

East Central Regional Arts Council

Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund (ACHF)

General Operating Support for Arts Organizations

Grant Guidelines and Application Instructions

- Fiscal Year 2018 -
July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018
- Fiscal Year 2019 -
July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019

East Central Regional Arts Council
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**This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota
thanks to a legislative appropriation from the
Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.**

**These guidelines can be made available in the following formats:
Braille, large print, and audio.
To accommodate your request ECRAC will need at least 5 working days.**

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East Central Regional Arts Council (ECRAC) Overview/Introduction

The East Central Regional Arts Council (ECRAC) is a regional grant-making agency that supports the arts through funding from the Minnesota State Legislature and The McKnight Foundation. The Council distributes grant awards to artists, arts and other non-profit organizations, educational institutions, and local units of government and provides technical assistance for these grants.

Mission/Vision/Values:

ECRAC's mission is to support the arts and bring the life enhancing values they afford to Region 7E residents. The vision is that all Region 7E residents have the opportunity to participate, appreciate, create, and invest in the arts. The values of ECRAC are: arts in action; integrity; artistic merit; and legacy.

The East Central Regional Arts Council accomplishes this mission through programs and special initiatives for artists and arts organizations. The current work program of the Arts Council includes the following: Grant programs for organizations (501(c)3 non-profits, units of government, schools or other groups using a fiscal agent), are the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, Art in Our Schools, and the Small/Art Project Assistance Grant; Grant Programs for individual artists such as the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, McKnight/ECRAC Individual Artist and Fellowship Grant Programs, and - IMAGE - the annual regional art show. As of FY 2018 ECRAC offers General Operating Support for arts organizations. Other resources include hosting various grant workshops, an arts library, art display equipment rental, an art gallery, and providing technical assistance and resource information.

ECRAC receives funding through appropriations of the Minnesota State Legislature and through The McKnight Foundation. These funding sources enable ECRAC to provide grant funds for local or regional arts projects in the following Region 7E counties of Minnesota: Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Pine, and Mille Lacs. All grants are contingent upon the availability of funds. Funds are offered to organizations and individuals for a variety of arts projects that develop or enhance local arts organizations, artists, or art audiences.

The East Central Regional Arts Council is an independent 501(c)3 non-profit. The mailing address is 112 Main Avenue South, PO Box 294, Braham, Minnesota, 55006. You can reach ECRAC by telephone at 320-396-2337, and by email at info@ecrac.org. The agency website is: www.ecrac.org.

It is always best to contact staff of the ECRAC in advance (see the grant deadline section) prior to submission of a grant application for assistance, to determine current funding availability, and for information on the correct application form to use. This allows applicants to review the grant guidelines and to ask questions pertinent to you, or your organization, as an applicant and regarding your proposed grant proposal.

ARTS and CULTURAL HERITAGE FUND (ACHF) LEGACY OVERVIEW

The Minnesota State Arts Board and Minnesota's designated Regional Arts Councils are entrusted with stewardship of funding through the State of Minnesota's Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund (ACHF). Minnesota voters passed a constitutional amendment in 2008 creating a new 3/8-cent sales tax to support outdoor heritage, clean waters, sustainable drinking water, parks and trails, arts, history and cultural heritage projects and activities. Of the total proceeds from the sales tax, 19.75% are dedicated to the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund (ACHF) to support "...arts, arts education and arts access and to preserve Minnesota's history and cultural heritage."

The 25-Year Vision, Framework, Guiding Principles, and Ten-Year Goals for the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund (PDF) was presented to the legislature on January 15, 2010. It can be found online at: <http://www.arts.state.mn.us/pubs/pubs/achf-25-year.pdf>.

The Minnesota State Legislature has appropriated a significant portion of the arts and cultural heritage fund to the Minnesota State Arts Board and Minnesota's eleven regional arts councils. These funds will help make high-quality arts experiences more accessible and available to Minnesotans throughout the state.

To see a comprehensive list of all Legacy Amendment projects funded by the arts and cultural heritage fund, outdoor heritage fund, clean water fund, and parks and trails fund visit the Legislative Coordinating Commission's searchable Web site at: <http://www.legacy.leg.mn/>

Minnesota Statewide ACHF Vision

- In Minnesota, the arts define who we are. This is a place where people are transformed by quality arts experiences, and see the arts as essential to their communities. The arts in Minnesota connect people of all ages and cultures, fostering understanding and respect.
- Arts and culture are central to Minnesota's educational system and lifelong learning opportunities. The arts develop creative minds that maximize new opportunities and find solutions to life's challenges.
- In Minnesota, the arts are an integral part of the economy. Because of the arts, Minnesota communities are successful, dynamic, attractive places to live and work.
- Minnesota is a recognized national arts leader, a magnet for artists and arts enthusiasts, and a destination for tourists. Residents and visitors are assured a world-class quality arts experience.
- Minnesotans appreciate, create, attend, participate or invest in the arts. Minnesota's effective, innovative, vibrant, public-private support for the arts is the strongest in the country. Universal support and appreciation for the arts help ensure the state's exceptional quality of life.

Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund (ACHF) Key Areas

Following the direction of the Minnesota State Legislature, the ECRAC Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund will support activities in three Key Areas in Region 7E. ECRAC ACHF Legacy arts project funding may be spent only on arts and arts access, arts education, and arts and cultural heritage. The fund is intended to create a strong arts legacy in Minnesota.

Arts & Arts Access

ACHF funding will support artists and arts organizations in creating, producing, and presenting high-quality arts activities; to overcome barriers to accessing high-quality arts activities; and to instill the arts into the community and public life in this state. Such grant activities may be, but are not limited to:

- Investing in activities that make the arts available to persons who might not otherwise have access due to economic, geographic, or physical barrier.
- Ensuring that artists and arts organizations have sufficient financial support to create high quality art.
- Investing in the long-term health and vitality of the arts sector by supporting capacity-building and professional development.
- Investing in efforts that enable residents to connect with arts/arts experiences and performances.
- Investing in efforts to fully integrate the arts into local community development efforts.
- Investing in efforts to integrate the arts into local and regional economic development planning.
- Investing in public art that is available throughout the region. (ECRAC encourages applicants to utilize Forecast Public Art and to include their consulting services in the grant budget.)
- Recognizing and rewarding artists/arts organizations/arts providers for exceptional artistic quality and service to their audiences and/or the region.

Arts Education: Investing in lifelong learning in the arts

ACHF funding will support high-quality, age-appropriate arts education for residents of all ages to develop knowledge, skills, and understanding of the arts. Such activities may be, but are not limited to:

- Investing in efforts that enable residents to connect with arts learning opportunities and residencies.
- Ensuring that artists/arts organizations/arts providers are able to invest in professional development and workshops.

- Ensuring that arts learning opportunities and professional development are achieving intended outcomes through ongoing assessment and evaluation.

Arts & Cultural Heritage: Building bridges between Minnesotans through arts and culture

ACHF funding may be used for events and activities that represent the diverse ethnic and cultural arts traditions, including folk and traditional artists and art organizations, represented in this state. Such activities may be, but are not limited to:

- Providing Region 7E residents with opportunities to celebrate our cultural heritage through events and activities that represent the range of Minnesota’s ethnic and cultural arts traditions including festivals.
- Ensuring that Region 7E residents are able to experience folk/traditional arts of diverse cultures by supporting the work of folk and traditional artists/arts organizations.

DEFINITION: WHAT IS ART?

Art can describe several things: a study of a creative skill, a process of using the creative skill, a product of the creative skill, or the audience’s experience with the creative skill. The Regional Arts Council defines “arts” as activities resulting in the artistic creation or artistic performance of works of the imagination. When we say arts, we are speaking very broadly of visual, performing, media, literary, and interdisciplinary art forms through which we learn about, explore, shape, and express the human experience.

These activities include the disciplines listed in ECRAC’s online application form. The list of disciplines is part of the National Standard for Arts Information Exchange which was developed by the National Endowment for the Arts and other state, regional, and national organizations. All state arts agencies in the country are required to report on their activities using this standard set of codes. The Regional Arts Council uses these disciplines to define and report the arts activities supported.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ECRAC GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT PROGRAM

This program provides general operating support to high quality, established arts organizations that produce, present, or exhibit works of art; to organizations that provide a broad range of services to artists; and to community arts groups that make arts learning available to regional individuals of all ages and abilities. The General Operating Support grant program offers up to \$3,000 to \$5,000 of funding to qualified organizations to maintain their ongoing organizational operating needs. This program recognizes that organizations with an established record of programmatic service and administrative stability should have access to funds to support their organizational goals and objectives, and to maintain their ongoing programs, services, and facilities without any emphasis on new initiatives or programs as justification for funding.

This grant program is not intended to fund any specific arts projects and/or events. Its purpose is to provide funding for organizations' existing ongoing arts operating expenses such as facility expenses, utilities, office or art supplies, equipment, organizational insurance, memberships, etc. Organizations seeking funding for specific arts projects or events should apply via ECRAC's Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund Grants for Organizations Program and/or the Small/Arts Project Grants Program.

