



2024

PROJECT SUPPORT

Guidelines and Application Instructions

ELIGIBILITY CHECK DUE: **THURSDAY, JUNE 1, 2023 BY 4:30PM ET**

APPLICATION DUE: **THURSDAY, AUGUST 3, 2023 BY 4:30PM ET**

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GREETINGS!

Thank you for your interest in a 2024 Project Support (PS) grant. 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 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.

\$230 MILLION+ INVESTED

Since 2007, CAC has invested more than \$230 million in more than 470 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

Annual grants of up to \$20,000 for arts and culture projects.

GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT

Multi-year core support grants to qualifying organizations with a primary mission of art and culture in Cuyahoga County.

CULTURAL HERITAGE

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 2024 Project Support. Organizations may only submit one application per cycle. First-time applicants must apply for Project Support. To learn more about the differences between CAC’s grants, refer to the [2024 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](#).

2024-2025 GRANT APPLICATION TIMELINE

- Eligibility Check Due June 1, 2023 at 4:30PM
- Application Due August 3, 2023 at 4:30PM
- Public Panel Review..... Week of September 18, 2023
- Board Approves Grants November 15, 2023
- Grant Agreements Sent and Signed November and December 2023





Nature Center at Shaker Lakes - photo by Bob Perkoski

ABOUT THE GRANT - PROJECT SUPPORT

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

The purpose of Cuyahoga Arts & Culture's Project Support (PS) grant is to promote public access and encourage the breadth of arts and cultural programming in our community by supporting Cuyahoga County-based projects. Grant applications are reviewed through a transparent panel review process. CAC will offer Project Support funding in 2024 for projects occurring in the January 1 - December 31, 2024 grant period.

How We Define a Project:

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. Proposed projects must be arts or cultural activities and have a public programming component. Open to the public does not mean that the project or program must 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 both 501(c)(3) organizations with and without a primary mission of arts and culture, as determined by CAC.

Grants range from \$1,000 to \$20,000 for 501(c)(3) organizations based in Cuyahoga County.

Funding only for arts and culture projects based on CAC's definitions.

Funding for projects occurring between January 1 - December 31, 2024.

[SMUDataArts Funder Report](#) required for organizations requesting more than \$5,000.

1:1 cash match required. For organizations requesting \$5,000 or less, 50% of matching funds can be in-kind income.

2023 Project Support Grant Recipients

All current 2023 Project Support grant recipients doing the [same project](#) in 2024 will be recommended for funding in 2024 after submitting the required Eligibility Check. Contact your grant manager to learn more. Current Project Support grant recipients not meeting this requirement will be required to complete an application and panel review.

Note: CAC anticipates grant amounts will be reduced to fit the available budget.

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 1, 2023 at 4:30 PM)**

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 (by August 3, 2023 at 4:30 PM)**

Be prepared with the following information:

 - Organizational Overview
 - Project Basics
 - Application Narrative
 - Project Budget & Financials
 - [Support Materials](#)
 - Statement of Assurances

POST-APPLICATION

- 6 **Public Panel Review (Week of September 18, 2023)**
- 7 **Panel scores and grant amounts approved at the CAC Board of Trustees meeting (November 15, 2023)**



Stellar Acrobatic Dance Company

ELIGIBILITY

Organizations receiving or applying for 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** the following eligibility criteria:

Have a **permanent** and **viable base** of operations in Cuyahoga County for at least one year prior to June 1, 2023 (as verified in part by an organization's Articles of Incorporation)

Be a **501(c)(3)** organization as verified by [Guidestar's Charity Check](#) service

Have **produced or presented arts or culture program(s)** open to the public within the previous two years prior to June 1, 2023

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 2024 Project Support grant (this list is not exhaustive):

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

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

Religious institutions without a separate 501(c)(3) organization that specifically administers non-sectarian public programming

Private non-operating foundations

Units of government, including component units

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



Cleveland School of the Arts Board of Trustees - Dance - photo by Emily Shelley

GRANT AMOUNTS

The maximum grant amount within Project Support is \$20,000.

When an organization is deemed eligible, the maximum grant amount that an applicant can request is determined by CAC. Applicants will be notified of this amount when they are notified of their eligibility.

APPLICANTS WITH A PRIMARY MISSION OF ARTS & CULTURE

For applicants with a primary mission of arts & culture, as determined by CAC, maximum eligible request amounts are determined by:

- The maximum grant amount that a new applicant can request is \$5,000.
- 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 amount is 25% of Total Expenses.

APPLICANTS WITHOUT A PRIMARY MISSION OF ARTS & CULTURE

For applicants without a primary mission of arts & culture, as determined by CAC, maximum eligible request amounts are determined by:

- The maximum grant amount that a new applicant can request is \$5,000.
- 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 completed at least one PS grant, their maximum eligible request amount will be determined using 25% of the total expenses from their 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 the organization's maximum eligible request amount, and their panel score.

Note: CAC also anticipates grant amounts will be adjusted to fit the available budget.



