

City's Initiative Program

Fiscal Year 2015

Grant Guidelines

Purpose of the City's Initiative Program

- The City's Initiative Program provides a one-time grant to nonprofit arts or cultural organizations for **special opportunities** that are not part of the applicant's annual budget, regular programming or annual event. An example could be the opportunity to present an artist or performance that was not included in an annual season; unanticipated invitation to perform or exhibit as part of conference or meeting being held in Houston; or the opportunity for enhanced exposure in national or regional media campaign. Awards are restricted to artistic and marketing costs, with a maximum request of \$10,000.
- Funds may also be used for **emergencies** which can be defined as acts of God or other extreme events. Funds cannot be used for past debt or unsuccessful fundraising.

What May Be Funded:

1. Marketing & promotion of unique one-time events including advertising and printing costs
2. Artist fees
3. Travel and lodging for visiting artist
4. Event related expenses such as rental of technical equipment or venue space.

What May Not Be Funded:

1. Programs and projects where application is submitted 90 days less than the project start date.
2. Project activities that do not meet the eligible uses of the Hotel Occupancy Tax, as outlined in the Texas Tax Code Chapter 351: <http://texansforthearts.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/TX-HOT-Tax-Code-351.001.pdf>
3. Existing deficits, loans, interest on loans, security deposits, fines, penalties or costs of litigation.
4. Projects or events that are extensions of training (i.e academic programs, conferences, classes and workshops)
5. Costs related to performances or programs already funded by Hotel Occupancy Tax (through the Houston Arts Alliance, Miller Outdoor Theatre, Houston Museum District Association, or Theater District Improvement)
6. Scholarships or cash prizes
7. Benefits, galas and projects planned primarily for fundraising
8. Projects or performances that are regularly occurring events.
9. 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:

- The funded program has a secular purpose
- The primary effect of the funded program does not advance or inhibit any religion
- The activity is open and advertised to the general public

10. Purchase of equipment (except rental costs directly affiliated with the funded project or program)

11. Capital building expenses

12. Meals, refreshments and/or catering expense

Deadline for Applications

Complete the online application no later than 5:30 p.m. on the LAST Friday of alternating months (**at least 90 days prior to planned event**): Applicants accepted during the months of August, October, December, February, April & June. For specific dates see the City's Initiatives Section at www.houstonartsalliance.com

Application Requirements

Houston-based nonprofit arts and cultural organizations are eligible to apply, provided they meet all the following requirements:

- Applicant must meet with the Director of Grants, Programs & Services before submitting an online application. You may request a meeting by emailing the Grants department at grants@haatx.com.
- Applicant is a currently IRS recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofit arts or cultural organization or other type of nonprofit organization that regularly presents arts events or arts projects.
- Applicant has been in operation for at least one full year prior to the grant application deadline.
- Applicant is physically based in the City of Houston.
- Applicant can apply as an individual organization, partnership (2 organizations) and as a consortium (3 organizations). Funding of the award will go to the lead applicant /organization acting as primary recipient for the partnership or consortium. Cannot form a partnership if each of the partners have been funded in the last year individually. This partnership or consortium will not be penalized individually from future funding under the 24 month rule.
- Applicant may request no more than 50% of previous year's cash revenues as demonstrated in the submitted IRS 990 (if required) or internal financial statement.
- Applicant may only apply for an activity or program not previously funded with a City's Initiative Grant, or any other Houston Arts Alliance program funding.
- Applicant must wait a minimum 24 months after receipt date on official award letter from the City's Initiative Program before submitting another application.
- Project for which funds are being requested must meet the requirement of the Hotel Occupancy Tax (Texas Tax Code Ann., Section 351.101), which mandates funds must be used to promote tourism. <http://texansforthearts.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/TX-HOT-Tax-Code-351.001.pdf>
- If the applicant is a existing or previous grantee, it must be "current" on all grant agreements and

submitted and received approval of all previous final reports.

How to Apply

- ❑ It is required that a prospective applicant contact the Grants Department by emailing Grants@haatx.com prior to preparing an application to ensure eligibility and to schedule a meeting with the Director of Grants, Programs & Services.
- ❑ Complete the City's Initiative Program grant application, and include all required attachments per the application instructions.

