



Annual Meeting of the  
**Cuyahoga Arts & Culture Board of Trustees**  
Cleveland Public Library: Martin Luther King Branch – Tech Room  
10601 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44016  
**Wednesday, April 16, 2025 – 4:00 p.m.**

**1. Call to order**

- a. Call to order
- b. Call the roll
- c. **Action:** Swearing in of Trustee Vernaci
- d. **Action:** Motion to approve February 25, 2025 minutes
- e. **Action:** Nomination and Election of Officers

**2. Public Comment on Today's Agenda**

**3. Executive Director's Report**

**4. Action Items and Reports – Finance and General Business**

- a. Finance Report
- b. **Action:** Approval to accept a grant from the Cleveland Foundation and associated hiring of a summer intern
- c. **Action:** Appointment of Audit and Finance Advisory Committee members
- d. **Action:** Appointment of Public Records Manager Designee
- e. **Action:** Approval of Bylaws (updates)
- f. **Action:** Appointment of two CAC Trustees as ex-officio voting board members to the nonprofit Assembly for the Arts
- g. **Action:** Approval of updated 2025 Board meeting calendar

**5. Action Items and Reports – Grantmaking**

- a. **Action:** Approval of 2026-27 General Operating Support & 2026 Project Support guidelines

**6. Connect with Culture – arts and culture in libraries**

**7. Public Comment on CAC General Business**

**8. Adjourn**

Next Regular Board Meeting: September 25, 2025



**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees**  
Tuesday, February 25, 2025

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A regular meeting of the Cuyahoga Arts & Culture (CAC) Board of Trustees was called to order at 4:03 pm at the Cleveland Public Library - Main Branch, Louis Stokes Wing, 2nd Floor 325 Superior Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44114.

The roll call showed that Trustees Blakemore, DiCosimo, Isenhardt, Scott Taylor, and Vernaci were present. It was determined that there was a quorum.

Also in attendance were: Jill Paulsen, Executive Director, and CAC staff.

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Action: Motion to approve minutes of the December 18, 2024 Board of Trustees meeting.

Motion by – Trustee Vernaci

Second by – Trustee Scott Taylor

Discussion: None.

Vote to approve the minutes of the December 18, 2024 Board of Trustees meeting.

Ayes: all ayes.

The motion carried.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT ON MEETING AGENDA ITEMS**

There was no public comment.

**3. CONNECT WITH CULTURE**

Hermione Malone, executive director of the Cleveland International Film Festival, provided an overview of the activities at CIFF.

**4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Ms. Paulsen thanked everyone for joining her and the Board. Ms. Paulsen's remarks can be found in the meeting materials.

## **5. FINANCE REPORT**

Ms. Meg Harris provided the financial update.

### **2024 Unaudited Financials**

**Revenue.** Final, unaudited tax revenue for 2024 was \$8,889,512. Tax revenue for the year was \$314,328 (3.41%) below forecast and \$1,193,574 (11.8%) lower than 2023 tax receipts. Interest revenue was \$449,955.

**Expenditure.** Final, unaudited expenditures for FY2024 were \$12,136,632 ending the year \$353,368 under budget. To balance the budget, \$2,755,225 was used from the general fund, as planned.

**Annual Audit.** The Local Government Services division of the Ohio Auditor of State began work on CAC's GAAP conversion for 2024 in early January and should finish the conversion in March.

### **2025 Financials YTD**

**Revenue.** Tax revenue through January was \$779,850. This is \$78,499 (11.2%) above budget and 59,170 (8.2%) above revenue for the same period in 2024. Interest revenue through January was \$67,537.

**Expenditure.** The majority of CAC's budget is comprised of grants which were approved by the Board in 2024. These grants are accrued at the beginning of the year and recognized on the balance sheet. Non-grant expenditures through January were \$101,692.

Due to lack of funds on deposit, CAC delayed entering into a handful of grant agreements, waiting until the funds were on deposit to secure the contracts. As of today, all contracts have been sent out.

## **6. REPORTS AND ACTION – GRANTMAKING**

Mr. Jake Sinatra, CAC director of grantmaking strategy and communications, presented an overview of highlights from the Grantee Connect Series, a yearlong effort to deepen CAC's connections with grantee partners through a series of meetups, surveys and listening sessions.

Mr. Sinatra presented the objectives for 2026 grantmaking, informed by feedback from the Grantee Connect Series and Peer Funder Scan. Recommendations included:

1. Prioritize consistent and reliable operating support funding for Cuyahoga County arts and culture nonprofits.
2. Build efficient and effective grantmaking practices to the benefit of grant applicants and current grant recipients.
3. Increase awareness and transparency around CAC's purpose, authority, and decision-making processes.
4. Continue CAC's emphasis on public benefit by funding nonprofits and programs that connect all Cuyahoga County residents with arts and cultural experiences.
5. Deepen connection and trust with our grant recipients through ongoing listening, conversations, and feedback and evaluation processes.

Action: To approve the 2026 grantmaking objectives, as outlined, to guide the development of CAC grant program guidelines and policies for consideration at a future CAC Board meeting.

Motion by – Trustee Blakemore

Second by – Trustee DiCosimo

Discussion:

When would these grant programs be rolled out? These grant programs would be rolled out in late spring with funding opportunities for Project Support 2026 and General Operating Support 2026-27.

How frequently does the Board of Trustees review policies? The Board reviews and approves grant program criteria and policies every one to two years, depending on the program; the Board has the ability at any meeting to review or change policy.

It is important for the Board to discuss policy at every meeting because there are a lot of outside factors that can impact the policy and operations of CAC.

Vote: To approve the 2026 grantmaking objectives, as outlined, to guide the development of CAC grant program guidelines and policies for consideration at a future CAC Board meeting

Ayes: all ayes.

The motion carried.

## **7. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

## **8. WORK SESSION**

The Board of Trustees held a work session with staff on approaches to forecasting CAC's revenue and discussion ensued. No Board action was taken during the discussion.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting.

Motion by – Trustee Scott Taylor

Second by – Trustee Blakemore

Ayes: all ayes.

The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 5:38 pm.

The next meeting will be held at 4:00 pm on Wednesday, April 16, 2025 at the Cleveland Public Library's MLK Jr. Branch in Cleveland.

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Leonard DiCosimo  
Secretary, Board of Trustees



## Executive Director's Report

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April 16, 2025

Welcome to Cuyahoga Arts & Culture's 2025 Annual Meeting.

The meeting will start with the swearing in of Trustee Gina Vernaci. We are grateful that she agreed to be reappointed to our Board.

At its annual meeting, this Board will also elect a 2025 slate of officers, as well as handle other regular administrative matters. The Board will continue its practice of reviewing and discussing revenue forecasts to plan for 2026+ grantmaking.

Our team is pleased to bring forward the 2026 Project Support and 2026-27 General Operating Support guidelines for the Board's approval. These materials represent a year's worth of community listening involving hundreds of voices, as well as ongoing Board and staff planning. When so much is uncertain in the arts funding landscape, our public agency is proposing a strategy that centers arts and culture nonprofits and prioritizes flexible operating support. See the Staff Report and the 2026 Grantmaking memos in this packet for further detail.

While not on the agenda for this meeting, other items of note:

- We continue our efforts to have open and direct communication with the nonprofits CAC funds. All grant recipients and applicants have been invited to the next gathering in our Grantee Connect Series. I invite Board members to attend, as well. It will be another great opportunity to hear from nonprofit leaders and for CAC to continue to keep grant recipients updated on our 2026+. Join us on Wednesday, April 30<sup>th</sup> at 9am at Dunham Tavern, 6709 Euclid Ave, Cleveland, OH.
- Applicant workshops continue through the spring and early summer. This is another opportunity for Board members to see the team in action and hear the questions and feedback we're receiving from nonprofits. See our website for details.  
<https://www.cacgrants.org/grants/events-deadlines/>

I appreciate your attention to matters before the Board today.

Respectfully,

Jill Paulsen  
Executive Director

# Updates from CAC Staff

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April 16, 2025

CAC's work is rooted in our [10-year community planning process](#) that identifies the two constituents that we must serve as: 1) nonprofit arts organizations; and 2) the residents of Cuyahoga County. Every year, staff creates a [work plan](#) that is grounded in this framework and CAC's [Mission, Vision & Values](#).

What follows is a brief update on the progress made since the last Board meeting in February.

## 1. GRANTMAKING: Connecting with and serving nonprofit organizations

### **Core Grants: General Operating Support, Cultural Heritage, Project Support**

2024 General Operating Support, Cultural Heritage, and Project Support grants are complete. Staff have reviewed and provided feedback on all reporting requirements and issued final payments accordingly. 2025 General Operating Support, Cultural Heritage, and Project Support grants are underway. CAC held its first virtual report-out for current Project Support grant recipients as an alternative reporting option for grants of \$5,000 or less. The team continues to manage advance payment requests, reporting requirements, and site visits to strengthen relationships with grantees and help them succeed in our process.

### **Planning for 2026 General Operating Support and Project Support**

Today, we present draft grantmaking guidelines for CAC's 2026 core grant programs: 2026-2027 General Operating Support and 2026 Project Support. Recommendation to the 2026 grant programs are based on the 2026 Grantmaking Objectives the Board approved in February. CAC's 2026+ grant programs are informed by CAC's *National Scan of State & Local Arts Funders*, ongoing listening and learning with our grantees, including findings from our year-long *Grantee Connect Series*. The guidelines and a cover memo are included in this packet to guide the Board's discussion.

### **Resident-Led Grants & Support for Artists**

For the 12<sup>th</sup> year, CAC is co-funding resident-led arts and cultural projects, and funding quarterly Arts & Culture Network Nights in Cleveland and East Cleveland through a grant to Neighborhood Connections. The first application cycle for Action Grants closed on February 10, and there are plans for a second round later this summer. The first of four Arts & Culture Network Nights took place on Thursday, February 27 at the new Midtown Collaboration Center. The next one is scheduled for Thursday, May 29<sup>th</sup> from 6-8pm at Waterloo Arts and all are welcome.

Assembly for the Arts signed its 2025 Support for Artists grant agreement last month. In early March, they launched the Boost Fund, which will be offered in 2025 through three cycles, funding a total of 140 Cuyahoga County artists with \$1,500 each. Between 40-50 artist recipients will be selected in each cycle. Their Creative Impact Fund will launch later this year to support emerging and established artists in Cuyahoga County. CAC continues to work with Assembly to establish benchmarks and key milestones for 2025.

### **Grantee Connect Series & Technical Assistance**

To continue to deepen relationships with and foster collaboration between CAC-funded nonprofits, CAC is continuing its Grantee Connect Series throughout 2025. The first Grantee Connect Meetup took place in February, and the series will continue with an in-person gathering on April 30 at Dunham Tavern. CAC will preview 2026 grantmaking opportunities, answer questions, and hold space for networking.

Staff are also preparing a variety of technical assistance opportunities, workshops (virtual and in-person), and other materials to help applicants and grantees succeed in 2025. View upcoming workshops and deadlines [on our website](#).

## **2. COMMUNICATIONS: Connecting with residents**

### **Annual Report**

Cuyahoga Arts & Culture's 2024-25 Report to the Community will be released in June in a digital and print format. The report will spotlight the work of CAC's grantee partners, the impact of public funds for arts and culture, and more data from 2024 grantmaking.

### **Media Placements**

In addition to consistent crediting for Cuyahoga Arts & Culture in the media by our partners, below is a sampling of recent media clips focused on CAC's work:

- [Cigarette tax revenue in Cuyahoga County plummets by millions](#) | WEWS Channel 5 – February 24, 2025
- [Cuyahoga Arts & Culture approves grants totaling \\$10.75M | Philanthropy | clevelandjewishnews.com](#) – February 25, 2025
- [Cuyahoga Arts & Culture mulls plans for increased revenues from cigarette tax | Ideastream Public Media](#) – February 25, 2025

## **3. EFFECTIVE TEAMWORK AND OPERATIONS**

### **Connecting with Community and Building Our Capacity**

CAC staff presented at or participated in the following workshops, peer groups, and trainings:

- Greater Cleveland Funders Collaborative (GCFC) Data Equity Working Group, Julia Carey
- Assembly: The Power of Arts Advocacy, Grants Team
- GARE Conversations: Building Capacity for Racial Equity, Grants Team
- GARE Conversations: Sustaining Racial Equity Work with Data & Evidence Based Strategies, Julia Carey
- Indy Arts Council: Annual Grants Program Panelist, Jake Sinatra
- Americans for the Arts- Community Conversation: Federal Arts Advocacy, Maya Curtis
- The City Club: The Purpose & Power of Place Based Philanthropy in Cleveland & Detroit, Maya Curtis
- Creative Ohio Regional Directors, Jill Paulsen

### **Cleveland Foundation Summer Intern**

CAC was selected as a host site for a summer intern and is pleased to welcome Elisa Gauntner, a sophomore Arts Management & Entrepreneurship and Theatre major from Baldwin Wallace University. Elisa will serve as a grant-funded full-time, temporary employee from late May to early August. She will work on communications projects and alongside the grants team to support key tasks during CAC's application process. The position is funded with a \$9,000 grant from The Cleveland Foundation.

