2025

PROJECT SUPPORT

Guidelines and Application Instructions

ELIGIBILITY CHECK DUE: **THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 2024 BY 4:30PM ET**

APPLICATION DUE: **THURSDAY, AUGUST 1, 2024 BY 4:30PM ET**

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GREETINGS!

Thank you for your interest in the 2025 Project Support (PS) grant program. Cuyahoga Arts & Culture's mission is to inspire and strengthen the community by investing in arts and culture. CAC is excited to work with you to connect Cuyahoga County residents to arts and culture in our community.

LOCAL PUBLIC FUNDER

CAC is the region's largest funder for arts and culture, helping hundreds of nonprofit organizations in Cuyahoga County connect millions of people to cultural experiences each year. Cuyahoga County residents created CAC in 2006 when they approved a tax to support arts and culture.

$246 MILLION+ INVESTED

Since 2007, CAC has invested more than $246 million in more than 485 nonprofit organizations both large and small, making Cuyahoga County a more vibrant place to live, work and play. CAC funds nonprofit 501(c)(3) arts and culture organizations based in and serving Cuyahoga County residents.

OUR CORE GRANTS ARE:

PROJECT SUPPORT	GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT	CULTURAL HERITAGE
Annual grants of up to $20,000 for arts and culture projects.	Multi-year core support grants to qualifying organizations with a primary mission of art and culture in Cuyahoga County.	Multi-year core support grants of up to $30,000 for qualifying cultural heritage organizations with a primary mission of arts and culture.

This document contains the guidelines for 2025 Project Support, the only grant program accepting applicants this cycle. To review Project Support in a snapshot, refer to the 2025 Project Support Grant Guide.

Our team is here to support you throughout the application process. For additional information and resources, please contact a member of the Grantmaking Team. Visit cacgrants.org to learn more about workshop opportunities, and sign up to receive email updates.

For additional information about terms in the guidelines or application materials, please see our glossary.

KEY DATES

2025 GRANT APPLICATION TIMELINE

Eligibility Check Due .... June 6, 2024 at 4:30PM

Application Due... August 1, 2024 at 4:30PM

Public Panel Review... Week of September 16, 2024

CAC Board Approves Grants.......................... November 20, 2024

Grant Agreements Sent and Signed .... November and December 2024

Cleveland Seed Bank, Photo by Grace McConnell

ABOUT PROJECT SUPPORT

CAC strongly encourages applications from BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color)-led and serving nonprofit organizations, as well as others that have been historically excluded or marginalized.

The purpose of Cuyahoga Arts & Culture's Project Support (PS) grant program is to promote public access and encourage the breadth of arts and cultural programming in our community by supporting Cuyahoga County-based organizations and projects. Grant applications are reviewed through a public panel review process. CAC will offer Project Support funding in 2025 for projects occurring in the January 1 – December 31, 2025 grant period.

How We Define a Project:
Proposed projects must be arts or cultural activities and have a public programming component. A project is a specific, connected set of activities with a beginning and an end, explicit goals/objectives and a predetermined cost that does not equal the organization's total annual budget. Projects may be one-time events, such as a festival or exhibit, or a defined series of events, such as classes or productions. Projects with multiple components must show that there is a cohesive theme that ties the project together. Public programming does not have to be free. Note: Mural and public art projects must demonstrate meaningful community engagement and include an element of public programming to be eligible.

PROJECT SUPPORT AT A GLANCE	
Open to 501(c)(3) organizations both with and without a primary mission of arts and culture, as determined by CAC.	Funding for projects occurring between January 1 – December 31, 2025.
Grants may range from $1,000 to $20,000 for 501(c)(3) organizations based in Cuyahoga County.	SMUDataArts Funder Report required for organizations requesting more than $5,000.
Funding only for arts and culture projects based on CAC's definitions.	1:1 cash match required. For organizations requesting $5,000 or less, 50% of matching funds can be in-kind income.