Application Sections:

Narrative

Prequalifications for City's Initiative:

Project Summary; provide a brief project summary of your project in 2-3 sentences with 50 words or less. From the drop down menu, select your responses for the following questions, elected officials district, grant amount requested, total project budget and project begin and end dates. **Note:** A project can only be considered for funding if application is submitted 90 days or more before the project start date.

This detail will be used in grant awarding contracts, advertisement and other HAA collateral if awarded.

Project Narrative

Should include:

- a. Detailed description of your full project, event or program, including dates, venue, scope and goals.
- b. Describe the artists involved in the project, program or event.
- c. Indicate how your organization's promotion and marketing plans will meet the requirements of the Hotel Occupancy Tax, which is to promote tourism and the convention and hotel industry.
- d. Describe how your project or event is distinguished from your regular programming.

Budget

Project Budget: Complete the required Project budget section which includes two categories of expenses (HAA Funds Allotted) and (Paid with Other Funds). Both sections added together will be considered your full project budget.

Anticipated Expenses: When listing the proposed expenses for the project use the designated expense categories (make the category selections by clicking on the drop down option in the application).

Anticipated Revenue: Include the amounts that you expect to raise from other sources such as sponsorships/cash, in-kind donations, ticket sales and concessions. Indicate if contributions will come from foundations, corporations or individuals and if the funds are committed or anticipated. Please note this detail in your project narrative to support what is documented in the project budget section. This section should equal the full project budget, however it can exceed the total project budget but never be less.

Budget Narrative: Please explain any detail that would support your project budget, such as overages, sponsorship, in-kind contributions that have a cash value associated, as well as other committed and anticipated funds other than the HAA grant request.

Support Materials

Required Attachments: (If applicant has not received funding from HAA in FY14)

- Current Board List (indicating names, addresses, gender and ethnicity)
- IRS 501(c)(3) Determination Letter and most recent 990 if you are a new applicant.

Supplemental Attachments

- Confirmation Letters or collateral from the venue/location where the event will take place
- Partnership Agreement specifying roles and responsibility in the project. All agreements or letters must have each organization representative's signature
- Artist materials such as biographies or examples of artistic merit relative to the project or event

How Applications Are Processed

- Applications that are received by the bi-monthly deadline are reviewed for eligibility and vetted for completeness.
- Incomplete applications will not be accepted. Each complete and eligible application is forwarded to the HAA Grants Committee. This committee, comprised of members who are experienced in the arts and nonprofit management, review the application, and make recommendations for funding. The recommendations are ratified by Houston Arts Alliance Grants Committee and is forwarded to the Mayor's Office. The Mayor's Office makes the final determination and sends out notification accordingly.
- Applications are evaluated based upon: 1) artistic, tourism and cultural merit, 2) marketing strategy to attract tourists and visitors to the City of Houston, and serve the convention industry; 3) evidence of community support (letters of endorsement); and 4) administrative ability of the organization as determined by its project budget, program quality, artistic merit, and any previous grant history with HAA.

After Grant Approval

- The applicant is notified by the Mayor's Office of final decision. Once awarded, you will receive notification via email of your award and contract from HAA Grants Department. All grantees are required to sign contract and submit financial forms electronically.
- **Agreements and Payments:** Once the **Houston Arts Alliance** has received the electronically signed contract and financial forms, processing of the award begins. Payments are made in two installments of 50/50, with final payment paid **after** the Final Report is approved.
- **Final Report:** Within 45 days of the completion of the activity the grantee is required to submit a Final Report summarizing the completed project detailing the use of the grant funds. This date will be included in your contract. The Final Report document and instructions will be available on the HAA website under the City's Initiative section.
- **Credit Line:** All grantees must use the following credit line: The credit line should read as follows: (INSERT NAME OF ORGANIZATION) is funded by a grant from the City of Houston through Houston Arts Alliance. You will find logo information and instructions at the following link:

<http://www.houstonartsalliance.com/news/haa-logo-usage-guidelines>.

Grantee Responsibilities

The Grantee is responsible for completing the project for which funds are awarded and complying with the terms of the Grant Agreement. If the grantee does not complete the terms of the grant, the grantee will be ineligible to apply for at least 24 months and is subject to reversion of funds until it has been closed properly.

A minimum of four tickets/passes to the event shall be made available at no cost to the Houston Arts Alliance. Please send any tickets or invitations to the to the Director of Grants, Programs & Services.