Information regarding all ECRAC grant programs can be found at ecrac.org/grants. Please contact ECRAC staff via telephone at 320-396-2337, or by email at info@ecrac.org if you have questions regarding which grant program best fits your organization's funding needs.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

ECRAC serves the non-profit arts organization community in the five Region 7E Minnesota counties of Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, and Pine. Eligible organizations must be located in one of these counties and must be a Minnesota private, non-profit arts organization which has obtained, for at least a year, 501(c)3 tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code and have registered with the Minnesota Secretary of State and Department of Revenue. Applicants must submit their annual organization budget with these proposals. Applicants must not have been disqualified for ECRAC grant funding (due to overdue or incomplete past final reports or other grantee issues.)

Your organization must also meet all of the following requirements:

1. Your organization must be a 501(c)3 tax exempt organization physically located in Region 7E.
2. Your programming, services, or activities must take place in Region 7E in Minnesota, and must primarily serve and engage Region 7E audiences and participants.
3. Your organization must be an arts organization defined as producing arts, presenting arts, a community arts school, or an artist service agency. For the purposes of this program, public or private pre-K-12 schools, colleges, or universities; radio and television stations; libraries; friends of the libraries; zoos; children's museums; historical societies or museums; natural history museums; civic organizations; human service organization; or other community service agencies do not meet the definition of "arts organization."
4. Your organization must have a history of at least two years of arts programming and services prior to applying and at least one year as a designated 501(c)3 non-profit per your IRS determination letter.
5. Your organization must be a regional arts organization. Local chapters of state or national organizations are only eligible to apply if they are administratively independent or receive little or no funding from their parent group.
6. Your organization cannot have an annual organizational budget over \$166,000.
7. Minnesota State Arts Board Operating Support grantees are not eligible for this funding.

WHAT IS FUNDED?

ECRAC/ACHF General Operating Support Grant proposals may include the following expenses based on your organizations identified needs and proposed outcomes.

- General operating expenses (e.g. – facility rental (not purchase) costs, operational insurance, directors and officer’s insurance, office or art supplies and equipment, utilities, phone or internet service, etc.)
- Board and staff training in non-profit or art best practices.
- Long range planning consultations (except fundraising).
- Purchase of equipment or small capital expenses necessary to the mission of the arts organization. (3 quotes and an equipment use plan are required for all capital expenses over \$500.)
- Expenses related to ADA compliance, or upgrades, in the facility used.
- Memberships in organizations such as your local chamber of commerce, GPS 45:93, or the Minnesota Council of Non-Profits, etc. Travel (within Minnesota) for staff and board members to attend meetings, conferences, or trainings of these membership organizations.

This grant program is NOT intended to fund specific arts projects or events. Its purpose is to provide funding for organizations’ ongoing operating expenses such as: facility rental expenses; utilities; office or art supplies; equipment; organizational and/or D&O insurance, etc. Organization art project grant requests must be made through the Small/Art Project Assistance Grant Program and/or the ACHF Organization Grant Program. Please contact ECRAC staff if you have questions regarding which program is most appropriate for your grant request.

WHAT IS NOT FUNDED?

ECRAC ACHF General Operating Support grants WILL NOT fund:

- Organizations that do not meet the eligibility criteria listed above in “Who is Eligible.”
- Applications that do not have an arts and/or culture related focus.
- Applicants not located in or grant activities that do not take place in Region 7E or for activities that would relocate the applicant outside of Region 7E or Minnesota.
- Any travel outside of Minnesota.
- Activities of a for-profit project, organization, or business or from other direct recipients of the Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.
- Projects when funds are requested for deficits in projects or programs begun prior to the project earliest start date. In other words, payment of any debts incurred before the grant begins or outside of the grant start and end dates cannot be approved.
- Applicants with either unacceptable or past due ECRAC final grant reports, or applicants that contact ECRAC members/panelists regarding the proposal before final grant approval.
- Applications when funds are to be used to match other ECRAC grants or grant applications.
- Requests for new building construction, purchase of real property, or endowment funds.
- Fundraising events.

