The purpose of Northwest Aurora Arts Grants is to help foster the Aurora Cultural Arts District and economic development in Original Aurora by providing financial support to individuals and organizations who create arts and culture programs and services within the Arts District capable of attracting audiences.

**Deadline:** Applications are due no later than Friday, November 22, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. See page 5 for details.

**Grant Boundaries**
For the purposes of this grant only, “Arts District” is defined as the section of Northwest Aurora bounded by 13th Avenue (south), 16th Avenue including City Park (north), Boston Street (west), and Geneva Street (east). Venues and/or events outside of, but in close proximity to, these boundaries may be considered on a case by case basis.
Outcomes
Successful applications will demonstrate a strong likelihood that the proposed programs/services will help accomplish one or more of the following:

- Enhance the Arts District’s identity as a destination for arts and culture programs/services that appeal to a broad diversity of audiences.
- Build upon existing community assets, including engagement of local residents.
- Increase visitors and area sales.
- Develop the capacity of arts and culture organizations as well as individuals to accomplish any of the above outcomes.

Types of Grants
- **General Operating Support** grants provide funds to arts and culture organizations located in the Arts District that can be used to support regular programming activities and administration. General Operating Support grants assist organizations in fulfilling their missions by providing funds to maintain their stability and encourage their advancement. These grants provide general operating support to organizations to continue, strengthen and expand their programs.
- **Project Support** grants support ongoing or short-term arts and culture projects in the Arts District. Projects should engage or benefit the residents of the arts district as well as other city residents and visitors. Projects should be designed to increase access to the arts, increase opportunities for artists to create and present their work or to expand arts education opportunities for young people.

Eligibility Criteria
- **General Operating Support** grants are available to organizations that serve more than 80% of their participants in the Arts District AND do more than 80% of their programming in the Arts District.
- **Project Support** grants are available to individuals and organizations planning to implement an arts or culture project in the Arts District that will help achieve one or more of the above outcomes.

Non-Discrimination
Grantees as well as their employees, contractors and volunteers shall not discriminate against any employee, applicant for employment, contractor, subcontractor or patron because of race, color, creed, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or veteran status.

Determining Awards
Applications will be reviewed and scored by a panel consisting of members of the city’s Cultural Affairs Commission and other community members. Separate panels review General Operating Support and Project Support applications. Panels meetings are public meetings, and applicants may be asked to answer questions and/or provide additional information about their application(s). For that reason, one or more representatives of an application must be present at the panel meeting for their application type.
Definitions

**Annual Operating Income** (AOI) is defined as an applicant’s total unrestricted income.

**Home** is defined as a physical building either owned or rented by the applicant on an annual basis in which regular programming occurs over the course of a year.

**Index** is defined as the average score from the panel converted to a percentage.

**Awards are calculated as follows (assumes total amount to be awarded is $185,000):**

**General Operating Support Grants**

1. The total amount to be awarded for General Operating Support grants will be $150,000 (about 80% of the total).
2. Applicants meeting the eligibility requirements will be placed into one of three Tiers as follows:
   A. Tier I - Eligible for a maximum grant of $50,000.
      i. Annual operating income greater than $100,000
      ii. Provides year-round operations in a "home" in the arts district
   B. Tier II - Eligible for a maximum grant of $25,000
      i. Annual operating income greater than $50,000
      ii. Provides occasional programming at one or more locations in the arts district
   C. Tier III - Eligible for maximum of grant of $10,000
      i. Annual operating income less than $50,000
      ii. Provides occasional programming at one or more locations in the arts district
3. Annual operating incomes will be derived from projected budgets (as opposed to last completed fiscal year). In cases where the difference between the last completed budget and the projected budget is greater than 15%, the commission may decide otherwise.
4. To be eligible for an award, an applicant must earn an average score (on a scale of 1 – 5) of 2.5 or better from the panel.
5. Awards are calculated by multiplying the applicant's index by the maximum award for their tier.
6. If the total amount to be awarded using the method just described exceeds the total amount available, an across-the-board adjustment by the percentage difference will be calculated.
7. Awards will be rounded to the nearest hundred dollars.

