2027 Community Arts Grant Guidelines
The ARTS Council of the Southern Finger Lakes
79 West Market Street, Corning, NY 14830
nate@eARTS.org | 607-962-1332 x204 |
www.eARTS.org

About

Community Arts grants support public facing arts and cultural activities of artists and organizations in service to residents in Cattaraugus, Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben, and Tioga counties. These activities increase the value of the arts as an integral part of the community and make the arts accessible to all. These grants are made possible with public Statewide Community Regrant (SCR) funds from the New York State Council on the ARTS (NYSCA), a state agency, and are administered locally by The ARTS Council of the Southern Finger Lakes (The ARTS Council).

Applicant Eligibility

Applicants must be **501(c)(3) nonprofits**, **unit(s) of local governments**, or **Tribal organizations** located in Cattaraugus, Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben, or Tioga County and meet the following, additional eligibility requirements:

- Nonprofits must show proof of registration with the New York State Charities Bureau by providing a Bureau filing receipt dated within the last 24 months. Nonprofit registration must be in the same county where the applicant operates.
- Chartered educational institutions (e.g., some museums and libraries) must provide documentation of NYS charter by the Board of Regents under section 216 of the NY State Education Law.
- Government or quasi-governmental entities must provide proof of authorization to apply, in the form of a formal letter on official stationery, signed by the appropriate county, city, town or village executive, dated within the last 12 months.
- Applicants must provide proof of address or residency in Cattaraugus, Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben, or Tioga County.
- Applicants who have applied directly to NYSCA for support in the 2027 fiscal year, regardless of funding status, are ineligible.
- Previous SCR funded grant recipients must have fulfilled all grant requirements.
- Publicly funded schools and NYS agencies/departments are ineligible.
- Business corporations, limited liability companies (LLCs), limited liability partnerships (LLPs), and 501(c)(4) and 501(c)(6) organizations are also not eligible.

Individual artist(s) or non-incorporated organizations can apply as a sponsored applicant through a fiscal sponsor or community-based partner. The following are additional sponsored applicant eligibility requirements:

- Fiscal sponsors and community-based partners must be located in the same county where the project occurs and provide a commitment letter outlining the collaboration. Fiscal sponsors must meet all the criteria of nonprofit organizations that apply directly. Community-based partners may be nonprofits or a community-based entity (e.g., a bookstore or coffee shop) that actively participates in the community.
- If an applicant uses a community-based partner, the applicant will receive grant funds directly from The ARTS Council. Applicants who use a fiscal sponsor will receive their grant funds from the fiscal sponsor.
- Direct NYSCA applicants cannot sponsor applications. However, they may offer use of their venue for free, handle ticketing, and provide other support as long as they do not financially benefit from a project and it is not advertised as part of their official programming.
- Individual sponsored applicants must be 18 years of age and older and cannot be enrolled in a full time degree program.

Project Eligibility

Projects must be community-focused arts and/or cultural activities, open to the public, and occur between January 1 and December 31, 2027. The following are additional project eligibility requirements:

- Projects must occur in the same county where the applicant resides.
- Projects cannot specifically target home-school participants or membership groups.
- Projects must include an artistic component and cannot support commercial arts or other forms of entertainment for entertainment's sake such as magicians or sip and paint.
- Projects cannot be primarily recreational, therapeutic, rehabilitative, or religious in nature.
- Projects cannot propose the acquisition of artwork, have a primary focus of fundraising, or propose financial gain for the applicant as the primary benefit.

Grant Amount & Funding Eligibility

Applicants can request grant funding from $500 to $7,500.

Applicants can submit up to three (3) requests, totaling no more than $7,500, through any combination of Community Arts, Teaching Artist, and Individual Artist grant applications for the entire 2027 grant cycle.

Tribal Nations are exempt from the 3 request, $7,500 limit. Tribal organizations within Tribal Nations are subject to the 3 request, $7,500 limit.

The following are additional funding eligibility requirements:

- Supplies and materials needed to execute the proposed project (examples: art supplies, sheet music, hardware, memory cards, and other consumable equipment) are eligible expenses, but individual supply or material line items may not exceed $1,000.
- Total project costs must equal or be greater than the grant request.
- Projects cannot pay children or students.
- Funding cannot support cash prize, award, scholarship, fellowship, party, or reception expenses.
- Funding can only support expenses directly related to the project.
- Funding can only support in-state travel expenses.

Funding Criteria

Grants are funded based upon the following criteria:

1. **Artistic and/or Cultural and Programmatic Merit**. Will the project make a meaningful impact? Projects that pay artist fees are especially welcomed.
2. **Community Benefit & Accessibility**. Does the project encompass the totality of our community? Projects that reflect the varied backgrounds and experiences of our region and welcome in people from all walks of life are especially encouraged.
3. **Managerial & Fiscal Competence**. Have the applicants demonstrated an ability to manage time, resources, and people so that the project will be successful?

Programmatic quality is valued over participant quantity. Financial need is not considered in funding decisions.

Application Process and Deadline

The application deadline is 11:59pm on **Friday, December 4, 2026**. Applications must be submitted through our online application system at https://earts.submittable.com/submit.

A completed application consists of the following:

- Applicant Information
- Project Information
- Budget Information
- Artistic Work Samples
- Letter of Partnership (if applicable)

The application consists of a mixture of short answers and narratives. There is no budget form.

Review panels will meet in early January. We expect to notify all applicants of their funding decision by **Friday, January 15, 2027**.

Assistance

Applicants are encouraged to discuss their projects with the ARTS Council's Grants Manager, Nate Weisenberg, before submitting their application to determine if they meet eligibility requirements.

Applicants may submit drafts of their application via email to nate@eARTS.org. Please submit these requests **by November 20, 2026** (two weeks before the deadline) to ensure sufficient time for review. The Grants Manager will review drafts for clarity with an eye towards the grant criteria, not for copyediting and rewriting. Please note, their comments and recommendations may not align with grant panelist decisions.

Upon request, changes to an applicant's submitted application can be made up until the deadline. No changes can be made after the deadline.

Contact the Grants Manager at nate@eARTS.org or 607-962-1332 x204 for more assistance. The Grants Manager will make in-person and virtual presentations throughout our service area this fall. We will also hold drop-in hours at sites throughout the region where you can meet one-on-one to discuss your proposal and ask questions. The dates/times will be announced on the ARTS Council's grants homepage, www.eARTS.org/grants.

Funding Process

Community member-led grant panels evaluate and score applications based on the criteria above. Awards are made based on panelist scores and available funding. The ARTS Council does not make any evaluative decisions or make recommendations to the grant panel.

When considering applications from previously funded applicants, upon request, panelists can be furnished historical records. Prior support does not imply or guarantee funding. Additionally, assistance or recommendations made to an applicant by the Grants Manager does not guarantee funding and may not reflect panelist decisions.

The ARTS Council's Board of Directors previews but cannot change panel decisions.

Funding Notification & Distribution of Funds

All applicants will receive funding notification via email **in January 2027**. Funded applicants must return a signed acceptance agreement before funds can be distributed. Email is preferred. Funding is subject to the availability of funds from the New York State Council on the Arts and can take several months to arrive (in 2026, funds arrived in late April). Please plan accordingly if your project is planned to occur in the first few months of the year.

About The ARTS Council

The ARTS Council of the Southern Finger Lakes (The ARTS Council) is a regional arts services organization located in the Southern Tier of New York State serving artists of all disciplines, organizations, and the public. Further information is available at www.eARTS.org.