Quick Support for Organizations: Guidelines for Fiscal Year 2023

Effective July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023

Program Intent

The Quick Support for Organizations grant program provides organizations with more quickly accessible funds for planning and small projects. Applicants may choose from five project types:

1) **Art Legacy Project planning**

   Planning for a specific large-scale project that will create a strong arts legacy in the region:
   - Requests for proposals from artists
   - Gathering community input
   - Determining available resources and costs
   - Researching the feasibility or sustainability of the future project

2) **Small arts project**
   - Arts exhibits or performances
   - Art classes for community members of all ages (excluding projects in schools)
   - Public art

3) **Small equipment purchase**

   Equipment that will strengthen the organization's capacity to serve arts needs in their region.

4) **Arts organization development**
   - Training of staff or board members at workshops and conferences
   - Hiring consultants/specialists to assist the organization in fundraising, marketing, financial development, board development, etc.
   - Conducting surveys to determine community interest
   - Developing new arts programs and services

5) **Arts organization start-up**
   - Developing articles of incorporation and bylaws
   - Filing for 501(c)(3) status

Grant Award Amounts

Quick Support for Organizations grants are available for up to **$2,500**.

The Quick Support for Organizations grant program is dependent on funding from the voters of Minnesota, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

SW MN Arts Council Contact Info

Contact the SW MN Arts Council (SMAC) office with questions, for a draft review, or if you need accommodations while applying for this grant.

Email: info@swmnarts.org. Phone: 507-537-1471 or 800-622-5284. Website (www.swmnarts.org)

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Important Dates and Deadlines

Project Start and End Dates
The start date for a SMAC grant is defined as the point at which the project is set in motion (e.g. auditions, rehearsals, advertising and public notification, payment of fees, ordering and/or paying for supplies or printed material, etc.). No funds can be expended prior to the project start date. Funds spent before the project start date, such as a deposit on a contract, cannot be included in the grant project budget. No advertising by the applicant organization can take place before the start date, whether or not it will be paid for through the grant. However, posting basic information such as event dates is allowed.

Projects must be concluded no later than June 30, 2024.

Application Deadlines

Applications must be submitted by 4:30 pm on the deadline date.

QUICK SUPPORT FOR ORGANIZATIONS DATES

- Grantwriting Webinar: July 21, 2022
- Request staff review of application at least one week before deadline
- **Monthly Deadlines: 1ˢᵗ of the month August 2022 – May 2023**
- Board Action: 4ᵗʰ Tuesday of the month
- Earliest Project Start Date: 1st of the following month

Who Can Apply

Geographic Area

Applicant organizations must be located within the eighteen counties of the SW MN Arts Council service region (Big Stone, Chippewa, Cottonwood, Jackson, Kandiyohi, Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, McLeod, Meeker, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Renville, Rock, Swift, and Yellow Medicine counties) or on tribal lands within our 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.

Types of Organizations

The Quick Support for Organizations grant program is open to nonprofit organizations as described in Section 501 (c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code with Articles of Incorporation on file with the State of Minnesota or official units of city, county, or state government of the State of Minnesota.

Arts organization development and arts organization start-up project types are only open to arts organizations (organizations with missions focused primarily on the arts).

Fiscal Sponsors

If your organization is not yet a registered nonprofit, you may apply using a fiscal sponsor. Some examples of organizations in this situation include one that has just recently been formed, with only a few board members and a couple of activities completed so far. Or, an organization may have been in existence for years, but the scale of its activities and capacity of its volunteers haven't warranted filing for nonprofit status.

The fiscal sponsor organization must meet the requirements listed above under the types of eligible organizations. A signed agreement outlining the relationship between the applicant and the fiscal sponsor must be submitted with the application. A fiscal sponsor, if used, must sign the application and, if funded, sign the grant contract. The fiscal sponsor is legally responsible for the proper management of grant funds and for the completion of the project.

Ineligible Activities

The following activities and organizations are NOT eligible for these grants:

- Applications that do not have an art focus.
- Activities of a for-profit project, organization, or business.
- Applications that are primarily for educational projects within a school system.
- 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.
- Costs for relocating the applicant's legal address/residence outside the state of Minnesota.
- Projects for which artists are required to pay excessive entry or exhibition fees in order to exhibit or perform in the project for which funds are sought.
- 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.
- 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.
- Requests for funds 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.
- Applications in which funds are to be used to match other SMAC grant projects.
- Budgets including prorated operating costs if the organization is already receiving SMAC operating support for the same time period.
- Budgets exceeding 90% of the total project's cash expenses in combined support from the Minnesota State Arts Board and SW MN Arts Council.
- Applicants with past due SMAC final (or other) reports.