**Project Support Grants**

1. The total amount awarded for Project Support grants will be $35,000 (about 20% of the total).
2. The maximum possible project grant award is $10,000.
3. To be eligible for an award, an applicant must earn an average score (on a scale of 1 – 5) of 2.5 or better from the panel.
4. Awards are calculated by multiplying the amount requested (up to a maximum of $10,000) by the applicant's index.
5. If the total amount to be awarded using the method just described exceeds the total amount available, an across-the-board adjustment by the percentage difference will be calculated.
6. Awards will be rounded to the nearest hundred dollars.

Contracts and Payments
Northwest Aurora Arts Grants require awardees to enter into an Agreement with the City of Aurora which will require awardees to show proof of insurance, agree to various terms and conditions (for example use of funds, non-discrimination, indemnification, etc.) and to monitor, document and report on processes and outcomes.

General Operating Support
General Operating Support grantees with a fully executed Agreement may request up to 50% of their award after March 30 and the remainder of the award after October 30 if contractual obligations have been met.

Project Support
Project Support grantees may request up to 50% of their award once they have a fully executed Agreement and the remainder of the award after the successful completion of the project. Applicants that are unable to implement their project given this timeline may appeal to the Cultural Affairs Commission.

Final Reports
Grantees in both categories will be required to submit a short report at the conclusion of the grant period describing what they did.

Acknowledgement of City of Aurora Funding
All grantees are required to acknowledge the city of Aurora in printed materials, publications, advertisements and signage related to the funded programs and/or services. Grantees are prohibited from acknowledging the city of Aurora as a funder, sponsor, contributor or any other type of supporter for any program or service other than those specifically set forth in the Application and Agreement. Acknowledgements may take the form of a statement such as “Financial support for [name of organization or project] is provided in part by the city of Aurora.” The logo for the city of Aurora may be used in addition to a statement or instead of a statement when space is limited.

The city emblem may be found here: https://www.auroragov.org/MediaKit
The following information is provided to help you answer the questions in the application. Please read it carefully!

How to prepare and submit your application:
- Answer all four questions in four pages or fewer. The applicant profile page and the required attachments are not included in the 4 page limit.
- In order to make reading your application a pleasurable experience for the reviewers, we recommend an easily readable font (Times New Roman, Calibri, Garamond, etc.) with a type size of 12 and one inch margins all around.
- Combine your profile page, answers to the four questions and any required attachments into one pdf file.
- Email one PDF file to Gary Margolis at gmargoli@auroragov.org.
- Complete applications are due by November 22, 2019 at 4:00 p.m.

1. Programming and Services
   a. The question for General Operating Support applicants is below.
   b. The question for Project Support applicants is on page 6.

Applicants for General Operating Grants – Please respond to the following:
Please give us an overview of the arts/culture work you (or your organization) have done in the past, where you have done the work and a description of your audiences. If you have experience working in the arts district, please discuss that. What do you propose to do in the arts district in 2020? Please make sure to pay attention to both the programmatic (what you do) side of your work as well as the management (how you get it done) side. The commission is especially interested in learning about your programmatic and management (including financial) challenges and your plans to address them.

What we are looking for:
If you’re seeking funds for General Operating Support, your response to this question needs to make an argument for the work of your entire organization rather than for a specific project. Your application will be judged based on overall organizational strength and your organization’s role in promoting and strengthening the Arts District.

What to highlight:
- DO NOT ASSUME that readers of your application know ANYTHING about you or your organization.
- Prepare an introduction that covers your organization’s purpose, goals and current programs.
- Describe your governance (board and staff) and your history (especially prior work in the Arts District).
- Describe your programming for 2020. If you do programming outside the district, please include a description of that, and make sure you meet the eligibility requirement for this grant program (see Attachment 1).
- Describe current challenges your organization faces as it works to fulfill its mission.
• Describe the various ways your organization monitors, assesses and improves its programs.
• Describe your organization’s fundraising plan (earned and contributed). If you have a budget deficit and/or debt, describe your plan to remedy those.

