

**GUIDELINES
GRANTS FOR ORGANIZATIONS
Fiscal Year 2018**

Arts Project Grant

Houston Arts Alliance

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OVERVIEW OF HOUSTON ARTS ALLIANCE GRANT PROGRAMS

Houston Arts Alliance (HAA) seeks to advance the nonprofit arts industry in Greater Houston through its public/private partnership with the City of Houston. HAA strives to support artistic programs that make Houston an attractive cultural destination and a lively community for its residents. Serving the Greater Houston area, HAA's efforts directly benefit approximately 220 organizations, and individual artists that are committed to providing quality artistic programming to residents and visitors to the Greater Houston area. The Arts Project Grant Program supports the encouragement, promotion, improvement and application of the arts to promote tourism and the convention and hotel industry. Through its grant programs, HAA encourages programming that embraces issues of diversity and the needs of all cultures and people of varying abilities.

SOURCE OF GRANT FUNDS: Funding for Houston Arts Project Grant category is provided by the City of Houston utilizing Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT). Each year, the City allocates 19.3% of the municipal Hotel Occupancy Tax receipts to support arts and cultural organizations, as permitted by the Texas Tax Code, through an annual agreement with Houston Arts Alliance. Per state law, revenue from the municipal Hotel Occupancy Tax may be used only to promote tourism and the convention and hotel industry. Organizations applying for and receiving Hotel Occupancy Tax funds are required to adhere to the state laws governing the use of such funds. Only organizations based in the City of Houston are eligible to receive Hotel Occupancy Tax funds for activities that meet the purposes described above. The complete details of the State of Texas Hotel Occupancy Tax Code may be found at our website <http://www.houstonartsalliance.com/grants/resources/>. Among the permitted uses of HOT monies are the following related to arts and cultural activity:

- *The encouragement, promotion, improvement, and application of the arts, including instrumental and vocal music, dance, drama, folk art, creative writing, architecture, design and allied fields, painting, sculpture, photography, graphic and craft arts, motion pictures, radio, television, tape and sound recording, and other arts related to the presentation, performance, execution, and exhibition of these major art forms [Texas Tax Code Section 351.101(a) (4)].*
- *Historical restoration and preservation projects or activities or advertising and conducting solicitations and promotional programs to encourage tourists and convention delegates to visit preserved historic sites or museums at or in the immediate vicinity of convention center facilities or visitor information centers or located elsewhere in the municipality or its vicinity that would be frequented by tourists and convention delegates [Texas Tax Code Section 351.101(a)(5)].*

ARTS PROJECT GRANT – AT A GLANCE

The Arts Project Grant supports **organizations** and **groups of individuals** (through the fiscal sponsorship) in the production of arts and cultural programming that serves to establish a cultural environment that attracts visitors and tourists to the City of Houston. Funding for this grant program is provided from the City of Houston Hotel Occupancy Tax, the funded projects should impact tourism and the hotel and convention industry. The **maximum request** for a project or event is \$10,000.

Important Dates	
Grant Term	July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018
Arts Project Grant Application Workshops	Tuesday, February 16, 2017 12 p.m. and 5 p.m.
Online Application Opens	Friday, March 3 , 2017 8:30 a.m.
Online Application Closes	Monday, April 3 , 2017 5:30 p.m.
Panel Reviews	Week of April 24 -28, 2017
Grants Committee Approval	May 2017
Board Review, Mayor's Office for Cultural Affairs Approval & Award Notifications	June 2017
Grantee Award Orientation Workshop *If awarded, the Grantee is required to attend the workshop.	July 2017
First payment released upon receipt of electronically signed contract agreement, W-9, ACH deposit form	No later than November 1, 2017
Final Report submission deadline	Monday, July 2, 2018 (there is 45 days of grace period)
Final reports submission hard deadline	Wednesday, August 15, 2018, 5:30 pm

OBJECTIVES FOR FUNDING:

Priority will be given to projects that clearly support the following:

- To provide a consistent funding mechanism for arts and cultural organizations of excellence in the City of Houston.
- Payments to artists and artist related costs; marketing & promotion of the funded activities; production/exhibition related costs.
- To promote cultural tourism by supporting special efforts to attract visitors to Houston and to include arts activities in their itineraries.
- To advance the artistic, administrative and organizational capacity of arts/cultural organizations.
- To ensure access to the arts for all residents and visitors.
- To stimulate economic and community development through the arts.