- Administrative staffing or contract employee expenses.
- Organizations that are not open to the entire public or are not ADA accessible.
- Religious organizations or projects that are for the religious socialization of participants or audience.
- Activities that engage in political lobbying or intend to influence public policy.
- Applicants that have been found to be ineligible for ECRAC funding.
- Projects when artists are required to pay excessive entry or exhibition fees in order to exhibit or perform at the organization seeking funds.
- Organizations that will not use the proper ECRAC funding credit line (in a legible font) and that don't use both the ECRAC logo and the ACHF Clean Water Land and Legacy logo, as required. Also, projects that will not take responsibility for their own publicity, media coverage, and public relations, or won't provide timely promotion.
- Projects that try and substitute traditional sources of funding with an ACHF grant. The Minnesota Constitution requires that arts and cultural heritage fund dollars must be used to supplement not substitute for traditional sources of funding. All recipients of ACHF dollars must ensure that they are in compliance with this constitutional requirement.
- Projects unwilling to track and report costs appropriately. ACHF grant dollars must not be spent on administrative costs, indirect costs, or other institutional overhead charges that are not directly related to and necessary for the specific projects or activities that will be funded with Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund dollars. If awarded Arts and Cultural Heritage Funds, a grantee must track and be able to clearly document what portion of ACHF funds is spent on direct program or project costs and what portion of ACHF funds is spent on administrative costs, indirect, or overhead costs that are "directly related to and necessary" to carry out the programs or projects that are supported with ACHF dollars. In order to ensure this, ECRAC requires that proof of all grant related costs are submitted with the final report.

GRANT FUNDING LIMITS

The funding amount for ECRAC General Operating Support Grants is \$3,000 to \$5,000. Matching funds are not a requirement of this grant.

Special Requirements for Art Equipment Purchases: Purchases of equipment or small capital expenses necessary to the mission of the organization are allowable with this grant fund. Requests from organizations for equipment purchase must include: a detailed plan for the use of the equipment; and a statement certifying they will not sell the equipment without prior ECRAC approval. In addition, all equipment purchases of over \$500 are required to have 3 price quotes in the grant application.

How many ECRAC grants may a group receive in one year?

An organization may be awarded a General Operating Support grant and still be eligible to apply for and receive funding from other ECRAC project grant programs, as appropriate. Only one General Operating Support grant is available to organizations annually and the grant is approved for an ECRAC fiscal year (July 1 to June 30).

WHERE AND HOW TO APPLY

Applications must be completed and submitted online. Questions? You can reach ECRAC by telephone at 320-396-2337 and by email at: info@ecrac.org. The agency website is: www.ecrac.org.

A reasonable amount of planning time should be allowed to develop an application. Grant writing technical assistance is provided by ECRAC staff as requested. The staff person can best be of help to you if you contact them well in advance of the application technical assistance deadline. Assistance from the staff person does not, however, imply that grant funding will be received.

Be sure to include all attachments with your application or your application will be considered incomplete and thus ineligible. **Required attachments include:** Personnel, program director, and Board Chair/President résumés, board member information, documentation from the IRS of tax-exempt status, annual organization budget, and, if applicable, 3 price quotes for equipment plus an equipment use plan.

ECRAC has an online grant application process only. You cannot submit any grant application materials by mail, in person, or by email.

The online application materials can be found at: www.ecrac.org/grants

The grant portal is online at: <http://ecrac.org/node/175>

Completed applications must be submitted online before 11:59 p.m. on the deadline date.

APPLICATION DEADLINES AND GRANT TIMELINES

The deadline for submitting General Operating Support proposals is May 1st of each year. When you submit an application, please be aware that it will take about a month and a half before a final decision is reached. All General Operating Support Grant start dates will be July 1st of each respective year. The grant period will end June 30th of the following calendar year.

The scheduled grant deadline dates for FY 2018 & 2019 are:

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE DEADLINE	GRANT APPLICATION DEADLINE	GRANT START DATE	GRANT END DATE
April 15, 2018 & 2019	May 1, 2018 & 2019	July 1, 2018 & 2019	June 30, 2019 & 2020

If a deadline date falls on a weekend or holiday, the deadline will be 11:59 p.m. on the next working day. Technical assistance is guaranteed if you contact ECRAC staff *before* the technical assistance deadline. After that date, assistance will be offered based on staff availability.

The start date for an ECRAC grant is defined as “the point at which the project is set in motion (e.g. ordering and/or paying for supplies or printed materials, staff time, rent payments, etc.).” ECRAC does not fund projects that are already underway. No funds can be expended prior to the project start date. Expenses incurred before the grant start date cannot be included in the grant application budget and may make your request ineligible. Please call ECRAC staff if you are unclear about whether ECRAC would consider your project as already started.