Option to Bypass the Full Application and Panel Process
2024 grant recipients who completed the full 2024 application and panel process and who are doing the same project in 2025 may opt to bypass the full application and panel process to be recommended for funding in 2025. **Bypass applicants must complete the Eligibility Check and indicate their request to bypass at that time.** If approved, bypass applicants will complete a Project Information Form for review and approval. Bypass applicants will be eligible to receive a maximum grant equivalent to their current (2024) grant amount; 2025 Project Support grant amounts may be reduced to fit CAC's available budget.

2024 grant recipients who bypassed the application and panel last year are not eligible to bypass for 2025 funding and must complete the full application and panel processes. Contact your grant manager with questions or to learn more.

ARTS & CULTURE DEFINED: Arts and Culture is defined in the Ohio Revised Code Chapter 3381, CAC's enabling law, as "including, but not limited to, literature, theater, music, dance, ballet, painting, sculpture, photography, motion pictures, architecture, archaeology, history, natural history, or the natural sciences."

APPLICATION OVERVIEW

PRE-APPLICATION

1 **Get Connected with CAC**
- Sign up for CAC's email list
- Register with CAC's online application and reporting system

2 **Attend a Grant Workshop and Q&A Session**

3 **Submit an Eligibility Check (by June 6, 2024 at 4:30PM ET)**
Required documents include:
- Organizational information
- 990, 990-N or 990-EZ
- Articles of Incorporation
- Secretary of State Certificate of good standing
- For New Applicants: Evidence of public arts or cultural programming that you produced

APPLICATION

4 **Attend Application Workshop and Q&A Sessions**

5 **Complete and Submit Online Application or Project Information Form (Bypass Grantees only) by August 1, 2024 at 4:30PM ET**
Be prepared with the following information:

Application:
- Organizational Overview
- Project Basics
- Project Narrative
- Project Budget & Financials
- Support Materials

Project Information Form:
- Project Basics
- Project Budget and Financials

POST-APPLICATION

6 **Public Panel Review (Week of September 16, 2024)**

7 **Panel scores and grant amounts approved at the CAC Board of Trustees meeting (November 20, 2024 anticipated)**

Cleveland School of the Arts Board of Trustees

ELIGIBILITY

Organizations receiving a General Operating Support or Cultural Heritage grant from CAC are not eligible to apply for Project Support funding in the same grant cycle.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY

To be eligible for a Project Support grant, applicant organizations must meet *all* of the following eligibility criteria:

Have a **permanent** and **viable base** of operations in Cuyahoga County for at least one year prior to June 6, 2024 (as verified in part by an organization's Articles of Incorporation)

Be a **501(c)(3)** organization as verified against IRS Publication 78 by the GoVerify service.

Have **produced or presented arts or culture program(s)** open to the public within the previous two years prior to June 6, 2024

Provide the required **financial documents**. All organizations: 990, 990-N or 990-EZ for the most recently completed fiscal year

Be **incorporated and authorized** to do business in Ohio as verified by the Ohio Secretary of State

WHO IS INELIGIBLE TO APPLY

The following types of organizations are not eligible to apply for the 2025 Project Support grant (this list is not exhaustive):

Organizations that are not in good standing with CAC and/or not in compliance with previous grants

Organizations receiving a General Operating Support or Cultural Heritage grant from CAC in the same cycle

Organizations that are serving as fiscal agents or fiscal sponsors for an organization or program

Private foundations

Units of government, including component units

Pre-K and K-12 schools, including parent-teacher associations and similar groups

Individuals

Fundraising organizations, such as "Friends Of" groups that do not conduct their own programming

Polish Village Parma

GRANT AMOUNTS

Project Support grants range between $1,000-$20,000.

The maximum grant amount that an applicant can request is determined by CAC. The amount is based on an organization's CAC grant history, budget size, and whether or not the organization has a primary mission of arts and culture, as determined by CAC. Applicants will be notified of this amount when they are notified of their eligibility.

NEW APPLICANTS

- The maximum grant amount that a new applicant can request is $5,000.

APPLICANTS WITH A PRIMARY MISSION OF ARTS & CULTURE

- If a 990-N was completed for their most recent fiscal year, an organization's maximum grant request amount is $5,000.
- If a 990/990-EZ was completed for their most recent fiscal year, an organization's maximum grant request amount is 25% of Total Expenses.

