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## Public Art Across Maryland New Artworks Grant FY 2026 Guidelines

**DEADLINE:** Thursday, December 12, 2025

**SUPPORT PERIOD:**

- Planning Grants: March 2026- March 2027
- Project Grants: March 2026- September 2027

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**NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT** for the **ARTS**  

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

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# Program Overview

## Purpose

The purpose of Public Art Across Maryland - New Artworks is to support independent artists and organizations in planning and creating new public artwork for communities and the general public in Maryland.

The Public Art Across Maryland- New Artworks grant provides support for outreach and visioning activities, research and planning, artist selection and design, specialized services and consultants, materials, fabrication, transportation, and other costs associated with creating and installing a fully completed work of public art.

MSAC defines Public Art<sup>1</sup> as artwork that is created intentionally for a place and space in the public realm, regardless of whether it is situated on public or private property. Located indoors or outdoors, public art is available to everyone at no cost and is accessible to all. Public art can include: expressions of community values or enhancements to an environment and can raise awareness of an unseen narrative.

Public art supported by MSAC grants must have a physical presence and a lasting impact on the place and community where it is installed.

## Grant Cycle

### Funding

Public Art Across Maryland- New Artworks offers two types of grant support:

- Planning grants are up to \$10,000
- Project Implementation grants are up to \$30,000

Public Art Across Maryland- New Artworks grants are available annually.

Grantees of the Public Art Across Maryland- New Artworks receive funding in one payment (100% of award amount). Please note that if approved for funding, 100% of the requested amount will be funded (this program does not offer a portion/percentage of the requested amount).

### Support Period

If awarded, grantees agree to spend or obligate all funds by the final report due dates indicated below:

For Planning Grants: March 30, 2027

For Project Implementation Grants: September 30, 2027

Obligation means that awarded funds are expended, encumbered, or otherwise legally committed to be used, such that returning the unspent funds would cause the grantee legal harm.

### Use of Funds

Grant funds may be used for:

**Planning** grants support research, community engagement, artists' selection processes, and other forms of organizing and concept development in preparing a proposal and design for new public artwork. The planning grant can support costs associated with:

- Community engagement and organizing activities (may include: accessibility accommodations, public meetings, community education or information campaigns, child care, or refreshments to encourage public participation)

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<sup>1</sup> A resource to assist with understanding this document is the [MSAC Glossary](#), which provides an overview of terms commonly used in MSAC grant guidelines, on the website, and in other published materials.

- Conducting artist selection processes; artist fees and/or honorariums for artwork proposal design and proposal development
- Consultant or specialized service fees for a public art consultant, design services provided by an architect or landscape architect, engineering services, digital graphics, and other specialized services as required for a specific site or project
- Facility or equipment rentals for meetings and gatherings
- Licensing fees for specialized software or online services (may include software for virtual meetings, application & portfolio review, and digital design)
- Printing of flyers, maps, and photographs that are helpful in the planning process.
- Organization administration/project management fee (cannot exceed 15% of the total grant request)

**Project Implementation** supports the work of the artist and project partners in taking a project from the proposal stage through to the successful installation of the new public artwork. The project implementation grant can support costs associated with:

- Artist fees and labor costs for Maryland-based artists and fabricators to cover their time and that of studio employees in developing and managing the creation of the artwork.
- Artist/Artisan designed site amenities (bike racks, fences, planters, etc..)
- Contracted services (may include design & modeling, fabrication, project management, photography, lighting, installation services, etc)
- Dedication event expenses
- Equipment purchase or rental
- Materials (artwork, base, lighting, landscaping)
- Studio or space rental to fabricate and assemble the artwork
- Signage or plaques to identify the artwork<sup>2</sup>
- Transportation of artwork between locations and to the installation site
- Organization administration/project management fee (cannot exceed 15% of the total grant request)

Grant funds may not be used for:

- Artworks that do not meet MSAC's definition of *Public Art* (see definition under Purpose above)
- Artwork planned and produced outside of Maryland
- Artwork that did not include community engagement in the planning or development of the work
- Artworks previously installed
- Artwork that is not publicly accessible
- Site amenities that are premanufactured "off the shelf" commercial products (not artist-manufactured, not designed for the site or location)
  - Such items that are decorated by an artist after purchase are not eligible. For example, a pre-designed Little Free Library or park bench kit, painted by an artist.
- Commercial Signage<sup>3</sup> (signs involving business names and/or products)
- Purchase, lease, or exhibition of pre-existing artworks or editions
- Ongoing operational expenses of the lead applicant or its partners beyond permitted project management costs and administrative costs
- Ongoing maintenance fee of the proposed artwork(s)
- Acquisition of capital assets
- Capital improvements or purchases of permanent equipment not related to the public artwork
- Activities for the exclusive benefit of an organization's members
- Contributions to any persons who hold, or are candidates for, elected office
- Contributions to any political party, organization, or action committee
- Activities in connection with any political campaign or referendum

<sup>2</sup> Please consult [Recognizing MSAC Grants](#) and share designs with Program Staff before finalizing plaque design for projects that received MSAC support.

