if the Legacy Logo (shown here) should be used in promotion of the project.



The "Clean Water Land and Legacy Amendment Logo Usage Guidelines" and electronic versions of the approved logo are located on the SMAC website, along with a complete listing of all credits, logos, and posters, at <http://swmnarts.org/grants/legacy-logo/>.

Final Report

A final report must be completed within 60 days of the project end date. The online form can be accessed within SMAC's online grant system. The report requires information on the number of persons involved, the actual costs, and an evaluation of the project. Failure to submit a final report within 60 days of the end of the project without a prior request for an extension will result in a 20% penalty on the applicant's next application. Grant awards may be reduced if actual expenses are significantly less than projected expenses.

Misuse of Funds Policy

Definition: What constitutes misuse of funds

Misuse of funds means using State of Minnesota resources for any purpose other than those allowed by:

- State of Minnesota statutes, laws, rules, policies; and
- The regional arts council receiving and disbursing the funds; and
- The program guidelines or grant contract through which funds are disbursed.

Misuse can happen both intentionally or unintentionally. Intentional misuse occurs when the grantee knowingly spends funds in ways that are outside the allowable parameters of the State, the council, or the program. Misuse also occurs when a grantee spends funds in ways that are inconsistent with the submitted proposal and budget. Unintentional misuse generally occurs as a result of miscommunication or misunderstanding.

Whether the misuse is intentional or unintentional—notices and consequences will be issued.

Conversely, a grantee that is unable to complete all proposed activities is not misusing funds. For example: An artist receives a grant to conduct residencies in 3 schools—three months in school A, three months in school B, three months in school C. Midway through the project, and before activities have happened at school C, school C decides it is unable to host a residency. It is too late to find a replacement school; 1/3 of the awarded funds will be unspent at the end of the grant period.

The grantee will need to document how funds were spent, and return any unspent funds.

Unspent funds are not misuse. The notices and consequences described below would not apply in this situation.

When misuse has occurred:

Notice of misuse and consequences to the grantee

SMAC will notify grantee, in writing (via mail or e-mail), that misuse has been detected. Written notice will state:

- The amount of funds that have been misused, and how SMAC determined funds had been misused.
- How much money needs to be returned to SMAC, and the date by which funds must be returned.
- The consequences the grantee will face if funds are returned and the consequences the grantee will face if funds are not returned.
- If grantee does not respond, a second written notice will be sent within 30 days of original notice, accompanied by a phone call from council to grantee.
- If grantee does not respond, a third written notice will be sent by registered mail, within 60 days of original notice.

Unless and until a grantee responds, no less than three notices will be given. More notices may be given, but all will be sent within 90 days from the date misuse is detected.

Recovery of funds

SMAC will use all reasonable methods to recover the funds that have been misused. Recovery of funds might take different forms, depending on the amount owed and the circumstances.

- If there is an unpaid balance on the grant in question, SMAC will withhold that payment until the investigation, recovery, and consequences phases have been completed, and will cancel the payment if misuse is proven and funds must be returned.
- If there is no unpaid balance, SMAC may use a variety of methods to recover the misused funds:
 - Request a lump sum repayment of funds
 - Negotiate a repayment plan with grantee
 - Engage the services of a collection agency to recover the funds
 - Ask the Arts Board for assistance in recovering the funds

Consequences

Misuse of state funds is never allowable. Severe consequences must be imposed if funds are not returned; lesser consequences will be imposed if funds are returned. Consequences may be different, depending on **the amount of funds that have been misused**. If the reason for the misuse is **unintentional**, consequences may be minimized.

The following is the range of consequences the SMAC board will impose:

If grantee does not return the funds:

- Grantee is permanently ineligible to receive State of Minnesota funds from SMAC, from the Arts Board, or from any other regional arts council.

If grantee does return the funds:

- **Misused funds are less than \$1,000** – Grantee is ineligible to receive State funds from SMAC, the Arts Board, or any other regional arts council for a period of one year from date of notification.
- **Misused funds are \$1,000 - \$5,999** – Grantee is ineligible to receive State funds from SMAC, the Arts Board, or any other regional arts council for a period of two years from date of notification.

- **Misused funds are \$6,000 or more** – Grantee is ineligible to receive State funds from SMAC, the Arts Board, or any other regional arts council for a period of three years from date of notification.

Reinstatement

- At the end of the consequence period, the grantee must submit a request to the SMAC board to have its eligibility reinstated. The request must clearly outline what safeguards have been put in place to ensure that misuse would not occur again. Grantee may not submit a grant application to SMAC until the SMAC board has reinstated its eligibility.
- If the SMAC board is satisfied that sufficient safeguards have been put in place, it will notify the grantee that eligibility has been restored.
- If the SMAC board is not satisfied that sufficient safeguards have been put in place, it may deny the request. It will notify the grantee of the weaknesses that still exist and steps that need to be taken to regain eligibility privileges. Grantee may submit another request for reinstatement when those weaknesses have been corrected.
- SMAC will notify the Arts Board that it has reinstated the grantee's eligibility, or that it has denied the reinstatement request. The Arts Board will notify other regional arts councils that the grantee's eligibility has, or has not, been reinstated.

Appeal process

Grantees that have been assigned consequences have the right to appeal if one of the following two circumstances has taken place:

- If consequences outside the guidelines have been assigned that the grantee feels are unfair or unwarranted, the grantee must submit an appeal in writing within 30 days of the date of the letter notifying the grantee that consequences will be imposed. The grantee's appeal must state the reasons for the appeal and must provide clear and compelling support for its assertion that the consequences assigned were unfair or unwarranted.
- If the grantee has made substantial progress toward remedying the situation that prompted the consequences, the grantee may appeal to have the remainder of the consequences waived. The grantee must submit an appeal in writing no earlier than 180 days (six months) from the date of the letter notifying the grantee that consequences will be imposed. The grantee's appeal must state reasons for the appeal and must provide clear evidence that grantee has taken the necessary steps and implemented the appropriate remedies so that its privilege of eligibility should be reinstated.

The SMAC board will review the appeal at its first meeting following the receipt of the appeal. At that meeting, the SMAC board may take one of these actions in response to the appeal:

- Determine that the appellant does not show sufficient cause for an appeal
- Direct the staff to investigate the appeal and bring a recommended resolution of the appeal to a subsequent meeting of the SMAC board
- Request that the appellant appear before the SMAC board at a subsequent meeting and address the appeal at that time
- Determine that the appellant does show sufficient cause for appeal and offer a settlement to the applicant at the meeting.

A grantee may not appeal to the Arts Board to overrule the decision of the regional arts council.