America SCORES Cleveland - Artemus Ward School - Poetry SLAM 2021 - photo by Paul Giglia

FUNDING CRITERIA

Successful grant applications will demonstrate Cuyahoga Arts & Culture's three funding criteria: **Public Benefit, Artistic and Cultural Vibrancy, and Organizational Capacity.**

PUBLIC BENEFIT

An organization's ability to meaningfully connect with its community through its project.

Examples of how an organization can demonstrate public benefit include, but are not limited to:

- Understanding, respecting, and [sharing power](#) with its community
- Listening and responding to its community
- Building and strengthening relationships
- Being inclusive and engaging diverse populations
- Being accessible and inviting to its community and the broader public

ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL VIBRANCY

An organization's ability to create a relevant and engaging project.

Examples of how an organization can demonstrate artistic & cultural vibrancy include, but are not limited to:

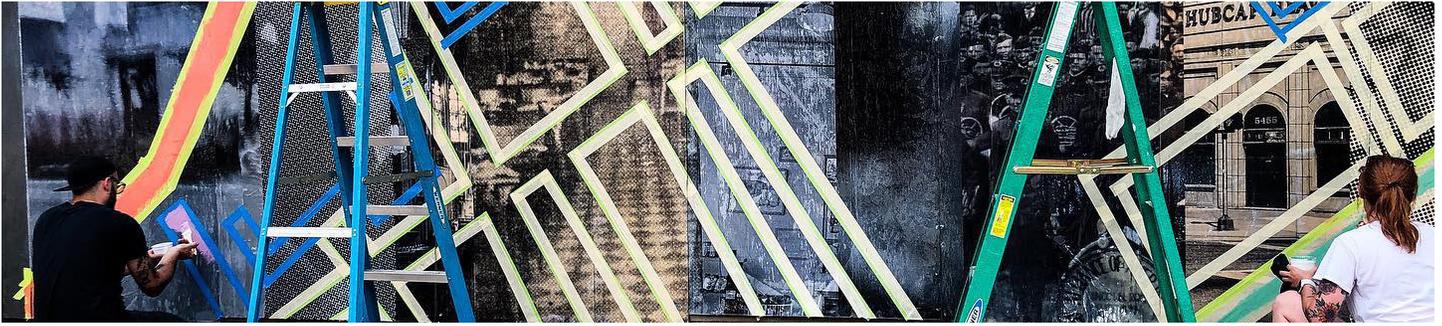
- Incorporating a process of reflection to ensure that programming is relevant to or created with its community
- Building the capacity of arts and cultural professionals, helping them to thrive
- Engaging a [diverse](#) team of arts and cultural professionals to carry out the project
- Identifying opportunities to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and [belonging](#) in its project

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

An organization's ability to successfully plan for and manage its project.

Examples of how an organization can demonstrate organizational capacity include, but are not limited to:

- Setting goals, measuring progress, and evolving the project
- Planning as a team to implement the project
- Creating a realistic budget with a clear plan to reach the match requirement
- Evaluating organizational processes and structures to ensure a culture of belonging where everyone can thrive



Slavic Village Development - Keen Collective mural - photo by Lynn Rodeman

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 CAC Grant Information 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 [workshop 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 criteria to receive a grant.



REQUIRED MATERIALS 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 within the previous two years prior to June 1, 2023

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.

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 1, 2023 BY 4:30PM ET



Chagrin Documentary Film Festival - photo by Cody Linck

APPLICATION

Start early and submit early! The application must be submitted by 4:30 pm ET on Thursday, August 3. 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
- Application Narrative
- Project Budget & Financials
- [Arts & Cultural Support Materials](#)
- Organizational Support Materials
 - Board of Directors list including affiliations
 - [SMU|Data Arts Cultural Data Profile Funders Report](#) for the two most recently completed fiscal years. 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. More information can be found [here](#).
- 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.

**SEE ALL APPLICATION QUESTIONS
AND EXPLANATIONS HERE**

KEY
DATE

APPLICATION DUE - THURSDAY, AUGUST 3, 2023 BY 4:30PM ET



Lakewood Young Filmmakers Academy

REVIEW PROCESS

All eligible applications are evaluated by a panel of arts or cultural professionals from outside the region in a transparent 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. During the panel review meeting, 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 18, 2023. 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 by the CAC Board of Trustees. 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 18, 2023
BOARD MEETING - WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2023



Cleveland Leadership Center

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 strong evidence that the funding criteria are met.
Somewhat: The applicant has provided fair evidence that the funding criteria are met.
No: The applicant has provided weak evidence that the funding criteria are met.

Applicants who receive a majority of “Yes” or “Somewhat” scores will be recommended for funding.



Historic Gateway Neighborhood Corporation

2024 GRANT RECIPIENT REQUIREMENTS

Grant Period: All funded activities and grant expenditures must occur during the grant period, January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024

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 during the grant period pending grant agreement compliance. Upon review and approval of the final reporting requirements, grant funds will be released. 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
- regrants, 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 provide no more than 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, then 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 Uncommon Sound Project

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](https://www.clevelandarts.org/events)) 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 2024 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.



cuyahoga
arts & culture
strengthening community