APPLICANTS WITHOUT A PRIMARY MISSION OF ARTS & CULTURE

- If a 990-N was completed for their most recent fiscal year, an organization's maximum grant request amount is $5,000.
- If the applicant completes a 990/990-EZ and has completed at least one PS grant, their maximum eligible request amount will be determined using 25% of the total expenses from their previous final report. Where possible, CAC will refer to the two most recently completed final reports and use the highest total expenses of the two.

  If this totals less than $5,000, the maximum eligible request amount will be $5,000.

FOLLOWING THE PANEL REVIEW PROCESS, final grant amounts will be determined based on a combination of CAC's budget, the organization's maximum eligible request amount, and their panel score.

Note: CAC anticipates 2025 Project Support grant amounts will be adjusted to fit CAC's available budget.

OCA Greater Cleveland, Photo by Ed Wong

FUNDING CRITERIA

Successful grant applications will demonstrate Cuyahoga Arts & Culture's three funding criteria:

PUBLIC BENEFIT is an organization's ability to meaningfully connect with its community through its project.

ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL VIBRANCY is an organization's ability to create a relevant and engaging project.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY is an organization's ability to successfully plan for and manage its project.

Organizations can demonstrate the funding criteria in a variety of ways.
Some examples of how grantees have done this in the past include:

- Inviting neighbors to serve on an advisory board
- Marketing the program broadly
- Training volunteers to ensure all feel welcome
- Hosting the program at a public library to ensure physical accessibility
- Developing the program using deep knowledge of a particular, defined community

- Paying artists fairly for their time and expertise
- Recruiting instructors from diverse backgrounds to provide fresh programming
- Surveying participants, and evolving programming based on feedback

- Setting SMARTIE goals, and measuring progress and impact
- Clearly articulating the project timeline via the application
- Having a defined plan for matching CAC's grant and covering all project costs
- Demonstrating belonging as an organizational value, so that all involved can thrive

CAC prioritizes Public Benefit because grants are made with public funds.

GLOSSARY

The Movement Project, Photo by Credit Black Valve, Artist Caribe Conexion

PRE-APPLICATION

Get Connected with CAC
News, updates, and events, including technical assistance workshops and webinars, will be posted on the CAC website and distributed via email. Sign up here and opt-in to receive Grant Opportunities to learn more. Add CAC's URL and staff email addresses to your email safe senders list, address book, or contact list to continue receiving important information from CAC. **CAC will not extend any deadlines if our emails are sent to your spam or junk mail.**

Attend a Grant Workshop and Q&A Sessions
CAC will offer a variety of technical assistance workshops/trainings in advance of the application deadline. Information regarding such trainings will be posted on the CAC website and all applicants will be notified by email. We strongly encourage and invite all prospective applicants to attend our workshops and Q&A sessions.

Submit the Eligibility Check
Submitting an Eligibility Check is the first step in applying for a Project Support grant for all applicants and is submitted via CAC's online application and reporting system. CAC uses the Eligibility Check process to determine whether an organization meets the requirements to receive a grant.

REQUIRED MATERIALS INCLUDE:

- Organizational Information
- 990, 990-N or 990-EZ for the most recently completed fiscal year
- Articles of Incorporation
- Secretary of State Certificate of Good Standing
- For New Applicants: Evidence of public arts or cultural programming that you produced within the previous two years prior to June 6, 2024

You do not need to have a finalized project plan at this stage. Organizations must submit an Eligibility Check and be deemed eligible in order to submit a Project Support grant application. Completing the Eligibility Check does not guarantee your organization's eligibility to apply. Organizations that wish to bypass the full application (if eligible) must indicate their desire to do so in the Eligibility Check.

Following the submission of the Eligibility Check, CAC will review documents, verify nonprofit status, and confirm eligible organization requirements. Within a few weeks of the submission of the Eligibility Check, CAC will reach out to applicants regarding their eligibility status.

SEE THE FULL ELIGIBILITY CHECK INSTRUCTIONS HERE

KEY DATE

ELIGIBILITY CHECK - DUE THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 2024 BY 4:30PM ET

Berea Arts Fest

APPLICATION

Start early and submit early! The application must be submitted by 4:30PM ET on Thursday, August 1, 2024. The online system will not accept late or incomplete submissions.

