



## **Emergency Grant Guidelines Independent Artists**

**DEADLINE: Rolling**

**SUPPORT PERIOD: For identified losses sustained  
between January 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022.**



Individuals who do not use conventional print may contact the Maryland State Arts Council to obtain this publication in an alternate format. 410-767-6555 or [msac.commerce@maryland.gov](mailto:msac.commerce@maryland.gov)



For individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.  
TTY: Maryland Relay 1-800-735-2258 or 711

This publication is available as a PDF file on the MSAC website: [www.msac.org](http://www.msac.org).

# Maryland State Arts Council

## Overview

The Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) advances the arts in our state by providing leadership that champions creative expression, diverse programming, equitable access, lifelong learning, and the arts as a celebrated contributor to the quality of life for all the people of Maryland.

The Council comprises an appointed body of 17 citizens from across the state, 13 of whom are named by the Governor to three-year terms that may be renewed once. Two private citizens and two legislators are appointed by the President of the Senate and by the Speaker of the House. All councilors serve without salary.

To carry out its mission, MSAC awards grants to not-for-profit, tax-exempt organizations for ongoing arts programming and projects. MSAC also awards grants to individual artists and provides technical and advisory assistance to individuals and groups. MSAC reserves the right to prioritize grant awards.

MSAC receives its funds from an annual appropriation from the State of Maryland, grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. and, on occasion, contributions from private, non-governmental sources.

## Authority

MSAC is an agency of the State of Maryland under the authority of the Department of Commerce, Division of Tourism, Film and the Arts.

Larry Hogan, Governor

Boyd K. Rutherford, Lieutenant Governor

Kelly M. Schulz, Secretary

Signe Pringle, Deputy Secretary

Thomas B. Riford, Assistant Secretary, Tourism, Film, the Arts, Marketing, and Communication

## Mission and Goals

MSAC's mission is to advance the arts in our state by providing leadership that champions creative expression, diverse programming, equitable access, lifelong learning, and the arts as a celebrated contributor to the quality of life for all the people of Maryland.

MSAC's most recent strategic plan outlines five goals:

1. Increase Participation: Broaden MSAC's constituency, providing avenues designed to increase pathways to engagement.
2. Provide Intentional Support: Embrace thoughtful and targeted approaches to serving known and yet to be known MSAC constituents.
3. Build Capacity: Work strategically to further build organizational and governance capacity to ensure that MSAC is capable of vigorously delivering on its mission.
4. Leverage Connections: Further enhance current relationships and involve additional collaborators, and constituents who will benefit from and advance the work of MSAC.
5. Bolster Maryland Arts: Showcase the high caliber, diverse and relevant work of Maryland's artists and arts organizations; their contributions to community vitality and MSAC's role as a catalyst.

Visit the About Us page at [msac.org](http://msac.org) to read the full strategic plan and learn more about implementation actions.

## Equity and Justice Statement

The arts celebrate our state's diversity, connect our shared humanity, and transform individuals and communities. The Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) and its supporting collaborators are committed to advancing and modeling equity, diversity, accessibility, and inclusion in all aspects of our organizations and across communities of our state.

MSAC and its grantees are committed to embracing equity and non-discrimination regardless of race, religious creed, color, age, gender expression, sexual orientation, class, language, and/or ability.

The driving goals of MSAC's granting processes are:

- To yield a greater variety of funded projects
- To eliminate biases that may be found in any part of the granting process (e.g., applications, panelist procedures, adjudication systems)
- To acknowledge positions of privilege while questioning practices, shifting paradigms of status quo arts activities, and taking more risks
- To expand deliberations to include criteria beyond current conventions or Western traditions

## Accessibility Policy

The Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) is committed to making sure all Marylanders can access our programs and services. Everyone is welcome, and all events and activities sponsored by or operated within MSAC are fully accessible both physically and programmatically. MSAC complies with all applicable disability-related statutes and regulations and seeks to ensure meaningful participation by all Marylanders regardless of need or ability.

### Feedback Procedures

If guests would like to provide general feedback to MSAC about accessibility for MSAC's programs or programs funded by MSAC, contact MSAC at [msac.commerce@maryland.gov](mailto:msac.commerce@maryland.gov).