**Applicants for Project Grants – Please respond to the following:**
1. Name of project
2. Provide a detailed description of the project (what exactly are you going to do, when, where – must be in the arts district, for whom, why, what is the fee, if any, to participate, etc.).
3. Do you have a track record of implementing this project or a similar one either in Aurora or any other place? If yes, please provide details.

**What we are looking for:**
Who, What, Where, When, and Why? The best project support applications are for projects that are planned well ahead of the grant deadline with clear timelines, objectives and outcomes. In that same vein, you should be clear on how you will evaluate the success of your project before it happens – don’t let evaluation be an after-thought. A plan to evaluate provides confidence in the reader that you care about what you did and you want to improve.

**What to highlight:**
• Community involvement in the planning process
• How the project reaches the local community and attracts outside visitors
• The quality of the arts experience
• How the grant will be paying for arts related expenses
• How you have looked for (and hopefully secured) other sources of funding

**Most common mistakes made on submitted grant applications:**
• Completeness! Make sure all questions are answered and all attachments included.
• Budget errors: Double check your math! Round dollar amounts to the nearest $10.
• Timeline: The project start date cannot be before January 1, 2020 and must conclude by December 31, 2020.
• Lack of specifics – artists, locations, dates, times, etc.
• Project narrative not reconciling with budget items. For example, you might write in your response to question #1, that you are anticipating to increase ticket sales and the revenue earned from those sales by 15% in 2020, but your financial attachments show no increase in earned revenue from 2019 to 2020.

**2. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

Please tell us how your organization is pursuing these values in terms of both how the organization is run and how the organization “invites” and builds its audiences. How do you monitor and evaluate that work?

**What we are looking for:**
The commission believes that organizations that embrace the values of diversity, equity and inclusion are better equipped to help themselves and the greater community because each person
has value to contribute, and we must address barriers and historical factors that have prevented them from doing so. Economists argue that organizations (and countries) that tap into diverse talent pools are stronger and more efficient, and therefore view discrimination as economic inefficiency – the result of a systematic misallocation of human resources. Audiences (and donors) are our customers, and they want to see themselves represented in the organizations that serve them, and diverse organizations are more likely to understand the needs of a diverse client base. Diverse nonprofit organizations, and the diversity of perspectives within them, will lead to better solutions to social and economic problems.

The commission further believes that an organization that prioritizes diversity, equity and inclusion creates an environment that respects and values individual difference along varying dimensions. In addition, inclusive organizations foster cultures that minimize bias and recognize and address systemic inequities, which, if unaddressed, can create disadvantage for certain individuals. This is not a human resources issue, it is a strategic issue. These efforts should be reflected in organizational mission, vision, and values; incorporated into strategic plans; and cascaded throughout the organization.

Definitions

Diversity includes ALL the ways in which people differ, encompassing the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. While diversity is often used in reference to race, ethnicity, and gender, the commission embraces a broader definition of diversity that also includes age, national origin, religion, ability/disability, sexual orientation, sexual identification, socioeconomic status, where a person sleeps, physical health, mental health, veteran status, education, occupation, marital status, language, physical appearance, experience with the criminal justice system, or any other characteristic that a group of people may use to help identify themselves. Our definition also includes diversity of thought: ideas, perspectives, and values. We also recognize that individuals affiliate with multiple identities.

Equity is the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. Improving equity involves increasing justice and fairness within the procedures and processes of institutions or systems, as well as in their distribution of resources. Tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within our society.

Inclusion is the act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported and valued to fully participate. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people. It’s important to note that while an inclusive group is by definition diverse, a diverse group isn’t always inclusive. Increasingly, recognition of unconscious or “implicit bias” helps organizations to be deliberate about addressing issues of inclusivity.
3. Who are the people who will help you do this work?