REVIEW PROCEDURE

Applicants must use the current online grant forms. The accuracy, content, completeness, and merits of the application are solely the responsibility of the applicant. Once submitted ECRAC staff will review all applications for accuracy, completeness, and eligibility and will report these findings to the grant review panel (if there is one) and the ECRAC Board. The ECRAC Board will have the final determination of completeness and eligibility. Applicants will be notified of the receipt of their application and when the grant application review/s will take place. A grant review panel may be used for funding recommendations. Applicants are strongly encouraged to attend the grant review meetings, but will not be permitted to provide any additional information from what was included in the application submitted. The ECRAC board, by majority vote, makes all final funding decisions. ECRAC staff do not participate in this grant review and funding process other than to introduce applications, describe the status of the grant application completeness and eligibility review, and to take minutes.

IMPORTANT –Grant applicants may not discuss their application with ECRAC review panelists, or ECRAC board members, until the ECRAC board has acted on the application. Communications regarding an application with ECRAC board members or panelists will result in the application being deemed ineligible for funding.

REVIEW CRITERIA

The East Central Regional Arts Council makes every effort to distribute available funds fairly and equitably among the various art forms and across all geographic and cultural areas of the region. Organizations supported by ECRAC are expected to encourage and reflect the highest possible standards of artistic excellence. The Regional Arts Council will consider each application on its own merits. Applications are reviewed in the order received. In reviewing the applications, a grant review panel and/or the Regional Arts Council will use the following criteria listed in order of priority. Review meetings are open to the public.

If the application is determined to be an art project of sufficient artistic merit and quality and an eligible application to indicate further review, the following standards will be applied. These factors constitute the grant review standards: artistic merit and artistic quality; ability of the organization to accomplish stated goals and objectives; and Demonstrated need of the organization.

The merit and artistic quality of the organization's projects or programs.

Grant review considerations used to address this criterion may include

1. How does your organization instill the arts into your community and public life?
2. How does your organization provide high quality arts experiences?
3. How does your organization provide Region 7E residents access to quality arts experiences?
4. How does your organization help develop knowledge, skills, and understanding of the arts?
5. How does your organization determine and provide artistic merit and quality?
6. Are your organization's venue(s) and/or activities publicly accessible and ADA compliant?
7. How will operating support funds expand your organization's artistic capabilities?
8. How does your organization help to represent diverse ethnic and cultural arts traditions?
(Optional - not applicable if not part of your organization's mission/goals.)

The ability of the organization to accomplish the organization's goals as stated. This is demonstrated by providing evidence of qualifications of artistic and administrative personnel, program brochures, catalog and materials, and previously successful efforts.

Grant review considerations used to address this criterion may include

1. Is the organization's annual budget feasible and does it demonstrate fiscal responsibility?
2. Does the organization have effective program information such as brochures or other materials?
3. Is the outcome evaluation plan appropriate for the request? Are the proposed outcomes strong? Could the proposed activities reasonably achieve the outcomes? Can the reported evaluation findings be used to identify, plan, and implement adjustments to increase effectiveness of future activities? Be aware that achievement of outcomes is not a criterion at this time.
4. If this organization is a past ECRAC grant recipient, have projects been successful, and were reporting requirements followed?
5. Do all organization résumés substantiate organizational ability?

Applicants must demonstrate a demand/need for the organization in the community served.

Grant review considerations used to address this criterion may include:

1. How does the organization define their community served?
2. Does the application demonstrate community involvement and support for the project?
3. Does the organization effectively provide arts activities to the community served?
4. How does the proposal meet the needs of the arts organization?
5. How does the proposal meet the artistic needs of the community served?

Based on the these review standards and the recommendation of the grant review panel (if applicable), the Regional Arts Council shall make one of the following decisions for each grant applicant: full funding of the amount requested; partial funding of the amount requested; table the request, pending receipt of additional information or stipulations for the application; or no funding.

The grant review panel (if applicable) will present its decisions for this grant program in writing to the East Central Regional Arts Council board. ECRAC relies heavily on the recommendations of these panels. ECRAC will determine if the review procedures have been properly followed and will approve, disapprove, or table based on its adherence to the procedures herein described. All applicants will receive a grant allocation notification within 10 days after final review of the grant application by ECRAC.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

ECRAC observes strict procedures to prevent any conflict of interest. Any member of the Regional Arts Council with a direct financial or employment interest relating to any grant application to be reviewed will inform the Council of such affiliation prior to review of any grant application. The member will leave the room and not vote, rank, or participate in the grant review discussion. The Council reports annually on those members with affiliations who declared conflicts of interest.

A conflict of interest exists if a Regional Arts Council member or grant reviewer:

- receives direct financial benefit from the organization or project being reviewed.
- serves as an employee or governing board member of an applicant organization.
- serves with or without pay as a consultant on the application being reviewed.
- has familial (or adversarial) relationship with an applicant or a staff or board member of an applicant organization.
- receives free tickets or other benefits from the grant applicant being reviewed.

The ECRAC board chair and executive director have the authority to determine the existence and effect of a conflict of interest. Members acting in violation of the rules will be asked to resign and may be subject to prosecution under state law.

GRANTS PAYMENT

Grantees will receive written notification regarding the ECRAC grant funding decision. If funded, a contract called the Notification of Grant Award (NGA) contract and a Request for Payment (RFP) form will be included with the notification. In cases where the grant is less than the full amount requested, or if the ECRAC board has stipulated revisions, the applicant will receive a revised approved budget in the NGA. If the grantee agrees with the approved budget and other terms of the contract, the grantee must sign and submit both forms to the Arts Council. No funds will be authorized until the signed NGA and RFP have been submitted.

ECRAC may request additional grant requirements as a contingency of grant funding and, if so, they will be outlined in the Notification of Grant Award (NGA) contract.

Funds will be approved and the full grant award will be distributed to the grantee before July 31. Grantees will receive a copy of the final report at the time of grant distribution and will be required to attend a grantee financial report training once a year at ECRAC.

REPORTS DUE

Grant recipients must submit their final report form online to ECRAC within 30 days of the end of the project.

The final reports must be completed in the ECRAC online format, and will include: narrative; copies of press releases from the year, any publicity received, website pages developed and showing ECRAC funding credit, and news articles. The final reports will show how grant funds were used, and will provide documentation of all income and expenses pertaining to the proposal, including all proofs of payment. The final/financial report form will also include all documentation on the outcome evaluation of the grant.

GRANT TERMINATION & REVOCATION

A grant contract may be terminated at any time upon written request of the grantee. Such termination does not necessarily relieve the grantee of its responsibilities as set forth in the grant contract. ECRAC may terminate a grant contract at any time upon failure of the grantee to comply with one or more of the conditions of the grant contract. A contract may be terminated by mutual written consent of ECRAC and recipient. Occasionally, additional stipulations or conditions will be placed on the use of the grant funds. These conditions, or in some cases recommendations, from the Regional Arts Council will be clearly outlined in the contract.

ECRAC will rescind its grant commitment if:

- a grantee does not submit the NGA and RFP within the time specified, or
- upon request, the recipient does not return any required grant stipulations with the NGA/RFP.

APPEALS POLICY & PROCEDURE

If an applicant can show cause that the established grant review procedures have not been followed, the applicant may file an appeal. There is no right of appeal for disputes of decisions of the Regional Arts Council with respect to artistic merit. To file an appeal, the applicant must notify the Regional Arts Council Executive Director in writing within 10 days of the notification of ECRAC's action, and describe the point(s) of issue with the grant review procedure. ECRAC will approve, disapprove, or table the appeal based on adherence to its grant review procedures.

OTHER

ECRAC reserves the right to adopt other policies related to grants and to revise these grant documents as needed.

ECRAC SERVICES

ECRAC provides a variety of services to the arts community in the region, including:

- **Art Gallery**
- **Resource Information**
- **Arts Library**
- **Workshops for artists and organizations**
- **Grant and Outcome Evaluation Workshops**
- **Grant Writing Technical Assistance**
- **Art Show Display Equipment Rental**
- **Art shows such as the annual IMAGE Art Show**
- **Space for meetings and art events**

Please contact ECRAC staff if you or your organization would like further information regarding these services.

Grant Application Workshops: Information sessions are held monthly. Participants will learn about the grant programs, application process, and how to write an effective ECRAC grant application. This is a great opportunity to get your questions answered on your project ideas.

Grant Library: ECRAC maintains a library of submitted grant applications. Reviewing these materials can enhance your understanding of the process and may improve your application. The application library is normally open during regular office hours (9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.). Our staff is happy to help you. To see a list of previously funded projects, visit our web page: www.ecrac.org/grants.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

You will first need to familiarize yourself with the basic information about grant funding through the East Central Regional Arts Council. Please read through this entire document before beginning the application form. The application form includes specific questions which will assist the Regional Arts Council review team in determining artistic quality and merit, organization ability, and artistic need for the project.

Technical assistance is available for applicants who need advice in developing a grant proposal. The Arts Council also conducts grant workshops that help applicants understand the philosophy of the Council as well as the process for submitting successful grant applications. Assistance from the staff does not imply funding for an application. The content, accuracy, completeness, and merits of the grant proposal are solely the responsibility of the applicant.

