



Work Plan FY26-27 :::

Biennial Plan Priority 1:

Grant Programs: Provide effective and efficient grant programs for the production or sponsorship of art for individual artists, non-profit organizations, units of government including tribal government, communities, schools, and youth

Objectives may include:

- offer a grant application process that meets the needs of all potential applicants: online and by other methods including, but not limited to, written or video
- provide a thorough two-step application evaluation process: conduct online grant evaluation in combination with virtual or in-person grant review panel meetings led by volunteers who are experts or experienced in at least one arts medium or arts organization acumen; followed by detailed board review and determination of reasonable & equitable funding
- provide grant programs for arts projects, arts and learning opportunities, youth art opportunities and individual artist projects taking into consideration that the future of the arts includes digital or virtual methods of transmission
- announce guidelines for all grant categories well in advance of grant program application deadlines
- maintain an informative website that is updated regularly with grant-related information
- develop & host grant writing workshops prior to grant application deadlines
- assist potential applicants to develop strong applications through workshops and one-on-one coaching
- respond to requests for information in a timely manner
- develop & maintain relationships with underrepresented/underserved communities and populations
- empower community mentors and leaders in supporting grantees outside of SMAC staff and board when possible
- actively communicate with public school educators and administration about grant programs available for them through various means and connection points

Supports the following Minnesota 25 Year Goals agreed to state-wide by the MSAB and Regional Arts Councils:

- 1) The arts are interwoven into every facet of community life.
- 2) Minnesotans believe the arts are vital to who we are.
- 3) People of all ages, ethnicities, and abilities participate in the arts.
- 4) People trust Minnesota's stewardship of public arts funding.
- 5) The arts thrive in Minnesota.

Measurement for Priority 1: Our annual needs assessment efforts (survey, focus groups, and testimonial/witness accounts) will reflect that at least 75% of respondents feel that we are providing accessible

and equitable grant programs. In addition, 85% of grantees will report in grantee final reports that their project was successfully completed and provided arts access for their community.

Achieving the Outcomes for Priority 1: Southwest Minnesota artists and non-profit organizations/government units will report they have access to grants funding including information, education and services. Regional residents experience increased access to the arts via a reduction in geographic, cultural, social and/or physical barriers.

Biennial Plan Priority 2:

Strong Organization: Maintain a strong and highly functional board of directors and staff utilizing their capacity to strengthen arts organizations and artists while acting as responsible stewards of public and private funds in service of the arts.

Objectives may include:

- recruit & maintain a strong and highly functional board of directors whose demographics reflect the constituents of the region
- recruit panelists whose skills, knowledge and experience allow them to effectively score applications according to the relevant criteria
- recruit panelists who belong to or represent underrepresented/underserved communities
- provide training & educational opportunities for staff, board members and panelists to strengthen their ability to better serve constituents and support the arts
- leverage the strength of our membership organization to offer fundraising that will fill gaps in our funding of the arts across the region
- take strategic actions to secure donations & funding from non-traditional sources

Supports the following Minnesota 25 Year Goals agreed to state-wide by the MSAB and Regional Arts Councils:

4) People trust Minnesota's stewardship of public arts funding.

Measurement for Priority 2: 75% of respondents to our annual needs assessment survey will react/respond positively in regard to our administration of funds.

Achieving the Outcomes for Priority 2: Residents of the Southwest Region will indicate satisfaction with how the resources for the arts are allocated and the benefits those resources produce.

Biennial Plan Priority 3:

Equity: Actively and with concentrated efforts connect with all constituents and work to define and address barriers and issues of arts access.

Objectives may include:

- ensure equity intentionality in our grant programs to support new/small/rural organizations, underrepresented/underserved artists and those communities with limited arts access

- share the SMAC EQUITY STATEMENT on our website as part of our 'Mission, Vision & Values' and as a link in each of our applications
- leverage current & past board members and other volunteers to serve as a conduit between SMAC and our constituents; recruit board members and panelists who represent Black, Indigenous and people of color as well as underrepresented/underserved communities
- convene a taskforce of culture-bearers and leaders of underrepresented/underserved communities that can forge connections between SMAC and underrepresented/underserved populations
 - *the taskforce members should represent communities in the SW MN region that include, but are not limited to: Indigenous, Latinx, Black, Hmong as well as other historically marginalized ethnic groups, immigrant communities, individuals with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ community, youth & seniors/elders and other groups that do not normally have arts access*
- execute a targeted, but flexible, outreach plan for staff, board members and SMAC-connected arts leaders to "go to" the underrepresented/underserved communities:
 - *make connections and strengthen alliances with Native American tribes including Pezihutazizi and Cansa'yapi communities in addition to immigrant, disabled and other underrepresented/underserved populations*
 - *focus on relationships, listening, understanding and trust*
- utilize all available communications methods to disseminate information across the region regarding grant deadlines, events, workshops and other opportunities; ensure those communications are available in languages representative of our underrepresented/underserved communities upon request
- welcome grant applications from non-English speakers and uphold a process to treat them equally in panel proceedings
- create an access plan with associated budget and milestone timelines that will address accessibility issues and reduce or remove them where possible to facilitate increased participation