### Grievance Procedures

#### **For programs or services provided by MSAC**

If a program or service operated by MSAC, facilities operated by MSAC, or public meetings conducted by MSAC are inaccessible to persons with a disability or is illegally discriminatory and you want to file a grievance:

- If you have any questions or would like to discuss the situation before filing a grievance, contact the Accessibility Coordinator.
- To file a formal grievance, contact Dan Leonard, Director of EEO & Fair Practices and ADA Coordinator: [daniel.leonard@maryland.gov](mailto:daniel.leonard@maryland.gov)

#### **For programs or services that are not provided by, but are funded by MSAC**

- Communicate the grievance to the sponsoring organization.
- If you think your grievance was not handled appropriately by the sponsoring organization, or if you have not received a response from the organization within thirty (30) days, contact MSAC to file a formal grievance at 410-767-6555 or [msac.commerce@maryland.gov](mailto:msac.commerce@maryland.gov).

MSAC will work with you to provide assistance as appropriate.

## Accessibility Web Page

MSAC has a dedicated accessibility page on [msac.org](http://msac.org) that includes contact information for the accessibility coordinator, federal and state regulations, the organization's Equity and Justice statement, grievance procedures, an emergency preparedness plan, accommodation policies, and other accessibility resources for artists and arts organizations, and PECS images.

## Professional Grants Review Panels

To assist the Council in its decision-making, professionals in the arts are appointed to a variety of grants review panels. The function of panels is to evaluate applications from organizations and individuals and to offer policy recommendations to the Council. Each year, MSAC publishes an open call, and more than 100 individuals serve as grants review panelists for the Council's programs, including Grants for Organizations, Arts in Education, Independent Artist Awards, Public Art Across Maryland, Creativity Grants, Maryland Touring Grants, Maryland Touring Artist Roster, Maryland Traditions grants, and County Arts Development. Anyone wishing to serve should visit [msac.org](http://msac.org) for detailed information and application forms for any open calls.

## Staff

MSAC maintains a professional staff to administer its grants programs and Council-initiated programs. Staff members are available to provide technical assistance to the arts community.

## Meetings

All Council and Grants Review Panel meetings are open to the public in accordance with the Open Meetings Act set forth in Title 3 of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. The dates, times, and locations of Council and Grants Review Panel meetings may be obtained from the MSAC website at [www.msac.org](http://www.msac.org) or by contacting MSAC offices at (410) 767-6555.

## Requirements For Grant Recipients

- Must comply with Title VI, Section 601, of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which states that no persons, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination related to, the arts.
- Must comply with Title IV, Section 1681, of the Education Amendments of 1972, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Section 6101, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex or age.
- Must maintain complete and accurate records of all activities connected with the grant.
- Must have filed a satisfactory reporting with MSAC for the most recently completed fiscal year.
- Must file a final report in alignment with the program requirements. Necessary reporting methods will be provided by MSAC in ample time to meet the deadline. Failure to report may jeopardize any future grant being received by the organization and may result in the organization being required to repay grant funds.
- Must give credit to MSAC in accordance with the [Recognition Guidelines](#) whenever and wherever credit is being given.
- Must notify the appropriate MSAC staff person in writing if a significant change is made in any MSAC-funded program or project.

## Accessibility Requirements for Grant Recipients

Grantees must ensure that any programming remains accessible to all, and if needed, conduct programs in accessible venues other than their own organization in order to meet accessibility requirements.

Grantees are required to:

1. Comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991, as amended.
2. Prohibit discrimination on the basis of: (a) political or religious opinion or affiliation, material status, race, color, creed, sexual orientation, or national origin; of (b) gender expression, sex, or age, except when age or sex constitute a bona fide occupational qualification; or (c) the physical or mental disability of a qualified individual with a disability.
3. Designate an Accessibility Point of Contact to ensure compliance, receive accommodation requests, and document grievances, and publish direct contact information for the Point of Contact to the public.
4. Create and publicly share a grievance procedure to allow stakeholders to address any events or programs that are inaccessible.
5. Upon request, submit documentation of operations and compliance with the above.

Notice: Certain personal information requested by the Department of Commerce is necessary in determining eligibility for grants. Failure to disclose this information may result in the denial of one or all of these benefits or services. Availability of this information for public inspection is governed by the provisions of the Maryland Public Information Act, Title 4 of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. This information will be disclosed to appropriate staff of the Department, or to public officials, for purposes directly connected with administration of the program for which its use is intended. Such information is routinely shared with state, federal, or local government agencies.

## Appeals Process

MSAC takes great care during the grant review process to ensure fair and equitable distribution of grant monies based on stated criteria. Therefore, dissatisfaction with the denial of an award or with the amount of an award is not sufficient reason for an appeal. However, a grant request may be reconsidered if a procedural impropriety or error has affected its review.