Complete and Submit Online Application

If your organization is deemed eligible through the Eligibility Check process, Cuyahoga Arts & Culture will notify you via email and provide access to the application. Applications must be submitted online using CAC's online application and reporting system. To be considered complete, an application must include all required application question responses and required materials as outlined below.

BE PREPARED WITH THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

- Organizational Overview
- Project Basics
- Project Narrative
- Project Budget & Financials
- Arts & Cultural Support Materials
- Board of Directors list including affiliations
- SMU|Data Arts Cultural Data Profile Funders Report: Organizations that are applying for grants of more than $5,000 will complete a Cultural Data Profile for the two most recently completed fiscal years and will pull the CAC Funders Report to upload as part of their application. We recommend starting this well before the application deadline.
- Statement of Assurances

About Support Materials

Support materials are images, audio files, video files, hyperlinks and/or other supporting documents that help bring your organization's mission and programs to life. CAC uses your support materials to help document eligibility, to evaluate reports and to share with residents how public funding for arts and culture impacts the community. Support materials also play a critical role in helping panelists evaluate your application. By providing support materials to CAC, you consent to CAC's reproduction and use of such materials for educational, promotional, official or noncommercial use.

SEE PROJECT INFORMATION FORM (BYPASS) INSTRUCTIONS HERE

SEE ALL APPLICATION QUESTIONS AND EXPLANATIONS HERE

KEY DATE

APPLICATION DUE - THURSDAY, AUGUST 1, 2024 BY 4:30PM ET
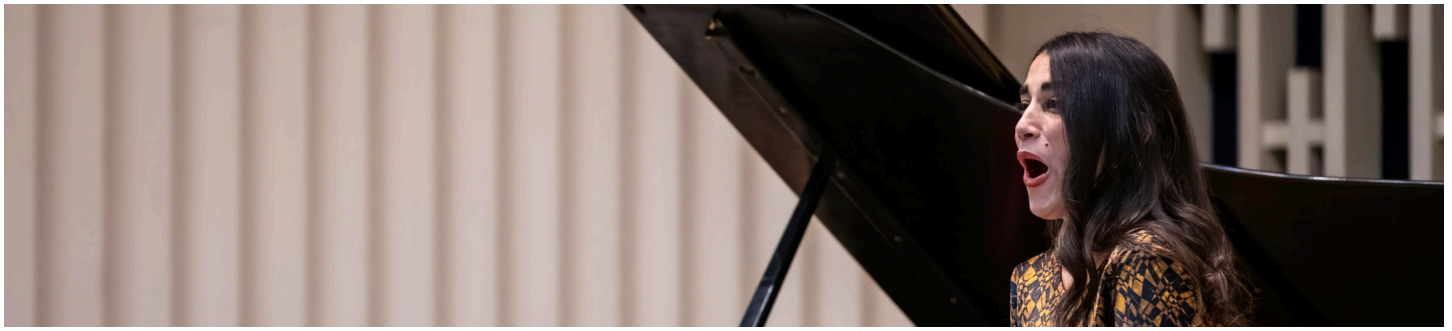
Cleveland Chamber Music Society

REVIEW PROCESS

All eligible applications are evaluated by a panel of arts or cultural professionals from outside the region in a public panel review process.

Panelists are chosen to represent a cross-section of professionals qualified to provide expert knowledge of specific arts or cultural disciplines, as well as for their management experience, professional knowledge of the sector and prior panel experience. CAC makes every effort to ensure that the panel is diverse in all respects. All panelists receive an honorarium for their service.

CAC provides the applications and support materials to panelists approximately four weeks prior to the panel review to allow panelists sufficient time for their evaluation. The panel will evaluate all eligible applications based on CAC's Funding Criteria:

- **Public Benefit**
- **Artistic and Cultural Vibrancy**
- **Organizational Capacity**

CAC reviews applications for completeness but does not score or provide opinions. CAC will manage all administrative and logistical tasks necessary to conduct a successful panel review; provide panelists all documentation necessary to evaluate applications effectively; inform the panel in matters of CAC policy and procedures; provide all available objective information regarding an applicant to the panel, and serve as panel chair.