<sup>3</sup> Local organizations or businesses interested in commissioning custom signage from an artist may want to consider looking for "facade improvement" grants or funding which is sometimes available through local and regional economic and community development organizations.

- Lobbying activities
- Expenses for activities or projects already completed at the time of grant application
- Expenses for which the applicant has been awarded funds through another MSAC grant program. (i.e., an applicant may only be awarded MSAC funds once for any individual project expense; contact MSAC staff with questions)
- Institutional or administrative indirect costs in excess of 15 percent of the total grant amount

## Timeline

The grant timelines below are estimates and may change according to application volume, funding changes, constituent needs, staff capacity, or other factors. Subscribe to MSAC communications to be notified of any public information sessions and other program updates by completing [the signup form on our webpage](#).

- Applications
  - Publication: September 8, 2025
  - Deadline: December 12, 2025
- Application review
  - Independent Panel Review: January 5 to February 13, 2026
  - Public Panel Meetings: February 24-27, 2026 (exact dates TBD and posted on the [Meeting Notices](#) page of MSAC's website)
- Notification
  - Early March 2026
- Final Reports
  - For Planning Grants: March 30, 2027
  - For Project Implementation Grants: September 30, 2027

## Eligibility

Eligible applicants must meet the requirements listed below.

Arts organizations or arts programs may apply for either **Planning** or **Project Implementation** grants and must be one of the following:

- Nonprofit organization (i.e., an organization with an IRS-designated 501(c)3 status) based in Maryland
- Nonprofit, Maryland-based fiscal sponsor organization applying on behalf of a Maryland-based group, project, or artist with whom it has a Model A fiscal sponsorship agreement in place (i.e., comprehensive sponsorship, in which the assets, liabilities, and exempt activities collectively referred to as "the project" are housed within the fiscal sponsor)
- Unit of government (e.g., town, city, county, state, etc., with the capacity to undertake an arts program)
- College or university (i.e., an established higher education institution in Maryland)
- School (i.e., a public or private school serving students in grades pre-Kindergarten through 12)

Independent artists may apply for **Planning grants**, and must be:

- An artist or collaborative group not directly affiliated with a larger arts organization or program
  - In the case of collaborative groups, having a membership comprising at least 50 percent Maryland residents, as defined below
  - In the case that an artist(s) is fiscally sponsored, the sponsored artist(s) must be a Maryland resident, as defined below
- Maryland residents (i.e., owning or renting residential property in Maryland six months prior to the application's submission and throughout the funded project or program) who are 18 or older; those experiencing homelessness are encouraged to reach out to MSAC staff for details on how to apply
- Producing or presenting projects or programs that are accessible to the public
- The lead artist whose original work is included in the proposed activities
- Not enrolled in any matriculated high school, undergraduate or graduate degree program at the time of application and throughout the grant activities outlined in the application.

**Applicants may only submit one PAAM grant application per fiscal year.**

**Grantees receiving Project Grants (New Artworks or Conservation) in the prior fiscal year (FY25) are not eligible to apply for any PAAM Project Grant in the subsequent fiscal year (FY26).**

- The following organizations listed under the FY25 New Artworks Project grants at the link [here](#) and under the FY25 Conservation Project grants at the link [here](#) are ineligible to apply for any PAAM Project grant in FY26.

#### Public Artwork Eligibility:

- Planning efforts and Projects funded through the Public Art Across Maryland grant program must fit within MSAC's definition of Public Art as described above under "Purpose" and included in the [MSAC glossary](#), and must be the product of an artist, artisan, studio, or team based in the state of Maryland.
- Artworks supported through Public Art Across Maryland grants should be either an architectural enhancement of artistic significance or an installation of artwork. Eligible mediums include, but are not limited to: murals, tile mosaics, paintings, or sculptures. Functional amenities such as benches, bike racks, creative way-finding, fences, screens, gateways, light-based works, shading and trellises, etc. are also eligible as long as they meet MSAC's definition of public art and are manufactured by an artist or artisan.
- All projects and artwork supported through Public Art Across Maryland grants are expected to comply with all local regulations, permit procedures, and permitting requirements as mandated by the local jurisdiction or property owner where the work will be installed. Applicants and grantees are required to conduct their own research to fully understand and meet the requirements for installing artwork, whether temporary or permanent, at the specified location.