How to Apply

Application Assistance

Before beginning an application, applicants are encouraged to contact SW MN Arts Council to determine if this grant program is right for their project and that their activities and expenses are eligible. Other forms of assistance include grant support open office hours, info sessions and webinars, and conversations with staff. Visit the SMAC website for more details.

To request a review of your application prior to submission, contact staff at least one week 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.

Accommodations

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

- through our online grant system, accessed on our [website](www.swmnarts.org) (www.swmnarts.org)
- in a Word document, submitted by email along with required attachments to info@swmnarts.org. The document can be found on the webpage for this grant program.
- on paper with required attachments, submitted by mail (PO Box 55, Marshall, MN 56258) or contact us to arrange drop-off. Print out a questions document from our website or contact us to request a paper copy.

Contact the SW MN Arts Council office if other accommodations such as audio or video responses are needed.

Application Questions

In the application, you will describe your proposed project and answer questions related to the following criteria:

- the project's artistic quality and merit
- the impact on the participants and audience
- your efforts toward reaching the underserved through the project
- your organization's ability to accomplish the project

You will also be asked to provide some demographic and financial data, along with contacts for your organization (and fiscal sponsor organization, if applicable).

Materials Needed

You will need to provide the following materials:

- Artist resumes or bios
- Samples of artists' work (attachments or links)
- Evaluation tool (optional)
- Project budget
- List of board members
- Fiscal sponsor agreement, if applicable

Organization applicants must provide their EIN, which is used to prove their (or fiscal sponsor's) 501(c)(3) status.

Grant Review Process

Eligibility Check

SMAC staff reviews submitted applications for eligibility and completeness. If there are missing requirements or eligibility concerns, the applicant will have 48 hours to make corrections or provide additional information. Only eligible, complete applications will be forwarded to the grant review panel.

Grant Review Panel

A grant panel reviews all eligible applications based on the criteria for the grant program, outlined below. 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 for each application. Geographic representation, ethnicity, and gender are also considered to ensure the panel reflects the diversity of the region. Board and panel members with a conflict of interest in regard to a specific applicant or project declare such and abstain from comment and scoring of that application.

Scoring Criteria

The review panel will use the following criteria to score each application:

- *Ability to Accomplish the Project* (33% of total score)
    - The applicant has a clear plan with reasonable time lines.
    - The project has capable and committed personnel, whether from the organization or consultants/contractors.
    - The budget is clearly itemized, responsible, and meets the needs of the project.
    - There is an appropriate marketing/publicity plan, if applicable.
- *Impact of the Project* (67% of total score)
    - The applicant has identified specific proposed changes to take place as a result of their project and a plan to measure or prove whether those changes have taken place.
    - The intent of the project type is fulfilled:
        - Organization start-up: The new organization is likely to play an important role in the artistic development of its community, as demonstrated by the artistic quality and merit of its activities, strength of its operations, and expected effects of completing the 501c3 process.
        - Organization development: The project helps the organization achieve increased capacity and long-term stability.
        - Equipment purchase: The equipment purchase strengthens the organization's ability to provide high quality arts activities, benefiting specific programs or events.
        - Art project: The project and artist(s) involved provide the potential for participants and audience to develop knowledge, skills, and understanding of the arts.
        - Legacy project planning: The activities will enable the final project to be well-planned, of high artistic quality and merit, and aligned with the artistic needs of the community.
    - The underserved or underrepresented in the community are enabled to participate in this activity or the organization's activities in general.

Observation

The date and time of the panel meeting will be posted on the [SMAC calendar](www.swmnarts.org/calendar/) (www.swmnarts.org/calendar/). SMAC operates in the spirit of the State of Minnesota open meeting guidelines, so applicants are allowed to observe grant review panel proceedings. They must notify SMAC staff at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting time if they plan to observe. Applicants will then receive a link if the meeting is virtual. Applicants cannot interact with the panel. If attending virtually, applicants must turn off their microphones and cameras.

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.

Priority Points

After panel scoring, applicants will be awarded one additional percentage point for each of the following conditions they meet, to address SMAC's funding priorities:

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

SMAC Board

The recommendations of the panel are submitted to the SMAC Board of Directors for final approval. Grants are awarded in ranked order to applications meeting the criteria, to the extent of funds available.

Notification

All applicants will receive email notification of acceptance or denial after the SMAC Board's final funding decisions. If an 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 info@swmnarts.org for more details about the appeal process.

Grant Contract and Distribution of Funds

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. A check for 100% of the grant award will be sent to the grantee upon receipt of the signed contract and within thirty days of the project start date.

Acknowledgement of Financial Assistance

Funding for this grant program comes from the voters of Minnesota, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

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. Grant Credit Lines and Publicity Material (https://swmnarts.org/grant-credit-lines-publicity-material/)

Reporting

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

Final Report
A final report must be completed within 60 days after the project end date. The report 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.