Supports the following Minnesota 25 Year Goals agreed to state-wide by the MSAB and Regional Arts Councils:

3) People of all ages, ethnicities, and abilities participate in the arts.

5) The arts thrive in Minnesota.

Measurement for Priority 3: We will see an increase in the numbers of grant applications for projects involving a high-level of artistic quality & merit from and/or serving diverse or underrepresented/underserved populations based on RAC Data Collection statistics.

Achieving the Outcomes for Priority 3: Our grantees, audiences and people served will more accurately reflect the rich cultures and diversity of the region. Regional residents build connections to their own and others' cultural heritage through regional arts and cultural events and/or activities.

Biennial Plan Priority 4:

Promotion of the Arts: Promote, celebrate and advocate on behalf of arts creators, arts venues, arts providers and the arts-interested public in SW MN.

Objectives may include:

- advertise regional arts activities through website, newsletter and email
- advocate for the arts within and beyond the region

- increase awareness of the SMAC organization and its funding and services through strategic communications targeted at all audiences and constituency groups including the arts interested public
- promote arts organizations and individual artists through any means possible, including, but not limited to, the SMAC Artist and Arts Organization Registry which offers web presence and mechanism for making contact
- host an annual arts celebration showcasing artists and arts organizations
- recognize Prairie Star & Prairie Disciple award winners as outstanding artists and arts advocates in our region
- provide exhibit opportunities for regional artist grantees in the SMAC Art Gallery and by virtual means
- provide performance opportunities for artists at the SMAC Art Gallery Receptions, other SMAC events and by virtual means
- provide networking and education opportunities for artists and arts organizations

Supports the following Minnesota 25 Year Goals agreed to state-wide by the MSAB and Regional Arts Councils:

- 1) The arts are interwoven into every facet of community life.
- 2) Minnesotans believe the arts are vital to who we are.
- 5) The arts thrive in Minnesota.

Measurement for Priority 4: SMAC constituents will report that they are prepared to inform regional legislators of arts activities and their impacts through their share-back of legislative communications. Individual artists will have increased opportunities to showcase their work and share with communities in the region as reported in our annual needs assessment. The arts-interested public will report use of our arts calendar and the ability to find arts activities on our website and via social media.

Achieving the Outcomes for Priority 4: Community members will have the tools to celebrate and effectively advocate for the arts in their schools, cities, counties and at the state level. Regional artists connect to new audiences and/or build relationships that provide artistic growth.

Biennial Plan Priority 5:

Technical Assistance/Capacity Building: Develop artists' and arts providers' capacity to succeed.

Objectives may include:

- enable constituents to learn from each other and specific subject matter experts through at least one high-quality conference per year for organizations and, separately, for artists
- make available marketing tools for artists and arts organizations via workshops, web and other technologies
- communicate artist and arts organization existence and activities via web, social media channels and other means
- provide workshops on topics that will help organizations and individuals grow in their artistic journey and in what they offer to the citizens of Minnesota
- develop workshops and opportunities to improve outreach relationships with underrepresented/underserved communities
- encourage collaboration with artists, arts organizations, other local and regional organizations and units of government

- provide use of SMAC physical space to artists and arts organizations for their benefit and constituents across the region
 - provide technical assistance to artists, schools and arts organizations including:
 - advocacy, information and referral
 - organization development
 - marketing
 - career development
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Supports the following Minnesota 25 Year Goals agreed to state-wide by the MSAB and Regional Arts Councils:

1) The arts are interwoven into every facet of community life.

5) The arts thrive in Minnesota.

Measurement for Priority 5: 85% of constituents will indicate that SMAC-provided training and resources met or exceeded their needs as evidenced in our annual needs assessment. Success factors, or need for change, will show up in post-event surveys, evaluations and grantee final reports.

Achieving the Outcomes for Priority 5: Artists and organizations in the Southwest Region will say have access to the resources, information, markets, personnel/volunteers, and audiences they need to accomplish their mission.