The eligibility guidelines listed above provide an overview only. In some cases, MSAC staff might make eligibility determinations addressing situations not described here but in support of the mission of the agency and the Department of Commerce.

## Application, Review, and Award

### Application and Review

#### SmartSimple

Applications are submitted via the secure, online grants management system, SmartSimple. Log in or create a free account on the [SmartSimple registration page](#).

- Applicants are required to complete and submit applications by electronic means, including the use of an electronic signature. To make an accessibility request for an alternative submission method, please contact the program director listed in the Contact Information section.
- Technical support for SmartSimple is available. See contact information section.
- Applicants must meet any revision deadlines requested after submission, as specified in writing, or the application will be considered withdrawn
- By submitting an application to MSAC, whether via electronic means or otherwise, applicant agrees to allow MSAC to retain records per state and federal document retention laws and policies. Applicant is also agreeing to the Terms and Privacy Policy of SmartSimple as applicable to MSAC..

## Panelist service

MSAC convenes panelists, representing a range of arts expertise statewide, to evaluate applications electronically. Panelists are selected via public application process and based on relevant experience and expertise. Opportunities to serve as panelists for various grant programs are posted throughout the year; individuals interested in panel service are encouraged to learn more and apply on MSAC's [Ways to Get Involved](#) webpage.

## Application form and review criteria

The grant application is a digital form available in SmartSimple and consisting of prompts requiring dropdown menu selections, fill-in answers, and external file uploads.

Application evaluation is based on review criteria that correspond with the prompts in the application form. The review criteria provide guidance on rating an applicant's response to a prompt.

Application prompts and review criteria are provided below, for reference.

### New Artworks Planning Grant Questions (Organizations or Independent Artists):

*Note: Planning grant applications should not include an artwork proposal.*

Application prompt	Review criteria
<p><b>1. Provide an overview of the public art planning process and its intended goals.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What are the goals or outcomes of this public art planning process?</li><li>• Will the planning funds be used for an artist selection process? Artist-led community engagement or research? Taking an existing concept through a design process?</li><li>• Describe the community that is the intended audience for the public art project that you are planning. Describe how the planning grant will contribute to public access and/or public engagement in the future public art project.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ How will the community be impacted? Who are the primary stakeholders? How might they be involved in the planning process?</li></ul></li><li>• If the funding will be used for community engagement activities or research, describe how that work will take place and those that will be involved in the activities supported by the grant.</li><li>• If the funding will be used for an artist selection process, describe the methodology or selection process and who will be involved.</li></ul>	<p><b>Excellent to Outstanding - 30 Points</b></p> <p>Response includes a clear, specific, and thorough explanation of the planning phase of a public art project. The response includes clear and thorough evidence of a larger goal, community engagement, and impact, as well as how the supported planning activities fit within and contribute to the broader scope.</p>
<p><b>2. Planning Timeline</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide a detailed timeline with specific activities/tasks for the planning process and activities described in Question 1.</li></ul>	<p><b>Excellent to Outstanding - 15 Points</b></p> <p>Response includes a clear, specific, and realistic planning timeline, outlining activities and tasks that strongly align with the planning process and</p>

<p>Note: It is not necessary to include a timeline for the project implementation phase of your future public art project. Activities supported by the planning grant should not begin until after application notifications in March 2026.</p>	<p>outcomes outlined in Question 1.</p>
<p><b>3. Planning Budget</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a detailed budget including all planned expenses and anticipated income beyond the MSAC request application to the public art planning process described in Question 1.</li> </ul> <p>Note: It is not necessary to include a budget for the implementation phase of your overall project.</p>	<p><b>Excellent to Outstanding - 15 Points</b> Response includes a clear, specific, and realistic financial plan for income and expenses as it relates to the planning process and outcomes outlined in Question 1.</p>

### New Artworks Project-Implementation Grant Questions (Organizations)

Note: Project-Implementation grant applications must name the lead artist and include a fully designed artwork proposal within the application.