Public Panel Review
For organizations requesting more than $5,000, the public panel review meeting will take place the week of September 16, 2024. For applications requesting up to $5,000, there is no review meeting but comments and scores will be made public. CAC will notify all applicants of the panel review meeting dates, times, and will post all details on the CAC website in advance.

POST-APPLICATION

Appeals Process
CAC will only consider and review appeals that are evidence-based and due to materially significant CAC processing errors that could have compromised an applicant's grant proposal. This does not include information that was in excess of the application's space limitations or information that was submitted after the application deadline. Any requests for appeals must be filed with the Executive Director within 10 working days after the conclusion of the panel review meeting. Requests received after 10 days will not be considered.

Please note: The panel's analysis and scoring of applications are not subject to appeal and therefore will not be considered for appeal. Neither grant awards nor grant award amounts are subject to appeal.

Board Meeting
Panel scores and grant amounts will be approved at the November CAC Board of Trustees meeting. This meeting is open to the public, and applicants are welcome to attend but not required.

The grant amount and total number of Project Support grants will be determined by the following factors: the amount of funding allocated to Project Support grants; the panel score for each application; and the total request amounts of all applications eligible for funding.

Recommended grant amounts will be shared with applicants prior to the November board meeting.

KEY DATES

PUBLIC PANEL REVIEW MEETING - WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 16, 2024
BOARD MEETING - WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2024 (ANTICIPATED)

Connecting for Kids

PANEL SCORING FRAMEWORK – REQUESTS OVER $5,000

Panelists will submit a score for each of CAC's three funding criteria, creating a total score based on the following framework:

Has the application demonstrated the funding criteria?	Public Benefit: 45%	Artistic & Cultural Vibrancy: 35%	Organizational Capacity: 20%
STRONG The applicant has provided <u>strong</u> evidence that this funding criterion is met.	39-45	31-35	18-20
FAIR The applicant has provided <u>fair</u> evidence that this funding criterion is met.	28-38	22-30	13-17
WEAK The applicant has provided <u>weak</u> evidence that this funding criterion is met.	0-27	0-21	0-12

The highest possible total score is 100. Applicants who receive a combined score of 75 or higher will be recommended for funding.

PANEL SCORING FRAMEWORK – REQUESTS OF $5,000 OR LESS

**Panelists will submit a score based on CAC's three funding criteria.**

With an emphasis on Public Benefit, has the application demonstrated the funding criteria?
Yes: The applicant has provided <u>strong</u> evidence that the funding criteria are met.
Somewhat: The applicant has provided <u>fair</u> evidence that the funding criteria are met.
No: The applicant has provided <u>weak</u> evidence that the funding criteria are met.

Applicants who receive a majority of "Yes" or "Somewhat" scores will be recommended for funding.
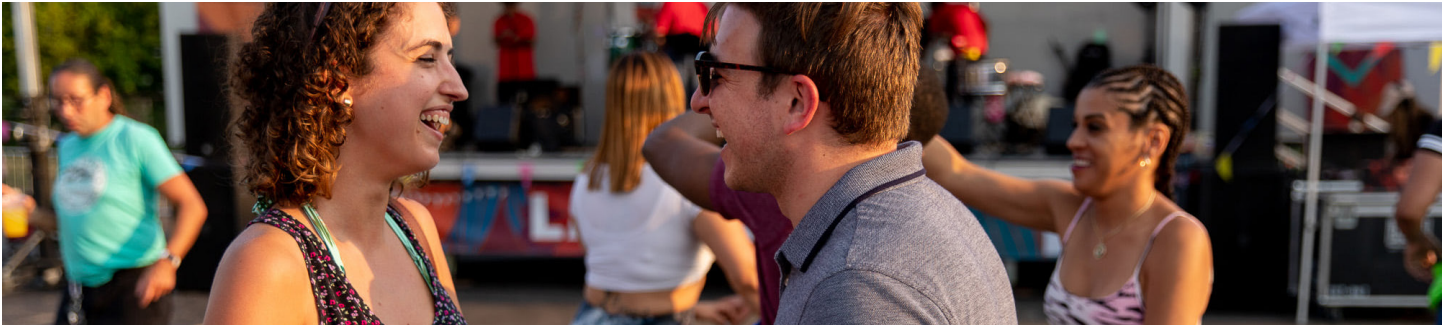
Northeast Ohio Hispanic Center for Economic Development