TIPS ON COMPLETING THE APPLICATION

1. **START EARLY!** A reasonable amount of planning time should be allowed to develop a grant application. Grant writing technical assistance is provided by ECRAC staff as requested. The staff person can best be of help to you if you contact them well in advance of the application technical assistance deadline. Assistance from the staff person does not, however, imply that grant funding will be received.
2. Contact the ECRAC office to determine the availability of funding and which of the grant areas your proposal fits into. The ECRAC phone number is: 320-396-2337 and the email address is info@ecrac.org.
3. Attend an ECRAC Grant Workshop Information Session annually. This is not currently a grant requirement, but it is strongly recommended by ECRAC. The grant writer should be a representative of the organization applying for funding. Best practices and past grant application history indicate successful grant applications are most often written by organization representatives. Contact ECRAC staff if you have questions concerning this particular issue.
4. Read over the form to be sure you understand all the questions. Call the ECRAC office (320-396-2337) or email info@ecrac.org if you are unclear about the application questions or grant review criteria.
5. Use the online forms provided by ECRAC. The application materials and grant application portal are on the ECRAC website: www.ecrac.org/grants.
6. You will have to remain within the specified amount of space for answers. Do not submit additional materials. Additional pages and materials will not be reviewed by the Council or by a grant review panel. Do not mail or email any application related materials to ECRAC.
7. Complete and submit your online application before 11:59 pm of the deadline date. Applications cannot be accepted after the deadline.
8. To be eligible, your application must include ALL required materials. If not, the application will be found ineligible.
9. Give all grant project personnel a copy of your proposal. We also recommend the officers of your board receive a copy of the proposal.

GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Use the online forms provided by ECRAC. The application materials and grant application portal are on the ECRAC website: www.ecrac.org/grants

For completing all application sections online, please refer to the following information.

Organization Eligibility Checklist

This checklist is used to help determine an organization's eligibility. Answer all items as they pertain to your organization.

Organization Information:

Enter all required organizational information and upload a copy of your organization's IRS Letter of Determination in this section.

The Board Chair/President has overall legal and financial responsibility for all grant requirements; for example, compiling the financial documentation after grant completion, and signing the completed final report form. Include the person's position title, email address, and phone number.

The **Grant Director** is the person responsible for the day-to-day details of the project. This is the contact person who is knowledgeable about the project and who is available to receive calls, e-mails, and correspondence. The project director has responsibility for all reporting requirements. For example, writing the final report and compiling the financial documentation after project completion. Include the mailing address and your email and web information for the organization.

The **Grant Writer** is the person from the applicant organization responsible for writing the grant proposal and needs to ensure that the project director, authorizing officials, and key project personnel are all aware of the grant proposal details. The grant writer should be a representative of the organization applying for funding.

Proposal Title – Enter your organization's name followed by "Operating Support Grant."

Brief Operating Support Grant Description – This should be 1-2 sentences in length.

Grant Start/End Dates - All General Operating Support Grant start dates will be **July 1st** of each respective year. The grant period will end **June 30th** of the following calendar year.

Summary of Proposal

State your organization's mission. Define your community served. Describe the opportunities, challenges, issues or needs currently facing your organization. Specifically explain the operating expenses for which you are requesting grant funds. What expenses is your organization requesting grant funds to support? See page 8 of the grant guidelines for allowable expenses. Detail how your organization will be able to meet the proposal outcomes, if funded.

Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund Investment Evaluation

Enter all information requested. This section will be used to substantiate the grant review criteria. Any person or volunteer named in the proposal should have a resume included in the upload section.

Outcome Evaluation

It is important for grantees to understand that funding for this program comes from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, a fund created by the people of Minnesota to support the arts. Because our fellow citizens have made this commitment, we have an obligation to be intentional about evaluating arts projects: the outcomes, impacts and results, and the community benefits. Therefore, outcome evaluation is an important part of a funding proposal; indeed it is a legislatively mandated requirement. You will want to include the costs of the outcome evaluation in your expense detail as a grant funded expense.

Describe which of the following best describe the majority of the people you plan to serve with this project:

- Young children
- School age children
- Teens or youth
- Adults – general public
- Adults – professionals or peers
- Adults – artists
- Adults – learners
- Adults – seniors or elders
- Inter-generational groups (e.g., families)
- Communities (e.g., neighborhoods or cities)
- Organizations
- People in institutional settings
- People who might have difficulty communicating (e.g., reading, writing, or speaking)
- People who may have sensory difficulties (e.g., vision or hearing)
- People who may have mobility difficulties
- People who may have cognitive difficulties

Sometimes thinking about different kinds of possible changes or effects can help us connect a grantmaker's very broad program outcomes to your own, specific outcomes for your project. Which of these broad areas best describes the kind of change you expect from your project?