Application prompt	Review criteria
<p><b>1. Public Art Project Overview</b> Provide a detailed description of the proposed public art project including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The artwork concept: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Is the work based on something specific or responding to a particular need or inspiration?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• How was the site selected? Is the site important to the design of the artwork? If so, how or in what ways?</li> <li>• What is the intended duration for the artwork to be installed?</li> <li>• How the final artwork will be realized <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ What is the role of the lead artist?</li> <li>◦ Will fabricators or subcontractors be involved?</li> <li>◦ What materials will be used?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• How will the work be transported to the location and installed? What kinds of permissions or permits were required for the location?</li> <li>• Who are the key stakeholders in the project? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Please describe any key members of the project team or community who will be instrumental in ensuring the project's success.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Note: The narrative response to this question can and should reference the visual materials submitted in</p>	<p><b>Excellent to Outstanding - 30 Points</b> Response includes a clear, specific, and thorough explanation of the proposed public art project.</p> <p>Includes clear and thorough evidence of the concept, intention, timeliness, and/or inspiration in relation to the location where it will be located and/or the community it is responding to. Provides a clear, specific, and thorough explanation on how the artwork will be created and installed, and the key individuals who will collaborate on ensuring its success.</p>



<p>Attachment A.</p> <p><b>2a. Describe your community</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe where the project will be located. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the defining characteristics of the neighborhood or community?</li> </ul> </li> <li>Who is the intended audience for the public artwork?</li> <li>Who will be involved in, or affected by, this project in the short and long term?</li> </ul> <p><b>2b. Community Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe how the public, especially local community members, were involved in the planning process that led to this artwork.</li> <li>How was the intended audience aware of or part of the planning process that led to the artwork?</li> <li>How will the intended audience be aware of or involved in the artwork's creation or installation?</li> <li>Are there any related activities or public programs that will take place as a result of this artwork being installed? (this could include a dedication event, but also any additional programming provided by the organization or local partners that relates to the installation of the artwork).</li> <li>List any additional programming or community engagement activities that panelists should be aware of in the context of the proposed artwork.</li> </ul> <p>Note: The narrative response to this question can reference the visual materials (maps, photos) submitted in Attachment A.</p>	<p><b>Excellent to Outstanding - 20 Points</b></p> <p>Response includes a clear, specific, and thorough description of where the project will be located, as well as the intended audience's awareness, involvement, and investment in the project, before and after it is installed.</p> <p>Response thoroughly demonstrates prior and sustained communication with and engagement of the intended audience, and/or nearby community that will be impacted by the project.</p>
<p><b>3. Prior Experience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe the team's prior experience that demonstrates an ability to manage and implement the proposed artwork:. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For the applicant organization, describe relevant experience with project management or public art installations</li> <li>For the lead artist, describe their background and experience. Is this the artist's first public art project? How does the project relate to their prior work? Is this their first time working with a specific method or new materials?</li> <li>For other key stakeholders, describe the prior experience or role they will</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Excellent to Outstanding - 15 Points</b></p> <p>Response includes clear, specific, and thorough evidence of the applicant, artist, and/or project partners' experience in managing and implementing comparable projects.</p> <p>Response includes clear and thorough evidence that the applicant and/or lead artist has successfully implemented public art projects to a similar scope and scale in the past; or clear and thorough evidence that the applicant and/or lead artist has assembled a project team of collaborators and stakeholders that bring the combined experience to implement a safe and successful public art project.</p>

<p>play in ensuring the project's overall success</p> <p>Note: The narrative response to this question can reference the visual materials included in both Attachments A and B.</p>	
<p><b>4. Project- Implementation Timeline</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the schedule template to describe the timeline of your proposed public art project. Include all of the significant steps in implementing your project, including steps of planning, community/public engagement, design, approvals, material acquisition, fabrication, installation, dedication, and evaluation of the final product.</li> </ul> <p>Note: Planning and community engagement activities may have already taken place, but activities supported by the Project-Implementation grant should not start before grant notification in March 2026.</p>	<p><b>Excellent to Outstanding - 15 Points</b></p> <p>Response includes a clear, specific, and realistic timeline of the steps to implementing the proposed project, including any community events and/or programming supported by the project-implementation grant.</p>
<p><b>5. Project-Implementation Budget</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the budget template to describe a clear list of all projected expenses to implement the proposed project, include sources of funding beyond the MSAC request, and how MSAC funding will be used.</li> <li>• Expenses may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Artist fees</li> <li>○ Project Management/Administration costs</li> <li>○ Contracted Services</li> <li>○ Community engagement activities</li> <li>○ Marketing and documentation</li> <li>○ Material purchases</li> <li>○ Site Preparation,</li> <li>○ Transportation</li> <li>○ Installation</li> <li>○ Landscaping and lighting</li> <li>○ Plaque/Signage</li> <li>○ Dedication Event Costs or related programming.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Note: Additional project-specific categories may be added as necessary. All applications are expected to compensate all artists and artisans involved fairly, for their time and labor. Applications that do not pay artists or count the sum of the artists time as donated or in-kind will not be considered eligible.</p>	<p><b>Excellent to Outstanding - 15 Points</b></p> <p>Response includes a clear, detailed, and realistic financial plan for income and expenses tied to the proposed project.</p> <p>Response clearly and realistically aligns the financial plan described in the budget with the project overview described in the response to Question 1 and the Implementation Timeline described in the response to Question 4.</p>