## FINANCIAL UPDATE

### 2024 Audit

**Annual Audit.** The Ohio Auditor of State is finalizing the filing of CAC's GAAP conversion, and we are in the process of gathering materials requested for the annual audit.

### 2025 YTD

**Revenue.** Tax revenue through March was \$3,217,779. This is \$8,711 (.27%) above budget and \$1,310,339, or 168.7%, above revenue for the same period in 2024.

**Revenue Trends.** To track revenue trends, a new category has been added to financial report to track unit sales. Year-over-year unit sales of cigarettes at the wholesale level have decreased by 5.4% over the first quarter of 2024.

**Expenditure.** The majority of CAC's budget is comprised of grants which were approved in 2024. These grants are accrued at the beginning of the year and recognized on the balance sheet. Non-grant expenditures through March were \$258,112.

**Investments.** As of March 31, CAC investments are as follows:

- STAR Ohio: \$134,899 (yield 4.48%)
- RedTree Investment Group: \$7,099,675(target yield 4.12%)

### Audit and Finance Advisory Committee

The CAC Audit and Finance Advisory Committee meets two to three times a year to review and provide feedback on CAC's Internal Controls Policies and Procedures and Investment Policy. There are currently three members of the advisory committee, plus one CAC board member. Members are appointed annually. Ken Surratt and Luis Cartagena have agreed to continue their service on the advisory committee. Ann McCarthy-Garland (3 years of service) has decided to roll off the advisory committee; we thank Ann for her service. The Board will be asked to consider the appointment of Meghann Marnecheck to the open position. Ms. Marnecheck brings experience in the public and nonprofit sectors. Gina Vernaci has agreed to serve on behalf of the Board.

At this meeting, the Board will be asked to affirm the appointment of:

Luis Cartagena – Cartagena CPA & Consultants, LLC, President & CEO

Meghann Marnecheck – former Executive Director of the Cleveland Transformation Alliance

Ken Surratt – United Way, Vice President of Community Investment & Chief Investment Officer

Gina Vernaci – Board member, CAC

The above individuals bring a range of accounting, investment, and financial experience, in the public, private and nonprofit sectors, to this committee.

| Cuyahoga Arts & Culture              |                       |                       |                            |                |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| Through 3/31/2025                    |                       |                       |                            |                |
|                                      | Actual YTD            | Budget YTD            | \$<br>Over/Under<br>Budget | %<br>of Budget |
| <b>Ordinary Revenue/Expenditures</b> |                       |                       |                            |                |
| <b>Revenue</b>                       |                       |                       |                            |                |
| Excise Tax                           | \$ 3,217,779          | \$ 3,209,068          | \$ 8,711                   | 100.27%        |
| Interest                             | \$ 155,961            | \$ 154,500            | \$ 1,461                   | 100.95%        |
| Other revenue                        | \$ 26,000             | \$ 26,000             | \$ -                       | 100.0%         |
| <b>Total Revenue</b>                 | <b>\$ 3,399,740</b>   | <b>\$ 3,389,568</b>   | <b>\$ 10,172</b>           | <b>100.30%</b> |
| <b>Expenditures</b>                  |                       |                       |                            |                |
| Salaries, Wages and Benefits         | \$ 193,041            | \$ 206,128            | \$ (13,086)                | 93.7%          |
| Grantmaking Expenses                 | \$ 33,475             | \$ 33,845             | \$ (370)                   | 98.9%          |
| Grants**                             | \$ 11,263,274         | \$ 11,325,847         | \$ (62,573)                | 99.4%          |
| Facilities, Supplies, Equipment      | \$ 18,073             | \$ 19,630             | \$ (1,557)                 | 92.1%          |
| Professional Fees                    | \$ 13,523             | \$ 34,397             | \$ (20,874)                | 39.3%          |
| Depreciation                         | \$ -                  | \$ 325                | \$ (325)                   |                |
| <b>Total Expenditures</b>            | <b>\$ 11,521,386</b>  | <b>\$ 11,620,172</b>  | <b>\$ (98,786)</b>         | <b>99.1%</b>   |
| <b>Net Ordinary Revenue</b>          | <b>\$ (8,121,646)</b> | <b>\$ (8,230,603)</b> | <b>\$ 108,958</b>          |                |

\*\* Outstanding 2025 grant obligations are on the balance sheet.

|   |            |            |             |
|---|------------|------------|-------------|
| <b>Non-grant cash disbursements YTD</b> | \$ 258,112 | \$ 294,325 | \$ (36,213) |
|---|------------|------------|-------------|

**Cuyahoga Arts and Culture**  
**Balance Sheet**  
As of March 31, 2025

|  | <u>Total</u>        |
|--|---------------------|
| <b>ASSETS</b>                          |                     |
| <b>Current Assets</b>                  |                     |
| <b>Bank Accounts</b>                   |                     |
| KeyBank                                | \$ 52,216           |
| RedTree (U.S.Bank)                     | \$ 7,099,675        |
| Star Ohio                              | \$ 134,899          |
| <b>Total Bank Accounts</b>             | <u>\$ 7,286,791</u> |
| <b>Accounts Receivable</b>             |                     |
| 11000 Accounts Receivable              | \$ 1,493,143        |
| <b>Total Accounts Receivable</b>       | <u>\$ 1,493,143</u> |
| <b>Total Current Assets</b>            | <u>\$ 8,779,934</u> |
| <b>Fixed Assets</b>                    |                     |
| 15000 Furniture and Equipment          | \$ 6,915            |
| 17000 Accumulated Depreciation         | -\$ 1,773           |
| <b>Total Fixed Assets</b>              | <u>\$ 5,142</u>     |
| <b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>                    | <u>\$ 8,785,075</u> |
| <b>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>          |                     |
| <b>Liabilities</b>                     |                     |
| <b>Current Liabilities</b>             |                     |
| <b>Other Current Liabilities</b>       |                     |
| 24000 Payroll Liabilities              | \$ 1,402            |
| 24200 GOS Grants                       | \$ 4,474,843        |
| 24300 PS and CH Grants                 | \$ 1,517,064        |
| 24400 SFA and Other (CC) Grants        | \$ 528,000          |
| <b>Total Other Current Liabilities</b> | <u>\$ 6,521,309</u> |
| <b>Total Current Liabilities</b>       | <u>\$ 6,521,309</u> |
| <b>Total Liabilities</b>               | <u>\$ 6,521,309</u> |
| <b>Equity</b>                          |                     |
| 32000 General Fund                     | \$ 10,385,412       |
| Net Income                             | -\$ 8,121,646       |
| <b>Total Equity</b>                    | <u>\$ 2,263,766</u> |
| <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>    | <u>\$ 8,785,075</u> |

| CIGARETTE TAX RECEIPTS FY 24 VS FY 25 YTD |                        |                        |                        |               | Per Unit Comparison |                    |              |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Month                                     | 2024                   | 2025                   | 2025 \$VAR             | 24/25 % VAR   | Units 2024          | Units 2025         | 24/25 % VAR  |
| JANUARY                                   | \$ 720,680.19          | \$ 779,850.00          | \$ 59,169.81           | 8.2%          | 48,045,346          | 51,990,000         | 8.2%         |
| FEBRUARY                                  | \$ 585,197.39          | \$ 944,785.71          | \$ 359,588.32          | 61.4%         | 39,013,159          | 26,993,877         | -30.8%       |
| MARCH                                     | \$ 601,562.02          | \$ 1,493,143.28        | \$ 891,581.26          | 148.2%        | 40,104,135          | 42,661,237         | 6.4%         |
| APRIL                                     | \$ 762,671.33          |                        |                        |               | 50,844,755          |                    |              |
| MAY                                       | \$ 823,925.67          |                        |                        |               | 54,928,378          |                    |              |
| JUNE                                      | \$ 1,302,380.22        |                        |                        |               | 86,825,348          |                    |              |
| JULY                                      | \$ 274,153.68          |                        |                        |               | 18,276,912          |                    |              |
| AUGUST                                    | \$ 798,356.75          |                        |                        |               | 53,223,783          |                    |              |
| SEPTEMBER                                 | \$ 762,716.32          |                        |                        |               | 50,847,755          |                    |              |
| OCTOBER                                   | \$ 755,750.76          |                        |                        |               | 50,383,384          |                    |              |
| NOVEMBER                                  | \$ 659,755.39          |                        |                        |               | 43,983,693          |                    |              |
| DECEMBER                                  | \$ 842,362.25          |                        |                        |               | 56,157,483          |                    |              |
| <b>TOTALS</b>                             | <b>\$ 8,889,511.97</b> | <b>\$ 3,217,778.99</b> | <b>\$ 1,310,339.39</b> | <b>168.7%</b> | <b>592,634,131</b>  | <b>121,645,114</b> | <b>-5.4%</b> |



## MEMORANDUM

Date: April 16, 2025  
To: CAC Board of Trustees  
From: Meg Harris, director of administration and Jill Paulsen, executive director  
Re: CAC Bylaws – Updates

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The Bylaws of Cuyahoga Arts & Culture were reviewed and updated by its attorneys at Squire Patton Boggs to ensure that they reflect CAC practice, policy and Ohio Revised Code 3381, its governing legislation. Minor recommended updates, included in the redlined version attached, are proposed for the Board's approval. The Bylaws were last updated in 2010.

1. Qualify references to County Resolution No. 052402 to indicate that CAC will do this to extent it is permitted. (CR No. 052402 was adopted prior to the creation of CAC and includes programs that CAC is not enabled to fund.)
2. Correct definition and update references to “the” area arts council to reflect Ohio Revised Code use of “any” area arts council.
3. Clarify that Board members serve until replaced at end of terms.
4. Update to reflect terminology used by CAC (e.g. President vs. Chair).
5. Remove the month of annual meeting to allow CAC leadership to determine best time to hold annual meeting.
6. Clarify role and powers of President of Board of Trustees.
7. Update language that refers to levy to reflect that of current levy.



BYLAWS  
OF THE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OF  
CUYAHOGA ARTS AND CULTURE

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## **ARTICLE I**

### **Definitions**

**Section 1.1. Definitions of Words and Phrases.** The following words and phrases used in these Bylaws are used with the following meanings.

“Area Arts Council” means an area arts council as defined in ORC Section 757.03, which provides that an area arts council is an arts council or other organization ~~incorporated under ORC Section 1702.0 to 1702.58, without purpose of profit to any private member or individual~~, the purpose of which is fostering and encouraging the development of the arts, including but not limited to, literature, theater, music, the dance, painting, sculpture, photography, architecture, and motion pictures.

“Arts or Cultural Organization” has the meaning given in ORC Section 3381.01(A), which defines an arts or cultural organization to be (1) any corporation, organization, association, or institution that (a) provides programs or activities in areas directly concerned with the Arts or Cultural Heritage, and (b) is not for profit and whose net earnings may not lawfully inure to the benefit of any private shareholder, member, or individual, and (2) any arts or cultural council that is not for profit and whose net earnings may not lawfully inure to the benefit of any private shareholder, member or individual.

“Arts or Cultural Heritage” has the meaning given in ORC Section 3381.01(B), which defines arts or cultural heritage to include, but not be limited to, literature, theater, music, dance, ballet, painting, sculpture, photography, motion pictures, architecture, archaeology, history, natural history, or the natural sciences.

“Board” or “Board of Trustees” means the Board of Trustees of CAC.

“CAC” means Cuyahoga Arts and Culture, the regional arts and cultural district established under authority of ORC Section 3381.04 and Resolution No. 052402 adopted by the Commissioners on June 16, 2005 (to the extent Resolution No. 052402 states the matters required by ORC Section 3381.04((A)(1) through (4) as consistent with ORC chapter 3381). The initial name of CAC was the “Cuyahoga County Arts and Culture District”. By Resolution No. 062633 adopted by the Commissioners on June 29, 2006, the name of CAC was changed to “Cuyahoga Arts and Culture.”

“Commissioners” refers to the Board of County Commissioners of Cuyahoga County, Ohio.

“County” refers to Cuyahoga County, Ohio, the territory comprising CAC as an arts and culture district under ORC Chapter 3381.

“County Officials” means (i) prior to January 2011, the Commissioners, and (ii) on and after the effective date in January 2011 of the Charter of Cuyahoga County, the County Executive or the County Council, as the case may be.

“ORC” means the Ohio Revised Code.

“Qualifying Arts or Cultural Organization” has the meaning given in ORC Section 3381.01(F), which defines a qualifying arts or cultural organization to be any Arts or Cultural Organization ~~as defined in ORC Section 3381.01(A)~~ whose income is exempt from federal income taxation, has been in existence for at least three years or is a successor to any arts or cultural organization which had been in existence for at least five years, and has a permanent and viable base of operations within the territory of the governmental entity or entities creating the regional arts and cultural district under ORC Sections 3381.03 or 3381.04.

“State” means the State of Ohio.

“Trustee” or “Trustees” means a member of the Board of Trustees of CAC.

**Section 1.2. Rules of Interpretation.** Words and phrases that are defined in ORC Chapter 3381 cannot be amended except by action of the General Assembly of the State amending those provisions of the Ohio Revised Code. Any reference to a section or provision of the ORC or other laws shall include such section or law as from time to time amended. References in these Bylaws to the masculine gender include the feminine gender.

## **ARTICLE II**

### **Legal Status**

CAC is a political subdivision of the State and a body corporate. (ORC Section 3381.02) CAC was created as a regional arts and cultural district by Resolution No. 052402 adopted by the Commissioners on June 16, 2005 (to the extent Resolution No. 052402 states the matters required by ORC Section

3381.04((A)(1) through (4) as consistent with ORC chapter 3381) under authority of ORC Section 3381.04. Its territory is Cuyahoga County.

### **ARTICLE III**

#### **Board of Trustees**

**Section 3.1. Powers.** All the power and authority granted to CAC as a regional arts and cultural district under ORC Chapter 3381 shall be vested in and exercised by the Board of Trustees. (ORC Section 3381.06) Without relief of such responsibility, the Board may delegate specific powers to officers of the Board and employees of CAC to the extent permitted by law.

**Section 3.2. Number and Qualifications of Trustees.** There shall be five members of the Board of Trustees appointed by the County Officials. (ORC Section 3381.04) The County Officials shall consider for appointment as Trustees, but ~~are not required to~~need not appoint, persons nominated by ~~the~~ Area Arts Councils located within CAC's district. (ORC Section 3381.05) All members of the Board of Trustees shall be persons who have broad knowledge and experience in the Arts or Cultural Heritage and who are qualified electors in Cuyahoga County. (ORC Section 3381.05) At least two members of the Board of Trustees shall be persons who devote a major portion of their time to practicing, performing, or teaching any of the arts or who are professional administrators in any field of the Arts or Cultural Heritage. (ORC Section 3381.05) Each Trustee shall affirm that he will honestly, faithfully, and impartially perform the duties of his office.

**Section 3.3. Terms of Office.** Each Trustee shall serve a term of three years. However, any person appointed to fill a vacancy shall be appointed to only the unexpired term. Any Trustee is eligible for reappointment. (ORC Section 3381.05) Terms of office shall begin on April 1 (except for the terms of persons appointed to fill vacancies) and shall end on March 31.

**Section 3.4. Resignation and Removal.** Any Trustee may resign by submitting his resignation in writing delivered to the Executive Director. A copy of such written notice of resignation shall promptly be delivered by the Executive Director to the other Trustees and to the appropriate County Official(s). Such resignation shall take effect immediately or at such other time as the resigning Trustee may have specified in the written notice of resignation. Any Trustee may be removed by the appropriate County Official(s) for misfeasance, nonfeasance, or malfeasance in office. (ORC Section 3381.05)

**Section 3.5. Vacancies.** A vacancy on the Board shall exist upon the death, incapacity, resignation, removal, or expiration of term of any Trustee (unless at the expiration of the term of any Trustee a successor Trustee has not yet been appointed, in which case the Trustee with the expired term shall continue to serve until a successor Trustee is appointed). The County Officials(s) shall appoint a Trustee to fill the vacancy consistent with the requirements of ORC Section 3381.05. That Trustee shall serve a term equal to the unexpired term of the person who caused the vacancy.

**Section 3.6. Compensation.** Trustees shall not receive compensation for their service as Trustees. Reimbursement of reasonable expenses incurred by Trustees in the performance of their duties shall be provided by CAC to the Trustees.

## **ARTICLE IV** **Officers**

**Section 4.1. Officers.** The officers of the Board shall be the President and the Vice President, who shall be elected at each annual meeting of the Board and who shall hold their respective offices until the next annual meeting of the Board. (ORC Section 3381.051) In addition, a Secretary shall be elected at each annual meeting of the Board. The annual meeting shall be scheduled as provided in Section 7.3.

**Section 4.2. President.** The President shall preside at all meetings of the Board; shall oversee conduct at meetings, unless otherwise provided by the Board; and shall perform all applicable duties commonly incident to the position of chair of a board or commission of a public body or public agency in the State. The President shall perform such other duties and have such other authority as may be provided from time to time by the Board.

**Section 4.3. Vice President.** The Vice President shall perform the duties of the President during the absence of the President or the inability of the President to perform his duties; shall preside at all meetings of the Board in the absence of the President or when the President shall for any reason vacate the office; and shall perform such other duties and have such other authority as may be provided from time to time by the Board. When performing the duties and having the authority of the President, the Vice President shall have all powers of the President.

**Section 4.4. Secretary.** The Secretary shall keep accurate records of the proceedings at meetings of the Board, and shall have custody of and maintain all minutes, resolutions, records, documents and files of the Board. The Secretary shall certify any such minutes, resolutions, records or documents as true and exact copies. The Board may provide for an employee of CAC to assist the Secretary in the performance of his duties. The Board shall adopt rules for compliance with the laws of the State concerning the availability of public records.

**Section 4.5. Resignation.** Any officer of the Board may resign his position as such officer by giving written notice of such resignation to the President, provided that in the event of resignation of the President, such written notice shall be given to the Vice President. Such resignation shall be effective as of the date stated in such resignation, or if there be no such date stated, then as of the date of its receipt by the proper officer. Notice of any such resignation shall promptly be transmitted to the Board by the officer receiving such resignation, but no such resignation shall require acceptance by the Board.

**Section 4.6. Removal.** All officers who serve at the pleasure of the Board shall be subject to removal by the Board at any time.

**Section 4.7. Vacancies.** A vacancy in any office of the Board shall be filled by the Board for the unexpired term of such officer.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **Executive Director and Staff**

**Section 5.1. Executive Director.** The Board of Trustees shall appoint and fix the compensation of a person to serve as Executive Director. (ORC Section 3381.051) The Executive Director shall not be a member of the Board of Trustees and shall serve at the pleasure of the Board of Trustees. (ORC Section 3381.051) The Executive Director shall be the chief executive officer of CAC and shall exercise general supervision over the conduct of CAC's programs and activities in accordance with the policies and procedures established by the Board. The Board shall evaluate the Executive Director's performance not less frequently than once a year. For that purpose the Board shall meet in executive session without the Executive Director in attendance to discuss and evaluate the Executive Director's performance and compensation. Thereafter the ~~Chair~~President or Vice ~~Chair~~President of the Board shall meet with the Executive Director to review with the Executive Director the Board's evaluation.



**Section 5.2. Executive Director is Fiscal Officer.** The person serving as Executive Director of CAC shall be the fiscal officer of CAC. (ORC Section 3381.051) As fiscal officer, the Executive Director shall maintain all financial records of CAC, shall have the care and custody of the funds of CAC and shall deposit and invest the funds of CAC in accordance with applicable laws of the State and the investment policy adopted by the Board.

**Section 5.3. Executive Director Authority Over Staff.** The Executive Director shall recommend to the Board the employment, classification and compensation of any person to be employed by CAC. The Executive Director shall be responsible for the proper day-to-day direction, supervision and evaluation of all persons employed by CAC and shall do so in a manner consistent with the policies and procedures established by the Board. The Executive Director shall have authority to appoint, promote, demote, dismiss and take any other personnel action without prior approval of the Board provided that any such personnel action is reported to the Board at its next regular or special meeting and is approved by the Board.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **Advisory Committees**

The Board of Trustees may establish advisory committees, from time to time, to study issues of concern to the Board or to obtain advice and recommendations from others concerning any matter requested by the Board to be reviewed by the committee so established. Persons serving on any such committees shall have such knowledge and experience as the Board deems appropriate for the purpose for which the advice is sought. The Board shall by resolution establish the composition of the committee, terms of service of each member of the committee, the procedures for the conduct of the committee's activities and meetings and other matters relating to the committee's work.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Meetings**

**Section 7.1. Quorum.** A majority of the Trustees shall constitute a quorum for a meeting of the Board of Trustees. The concurrence of a majority of a quorum shall be sufficient for any action taken by the Board. A Trustee must be present in person at a meeting to be considered present or to vote at the meeting and for purposes of determining whether a quorum is present. (ORC Section 121.22 (C))

**Section 7.2. Place of Meetings.** All meetings of the Board shall be held at such place as may be designated by the Board at a preceding meeting of the Board, or as may be designated in the notice of the meeting of the Board.

**Section 7.3. Meetings.**

(a) Annual Meeting. The annual meeting of the Board shall be a regular meeting held in the month ~~of April on the date~~ determined by the Board. Officers shall be elected at the annual meeting.

(b) Regular Meetings. Regular meetings of the Board shall be held on the dates and at the times and places as determined by a duly adopted resolution of the Board. There shall be at least four regular meetings of the Board in each calendar year. The dates, times and places of regular meetings shall be posted on CAC's web site and in CAC's offices.

(c) Special Meetings. Special meetings of the Board may be called at any time by the President or by the Executive Director or by any two Trustees, by giving notice to all Trustees of the date, hour, and place of the meeting. Notice must be given at least 24 hours prior to the special meeting to the news media that have requested notification as more specifically provided in Section 8.4. (ORC Section 121.22 (F)).

(d) Notice to Trustees. Notice of any regular or special meeting of the Board may be given to each Trustee by electronic mail, by first class or express mail, by telephone or in person. Notice of any meeting need not be given to any Trustee if such notice is waived by that Trustee in writing before, during, or after such meeting, or if that Trustee shall be present at that meeting. Any special meeting shall be a valid meeting without notice having been given thereof if all of the Trustees shall be present at that special meeting. Any subject matter may be considered at any meeting of the Board.

**Section 7.4. Conduct of Meetings.** Meetings of the Board shall be conducted in accordance with the following procedures:

(a) Order of Business. The President shall establish an agenda for the order in which matters will be considered by the Board.

(b) Resolutions. Action of the Board shall be by resolution considered following a motion made by a Trustee and seconded by another Trustee. Upon

request of any Trustee, any resolution shall be reduced to writing. Any motion may be withdrawn by the maker with the consent of the second, before a resolution has been voted upon. All resolutions which have been adopted by the Board shall be entered upon the minutes of the meeting.

(c) Roberts' Rules of Order. To the extent not otherwise provided by the Ohio Revised Code or these Bylaws, meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the latest published edition of Roberts' Rules of Order. Any rules of procedure may be waived by the affirmative vote of all Trustees present at the meeting at which such rules are waived.

**Section 7.5. Minutes.** The minutes of each meeting shall be prepared by the Secretary of the Board or another person designated by the Secretary, and the minutes shall be distributed to each Trustee for review prior to the next regular meeting of the Board. Following their approval by the Board, the minutes shall be filed and maintained in a minute book to be kept in the offices of CAC. With respect to each meeting, there shall be shown in the minutes the date and place at which the meeting was held, the names of the Trustees present, a summary of actions there taken, the resolutions adopted and a record of the vote of each Trustee present on each resolution. The minute book shall be open to inspection by the public at all reasonable times.

In the event the Secretary and the Secretary's designee are absent from any meeting, the Trustee presiding at such meeting shall designate a person, who need not be a Trustee, as acting secretary to record the minutes of the meeting and attest any resolutions adopted at such meeting. Any such acting secretary may also certify as to the authenticity of any resolution adopted at such meeting or to the correctness of a copy or extract of the minutes of such meeting.

**ARTICLE VIII**  
**Rules for Notification of Meetings to the Public and News Media**

**Section 8.1. Public Meetings and Purposes.** Meetings of the Board at which a majority of the Trustees are present shall be held, and notice thereof given, in accordance with ORC Section 121.22 and this Article VIII. The purposes of the rules contained in this Article VIII are: (a) to establish a reasonable method for any person to determine the time and place of all regular meetings and the time, place and purpose of all special meetings, (b) to make provisions for giving advance notice of special meetings to the news media that have requested notification, and (c) to make provisions for persons to request and obtain reasonable advance notification of all meetings at which any specific type of public business is to be discussed. The rules contained in this Article VIII are in addition to any applicable legal requirements as to notices to Trustees or to others in connection with specific meetings or specific subject matters.

**Section 8.2. Notice of Regular Meetings.**

The Executive Director shall cause there to be a publication on CAC's web site of a schedule of the time and place of regular meetings for each calendar year. That schedule also shall be posted in a visible place in CAC's offices. If at any time during the calendar year the time or place of any regular meeting is changed on a permanent or temporary basis, a statement of the time and place of such changed regular meetings shall be so published at least twenty-four (24) hours before the time of the first changed regular meeting. Upon the adjournment of any regular or special meeting to another day, the Executive Director shall promptly cause notice of the time and place of such adjourned meeting to be published on CAC's web site.

**Section 8.3. Notice of Special Meetings.**

(a) Except in the case of an emergency meeting referred to in Section 8.4(d) below, the Executive Director shall, no later than 24 hours before the time of a special meeting, cause publication on CAC's website of a statement of the time, place and purposes of such special meeting.

(b) The statement under this Section 8.3 and the notifications under Section 8.4 shall state such specific or general purpose or purposes then known to the Executive Director to be intended to be considered at such special meeting and may state, as an additional general purpose, that any other business as may properly come before the Board at such special meeting may be considered and acted upon.

#### **Section 8.4. Notice to News Media of Special Meetings.**

(a) Any news media organization that desires to be given advance notification of special meetings shall file with the Executive Director a written request therefore. Except in the event of an emergency requiring immediate official action as set forth in Section 8.4(d) below, a special meeting shall not be held unless at least 24 hours' advance notice of the time, place and purpose of such special meeting is given to the news media that have requested such advance notification in accordance with Section 8.4(b) below.

(b) News media requests for such advance notification of special meetings shall specify: the name of the medium; the name and address of the person to whom written notifications to the medium may be sent electronically, mailed by U.S. mail, or delivered; and the names, addresses and telephone numbers (including addresses and telephone numbers at which notifications may be given either during or outside of business hours) of at least two (2) persons to either one of whom oral notification to the medium may be given.

For purposes of this Article VIII, "oral notification" means notification given orally either in person or by telephone, directly to the person for whom such notification is intended, or by leaving an oral message for such person at the address, or if by telephone at the telephone number, of such person as shown on the records kept by the Executive Director under this Article VIII. "Written notification" means notification in writing, electronically transmitted, or mailed by U.S. mail or delivered to the address of the person for whom such notification is intended as shown on the records kept by the Executive Director under this Article VIII, or in any way delivered to such person. If mailed, such notification shall be mailed by first-class mail, deposited in a U.S. Postal Service mailbox no later than the second day preceding the day of the meeting to which such notification refers, provided that at least one regular mail delivery day falls between the day of mailing and the day of such meeting.

Any request by news media for advance notification of special meetings shall be effective for one (1) year from the date of filing the request with the Executive Director or until the Executive Director receives written notice from such medium canceling or modifying such request, whichever is earlier. Each requesting news medium shall be informed of such period of effectiveness at the time it files its request. Such requests may be modified or extended only by filing a complete new request with the Executive Director. A request shall not be deemed to be made

unless it is complete in all respects, and such request may be conclusively relied on by the Board and the Executive Director.

(c) The Executive Director shall give oral notification or written notification to the news media that have requested such advance notification in accordance with Section 8.4(b) above, of the time, place and purposes of each special meeting, at least 24 hours prior to the time of such special meeting.

(d) In the event of an emergency requiring immediate official action, an emergency meeting may be held without giving 24 hours advance notification thereof to the requesting news media. The persons calling such emergency meeting, or any one or more of such persons or the Executive Director on their behalf, shall immediately give oral notification or written notification, or both, as the persons or persons giving such notification determine, of the time, place and purposes of such emergency meeting to such news media that have requested such advance notification in accordance with Section 8.4(b) above. The notification of any such emergency meeting shall state the general nature of the emergency requiring immediate official action.

**Section 8.5. Notification of Discussion of Specific Types of Public Business.**

(a) Any person, upon written request and as provided herein, may obtain reasonable advance notification of all Board meetings at which any specific type of public business is scheduled to be discussed. (ORC Section 121.22(F)). Such person may file a written request with the Executive Director specifying: the person's name and the address and telephone number at or through which the person can be reached during and outside of business hours; the specific type of public business the discussion of which the person is requesting advance notification; and the number of calendar months (not to exceed 12) which the request covers. Such request may be canceled by request from such persons to the Secretary.

Each such written request shall be accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelopes sufficient in number to cover the number of regular meetings during the time period covered by the request and an estimated number of 12 special meetings. The Executive Director shall notify in writing the requesting person when the supply of envelopes is running out, and if the person desires notification after such supply has run out such person must deliver to the Executive Director an additional reasonable number of stamped self-addressed envelopes as a condition to receiving further notifications.

Such requests may be modified or extended only by filing a complete new request with the Executive Director. A request shall not be deemed to be made unless it is complete in all respects, and such request may be conclusively relied on by the Board and the Executive Director.

(b) The Executive Director shall give such advance notification under this Section 8.5 by written notification, or by oral notification, or both, as the Executive Director determines. The contents of written notification under this Section 8.5 may be a copy of the agenda of the meeting. Written notification under this Section 8.5 may be accomplished by giving advance written notification, by copies of the agendas, of all meetings that are the subject of such request.

#### **Section 8.6. General.**

(a) Any person may visit or telephone the CAC's office during regular office hours to determine, based on information available at that office: the time and place of regular meetings; the time, place and purposes of any then known special meetings; and whether the available agenda of any such future meeting states that any specific type of public business, identified by such person, is to be discussed at such meeting.

(b) Any notification provided herein to be given by the Executive Director may be given by any person acting on behalf of or under authority of the Executive Director.

(c) A reasonable attempt at notification shall constitute notification in compliance with this Article VIII.

(d) A certificate by the Executive Director as to compliance with this Article VIII shall be conclusive upon the Board.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **Grants to Arts or Cultural Organizations**

~~At the election held on November 7, 2006, the electors in the County approved~~As of the date of these Bylaws, CAC is supported by the levy of a tax on the sale of cigarettes at wholesale at the rate of ~~15-30~~35 mills per cigarette (amounting to ~~1-1/2~~three and one-half cents per cigarette) ~~for a period of ten years, beginning February 1, 2007,~~ for the purpose of making grants to support the operating or capital expenses of Arts or Cultural Organizations in the County, to defray the costs of acquiring, constructing, equipping, furnishing, improving, enlarging, renovating, remodeling, or maintaining an Artistic or Cultural Facility, and to meet the operating expenses of CAC. The expenditure of the collections from the tax are limited by ORC Section 3381.17, as follows: (1) the tax must be expended for the purpose of making annual grants to support operating or capital expenses of Arts or Cultural Organizations located in the County as the Board of Trustees shall determine; (2) not more than ten per cent of the amount granted in any calendar year from the tax is permitted to be granted to Arts or Cultural Organizations that are not Qualifying Arts or Cultural Organizations; (3) prior to making grants in any calendar year, the Board of Trustees shall afford an opportunity for the presentation, either in person or in writing, of the suggestions of ~~the~~ any Area Arts Council located within CAC's district; and (4) any grant to an Arts or Cultural Organization shall be on such terms and conditions as the Board of Trustees considers advisable.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **Deposit, Investment and Expenditure of Funds**

**Section 10.1. Deposit of Funds.** The Executive Director of CAC shall deposit all funds of CAC to the account of CAC in one or more depositories as are qualified to receive deposits of County funds. (ORC Section 3381.10) Those deposits shall be secured in the same manner as County funds. (ORC Section 3381.10) Reference is made to ORC Sections 135.31 to 135.40 for the laws of the State governing the deposit of County funds.

**Section 10.2. Investment of Funds.** The Executive Director shall invest the funds of CAC in investments permitted by the laws of the State for the investment of County funds and in accordance with the investment policy of the Board. Reference is made to ORC Section 135.35 for the existing laws governing the investment of County funds.



**Section 10.3. Expenditure of Funds.** CAC funds may only be expended upon certification of a voucher by the Executive Director. No expenditure may be made in excess of amounts budgeted for the purpose in the annual CAC budget except by resolution of the Board.

## **ARTICLE XI** **Contracts**

### **Section 11.1. Authority.**

(a) The Executive Director may enter into a contract on behalf of CAC for the purchase of supplies or material or for labor for any work the cost of which shall not exceed ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) and the term of which shall not exceed twelve (12) months. The Executive Director may enter into a contract on behalf of CAC for personal services the cost of which shall not exceed twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000.00) and the term of which shall not exceed twelve (12) months. All other contracts shall be first authorized by resolution adopted by the Board.

(b) The Executive Director shall sign each contract and shall certify each contract for the availability of funds to meet the obligations of CAC under the contract. The Executive Director shall report to the Board at each meeting of the Board information as to each contract entered into by CAC subsequent to the prior report to the Board, including: the name of the other party or parties to the contract; the services, supplies or materials to be provided to CAC under the contract; the schedule of payments to be made by CAC under the contract; and the term of the contract.

**Section 11.2. Public Bidding.** When an expenditure, other than for the acquisition of real estate, the discharge of noncontractual claims, personal services, or for the product or services of public utilities, exceeds ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00), such expenditure shall be made only after a notice calling for bids has been published once a week for two consecutive weeks in at least one newspaper of general circulation within the County. The Board may then let the contract to the lowest and best bidder, who shall give a good and approved bond with ample security conditioned on the carrying out of the contract. Such contract shall be in writing and shall be accompanied by or shall refer to plans and specifications for work to be done, approved by the Board. The plans and specifications shall at all times be made and considered part of the contract. The contract shall be approved by the Board. No sale of any real or personal property or a lease thereof having a

term in excess of five years shall be made except with the highest and best bidder after publication of notice for bids in the manner above provided. (ORC Section 3381.11)

Bidding in accordance with the preceding paragraph is not required when:

(A) The Board, by a two-thirds affirmative vote, determines that a real and present emergency exists and such determination and the reasons therefor are entered in the proceedings of the Board, when: (1) the estimated cost is less than fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000.00), or (2) there is actual physical damage to structures or equipment;

(B) Such purchase consists of supplies or a replacement or supplemental part or parts for a product or equipment owned or leased by CAC and the only source of supply for such supplies, part, or parts is limited to a single supplier;

(C) The lease is a renewal of a lease for electronic data processing equipment, services, or systems;

(D) Services or supplies are available from a qualified nonprofit agency pursuant to ORC Sections 4115.31 to 4115.35; or

(E) With respect to any contract, agreement, or lease by CAC with any Arts or Cultural Organization (including ~~the~~any Area Arts Council) or any governmental body or agency. (ORC Section 3381.11).

## **ARTICLE XII**

### **Standards of Ethical Conduct**

Trustees and employees must, at all times, abide by protections to the public embodied in Ohio's ethics laws, as found in Chapters 102 and 2921 of the Ohio Revised Code, and as interpreted by the Ohio Ethics Commission and Ohio courts. Trustees and employees are expected to comply with the Ethics Policy adopted by the Board in addition to complying with applicable provisions of Ohio law.

## **ARTICLE XIII**

### **Construction and Amendment of Bylaws**

**Section 13.1. Construction and Separability.** These Bylaws represent the official action of the Board of Trustees under authority granted to the Trustees under ORC Chapter 3381 and are to govern the conduct of the operation of CAC. Each Article and Section of these Bylaws shall be construed, if and to the extent possible, in a manner consistent with the laws of the State (particularly ORC Chapter 3381) and the United States of America. If and to the extent that any provision or application thereof shall be deemed in conflict with any such laws, such provision or application thereof shall be void, but each provision shall be deemed separable from every other provision and its invalidity, or the invalidity of any application thereof, shall not affect any other provision or any lawful application thereof.

**Section 13.2. Amendments.** Certain provisions of these Bylaws are mandated by ORC Chapter 3381. In the event that any of those ORC provisions are amended by the General Assembly of the State subsequent to the date of the adoption of these Bylaws, these Bylaws shall be deemed to be amended to conform to the ORC without any further action of the Board of Trustees. Otherwise, these Bylaws shall not be amended except in writing and by approval by a majority vote of the Board.

## **ARTICLE XIV**

### **Miscellaneous**

**Section 14.1. Indemnification.** CAC shall defend, indemnify, keep and save harmless the members of the Board of Trustees, the Executive Director and any other employees of the CAC from any claims or suit for damages arising out of the official acts of the Trustees, Executive Director or other employees performed within the scope of their duties on behalf of CAC.

**Section 14.2. Seal.** The Board of Trustees has determined not to adopt a seal of CAC. Accordingly, it shall not be necessary to affix a seal to any contract, lease, bond, note or other instrument of CAC in order for that contract, lease, bond, note or other instrument to be valid, binding or enforceable.



## MEMORANDUM

Date: April 16, 2025  
To: CAC Board of Trustees  
From: CAC Staff  
Re: 2026-27 General Operating Support and 2026 Project Support Grant Guidelines

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**Executive Summary:** Staff recommends the **2026-2027 General Operating Support** and **2026 Project Support** grant guidelines for Board approval. These policy documents shape CAC's grantmaking and are the result of ongoing planning and feedback from grantees and the community. The guidelines are grounded in the objectives the Board approved at its February meeting.

**Board Action:** Approve grant program guidelines for 2026-2027 General Operating Support and 2026 Project Support.

### Background

In 2025, Cuyahoga Arts & Culture will accept applications to the 2026-2027 General Operating Support and 2026 Project Support grant programs. These programs remain core to CAC's operations and mission, and include several updates to align with grantmaking objectives, as approved by the Board in February. The 2026 Grantmaking Objectives include:

- 1) **Prioritize consistent and reliable operating support funding** for Cuyahoga County arts and culture nonprofits.
- 2) **Build efficient and effective grantmaking practices** to the benefit of grant applicants and current grantees.
- 3) **Increase awareness and transparency** around CAC's purpose, authority, and decision-making processes.
- 4) **Continue CAC's emphasis on public benefit** by funding nonprofits and programs that connect all Cuyahoga County residents with arts and cultural experiences.
- 5) **Deepen connection and trust with our grant recipients** through ongoing listening, conversations, and feedback and evaluation processes.

Together, these objectives have guided the strategy, program design, and policy changes embedded in the 2026-2027 General Operating Support and 2026 Project Support grant guidelines. These updates aim to

further align our programs to CAC's mission, be responsive to grantees and the public, and to position CAC as a reliable source of funding over the duration of its current tax levy, through 2035.

- **General Operating Support** is core to CAC's mission and provides meaningful, multi-year flexible support to arts and cultural nonprofits based in and serving the residents of Cuyahoga County. The program will accept applications from eligible nonprofit organizations of all sizes with a demonstrated core mission of arts and culture. Grants may range from \$1,000 up to \$1,000,000 based on organizations' budget sizes, financials, staffing, and available funding. The Cultural Heritage grant program will sunset; all current grant recipients are now eligible for General Operating Support funding.
- **Project Support** promotes public access and supports the breadth of arts and culture programming in Cuyahoga County. Nonprofits based in Cuyahoga County with or without a demonstrated core mission of arts and culture that meet CAC's eligibility criteria can apply for 2026 Project Support funding, including new applicants. Grants may range from \$1,000 up to \$7,500.

### **Acting on Grant Recipient & Community Feedback**

Each year, CAC collects feedback from applicants and grant recipients in multiple formats. Feedback directly informs the grant guidelines and application. Key touchpoints and feedback mechanisms include:

- **Grantee Connect Series**, a [listening and learning project](#) with our grant recipients. The series focused on grantee engagement with an emphasis on short-term improvements to our grantmaking practices and gathering feedback to inform long-range planning. More than 300 individual participants representing over 200 grantee partner organizations participated in the Grantee Connect Series in 2024-25.
- **National Scan of State & Local Funders**, broad [research on nine arts and culture funders](#) across the United States that make grants using public funds. This included a robust website analysis, interviews with key staff members at each organization, and the development of summary profiles and learnings to inform our work.
- **Technical assistance** sessions (approximately 10 per grant cycle) for applicants and grantees, which include feedback opportunities.
- **Public comment period** on CAC's draft grant guidelines, providing all grantees, applicants and the public an opportunity to review and provide feedback on CAC policy documents.
- **Ongoing relationships with CAC staff**, including regular communication between grant recipients and CAC staff, including with potential new applicants.

CAC grant recipients and applicants indicated that CAC's guidelines and applications requirements were clear and easy to understand, and that they understand the program's objectives and CAC's funding priorities. Most respondents indicated that the guidelines are inclusive and resourceful, and they appreciate the streamlined approach. Some respondents asked specific questions about the requirements which staff clarified in follow-up calls or communications.

## Key 2025 Dates for 2026 Grant Programs

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>April 16, 2025</b>              | Board approval of 2026 grant guidelines                |
| <b>May 5, 2025</b>                 | Open 2026 grant guidelines and application             |
| <b>May – July 2025</b>             | Provide technical assistance to prospective applicants |
| <b>July 31, 2025</b>               | Application deadline                                   |
| <b>September 2025</b>              | Hold written panel (Project Support only)              |
| <b>November (anticipated) 2025</b> | Board reviews and approves 2026 allocations and grants |

### Recommendations

CAC recommends several policy updates to 2026-2027 General Operating Support and 2026 Project Support to further the 2026 Grantmaking Objectives. These include:

For all grants:

Combining CAC's two-step eligibility check and application processes into **one cohesive process** with a deadline of July 31, 2025.

- Further **streamlining and simplifying grant applications and reporting**, with a focus on trust-based philanthropy and right-sized expectations for applicants and grantees.
- Utilizing more **predictable funding categories**, based on budget size, across programs.
- Maintaining CAC's **three core funding priorities**: public benefit, artistic and cultural vibrancy, and organizational capacity.

For 2026-2027 General Operating Support:

- Continuing **multi-year commitments for operating support grant recipients** (same grant amount for 2026 and 2027).
- Prioritizing operating support for eligible Cuyahoga County nonprofits **with a core mission of arts and culture** by expanding eligibility to organizations of all budget sizes.
- The minimum grant amount is \$1,000 and the maximum grant amount varies based on an organization's budget, financial documents, and staffing: may be up to \$5,000; or up to \$20,000; or up to \$1,000,000. All grant amounts are subject to available CAC funding.
- Current **Cultural Heritage** grantees may apply for an operating support grant.
- SMU Data Arts Cultural Data Profile is required.
- 1:1 match required. 50% of matching funds can be in-kind for grants of \$5,000 or less.

For 2026 Project Support:

- Funding for nonprofits **with or without a primary mission of arts and culture**, as determined by CAC.
- Grant amounts may be up to \$7,500 or \$5,000 based on the applicant's budget and financial documents. All grant amounts are subject to available CAC funding.
- **New grant applicants** must apply for Project Support and are eligible for up to \$5,000.

- Continue using CAC's transparent application and further simplified **panel review process** for Project Support; a written online panel will take place in September.
- No SMU DataArts Cultural Data Profile requirement.
- 1:1 match required. 50% of matching funds can be in-kind income for all PS grantees.

### **Next Steps**

Following Board approval, staff will finalize the draft documents and officially launch CAC's 2026-2027 General Operating Support and 2026 Project Support grant opportunities. The Board will begin discussions to determine how much to allocate to both grant programs this fall, once CAC has received the majority of 2025 tax revenue.



# 2026-2027

## GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT

### Grant Program Guidelines & Resources

APPLICATION DUE:

**THURSDAY, JULY 31, 2025 BY 4:30 PM ET**



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## Greetings!

Thank you for your interest in the 2026–2027 General Operating Support (GOS) grant program.



Apollo's Fire, photo by Sisi Burn

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.

### ABOUT CUYAHOGA ARTS & CULTURE

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

Since 2007, CAC has invested more than \$257 million in 500 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 GRANT PROGRAMS

#### GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT

Multi-year core support grants to qualifying arts and cultural nonprofit organizations in Cuyahoga County, Ohio.

*Who can apply?* Cuyahoga County-based nonprofit organizations with a [core mission of arts and culture](#) who have successfully completed at least two CAC grants, current General Operating Support grant recipients, and current Cultural Heritage grant recipients.

#### PROJECT SUPPORT

Annual grants for Cuyahoga County-based nonprofits conducting arts and culture projects in Cuyahoga County, Ohio.

*Who can apply?* New applicants, and organizations with or without a core mission of arts and culture.

### RESOURCES

To learn more about the differences between CAC's grants, refer to the [2026 Grant Guide](#). Organizations may only submit one application per cycle. First-time applicants must apply for Project Support.

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](https://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](#).

## General Operating Support Overview



Cleveland Institute of Art, photo by Leah Trznadel

The purpose of Cuyahoga Arts & Culture’s General Operating Support (GOS) grant is to strengthen the community by connecting residents to arts and culture through meaningful, multi-year core support to arts and cultural nonprofits based in and serving Cuyahoga County. CAC is accepting applications for 2026-2027 General Operating Support.

### GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT AT A GLANCE

- Open to 501(c)(3) organizations with a demonstrated [core mission of arts and culture](#), as determined by CAC, from documents provided during the application process.
- CAC accepts applications every other year for GOS.
- Approved grants are a two-year grant commitment from CAC, though grants are approved by CAC’s Board of Trustees each year. This grant period is for calendar years 2026 and 2027.
- Grant amounts are based on organizations’ budget sizes and available funding.

### 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.”

### HOW TO APPLY

All current and prospective GOS grant recipients are required to apply for 2026–2027 GOS funding. There is no panel review process. To continue to receive GOS funding, organizations must continue to meet all eligibility requirements and submit required reports on progress toward organizational goals based on CAC’s Funding Priorities.

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.

## Timeline & Application Overview

| 1. PRE-APPLICATION   | MAY – JULY 2025                           |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get connected with CAC — sign up for CAC’s email list</li> <li>• Register with CAC’s <a href="#">online application and reporting system</a></li> <li>• Attend a <a href="#">Grant Workshop and Q&amp;A Session</a> to determine what grant is best for you</li> <li>• Start your application — available in early May</li> </ul>   |   |
| 2. APPLICATION   | DUE THURSDAY, JULY 31, 2025 BY 4:30 PM ET |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete and Submit Online Application by July 31, 2025 at 4:30PM ET</li> <li>• Application materials for <u>all</u> applicants include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organizational Information</li> <li>- Secretary of State Certificate of Good Standing</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Application materials for <u>new</u> GOS applicants include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Audited or Reviewed financial statements for FY22, FY23 and FY24, if applicable</li> <li>- IRS Form 990, 990-EZ, or 990-N for FY23 and FY24 (If FY24 990 is not available, CAC will accept the extension form and grant an extension to match the updated IRS due date.)</li> <li>- SMU DataArts Cultural Data Profile for FY 24 (optional at this deadline — due September 30 at the latest)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |   |
| 3. POST-APPLICATION  | SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER 2025                 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your organization’s eligibility for the GOS program will be confirmed by CAC staff. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organizations not eligible for GOS may be able to submit a Project Support application. CAC will review applications in the order they are received and encourages early submissions to confirm eligibility for either grant program.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Complete Eligible Revenue and Support (ERS) Form and SMU DataArts Cultural Data Profile, if applicable, by September 30.</li> <li>• CAC Board approves grants at public meeting — anticipated November 2025.</li> <li>• Grant agreements issued and signed — anticipated December 2025 – January 2026.</li> </ul>   |   |



## Eligibility



Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, photo by Allie Morrison Photography

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY

To be eligible for a General Operating Support grant, organizations must meet all the following criteria:

- Be a current (2025) GOS grant recipient or have previously received and successfully completed at least two grants from Cuyahoga Arts & Culture within the last four years (since 2021).
- Have a core mission to produce, present or create programs or activities in areas directly concerned with arts or cultural heritage for the general public, as determined by CAC using documentation provided by applicant.
- Have a permanent and viable base in Cuyahoga County for at least three years prior to July 31, 2025. Applicant organization must have its principal business address in Cuyahoga County and conduct the majority of its programs and services in Cuyahoga County for the residents of Cuyahoga County and visitors to Cuyahoga County.  
For the GOS Program an organization with a “permanent and viable base” in Cuyahoga County must show documentation of the following:
  - Headquartered in Cuyahoga County (administrative and operational functions)
  - Articles of Incorporation
- Exist as a 501(c)(3) organization for at least three years or be a successor to an arts or cultural organization that had been a 501(c)(3) organization for at least five years prior to July 31, 2025, and be verified as a 501(c)(3) by the IRS Publication 78 and GoVerify.
- Have an active board of at least three directors.
- 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 a GOS grant (this list is not meant to be exhaustive):

- Organizations whose core mission is not arts and/or culture
- Organizations that are not in good standing with CAC and/or not in compliance with previous grants
- Organizations applying through a fiscal agent or fiscal sponsor
- Organizations that are the primary responsibility of a government agency
- National or state service organizations or supporting organizations
- K-12 schools, including parent- teacher associations and similar groups
- Fundraising organizations of any kind or “friends of” or “foundation” established for the primary purpose of supporting the activities of or fundraising for another ineligible organization
- Private foundations of any kind
- Units of government
- Private libraries
- Cemeteries
- Individuals
- Organizations that are applying for Project Support in the same grant cycle

## Grant Amounts & Process



Doan Brook Watershed Partnership

Grant amounts are determined by an organization's budget size (as determined by an applicant's IRS 990 filing, audit, or independent financial reviews and accompanying Eligible Revenue and Support form). CAC will determine grant range eligibility through the application process based on the financial documentation provided and applicant budget size.

### UP TO \$5,000

The grant amount is up to \$5,000 for:

- applicants who file IRS Form 990-N.

### UP TO \$20,000

The grant amount is up to \$20,000 for:

- applicants who file a 990-EZ or 990 but do not complete an annual audit or independent financial review

Grant amounts up to \$20,000 are determined by an organization's average total revenue as recorded in IRS Forms 990 for FY23 and FY24 990s.

### FROM \$20,000 UP TO \$1,000,000.

The grant amount is from \$20,000 up to \$1,000,000 for:

- applicants with annual revenues of \$200,000 or more, who also complete an annual audit or independent financial review, and;
- Have at minimum a 50%-time (20 hours per week) paid staff person.

GOS grant amounts above \$20,000 are determined by a formula designed to distribute funding to recommended organizations by considering several factors, including and specific to this grant pool:

- The total amount allocated to the GOS grant program by CAC's Board;
- The averaged operating budget for the previous three fiscal years (FY22, FY23, and FY24) of each organization, as determined by each applicant's Eligible Revenue and Support (ERS) forms; and;
- The aggregation of all GOS grant recipients' operating funds as determined by Eligible Revenue and Support (ERS) forms.

### MATCHING FUNDS

GOS grants are matching grants. Applicants are required to leverage CAC funds to secure additional income from other sources. For grants above \$5,000, this grant requires a 1:1 cash match. For grants of \$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.

### GRANT APPROVAL PROCESS

Grant amounts are subject to approval by CAC's Board of Trustees at a public board meeting; applicants are welcome to attend all CAC Board meetings, but not required.

The grant amounts will be determined by the following factors: the amount of funding allocated to the General Operating Support grant program by CAC's Board, and number of organizations, and each organization's budget size.

*Recommended* grant amounts will be shared with applicants prior to CAC Board approval.

## Funding Priorities



Ingenuity, photo by Matthew Tyler Media

General Operating Support grant recipients are expected to demonstrate alignment with Cuyahoga Arts & Culture's three funding priorities throughout the grant cycle: Public Benefit, Artistic and Cultural Vibrancy, and Organizational Capacity.

### PUBLIC BENEFIT

An organization's ability to meaningfully connect with its community to achieve its mission.

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 relevant and engaging work that furthers its mission.

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 qualified to achieve the mission
- Identifying opportunities to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging through its work

### ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

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

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

- Setting goals, measuring progress, and evolving
- Recruiting and retaining a diverse staff and board that can carry out the mission
- Planning strategically to achieve and maintain a strong financial position
- Evaluating organizational processes and structures to ensure a culture of belonging where everyone can thrive



# Application

Start early and submit early!



Shaker Historical Society

**The one-step form to apply must be submitted by 4:30PM ET on Thursday, July 31, 2025.**

The online system will not accept late or incomplete submissions.

## BEFORE YOU BEGIN

### 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 to continue receiving important information. CAC will not extend any deadlines if our emails are sent to your spam or junk mail.

### Attend a Grant Workshop

CAC will offer a variety of technical assistance opportunities 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](#).

## ONLINE APPLICATION & REPORTING SYSTEM

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 in the guidelines.



[ONLINE APPLICATION AND REPORTING SYSTEM GUIDE](#)



# Application Questions

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## 501(C)(3) VERIFICATION

**Submit 501c3 Verification** – please verify the nonprofit status of your organization before proceeding to the application form.

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## ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

**Organization Name**

**Publicly Known As**

**Date Organization Formed**

**Is your organization a 501(c)3 non-profit organization? (yes/no)**

**Date of 501(c)3 incorporation**

**EIN Number (Tax ID)**

**Fiscal Year End Date**

**Address**

**Website**

**Phone**

**Mission Statement** (max 100 words)

**Organization Overview and History** (max 200 words)

**Grant Contact** – the Grant Contact is the primary contact between CAC and your organization for grant information, updates, and deadlines.

**Grant Contact Name, Pronouns, Title, Email Address, Phone**

**Executive Director/CEO** – the Executive Director/CEO will be contacted for major institutional communications and grant agreements.

**Executive Director/CEO Name, Pronouns, Title, Email Address, Phone**

**Board of Directors Chair** – the Board Chair will be contacted only for grant agreements, in coordination with Grant Contact and Executive Director/CEO.

**Board Chair Name, Pronouns, Title, Email Address, Phone**

# Application Questions

## ELIGIBILITY CHECK

1. Does your organization have a core mission to produce, present or create programs or activities in areas directly concerned with arts or cultural heritage (as defined by the Ohio Revised Code) for the general public? (yes/no)

Defined in the Ohio Revised Code, Chapter 3381, 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.”

2. Has your organization had a permanent and viable base of operations in Cuyahoga County for at least three years prior to July 31, 2025? (yes/no)

Applicant organization must be headquartered in and conduct the majority of its programs and services in Cuyahoga County for Cuyahoga County residents and visitors.

3. Has your organization existed as a 501(c)3 organization for at least three years, or is a successor to an arts or cultural organization that has been a 501(c)3 organization for at least five years prior to July 31, 2025? (yes/no)

4. Is your organization incorporated and authorized to do business in Ohio as verified by the [Ohio Secretary of State](#)? (yes/no)

5. Using <https://businesssearch.ohiosos.gov>, please find your organization’s Filings page, and paste the URL, which can be copied from the bottom of the Filings page. (The URL in your search-bar will not link to your organization’s page).

- Look up your organization on the SEARCH BY BUSINESS NAME page.
- Find the Active account for your organization in the SEARCH RESULTS and click SHOW DETAILS.
- Scroll to the bottom of BUSINESS DETAILS & FILINGS and click Copy URL.
- Paste the URL into the box in the online system. It should look like: <https://businesssearch.ohiosos.gov?=businessDetails/#####>

6. Has your organization employed, for a minimum of two years prior to July 31, 2025, at least one paid, professional cultural/artistic and/or administrative staff person who meets the following requirements: (yes/no) Your response does not impact grant eligibility.

- Working a minimum of 20 hours per week (or 1,040 hours per year) at or above the state-designated minimum wage
- Receives an IRS Form W-2 from the organization reporting wages and withheld taxes
- Has approval from the organization’s Board of Directors to sign for financial transactions and grant-related documents

7. Is your organization a current (2025) General Operating Support grant recipient (yes/no) (If yes) Proceed to question 13.

(If no) Has your organization previously received and successfully completed (received final grant payment) at least two grants from Cuyahoga Arts & Culture since 2021? (yes/no)

**Financial Statements:** Does your organization have independently certified audited financial statements for FY22, FY23, and FY24 if its FY24 total expenses are \$750,000 or more; or independently certified audited or reviewed financial statements for FY22, FY23, and FY24 if its FY24 total expenses are less than \$750,000? (yes/no)

(If yes) Please upload documents.

## Application Questions

**8. Upload your Board of Directors list.** Please upload a list of all current board members along with their affiliations.

**9. OPTIONAL — Upload your SMU DataArts Funder Report (with FY24 data profile in Complete status)** This upload is optional at this time, but will be required to be completed by September 30, 2025 to receive a GOS grant.

- We recommend starting the CDP well before the application deadline. It may require you to compile additional data about your organization.
- Explain any important outliers, trends, or variances. (max 200 words)

**10. What type of IRS Form 990 do you file? Select one.**

- 990
- 990-N
- 990-EZ

**11. Upload IRS Form 990, 990-EZ, or 990-N.**

Upload the IRS Form 990 for the fiscal years 2022, 2023, and 2024. The 990s must be signed or be e-signed and include form 8879-TE.

- If your organization has filed for an extension for the 2024 990, you must attach the Extension Form 8868 in its place. CAC will request 990s according to the extended due date.

**12. Upload Board Approved Budget for Current Fiscal Year**

No required format; please upload a board-approved budget for the current fiscal year.

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### ORGANIZATION LEADERSHIP & POPULATION SERVED

To improve CAC's understanding of the organizations and communities served through its grants we ask that you consider the questions below. **These responses do not impact eligibility and are not factored into any funding decisions. CAC does not make grants or funding decisions on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, disability, or any characteristic protected by law.**

**13. Do the majority of your organization's senior leadership and board publicly self-identify as Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC)? (yes, no, not sure/prefer not to answer)**

**14. Do the majority of the individuals your organization serves identify as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC)? (yes, no, not sure/prefer not to answer)**

**15. OPTIONAL — Please share any additional context below.** (up to 100 words)

Cuyahoga Arts & Culture recognizes additional historically marginalized communities including but not limited to: lesbian; gay; bisexual; queer; transgender and gender-variant people; people with disabilities; immigrants and women. CAC strongly encourages applicants who are from communities that have been historically excluded or marginalized.

## Application Questions

### ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY & GOVERNANCE CHECKLIST

| Question   | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
| A. Does your board meet on a regular schedule? How often? (insert explanation below)   |     |    |
| B. Are minutes kept and available for review?  |     |    |
| C. Does the organization work with all Board members to determine a meaningful contribution based on the individual Board member's skills and resources? |     |    |
| D. Have/will any board members be paid stipends for their service on the board or for professional services provided to the organization?                |     |    |
| E. Are any of your staff and board members related?  |     |    |
| F. Does any board member or staff person have a financial interest in the operation of the organization other than an authorized salary?                 |     |    |
| G. Has the board adopted by-laws and are they periodically reviewed?   |     |    |
| H. Does your organization have a board-approved budget?  |     |    |
| I. Does your organization have a board-approved strategic or long-range plan?  |     |    |
| J. Does your organization have a board-approved diversity, equity, and inclusion policy? (not your EOE statement)  |     |    |
| K. Are regular and year-end financial statements reviewed by the board?  |     |    |
| L. Does your organization handle its financial transactions through a regularly reconciled checking account?   |     |    |
| M. Is your organization current on all tax obligations including employee withholding, sales tax, business taxes to all levels of government?            |     |    |
| N. Is check-signing authority included in the by-laws or other written procedures?   |     |    |
| O. Does your organization have cash flow projections that are updated regularly?   |     |    |
| P. Are your present facilities, or facilities in which you present/conduct programs, <a href="#">ADA compliant</a> ?                                     |     |    |
| Q. Does your organization have a succession plan in place for executive leadership?  |     |    |
| R. Does every employee receive an annual performance review?   |     |    |
| S. Do you budget for professional development for all staff?   |     |    |
| <b>Additional Comments (Optional):</b>   |     |    |

## Application Questions

---

### STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES

The Statement of Assurances is the last step in the application process. An authorizing official will certify that they are authorized to submit the application on behalf of the organization and that the information submitted in the application is true and correct to the best of their knowledge.

**The undersigned further certifies that:**

- I am authorized to submit this Application form on behalf of this organization.
- The information submitted on this Application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.
- No information known to me has been omitted that causes information presented in this application or in the eligibility documentation to be misleading in any material respect.
- The organization is a going concern.

**First and last name of person completing this form**

**Title**

**Email**

When this form is finalized, please mark as **Complete** below, and go on to complete the other required task (501c3 verification), in the upper left-hand side of the page. When both tasks have been marked complete, you'll see the **Submit** button becomes available and you can submit your Eligibility Check.

## Post-Application



Inlet Dance Theatre, photo by Ken Blaze

**All GOS applicants will be required to participate in the SMU Data Arts annual survey. Some eligible applicants will be required to complete Eligible Revenue and Support Forms. Both requirements are due by September 30, 2025.**

### ELIGIBLE REVENUE AND SUPPORT (ERS) FORM

The ERS form is a document where an organization enters its annual sources of funding. It is used to determine the base revenue figure for each organization in the funding formula. A grant manager will reach out to applicants to begin this step in the process.

Organizations who file a financial audit or review will be required to complete the [Eligible Revenue and Support Form](#) for FY22, FY23 and FY24 by September 30, 2025.

### SMU DATA ARTS

SMU DataArts' mission is to empower arts and cultural leaders with high-quality data and evidence-based resources and insights that help them to overcome challenges and increase impact.

The Cultural Data Profile (CDP) is a free and secure online survey that collects financial and programmatic data from nonprofit arts, culture, and humanities organizations so they can apply for grants, gather insights, use data to strengthen a case for support, and contribute to nationwide research.

All GOS applicants are required to generate and submit a CAC Funder Report for FY24 by September 30, 2025.



# Grant Recipient Requirements



Lake Erie Ink

## GRANT PERIODS

All funded activities and grant expenditures must occur during the grant periods, January 1 – December 31, 2026, and January 1 – December 31, 2027.

## EVENTS CALENDAR AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

CAC asks that grant recipients 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 events and programs through CAC's online calendar ([ClevelandArtsEvents.com](http://ClevelandArtsEvents.com)) at least 30 days prior to the date the event is presented to the public. The [Events Calendar and Credit Requirements](#) document outlines these requirements. Recipients shall have active events for each month that the organization has public programming. Grant recipients that do not comply with these expectations may be subject to a reduced final grant amount.

## REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

All 2026–27 GOS grant recipients will submit yearly goals connected to CAC's Funding Priorities and will submit mid-year and year-end reports in 2026 and 2027. Reporting may

include a combination of goals, mid-year, final report based on your grant amount. These reports allow CAC to better understand progress made toward goals of the grant program, offer support where necessary, and provide an opportunity for organizations to reflect on their activities during the year. Reports consist of a narrative portion, financial documentation, self-reported staff and board demographic data, and other required support material. 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 application, grant reports, and any other requested informational material; 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.

## Grant Payments & Funding Restrictions



Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland, photo by Natasha Herbert Photography

**Cuyahoga Arts & Culture grant payments are issued during each calendar year pending grant agreement compliance. All funded activities and expenditure of grant dollars must occur during the respective calendar year.**

### GRANT PAYMENTS

CAC grants are disbursed in increments upon approval of grant requirements including organizational goals, reporting at mid-year, and year-end reports. The GOS payment schedule and requirements may vary based on the awarded grant amount.

### CAC GRANT FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

Grant Recipients shall use the General Operating Support grant for organizational expenses relating to programs or activities directly concerned with arts or culture heritage. Prohibited uses of this grant include but are not limited to:

- costs of any programs or activities located outside of Cuyahoga County;
- activities that are not open to the general public;
- fundraisers or benefits;
- regranting;
- scholarships, tuition assistance, awards or cash prizes;
- credit-bearing academic programs (K-12 and college level)
- 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; or
- advocacy of specific political causes or candidates.



### [STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION](#)







2026

PROJECT SUPPORT

Grant Program Guidelines & Resources

APPLICATION DUE:

**THURSDAY, JULY 31, 2025 BY 4:30PM ET**

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## Greetings!

Thank you for your interest in the 2026 Project Support (PS) grant program.



Cleveland Ballet, photo by New Image Photography

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.

### ABOUT CUYAHOGA ARTS & CULTURE

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

Since 2007, CAC has invested more than \$257 million in 500 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 GRANT PROGRAMS

#### GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT

Multi-year core support grants to qualifying arts and cultural nonprofit organizations in Cuyahoga County, Ohio.

*Who can apply?* Cuyahoga County-based nonprofit organizations with a [core mission of arts and culture](#) who have successfully completed at least two CAC grants, current General Operating Support grant recipients, and current Cultural Heritage grant recipients.

#### PROJECT SUPPORT

Annual grants for Cuyahoga County-based nonprofits conducting arts and culture projects in Cuyahoga County, Ohio.

*Who can apply?* New applicants, and organizations with or without a core mission of arts and culture.

### RESOURCES

To learn more about the differences between CAC's grants, refer to the [2026 Grant Guide](#). Organizations may only submit one application per cycle. First-time applicants must apply for Project Support.

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](https://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](#).

# Project Support Overview

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 projects.



Writers in Residence

Grant applications are reviewed through a public panel process. CAC will offer Project Support funding in 2026 for projects occurring in the January 1 – December 31, 2026 grant period.

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.

## PROJECT SUPPORT AT A GLANCE

- Open to 501(c)(3) organizations with or without a [core mission of arts and culture](#), as determined by CAC from documents provided during the application process.
- Grants may range from \$1,000 to \$7,500.
- For arts and culture projects only, as defined by CAC.
- Projects must begin and end between January 1 – December 31, 2026.
- 1:1 match required. 50% of matching funds can be in-kind income.

## 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, 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.

## 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."

## Timeline & Application Overview

| 1. PRE-APPLICATION   | MAY – JULY 2025                           |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get connected with CAC — sign up for CAC’s email list</li> <li>• Register with CAC’s <a href="#">online application and reporting system</a></li> <li>• Attend a <a href="#">Grant Workshop and Q&amp;A Session</a> to determine what grant is best for you</li> <li>• Start your application — available in early May</li> </ul>   |   |
| 2. APPLICATION   | DUE THURSDAY, JULY 31, 2025 BY 4:30 PM ET |
| <p>Complete and Submit Online Application by July 31, 2025 at 4:30PM ET</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required documents include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 990, 990-N or 990-EZ for the most recently completed fiscal year</li> <li>- Secretary of State Certificate of Good Standing</li> <li>- For New Applicants: Evidence of public arts or cultural programming that you produced within the previous two years prior to July 31, 2025</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Be prepared with the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organizational Overview</li> <li>- Project Basics &amp; Narratives</li> <li>- Project Budget</li> <li>- Support Materials</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |   |
| 3. POST-APPLICATION  | SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER 2025                 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online Panel Review — September 2025</li> <li>• CAC Board approves grants at public meeting — anticipated November 2025</li> <li>• Grant agreements issued and signed — anticipated December 2025 – January 2026</li> </ul>   |   |



## Eligibility



Aradhana Committee, photo by Gopi Sundaram

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY

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

- Be a 501(c)(3) organization as verified through the IRS Publication 78 by the GoVerify service.
- Have a permanent and viable base of operations in Cuyahoga County for at least one year prior to July 31, 2025. Applicant organization must have a business address in Cuyahoga County and conduct the majority of its local programs and services in Cuyahoga County for the residents of Cuyahoga County and visitors to Cuyahoga County.
- Have created, produced or presented arts or culture programming open to the public in Cuyahoga County within the previous two years prior to July 31, 2025.
- 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 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 grant from CAC in the same cycle
- Organizations that serve 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

## Grant Amounts & Process



CityMusic Cleveland, photo by Amanda Chambers

### GRANT AMOUNTS

Project Support grants may range from \$1,000 – \$7,500.

Maximum grant request amounts are determined by an organization's CAC grant history and budget size (as determined by an applicant's IRS 990 filing), as follows:

#### UP TO \$5,000

The maximum grant is up to \$5,000 for:

- new applicants, and;
- returning applicants who filed IRS Form 990-N in the most recently completed fiscal year.

#### UP TO \$7,500

The maximum grant is up to \$7,500 for:

- returning applicants who filed IRS Form 990 or Form 990-EZ in the most recently completed fiscal year.

### GRANT APPROVAL PROCESS

Panel scores and grant amounts are subject to approval by CAC's Board of Trustees at a public meeting; applicants are welcome to attend all CAC Board meetings, 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 by CAC's Board to the Project Support grant program; the panel score for each application, as determined by a panel of outside experts; and the total request amounts of all applications eligible for funding.

*Recommended* grant amounts will be shared with applicants prior to CAC Board approval.



## Funding Criteria



BigHearted Blooms

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.

*CAC prioritizes public benefit because grants are made with public funds.*

••• [View the GLOSSARY for examples of how applicants demonstrate CAC's funding criteria.](#)

## Review Process & Scoring Framework



Western Reserve Land Conservancy

### 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 selected and vetted by CAC staff 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 of up to \$200 for their service. The panel will evaluate all eligible applications based on CAC's funding criteria.

CAC reviews applications for completeness but does not score or provide opinions. Panel comments and scores will be shared with applicants and the public after grants are awarded.

### PANEL SCORING FRAMEWORK

Panelists will submit a **score between 1-10 points** based on CAC's three funding criteria.

**With an emphasis on Public Benefit, has the application demonstrated the funding criteria?**

**8-10 points:** The applicant has provided strong evidence that the funding criteria are met.

**5-7 points:** The applicant has provided fair evidence that the funding criteria are met.

**1-4 points:** The applicant has provided weak evidence that the funding criteria are met.

The minimum score threshold for funding will be determined based on the amount of funds available and total request amounts. Applicants who demonstrate weak evidence that the funding criteria are met will not be recommended for funding.

# Application

Start early and submit early!



Art of Me Productions

The eligibility check and application are now one step, and must be submitted by 4:30PM ET on Thursday, July 31, 2025. The online system will not accept late or incomplete submissions.

## BEFORE YOU BEGIN

### 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 to continue receiving important information. CAC will not extend any deadlines if our emails are sent to your spam or junk mail.

### Attend a Grant Workshop

CAC will offer a variety of technical assistance opportunities 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](#).

### Gather 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.

## ONLINE APPLICATION & REPORTING SYSTEM

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.

## ••• [ONLINE APPLICATION AND REPORTING SYSTEM GUIDE](#)

# Application Questions

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## 501(C)(3) VERIFICATION

**Submit 501c3 Verification** — please verify the nonprofit status of your organization before proceeding to the application form.

---

## ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

**Organization Name**  
**Publicly Known As**  
**Date Organization Formed**  
**Is your organization a 501(c)3 non-profit organization? (yes/no)**  
**Date of 501(c)3 incorporation**  
**EIN Number (Tax ID)**  
**Fiscal Year End Date**  
**Address**  
**Website**  
**Phone**

**Mission Statement** (max 100 words)

### Organization Overview and History

Who started the organization and why? Has it evolved since then? If so, how?  
 (max 200 words)

**Grant Contact** — the Grant Contact is the primary contact between CAC and your organization for grant information, updates, and deadlines.

**Grant Contact Name, Pronouns, Title, Email Address, Phone**

**Executive Director** — the Executive Director will be contacted for major institutional communications and grant agreements.

**Executive Director Name, Pronouns, Title, Email Address, Phone**



# Application Questions

## ELIGIBILITY CHECK

1. Does your organization have a core mission to produce, present or create programs or activities in areas directly concerned with arts or cultural heritage (as defined by the Ohio Revised Code) for the general public? (yes/no)
2. Has your organization had a permanent and viable base of operations in Cuyahoga County for at least one year prior to July 31, 2025? (yes/no)

Applicant organizations must have a business address in Cuyahoga County and conduct the majority of its local programs and services in Cuyahoga County for the residents of Cuyahoga County and visitors to Cuyahoga County.