Grounds for such reconsideration are:

- A decision based on review criteria other than those stated in these guidelines.
- A decision based on material provided to panelists and/or Councilors that was substantially incorrect, inaccurate, or incomplete despite the applicant having provided the staff with correct, accurate, and complete application information.

Based on the above, if an applicant believes there is legitimate reason for an appeal, the following steps must be taken:

- The applicant must discuss the problem with the program director who handled the application.
- To pursue an appeal, the applicant must write a letter to the MSAC Executive Director within 60 days following receipt of the grant award or denial letter requesting a reconsideration of the Council's decision and stating the grounds for the request.
- The applicant will receive written notification on the determination of the appeal within 90 days of the receipt of the written request for reconsideration.

# Emergency Grant Overview

The purpose of the Emergency Grant is to support the needs of independent artists as they adjust to income losses as a result of an emergency.

Applications for the Emergency Grant may be submitted at any time during the fiscal year with the understanding that the timeline between approval and payment may be 90-days. Applications will be reviewed monthly upon submission, and Emergency Grants will be awarded throughout the fiscal year until allocated funding is depleted.

## Eligibility

### Who May Apply:

- Independent Artists, defined as artists who earn income from artistic activities and are not directly affiliated with an arts organization or program that provides any form of compensation.
- Applicants must be 18 years of age or older.
- Applicants must be Maryland residents (owning or renting residential real property in Maryland at the time of submission of the application and throughout the funded project or program).
- Applicants may receive up to one Emergency Grant per fiscal year.

### Who May Not Apply:

- Individuals with full-time employment.
- Artists who meet the Independent Artist definition above but whose income is derived from the creation or execution of artistic work for industry-oriented or industry-related production, meaning artistic work that is produced at large volume or for a commercial entity.
- Artists enrolled in high school or any undergraduate classes or programs during FY 2022 (July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022).
- Individuals pursuing graduate instruction during FY 2022 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022). This includes visual, performing, and literary arts.
- Artists who received a \$6,000 MSAC Individual Artist Award in FY 2019.
- Artists who received a State Independent Artist Award in FY21.
- Artists who received a \$10,000 Regional Independent Artist Award in FY21.

## Review Criteria

The review of all Emergency Grant applications is based on successful evidence of the answers to the following application questions:

- 1. Describe your artistic practice and your work as an independent artist.**
- 2. Describe the emergency situation and how your ability to support yourself as an independent artist has been impacted as a result of the stated emergency.**

*(Recommended Response: Clear, specific, and thorough description with detailed evidence of significant impact to the artist(s).)*

3. **How will you use the funding? Include expenses related to any cancelled, modified, or additional arts or non-arts income opportunities. Please list each of your expenses by category and amount (such as Utilities: \$75).**

*(Recommended Response: Use of funding supports significant need.)*

## **Allowable Uses**

Grant funds may be used for losses sustained because of programming and/or events that have been modified or cancelled as a result of the stated emergency, including but not limited to emergencies in relation to COVID-19.

## **Application Process**

### **Smart Simple**

MSAC utilizes the cloud-based grant system SmartSimple to accept grant applications. Only successfully submitted online applications will be accepted. Hard copy applications will NOT be accepted.

- Applicants are required to complete and submit their applications by electronic means, including the use of an electronic signature.
- Technical support for SmartSimple is available during regular office hours, 8:00 AM through 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday.
- Lost, misdirected or late applications are the sole responsibility of the applicant.

## **Grant Review and Evaluation Process**

Applications for Emergency Grants are approved by the MSAC Staff for grant amounts of \$2,000 or less.

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis, and will be reviewed monthly. Funding will be recommended in connection to rubric score and monthly funding allocation for the Emergency Grant Program.

### **Notification**

Emergency Grant applications will be reviewed by MSAC on a monthly basis. After the review, applicants will be notified of the application status, and, if approved, receive a formal grant agreement form to process the grant payment (100% of award amount).

If any debt is owed to the State of Maryland by the grantee, the amount owed will be subtracted by the General Accounting Division prior to the disbursement of grant funds. If a grantee's liability exceeds the grant award, the liability will be reduced by the award amount, but the grantee will receive no grant funds.

## Reporting Requirements

If awarded an Emergency Grant, the grantee must file a final report online through Smart Simple by August 15, 2022. The report contains a brief summary request as well as some demographic requirements of the National Endowment for the Arts and Commerce Office of Research. Failure to submit reports may jeopardize the grantee's current and/or future MSAC grants and may result in repayment of grant funds. Before any funds are distributed, grantees must submit any outstanding reports/requirements for any other MSAC grants they have received.