



Art Study Opportunity for Youth Grants: Guidelines for Fiscal Year 2024

Effective July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024

Program Intent

The Art Study Opportunity for Youth grant program provides funding for students entering grades 5-12 to study their chosen art form with a practicing professional artist or attend an arts workshop, series of classes, or special training opportunity. All arts disciplines are accepted.

The project must address specific training as opposed to unrestricted support. Funding for standard weekly lessons (such as piano or voice lessons) is eligible for students who qualify for the federal free or reduced lunch program. Arts supplies costs are eligible for students attending a MN public arts high school.

Grant Award Amounts

Art Study Opportunity for Youth grants are available for up to **\$500**.

The Art Study Opportunity for Youth grant program is dependent on funding from the voters of Minnesota, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund; and from individual donors from the southwest Minnesota region.

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](http://www.swmnarts.org) (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 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, 2025.

Application Deadlines

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

ART STUDY OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUTH DATES

- Grantwriting Webinar: February 15, 2024
- Request application draft review by March 13, 2024
- **Application Deadline: March 27, 2024**
- Panel Review: April 16, 2024
- Board Action: April 23, 2024
- Earliest Project Start Date: May 1, 2024

Who Can Apply

Geographic Area and Residency

The Art Study Opportunity for Youth grant program is open to permanent residents within the SW MN Arts Council service region, consisting of eighteen counties (Big Stone, Chippewa, Cottonwood, Jackson, Kandiyohi, Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, McLeod, Meeker, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Renville, Rock, Swift, and Yellow Medicine counties) and two tribal nations (Pezihutazizi/Upper Sioux Community, Cansayapi/Lower Sioux Community). We acknowledge that the Southwest Minnesota region occupies the traditional, ancestral, and contemporary lands of the Dakota people.

Applicants must be a region resident for at least six months prior to submitting an application and remain a resident throughout the contract period. Applicants may be asked to provide proof of residency, which must be demonstrated by the following, each showing an eligible address: 1) A valid MN state ID/driver's license or other federally recognized documentation and 2) Bills for utilities or mortgage/rent.

Age Requirement

Applicants must be entering grades 5 through 12 in Fall of 2022.

Other SMAC Grants for Individuals

Artists may only have one pending SMAC grant request at a time, across all grant programs for individuals. Artists with a current SMAC grant project in progress may not apply for another individual grant until reporting on the first grant is completed. Applicants with overdue final reports are not eligible to apply.

Conflicts of Interest

Children of SMAC Board members and SMAC staff are ineligible to apply for this grant program.

Ineligible Activities

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

- Projects that do not have an art focus.
- Participation in a school or organization band or choir trip.
- Equipment requests not specifically tied to the proposed project.
- Credits or materials necessary to fulfill degree requirements for students, including tuition, class projects, and school-related exhibits, performances, or shows.
- Activities of a for-profit project or business or projects intended for mass-market distribution.
- Requests for new building construction or purchase of real estate.
- Fundraising events. Grant funding should allow projects to break even, not make a profit.
- 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 in which funds are to be used to match other SMAC grant projects.

- Requests for funds to account for deficits in projects 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.

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 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.

Accommodations

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

- through our online grant system, accessed on our [website](http://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:

- your experience in your artform
- the project's contribution to your growth as an artist

You will also be asked to provide some demographic data.

Materials Needed

You will need to provide the following materials:

- Samples of your work (attachments or links)
- For study with a mentor, samples of the mentor artist's work and a letter of commitment
- Project budget

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 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:

- *Project's contribution to the student's growth (50% of total score)*
 - The study opportunity as described is well-planned and financially feasible.
 - The chosen mentor/study opportunity has high artistic merit, proven by the materials provided.
 - The study opportunity has the potential to strengthen the student's skills in this art form.
 - The applicant has a high level of commitment to the study opportunity.
 - The applicant articulates how they want to grow through this study opportunity.
- *Excellence of work (50% of total score)*
 - The application shows that the student's past activities and studies in this art form have been significant for their age level and were of high artistic quality.
 - The applicant demonstrates a desire to challenge themselves artistically and describes past instances in which they did so.
 - The work samples submitted clearly show excellence and promise in the artistic discipline presented.

Observation

The date and time of the panel meeting will be posted on the [SMAC calendar](http://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 from an underserved/underrepresented community
 - People who are Black, Indigenous, or other people of color (BIPOC). In the SW MN region, this could include those who are Black, Dakota/Lakota, Hispanic/Latinx, Hmong, Karen, Micronesian, Somali, etc.
 - People who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual, or two-spirit (LBGTQIA2+).
 - 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 adult 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; and from individual donors from the southwest Minnesota region.

SMAC's financial assistance must be acknowledged on all publicity and promotional materials through the credit line included in your grant contract. Your 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.



A complete listing of all funding credit lines, logos, and posters is located on the SMAC website. [Grant Credit Lines and Logos](https://swmnarts.org/grant-credit-lines/) (<https://swmnarts.org/grant-credit-lines/>)

Reporting

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 project's actual costs, your outcomes, and any audience reached through the project. Grant awards may be reduced if actual expenses are significantly less than projected expenses. 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. If a final report is not submitted and there is no communication from the grantee over a period of six months after the report deadline the grant will be closed and the grantee must wait three years before they are eligible to apply to SW MN Arts Council again.