## 6. Collection & Maintenance Plan

Please describe the maintenance required, and the organization or entity that will be responsible for artwork oversight and funding maintenance.

- For artwork that is "temporary" or intended to be installed for less than 5 years:
  - How long will the installation be up?
  - Who will monitor the artwork's condition over that time period and how often will it be checked?
  - At the end of the installation period, who will be responsible for the artwork and who will sign off on the complete removal of the work?
- For artwork that is "permanent" or intended to be installed for 5 or more years:
  - Who is the "owner" of the work?
  - Is it included in a local public art collection or inventory? Whose collection and where is it documented?
  - Who will monitor the artwork's condition over time and be responsible for periodic cleaning and maintenance? How often will it be checked?
- In the case of accidental harm, vandalism, impacts of seasonal exposure, etc. who is responsible for assessing and addressing repairs and who will pay for them?

Note: The lead artist can be contracted to perform maintenance or repairs, but cannot be the sole party responsible for long-term monitoring and oversight. The narrative response to this question can reference the materials included in both Attachments A and C.

### Required Attachments:

Each attachment below should be saved as a single combined PDF file, and labeled individually in this format before upload "[grant id#\_Attachment A]" (e.g. "2028-0344\_Attachment A")

### Attachment A: Public Artwork Proposal

This attachment should include the following:

- a. Map(s) showing the geographic location of the artwork (the location can be marked on an aerial or satellite view google map, or other forms of maps providing context for the location)
- b. Photos and/or drawings or plans that

## Excellent to Outstanding - 5 Points

Response provides a clear, specific, and realistic plan for the artwork maintenance, oversight, and on-going funding; roles and responsibilities are clear, specific, and sustainable over the life of the artwork (including removal, if temporary)

- communicate the context and relevant details of the existing site or location where the artwork will be installed
- c. Drawings, renderings, collages, plans, or diagrams, that visually communicate the proposed artwork as designed by the artist, and how it will be installed. Text may be used to label or explain details in the drawings, such as: materials, colors/finishes, artwork or site dimensions and scale, etc...
- d. Any further documentation, such as photos or graphics that describe the community/public engagement, the artist's design process, or other relevant visuals to support your narrative responses in the application.

#### **Attachment B: Prior Work Samples**

This attachment should include the following:

- e. Images of prior artwork completed by the lead artist(s). Artwork samples should include at least 5 prior works by the artist. It is not required that prior work samples include public art projects or the medium the artist is proposing to work in.
- f. Images of any relevant prior projects completed by the lead applicant or key stakeholders that are relevant to the proposed project or final artwork.

#### **Attachment C: Letter(s) of Permission**

This attachment should include letters of permission or acknowledgement from the property owner, or owners agent, that legal permission or "right-of-entry" will be granted to the applicant and/or artist to install the proposed artwork if funding is awarded.

Note: Press releases and announcements are not accepted as a Letter of Permission. Applicants and property owners are expected to abide by all state and local rules, regulations, and design guidelines applicable to the location where the artwork is to be installed. Please check with your local department of planning or permitting office to ensure you are working with the right department or agency to review and approve

<u>your public art project.</u>	
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The complete scoring rubric can be found on the program website [here](#).

In addition to responding to the prompts above, all applicants are required to submit a current, signed W-9 form upon application submission. The address on the W-9 form must match the address entered in SmartSimple, both on the application form and under the SmartSimple account profile. If awarded, grant funds will be made payable to the person or entity indicated on the W-9 and sent to the address listed in the form.

## Award

### