

Connecticut Office of the Arts Grant Overview Guidelines

ABOUT THE CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF THE ARTS

The Department of Economic and Community Development's (DECD) Office of the Arts (COA) develops and strengthens the arts in Connecticut and makes artistic experiences widely available to residents and visitors. Through its grant programs, the office invests in Connecticut artists and arts organizations and encourages the public's participation as creators, learners, supporters, and audience members. Through its program and services, the office connects people and places to the arts and helps to build vital communities across the state.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) is a public agency dedicated to supporting excellence in the arts, both new and established; bringing the arts to all Americans; and providing leadership in arts education. Established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government, the NEA awards grants to state arts agencies and regional arts organizations, as well as direct grants to individual non-profit arts organizations to promote the arts across America.

State arts agencies, such as the Connecticut Office of the Arts, are considered NEA's primary partners in serving the American people. As such, COA applies for and receives annual funding from the NEA. As a recipient of federal funds, COA complies with all pertinent federal requirements. Those COA grantees receiving federal funds must, therefore, comply with all pertinent federal requirements.

PREFACE

These guidelines outline what is required of applicants by law and by the Connecticut Office of the Arts (COA), Department of Economic and Community Development. This section will help applicants understand the requirements before entering the COA funding process. Because most COA programs are competitive, however, meeting these requirements does not ensure activities will be funded. All applications are objectively reviewed according to how well they meet the criteria stated in the guidelines under each program area. Should you have any questions regarding any of the guidelines or applications, please call the appropriate program manager.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

Applicants receiving COA funds must comply with all governmental regulation concerning nondiscrimination. Grantees are prohibited from discrimination in employment and the provision of services because of race, color, religious creed, age, sex, marital status, national origin, sexual orientation, ancestry, learning disability, physical disability or blindness, present or past history of mental disability, mental retardation, genetic history or criminal record.

ADA COMPLIANCE

Applicants receiving COA funds must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 by making appropriate and reasonable accommodations to ensure that people with disabilities have equal physical and communications access to services and programs, as defined by federal law. If an applicant's facilities or activities do not meet the standards of the ADA, the applicant may be ineligible for COA funding.

OWNERSHIP

COA 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 grantee to protect the grantee's intellectual property rights. COA does, however, have legal authority to reproduce and use documentation of such products for educational, promotional, official or noncommercial purposes, both electronically and in print. COA will retain possession of all materials submitted in support of a grant application or a final report.

FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

The COA does not fund the following:

- Any organization whose primary place of business and operations is not in Connecticut
- Organizations whose membership and participation policies do not comply with non-discrimination laws
- Brick and mortar and capital improvements except in the Arts Endowment Fund and as noted in the Arts Catalyze Placemaking program.
- Specific activities or projects that are already funded by another COA program during the same fiscal year
- Activities that have already been completed
- Activities to eliminate or reduce existing deficits
- Activities funded by or which generate revenue for COA
- Religious programming and activities
- Benefits, fundraisers, social events
- Interest expenses paid on loans or debts
- Scholarship assistance for academic or non-academic programs
- Lobbying activities
- Political contributions
- Legal fees
- Individuals who are not residents of Connecticut at the time of application. Applicants for the State Troubadour and State Poet Laureate programs must have resided in Connecticut for at least five years prior to the submission of the application.

APPLYING TO MULTIPLE PROGRAMS

COA does not accept applications to multiple grant programs for the same project and activity.

Applicants must follow all instructions and provide accurate and complete information in all sections and supporting materials as stated in each program's guidelines. Failure to do so will render the application ineligible for review.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

Applications and all information submitted will become public records under the Freedom of Information Act, C.G.S. §1-200, et. seq. unless specifically exempted by the Act. Applicants may request that information contained in the application which are not exempt by the Act, C.G.S. §1-210, be exempt from public disclosure. Such requests will be taken under consideration by the Department of Economic and Community Development.

AWARD NOTIFICATION / GRANT PAYMENT

The following process is applicable to all COA grants:

- COA will notify all applicants of funding decisions via email. Successful applicants will receive award notification and grant contracts which must be signed and returned within 30 days before grant payments will be processed, unless noted otherwise in the contract package.
- Every COA grant contract issued to an organization shall be accompanied by a contract specific certification (a.k.a. “certified resolution”) indicating that the grantee has passed a resolution authorizing the named individual to sign the contracts on behalf of the organization and that the resolution is in effect as of the date of the contract signing. While grant contracts issued to an individual will not require a certified resolution, grant contracts issued to any fiscal sponsor will require a certified resolution.
- Contracts shall be accompanied by a nondiscrimination certification (if applicable) which certifies that the organization has resolved to support nondiscrimination agreements and warranties required under Connecticut General Statutes and that the resolution is in effect.
- After the signed contract and certifications are returned to COA, contingent upon availability of funds, payments will be authorized in one or more installments as indicated on the contract.
- Grant funds, however, will not be disbursed if the grantee has an overdue final report from any prior COA grant program.

GRANTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Grant recipients are required to expend all COA grant funds within the specified funding period for the purposes indicated in Section 1 of the contract and confirmed by the applicant’s grant proposal.

Any request for changes or modifications to a contract, including a request for an extension of the funding period, shall be formally made in writing to the Director of the Office of the Arts. Submission of such a request does not authorize the change or modification. All requests for extension of time shall be made approximately 90 days prior to the expiration of the contract.

NOTE: COA urges grantees to contact our office at the earliest indication that their funded project or program will necessitate any noteworthy change(s) from the information submitted in their original proposal (termination of a partnership, a greater than 20% change in allocation of state funding, difficulty meeting a deadline, etc).

Grantees shall honor all legal requirements as specified in the contract. Those receiving federal funds shall comply with certain federal requirements as stipulated.

MATCHING FUNDS

Grantees shall adhere to the matching requirements of the particular grant program. State funds cannot be used as match. Refer to individual grant programs for details.

CREDIT AND PUBLICITY RESPONSIBILITIES

Grant recipients shall credit the Department of Economic and Community Development’s Office of the Arts in print, A/V and electronic materials and publicity materials (such as press releases, brochures, posters, advertisements and web sites) related to the funded project or activities or comparable credit approved by COA. Please consult the Connecticut Office of the Art’s Credit & Publicity Kit, which will be sent to grant recipients at the time of award notification. This document is also available online at www.cultureandtourism.org.

APPEALS PROCESS

What May be Appealed:

Applicants to the COA grant programs for funding or for listing within a directory or roster may appeal the decision of COA based on the following reasons:

1. the application was declined on the basis of review criteria other than those stated in the program guidelines;
2. the application was declined due to influence of a COA Arts Council or Advisory Committee member who failed to disclose conflict of interest; or
3. the application was declined due to information withheld or information erroneously provided to the review panel by COA staff despite complete and accurate information being provided in the application.

Incomplete applications are denied any appeals process. Dissatisfaction with the amount of the award or denial of an award is not grounds for an appeal.

Process for an Appeal:

An applicant seeking to appeal a decision of COA shall adhere to the process set forth below:

1. any request for appeal must be submitted in writing to the Deputy Commissioner of DECD
2. any request for appeal must be received by DECD within 30 days of the applicant's receipt of notice of decision
3. any request for appeal of a decision not to be included in a directory or roster must be received within 15 days of the applicant's receipt of notice of decision
4. the Deputy Commissioner shall review the appeal with the chair of the COA Arts Council and the appropriate grant program manager(s) to determine whether the appeal has merit
5. if the appeal is determined to have merit, the appeal will be re-evaluated by the COA Arts Council at its next regularly scheduled meeting
6. if the appeal is determined to have no merit, the applicant will be so notified
7. any decision rendered pursuant to this process shall be final

If COA changes a funding decision as a result of an appeal, the timing of the payment of the grant shall be made at the discretion of the Deputy Commissioner.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

COA grant recipients shall submit a final report within 60 days of completion of the grant period specified on the contract or following completion of the funded project if sooner. Future COA funding is contingent upon submission of final reports. Forms and instructions are available on COA's web site at www.cultureandtourism.org or by request.

The final report must include project work samples that acknowledge COA support (see specific program guidelines for any additional reporting requirements).

STATE SINGLE AUDIT:

The grantee receiving state funds must comply with Sections 4-230 through 4-236 of the Connecticut General Statutes. Grantees that are a municipality, audited agency or not-for-profit organization, and that expend state financial assistance equal to or in excess of three hundred thousand dollars in any fiscal year, must conduct a single audit in accordance with the provisions of the above-referenced General Statutes. Further information is available on the Office of Policy and Management web site at:

<http://www.ct.gov/opm/cwp/view.asp?q=383096>

GRANT CANCELLATIONS

COA has the right to withhold, reduce or cancel grants if a grantee:

- cancels, suspends or significantly changes the scope and activities of a funded project
- fails to comply with the terms of the grant contract
- owes a final report (past due) for a previously received COA grant
- is unable to raise the required match
- demonstrates inadequate financial management or oversight.