Please tell us about the people who are planning, implementing and reviewing what you do.

What we are looking for:
The Cultural Affairs Commission believes that successful arts and culture organizations pay as much attention to their management of personnel as they do to their production of programs and services. We are looking for organizations that have “competent” people in the key areas identified below. Competency can be demonstrated through a combination of academic and/or professional training, on-the-job experience and a demonstrated record of success. Competent individuals may be paid or volunteer, full-time or part-time. For example, you may have a volunteer board member whose profession is elementary school teacher, and she is responsible for your organization’s financial management. You could demonstrate her competency in this position by stating the following:

Esther Mamadu, the volunteer treasurer of our board of directors, has managed our finances for the past five years. Her activities include weekly meetings with the staff to ensure that revenues and expenses are being tracked and deposited properly and monthly finance reports using professional financial management software to the board. In those years, the organization has operated without debt or deficits, earned revenue has increased by 15%, contributed revenue by 25%, administrative expenses have been kept to less than 15% of total expenses each year, and Form 990s have been submitted on time each year to the IRS.

An exemplary response to this question (like the one above) will provide information for the following “roles.” You may not use the following labels nor do these “roles” have to be performed by different people. One person may be responsible for more than one of the following and/or responsibilities may be shared. We do expect, however, that you can demonstrate a level of competence for each responsibility that a person has.

a) Diversity, equity and inclusion
b) Executive director and/or business manager (responsible for overall operations and business decisions)
c) Artistic director (responsible for artistic decisions)
d) Marketing/Public Relations/Outreach (responsible for getting the word out about what you do and building your audience)
e) If your organization offers programs/services for K-12 children, who develops and oversees those programs/services?
f) Identify and outline the duties of volunteers (other than those already described).
g) Others?
4. Ability to attract “outside” audiences to the Arts District

Please tell us how you will attract audiences from outside the arts district not only to attend your programs but also to contribute to the greater economic activity of the arts district.

What we are looking for:
In question #2, you provided us with information about how you “invite” diverse audiences to your programs and services. It may be that you are able to accomplish that to a great extent just by focusing on people who live in the Arts District. This question asks specifically about people who live outside the Arts District. Your response should include references to your organization’s audience development (marketing) plan if you have one and/or goals and primary strategies, for example, which new groups of audiences is your organization trying to attract and why, and how will you monitor and evaluate your progress?

An example of contributing to the greater economic activity of the arts district could be partnering with nonprofits and businesses to create economic incentives (for example, buy a ticket and get 10% off a meal at Joe’s Restaurant).

Attachments

These should be self-explanatory. If you have questions about these or anything else, please contact Gary Margolis gmargoli@auroragov.org

General Operating Support Applicants – Please provide the following:
1. Please provide evidence that you meet the following eligibility requirement: At least 80% of your participants are served in the Arts District AND at least 80% of your programming occurs in the Arts District.
2. Profit and loss statements (or audit) for your organization’s last two completed fiscal years (preferably generated by your financial management software).
3. Current year budget (revenue and expenses)
4. Board Roster (dated) with short bios, if applicable
5. Please complete the following table:

Annual “Number of” Totals for Programs and Services in the ARTS DISTRICT ONLY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019 (January – June)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 # of Paid Admissions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 # of Free Admissions</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 # of Days open to the public with programming</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Project Support Applicants – Please provide the following:**

1. Project budget(s) showing last completed (if applicable) and projected revenue and expenses.
   a. Please make certain that you include a revenue line “Northwest Aurora Arts Grant” on which you indicate the grant amount you are requesting.
   b. Please note: The Cultural Affairs Commission will ultimately decide how much, if anything, to award.

2. Board Roster (dated) with short bios, if applicable

**Review Panels**

Applications will be reviewed by panels comprised of Aurora Cultural Affairs commissioners and community members. The dates and locations for the panels are to be determined. **One or more representatives of the applicant must be present to answer questions, if necessary.**