2025 GRANT RECIPIENT REQUIREMENTS

Grant Period: All funded activities and grant expenditures must occur during the grant period, January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025

Grant Agreement and Compliance
If your application is recommended and approved for funding following the November Board meeting, CAC will prepare a grant agreement. CAC will be available to meet with new and returning grant recipients to review the grant agreement requirements. To be considered an active grant recipient and receive funding, recipients must sign a grant agreement and meet the requirements therein.

Grant Payment Timeline
CAC grants are reimbursement grants and are paid upon completion of the project and approval of the final report. Grant recipients may optionally request up to 60% of the total grant award as early as 30 days before project activities begin through an advance payment request. All funded activities and expenditure of grant dollars must occur during the respective grant year.

CAC Grant Funding Restrictions
Restricted uses of CAC funds include but are not limited to:

- credit-bearing academic programs (K-12 and college level)
- activities that are not open to the general public
- general operating support or operating expenses not directly related to your project
- fundraising or benefits
- regranting, scholarships, tuition assistance, awards or cash prizes
- deficit reduction or elimination, trust endowments, cash reserves, penalty or litigation fees, loans, or interest on loans
- capital improvements, facilities or equipment
- religious ceremonies or events advancing or inhibiting a particular religious ideology
- cost of receptions, food and beverages
- agent's fees for programs contracted through commercial agencies
- travel outside of the United States
- advocacy of specific political causes or candidates

Matching Funds
Project Support grants are matching grants. Applicants are required to leverage CAC funds to secure additional income from other sources. This grant requires a 1:1 match. This means that **CAC will only provide a grant equaling up to half of the project's total expenses.** For organizations whose grant amount is more than $5,000, a cash match is required. For organizations whose grant amount is $5,000 or less, 50% of the match can be met through in-kind income. In-kind income can include donated goods, services, space, and volunteer hours. Sources of your matching funds can include, but are not limited to, foundation or government grants, private donations, ticket sales, and member dues.

Matching funds may not include other funds from CAC. This includes any CAC co-funded grants. As such, applicant organizations may only apply for one project to be funded. Additionally, multiple organizations requesting funds for the same project are not eligible. Contact a grant manager with any questions.

Cleveland Photo Fest

Events Calendar and Credit Requirements:
CAC asks that organizations receiving Project Support partner with CAC throughout the grant cycle by communicating with their grant manager at CAC, posting events and job opportunities on CAC's website, connecting with CAC on social media, and saying thank you to the residents of Cuyahoga County for their support. **Grant Recipient shall submit Project events through CAC's online calendar (ClevelandArtsEvents.com) at least 30 days prior to the date the Project is presented to the public.** The Events Calendar and Credit Requirements document outlines these requirements. Grant recipients that do not comply with these expectations may be subject to a reduced final grant amount.

Reporting Requirements:
All grant recipients that receive a 2025 Project Support grant must submit a final report online within 30 days of the completion of the project. In addition to a final report, CAC may conduct site visits during the project period. Reporting guidelines and instructions will be posted online in advance of deadlines. Reports consist of a narrative, financial documentation, and support materials. Grant recipients that submit a late final report, or do not submit a final report, may receive a reduced or revoked final grant amount.

Maintaining Good Standing:
To receive CAC funds, a grant recipient must maintain its good standing with CAC during the grant period. A grant recipient is in good standing if it:

• Fully and completely meets all requirements as stated in the grant agreement for the duration of the grant period;
• Accurately represents its organization and its activities in all documents submitted to CAC. This includes, but is not limited to, the eligibility check, application, final report and all other reports and forms; and
• Continues to meet the eligibility criteria.

A grant recipient not in good standing with CAC will be officially informed of this status in writing.

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

cuyahoga
arts & culture
strengthening community