3. Is your organization incorporated and authorized to do business in Ohio as verified by the [Ohio Secretary of State](#)? (yes/no)
4. Using <https://businesssearch.ohiosos.gov>, please find your organization's Filings page, and paste the URL, which can be copied from the bottom of the Filings page. (The URL in your search-bar will not link to your organization's page).
  - Look up your organization on the SEARCH BY BUSINESS NAME page.
  - Find the Active account for your organization in the SEARCH RESULTS and click SHOW DETAILS.
  - Scroll to the bottom of BUSINESS DETAILS & FILINGS and click Copy URL.
  - Paste the URL into the box in the online system. It should look like: <https://businesssearch.ohiosos.gov?=businessDetails/#####>

5. Is your organization a current (2025) Project Support grant recipient? (yes/no)  
(If no) Did your organization receive CAC funding of any kind between 2021–2025? (yes/no)

### Organization Leadership and Population Served

To improve CAC's understanding of the organizations and communities served through its grants we ask that you consider the questions below. **These responses do not impact eligibility, will not be shared with the panel, and are not factored into any funding decisions. CAC does not make grants or funding decisions on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, disability, or any characteristic protected by law.**

6. Do the majority of your organization's senior leadership and board publicly self-identify as Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC)? (yes, no, not sure/prefer not to answer)
7. Do the majority of the individuals your organization serves identify as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC)? (yes, no, not sure/prefer not to answer)
8. **OPTIONAL — Please share any additional context below.** (100 words)

Cuyahoga Arts & Culture recognizes additional historically marginalized communities including but not limited to: lesbian; gay; bisexual; queer; transgender and gender-variant people; people with disabilities; immigrants and women. CAC strongly encourages applicants who are from communities that have been historically excluded or marginalized.

## Application Questions

### 9. What type of IRS Form 990 do you file? Select one.

- 990
- 990-N
- 990-EZ

### 10. Upload IRS Form 990, 990-EZ, or 990-N.

Upload the IRS Form 990 for your 2024 fiscal year. Only signed or e-signed 990s will be accepted. E-signed 990s must also include Form 8879-TE. If you filed an extension, upload your most recently completed 990 and your extension filing. Options for acceptable 990s include:

- 990-N for fiscal year ending in 2024
- 990/990-EZ for fiscal year ending in 2024
- 990/990-EZ for fiscal year ending in 2023 + Form 8868 Extension

### 11. Enter your organization's total budget (expenses) for the 2025 fiscal year.

### 12. Upload evidence of arts and culture programming.

If this is your first time applying for a CAC grant or if your last grant received was prior to 2023, please upload examples and materials demonstrating the public arts and culture programming presented or produced by your organization between July 31, 2023 – July 31, 2025, and show your organization's name, logo, and/or connection to the programming taking place.

### 13. OPTIONAL — Provide links (URLS) to online documentation of arts and culture programming.

Use this optional field to provide up to two links to websites for your support materials.

### 14. Arts and Culture Programming Upload Explanation (100 words)

Please describe the programming taking place in the uploaded materials, including when and where the programming took place, who was invited to participate or how it was advertised to the public, and how your organization was involved in the program.

---

## PROJECT BASICS

### 1. Project Title (Up to 10 words) This should be the title, not a summary of the project.

### 2. Project Dates — All events must begin and end within the grant period (January 1, 2026 – December 31, 2026). The start and end dates should not be the entire calendar year.

### 3. Public Event Location(s). Where in Cuyahoga County will your public arts and culture programming take place? (Up to 150 words)

### 4. Total number of expected participants and/or audience members.

### 5. Will the event/activity be free? (yes/no)

# Application Questions

## PROJECT NARRATIVES

**Project Support grants are in support of arts and culture activities with a public programming component in Cuyahoga County.** We seek applications that demonstrate artistic and cultural vibrancy by creating relevant and engaging projects. Cuyahoga Arts & Culture is made possible by the residents of Cuyahoga County through a countywide tax. It is our priority that dollars granted are to the benefit of Cuyahoga County residents. Please use the questions below to share how your project demonstrates CAC's public benefit funding criteria.

**Public Benefit: An organization's ability to meaningfully connect with its community through its project.** *Tip: Refer to CAC's [Funding Criteria definitions on Page 8](#).*

**6. Project Summary — Briefly describe the project, planning process, and implementation.**  
(Up to 400 words)

**7. Define your community.** (Up to 200 words) *Tip: A community may be defined by geography (place), identity (attributes), affinity (what we like) or other connection.*

**8. How will you connect with your community through your project? How will you be inclusive and promote belonging?** (Up to 200 words)

**As a steward of public dollars Cuyahoga Arts and Culture values organizational capacity.**

Please use the sections below to demonstrate your organization's ability to successfully plan for and manage your project.

**9. Describe your team. Include who will be involved in the project and how they are qualified.**  
(Up to 200 words)

**10. OPTIONAL: Is there any additional information about your project or organization that may be helpful to an outside panelist reviewing your application?** (Up to 250 words) *Tip: CAC recruits panelists from outside of the region. What might be important information to share with someone who is unfamiliar with Cuyahoga County or your work? i.e. demographic information, project location descriptions, historical context, etc.*

## Application Questions

### PROJECT BUDGET

- 11. Amount Requested from CAC** — the requested amount cannot be more than 50% of the proposed project's total expenses. Please enter a whole number with no commas or dollar signs.

#### INCOME TABLE

Please describe your sources of income and their amounts in the table below.

- Use the first row for your CAC grant request.
- CAC requires a 1:1 match in funds.
- 50% of your match funds can come from in-kind donations.

| Income Source (text)                | Income Amount (\$) |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| CAC grant request                   | \$                 |
| Other grants                        |                    |
| Individual donations                |                    |
| Ticket / admission revenue (earned) |                    |
| Other funding                       |                    |
| In-kind                             |                    |
| <b>Total Project Income</b>         | \$                 |

#### EXPENSE TABLE

Please describe your expense categories and their amounts on the table below. CAC grant amounts cannot be more than half of the expenses. For example: if your CAC grant is \$4,000, you must show at least \$8,000 in expenses. In-kind donations listed above may be included here as well.

| Expense Category (text)         | Expense Amount (\$) |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| Arts and cultural professionals |                     |
| Venue or space rental           |                     |
| Marketing                       |                     |
| Administrative                  |                     |
| Other project expenses          |                     |
| In-kind                         |                     |
| <b>Total Project Expenses</b>   | \$                  |



# Application Questions

---

## SUPPORT MATERIALS

### 12. Upload Arts and Cultural Support Materials

Support materials play a critical role in helping panelists evaluate your proposed project's alignment with CAC's funding criteria, specifically **artistic and cultural vibrancy, an organization's ability to create a relevant and engaging project**. For more information on selecting and uploading support materials to your online application, please refer to the [Support Materials Guide](#).

Include at least one (1) but no more than three (3) total uploads and/or web-based support materials:

- Upload items of your choice that demonstrate your Public Benefit, Artistic and Cultural Vibrancy and Organizational Capacity.
- Photos, videos, audio, and other documents do not necessarily need to be professionally produced to demonstrate vibrant programming.
- All audio and visual materials should be cued to immediately begin with relevant activity.
- Applicants are encouraged to submit quality support materials that are current (within the last 24 months) and relevant to the application.

**Optional:** Include web links as support materials, no more than three (3) total uploads.

**Please note:** CAC does not own, collect royalties on or hold copyrights to artistic products resulting from its grants, nor will it take any action on behalf of the grant recipient to protect the grant recipient's intellectual property rights. CAC does, however, have legal authority to reproduce and use submitted documentation (electronically and in print) of such artistic products for educational, promotional, official or non-commercial purposes. By providing documentation of artistic products to CAC, you consent to such use by CAC.

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## STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES

The Statement of Assurances is the last step in the application process. An authorizing official will certify that they are authorized to submit the application on behalf of the organization and that the information submitted in the application is true and correct to the best of their knowledge.

**The undersigned further certifies that:**

- I am authorized to submit this Eligibility Check on behalf of this organization.
- The information submitted on this Eligibility Check is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.
- No information known to me has been omitted that causes information presented in this Eligibility Check or in the eligibility documentation to be misleading in any material respect.
- The organization is a going concern.

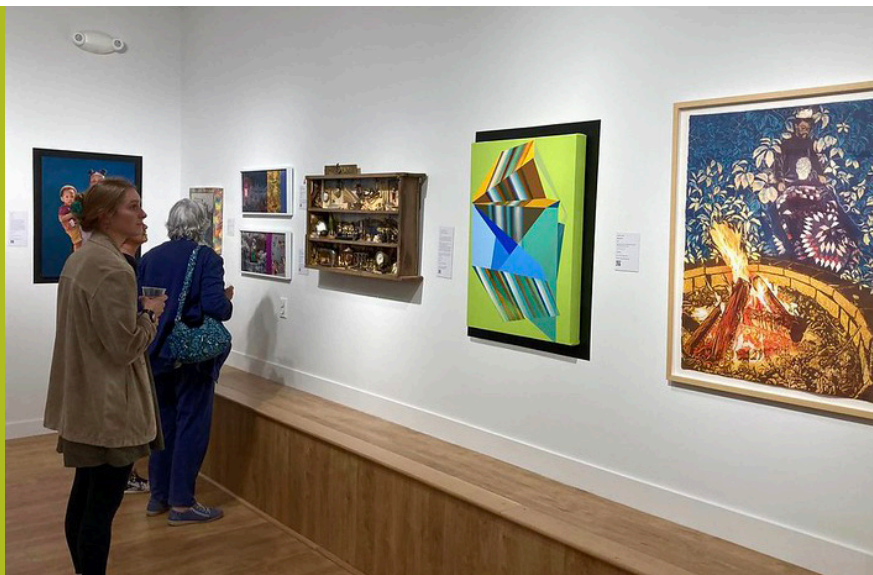
**First and last name of person completing this form**

**Title**

**Email**

When this form is finalized, please mark as **Complete** below, and go on to complete the other required task (501c3 verification), in the upper left-hand side of the page. When both tasks have been marked complete, you'll see the **Submit** button becomes available and you can submit your Eligibility Check.

## Grant Recipient Requirements



Ursuline College, photo by Luanne Bole-Becker

### Grant Period

All funded activities and grant expenditures must occur during the grant period, January 1, 2026 – December 31, 2026.

### Grant Agreement and Compliance

If your application is recommended and approved for funding, 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

Project Support grants are reimbursement grants and are paid upon completion of the project and approval of a 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 in 2026.

### CAC Grant Funding Restrictions

Grant Recipients shall use the Project Support grant for project expenses directly concerned with arts or culture heritage. Restricted uses of CAC funds include but are not limited to:

- costs of any programs or activities located outside of Cuyahoga County
- activities that are not open to the general public
- general operating support or operating expenses not directly related to your project
- fundraising events or benefits
- regranteeing
- scholarships, tuition assistance, awards or cash prizes
- credit-bearing academic programs (K-12 and college level)
- 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

## Grant Recipient Requirements (continued)

### 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. 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. Applicant organizations may only apply for one project to be funded. Multiple organizations may not request funds for the same project. Contact a grant manager with any questions.

### Events Calendar and Credit Requirements

CAC asks that organizations receiving Project Support connect 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 2026 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.





| Contractor               | Amount  | Purpose   | Term          | Requires Board Approval |
|--------------------------|---------|---|---------------|-------------------------|
| The Cleveland Foundation | \$9,000 | Accept grant <i>from</i> The Cleveland Foundation for a summer intern | 5/28-8/8/2025 | Yes                     |



## Board of Trustees: 2025 Meeting Schedule

All regular meetings will start at 4:00 pm unless otherwise noted.

| Date   | Location  |
|--|---|
| <b>Tuesday, February 25</b>  | Cleveland Public Library<br>Main Campus, Learning Commons |
| <b>Wednesday, April 16</b><br><i>Annual Meeting</i>  | Cleveland Public Library<br>MLK Branch – Tech Room        |
| <b>Wednesday, September 25</b>   | Cleveland Public Library<br>Main Campus, Conference B     |
| <b>Wednesday, November 12</b><br><i>Approval of 2026 grants</i>  | Cleveland Public Library<br>Main Campus, Learning Commons |
| <b>Wednesday, December 17*</b><br><i>Approval of 2026 budget</i><br><i>*meeting starts at 3:30pm to include an executive session</i> | Cleveland Public Library<br>Main Campus, Learning Commons |