- Artists and the arts are visible in communities
- Artists develop their practice
- Organizations develop capacities that advance the arts
- People access arts experiences
- People develop arts skills or knowledge
- People have meaningful arts experiences
- People make connections to ideas, organizations, or one another

Having a specific outcome in mind means that the people you serve are supposed to be different in some way as a result of this project. What kinds of specific changes do you expect to see in the people to be served by this project?

- An emotional response or reaction
- A changed attitude about something or someone
- A new awareness about something or someone
- A new intention or motivation to take some course of action
- A changed perception of themselves or others
- A new or expanded understanding or knowledge about some topic
- A new or expanded skill in some area
- A change to their behavior after this experience
- Changes to their relationships with someone else: could be new, strengthened, enriched, or changed in some other way
- Your organization will have a new or improved ability or capacity to do something
- A change to some other condition (for example, some kind of individual well-being, community strength, etc.)

Outcome Measurement

There are many ways to measure the results of projects; for example, collecting verbal or written stories and comments, surveys, focus groups, and interviews. For the visual arts, exhibit guest books are often used to capture comments. For the performing arts, attendance numbers or audience surveys may be useful. Comments/Critiques by peers can also be a way to assess the impact of your work. ECRAC staff has samples of outcome evaluations. Schedule an appointment with staff if this will assist you in your proposal.

ECRAC expects that you will provide either quantitative or qualitative measurements or both.

What kinds of methods do you anticipate using to document progress toward your project outcomes?

- Reviewing program statistics or other documents related to the project
- Reviewing or critiquing a portfolio, experience, or other artifacts of the project (by experts, peers, or others)
- Conducting interviews with stakeholders
- Conducting focus groups with stakeholders
- Creating one or more case studies about the project
- Making structured observations of stakeholders during project activities
- Surveying stakeholders about their knowledge skills, attitudes, behaviors, or motivations
- Gauging stakeholder priorities using interactive methods such as sorting cards or voting
- Having stakeholders describe or capture their own impressions using PhotoVoice, talk-aloud interviews, making maps or illustrations, journaling, etc.

Please note that the term stakeholder suggests the people data is gathered from and could be participant, audiences, community members, artists, project partners or organization staff. It depends on the project.

Proposal Request

The funding amount for ECRAC General Operating Support Grants is \$3,000 to \$5,000. Matching funds are not a requirement of the program at this time. Enter the amount of grant you are requesting and it should be the same amount as request in the project summary information.

Organization Expense Details and Explanations - In narrative form, describe specifically what allowable expenses your organization is proposing and how much will be spent on each. These items and amounts will become part of your grant contract. All grant funded expense items should be explained in detail here.

Equipment Price Quotes and Equipment Use Plan, if applicable - Three price quotes are required for equipment purchases of \$500 or over. Upload the quotes as a pdf. In addition, requests from organizations for equipment purchases must include a detailed plan for the use of the equipment with a statement certifying they will not sell the equipment without prior ECRAC approval. Upload the plan and certification as a pdf here.

Certification

Your organization must certify that your board of directors supports this application, that it is accurate, and that you will carry out the activities as described in the proposal and will follow the ECRAC ACHF General Operating Support grant guidelines if it is funded.

Two signatures are required; one signer must be an authorizing board officer. One signature is the grant director. Complete the certification form and upload it into the grant application form with original signatures.

Regional Arts Council (RAC) Data Collection

The information in this section is not used in the evaluation of your grant request and is simply used for data collection purposes. All information in this section is required. Without it, your application will be incomplete.

IMPORTANT - Applications submitted to ECRAC are public documents. DO NOT submit private personal information such as social security numbers or other non-public information. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their proposal application is complete and submitted correctly. ECRAC staff can provide technical assistance on the proposal, if needed. If you have questions contact ECRAC: call 320-396-2337 or email info@ecrac.org.

East Central Regional Arts Council

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STAY UP-TO-DATE!

Make sure you are on the ECRAC newsletter mailing list!

ECRAC Mission

The ECRAC mission is to support the arts and bring the life enhancing values they afford to Region 7E residents.

If funded by this grant program, any publicity for your project needs to include the following logos, funding credit line, and hashtags (for social media use):



This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the East Central Regional Arts Council thanks to a legislative appropriation from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.

These guidelines can be made available in the following alternative formats:
Braille, large print, and as an audio.
To accommodate the special request ECRAC will need at least 5 working days.