ELIGIBILITY:

This category is open to nonprofit arts and culture organizations, groups of artists (through fiscal sponsorship), non-arts/culture nonprofits (community and civic organizations, social service organizations, etc.) and university departments that produce or present arts and cultural projects that are open to the public are also eligible to apply for this category. All applicants have to **meet the following requirements:**

1. Project support is not designed to support any one organization's entire annual expenses, but rather a specific event, series of events or component of a season.
 - Eligible projects must involve the creation and presentation of an original work of art, art experience;
 - All projects must have a clear beginning and ending date within the eligible funding period;
 - Applicants may only apply for support of yearly event or series if the applicant can demonstrate how the project is unique and worthy of support within the particular funding period. Project content must change from year to year.
2. Organizations must have current tax-exempt status under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Service (or the equivalent) as a public charity and have ongoing artistic/cultural programming;
3. The organization is physically based and offers events in the City of Houston;
4. Eligible activities include, but are not limited to, visual arts exhibitions, performing arts presentations, festivals and other public programs that make Houston an attractive cultural environment for visitors and residents alike.
5. Funded activities should, in accordance with the Hotel Occupancy Tax code, enhance and promote tourism and the convention and hotel industry. For more information about the Hotel Occupancy Tax, please see the "Funding Sources" section of the guidelines.
6. The organization is governed by a local board of directors that meets at least quarterly.
7. The organization has a track-record of providing arts/cultural programs and events that are advertised and open to the public.
8. Applicants who are NOT currently receiving General Operating Support Grant funding, can apply.
9. The organization does not have any outstanding Final Reports due from any grant programs to Houston Arts Alliance.
10. Fiscally sponsored applicants should review "Fiscal Sponsorship" section of the guidelines.

NOTE: Activities funded or included in any other Houston Arts Alliance grant application are not eligible for funding. Activities funded by Miller Theatre Advisory Board, Theatre District or Museum District or other Hotel Occupancy Tax sources are not eligible for funding in this category.

Organizations that have received GOS or GOSE support from HAA in the past may apply in the APG category but cannot receive GOS or GOSE funding in the same year that it receives APG funding.

WHAT MAY NOT BE FUNDED

1. Project activities that do not meet the eligible uses of the Hotel Occupancy Tax, as outlined in the Texas Tax Code Chapter 351: [http://houstonartsalliance.com/images/uploads/main/Chapter_351._Municipal_Hotel_Occupancy_Tax_\(HOT\)_Code.pdf](http://houstonartsalliance.com/images/uploads/main/Chapter_351._Municipal_Hotel_Occupancy_Tax_(HOT)_Code.pdf)
2. Existing deficits, loans, interest on loans, fines, penalties or costs of litigation.
3. Projects or events that are extensions of training (i.e. academic programs, conferences, classes and workshops)
4. Scholarships or cash prizes
5. Travel and lodging outside of Houston
6. Benefits, galas and projects planned primarily for fundraising
7. Projects or performances that are regularly occurring events.
8. Projects or activities which have a primary purpose that is religious. Religious organizations or groups closely affiliated with religious organizations may receive funding if all the following conditions are met:
 - a. The funded program has a secular purpose
 - b. The primary effect of the funded program does not advance or inhibit any religion
 - c. The activity is open and advertised to the general public
9. Purchase of equipment (except rental costs directly affiliated with the funded project or program)
10. Capital building expenses
11. Meals, refreshments and/or catering expense

TERMS OF GRANT SUPPORT: The period of support for this grant cycle is **July 1, 2017**, through **June 30, 2018**. Grant funds cannot be used for budgeted expenses incurred prior to or after the grant term. Matching funds is not a requirement for the APG program. A Final Report will be due no later than August 15, 2018.

FISCAL SPONSORSHIP

Houston Arts Alliance accepts applications for project support from organizations or groups of artists via fiscal sponsors provided:

- Organizations do not have 501 (c)(3) tax exempt status with Internal Revenue Service, but do have a charity designation with the State of Texas and have a history of ongoing artistic/cultural programs;
- Organizations that currently in the process of obtaining Internal Revenue Code section 501 (c)(3) tax status and have a history of ongoing artistic/cultural programs;
- Groups of two or more artists and/or art producers (arts managers, agents, promoters, curator, entrepreneurs and etc.) have proven track record of producing art and art projects in their respective disciplines. *All members of the groups will be required to provide their proof of residency within City of Houston.*

All fiscally sponsored applicants must be physically based and offer programming within the City of Houston. The organizations will be required to provide their physical addresses. No P.O. Boxes accepted as a proof of residency. The Houston Arts Alliance accepts fiscally sponsored applications from two organizations. For more information, please contact the organizations directly:

- Fresh Arts website <https://www.fresharts.org/content/fiscal-sponsorship>
- SWAMP website <http://swamp.org/fiscal-sponsorship/>.

Fiscal Sponsorship Reference Key - Arts Project Grant

Organizations/Individuals	Fiscal Sponsorship Required
Organizations holding current tax-exempt status under Section 501(c) (3) of the IRS	NO
Organizations that do not have 501 (c)(3) tax exempt status with Internal Revenue Service, but do have a charity designation with the State of Texas	YES
Organizations that are currently in the process of obtaining Internal Revenue Code section 501 (c)(3) tax status	YES
Groups of two or more artists and/or art producers (arts managers, agents, promoters, curator, entrepreneurs and etc.)	YES

HOW TO APPLY

Please visit the Houston Arts Alliance website under the Grants for Organization's link to locate access to the online application portal link. Once you are at the application website, you will need to create a "new" username and password.

The application portal will open on Friday, March 3rd, 2017 at 8:30 a.m. and close on Monday, April 3rd, 2017 at 5:30 p.m.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact a grants staff member by emailing to Grants@haatx.com or calling 713-527-9330.

Applicants are strongly encourage to provide unique contacts for the following contact information, if applicable:

- Authorizing Official – a contact with authorizing authority who is legally able to sign contracts.
- Organizations Contact – a contact who can provide general organization information.
- Project Director – a contact who is responsible for management for the grant application.

REQUIRED SUPPORT MATERIALS

The online application will include required support materials that must be uploaded into the Grants Application Portal. **Your application will be considered incomplete unless you submit the required documents in the portal.**

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS FOR UPLOAD	
Board of Directors List (<i>organizations only</i>) - including name, professional title, ethnicity, address, email & phone number for each member (adhere to the format as requested).	PDF format
Artistic Support Materials - these should be uploaded in the appropriate format as indicated below. (Examples of support materials are printed materials including: programs, flyers, press clippings, posters, videos, pictures etc.), as applicable to your artistic discipline or project. Please make sure you provide the proper scale and clarity for your electronic submissions.	PDF format
Cultural Data Profile (<i>organizations only</i>) – Organizations must upload the funders report reflecting data for FY16 (fiscal year ending 2016).	PDF format
All first time applicant organizations MUST upload their IRS determination letter verifying 501(c)(3) status	PDF format
All fiscally sponsored organizations and groups of individuals must upload their Fiscal Sponsorship Agreement ;	PDF format
FORMAT SUBMISSION	
Movies or Clips (Please upload the best format possible to allow panelists the ease of viewing. Any unnecessary narrative that does not depict artistic merit should not be included, as the panelist will have limited time to review your material).	3-5 minute video of supplemental examples MOV format , Vimeo.com, youtube.com
Public Broadcasting or Marketing Music Clips (Please upload the best format possible to allow panelists the ease of viewing.)	3-5 minute recording MP3 or MP4 format
Other visual aids, such as brochures, pictures, programs, flyers, press clippings, posters, etc.	5 – 10 images JPEG format

DataArts Cultural Data Profile (CDP)

All applicants are required to submit their organization's financial and programmatic information using DataArt's Cultural Data Profile Funders Report for the Fiscal Year 2016 as part of the support materials. If your organization already has completed Data Profiles for multiple years (i.e. FY 2015 and either FY 14 or FY 13) you may include a copy of the Data Profiles for each completed fiscal year with application, but at this time only FY 2016 is required. Please review the DataArts instructions here: http://houstonartsalliance.com/images/uploads/main/DataArts_-_FY18_Instructions.pdf.

Failure to submit the DataArts Funders Report will result in a 25% administration score reduction and jeopardize future funding.

For more help or any question regarding the **DataArts Funders Report** please contact the Support Center at 877.707.DATA (877.707.3282) or help@culturaldata.org.

REVIEW PROCESS

Applications received by Houston Arts Alliance undergo a multi-step review process that includes staff, peer panel, and board review.

All Arts Project Grant applications are reviewed using the following criteria weighted on a rating scale as follows:

ARTISTIC/CULTURAL MERIT (40%)

- Activities that are of high artistic quality or exemplary of the organization's discipline
- Quality of the artists or experts involved in performances, works and/or activities
- Involvement of artists or experts who are knowledgeable of their discipline
- Innovative and creative programming
- Artistic or curatorial staff that shows vision and leadership
- Effective use of artistic resources of the community
- Performance/ exhibition based upon actual or submitted materials
- Effective use of available resources to produce content of the highest artistic merit

ADMINISTRATIVE ABILITY (20%)

- Evidence of board/staff interaction as demonstrated through working committees
- Evidence of leadership and experience of administrative staff
- Evidence of short range and/or long range planning
- Financial stability; balance of earned and contributed revenue
- Accurate record keeping and regular preparation of financial reports
- A board of directors, representative of the community, that meets at least quarterly and sets policies for the organization
- Ability to deliver services effectively
- Established process for board review of financials
- The overall quality of the application, including attention to spelling, grammar and clarity
- Effective management of past Houston Arts Alliance grant(s) including timely submission of reports and timely completion of grants, events, programs and activities
- Diversification of its funding base as evidenced by efforts to secure financial support from the private sector as well as the public sector

CULTURAL TOURISM IMPACT (20%)

- Marketing and public relations efforts to promote activities and programming that may draw tourists and visitors to the city and the region
- Efforts to increase Houston's competitiveness as a cultural tourism destination
- Programming that contributes to creating a regional identity/image of quality and creativity to attract and retain residents and visitors to Houston

AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT & COMMUNITY OUTREACH (20%)

- Furthering an understanding of and generating interest in the organization's particular art form or discipline
- Efforts to reach and serve visitors and tourists
- Efforts to involve individuals of different backgrounds at the artistic, technical, administrative and board levels
- Outreach efforts to develop future audiences and to reach/serve new, special and/or diverse audiences
- Collaboration with other organizations
- Providing programming in venues and through methods that make the programming accessible to people with disabilities

STAFF REVIEW: Upon receipt of the applications, staff reviews applications for completeness, eligibility and verification of the 501(c)(3) status. When necessary, applicants are asked to revise proposals or supply additional information. Incomplete applications or those that do not meet eligibility requirements cannot be considered and will be returned to applicants. Applicants that do not submit all of the required support materials by the appropriate deadlines will not be eligible for consideration. Please note that Houston Arts Alliance grants are funded from public tax dollars and, as such, grant records may be subject to the Texas Open Records Act. Applications submitted to Houston Arts Alliance become the property of Houston Arts Alliance and are subject to review by members of the public upon request.

PEER PANEL REVIEW: Peer panels - consisting of objective and knowledgeable arts professionals, artists, community and corporate volunteers and others with arts expertise - evaluate each application using the published funding criteria. Panelists meet to discuss and score each eligible application; their scores are totaled and averaged for each application following the panel meetings.

- Addressing the Panel: All grant applicants are given an equal and set time to respond to questions from the panel or to clarify any comments made by the panel during the review process. **All applicants are required to have an informed representative(s) attend their review time. If representatives cannot be present, they must notify the Grants Department no later than 24 hours in advance. We can offer phone interview options in special cases during the panel meeting if needed.** The representative(s) must be able to answer questions about the organization's operations and programs, budget and finances, and the specifics of the application. HAA strongly encourages the Executive Director or Equivalent to be the designated representative. No new materials may be distributed to the panel at this time.
- An organization's application should stand on its own merit. Site visits are not a part of the review process. Any previous grant file documentation, such as quarterly and/or final reports, may be reviewed at the panel's request. It is the primary responsibility of the applicant to inform the panel about its activities and programs through a high quality submission of the online application and support materials.
- Houston Arts Alliance has a Conflict of Interest Policy for panelists. Panelists must declare their conflicts of interest regarding the organizations being reviewed by their specific panel. Panelists may neither review nor score applicants with whom they have a fiduciary, personal or adversarial relationship currently, in the past twelve months or in the projected grant term. Panelists who have a conflict of interest with an applicant must leave the panel meeting during the discussion of that application.

BOARD REVIEW: Grant recommendations from panels are forwarded to the Houston Arts Alliance Grants Committee for review. The committee, in turn, forwards its recommendations to Houston Arts Alliance Board of Directors for final approval. These recommendations are subject to organizations meeting all requirements prior to issuing a grant agreement. Organizations that are not funded might be asked to attend HAA workshops or other training for further assistance.

MAYORS OFFICE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS: Grants recommendations approved by the Houston Arts Alliance Board are forwarded to the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs for final approval.

RECEIVING A GRANT

Organizations that are awarded grants by Houston Arts Alliance are required to attend a new grant applicant workshop. The grantee will enter into a grant agreement that clearly states the scope of services and outlines the requirements of the grant. All grant funds are to be used for the stated activities as a requirement of the grant agreement.

SIGNING THE GRANT AGREEMENT: Houston Arts Alliance requires an electronic signature from the official representing the organization. One of these officials must be the CEO, executive director, president or board chair of the organization. The grant agreement will outline the terms of the grant, scope of services, reporting requirements and legal issues applicable to the funding. Houston Arts Alliance reserves the right to make changes to the grant program policies, schedule or guidelines. If any changes are made, grantees will be notified in writing within 30 days of the change.

CREDITING SUPPORT OF THE CITY OF HOUSTON AND HOUSTON ARTS ALLIANCE: Grantees are required to acknowledge the support of the City of Houston and Houston Arts Alliance through the use of logos and credit lines on all printed, broadcast, electronic materials and announcements pertaining to your grant
 Credit Line: *"(INSERT NAME OF ORGANIZATION) is funded in part by the City of Houston through Houston Arts Alliance"*. When logos are displayed both the City of Houston and Houston Arts Alliance logos shall be used. The City of Houston seal will always be twice as large. You will find logo information and instructions at the following link: <http://www.houstonartsalliance.com/news/logos/>.

GRANT PAYMENT: Grant payments are made two 50% / 50% installments, following the distribution of Hotel Occupancy Tax funds to Houston Arts Alliance from the City of Houston. The initial payment will be made after execution of the grant agreement. The final payment is dispersed after submission and approval of the Final Report. (Please see the reporting requirements section below.)

Grantees with outstanding reports from previous years are not eligible to receive any payments until the previous grants are closed out. Grantees are ineligible for any future grants if they are in default of a previous grant.

FINAL REPORT: Final report is required after the completion of the scope of services and activities specified within the grant agreement. The Final Report includes information and documentation on completed activities, income and expenses for the grant. Documentation for how grant funds were used **must** include copies of every invoice/receipt and check written for grant expenses paid for with Houston Arts Alliance funds. Every check copy and receipt or invoice copy provided to Houston Arts Alliance should be dated during the grant term (between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018).

HELPFUL TIPS ON PREPARING YOUR APPLICATION

- Read the guidelines, criteria and grant application instructions before beginning the application process.
- Plan your narrative following the questions and funding criteria. Plan your answers carefully to avoid repetition.
- Keep the funding criteria in front of you when preparing your proposal. Remember all applications are reviewed and scored based on how well the applicant meets the funding criteria.
- Don't assume. The panelists who review your proposal may have no knowledge of your organization or its programming. Make sure you describe existing and proposed programs in detail. The application should stand on its own merit. You will be notified of panel review date and required to send a qualified representative(s) who can discuss the budget and program proposed.
- Avoid generalizations. Rather than stating, "We have operated a successful series of concerts for the last four years," use numbers to prove your case. For example, "We have produced six plays with 10-performance runs for the last four years to audiences ranging from 75 to 100 for each performance."
- Proofread. Before submitting your application, have at least one person in addition to yourself proofread your application. If the reader has questions, it is likely the panel will as well. You are advised to create your narrative in Microsoft Word, or comparable software program, utilizing the spell-check, grammar check, and word count features, and then to cut and paste it into the online application. Applications that contain frequent typographical errors, poor grammar or misspelled words do not give a positive impression of the organization and rarely score well. If your narrative doesn't fit into the allowed word limit, it is your responsibility to edit it to fit.
- Balance your budget for the projected grant period (projected income and expenses must balance). Previous years may show deficits or surpluses, since these are actual numbers and not projections.

NEED ASSISTANCE?

Applicants are encouraged to become familiar with the program requirements and criteria before beginning the application process. To speak with grants staff at Houston Arts Alliance or to make an appointment, please call (713) 527-9330 or email Grants@haatx.com



Accessibility and Special Needs

Houston Arts Alliance works to make its grant application process, assistance and workshops open to all interested parties. Applicants with special needs should contact Houston Arts Alliance grants staff. If you would like to attend an application workshop and need special accommodations, please contact Houston Arts Alliance grants staff one week in advance [if possible] at 713.527.9330.

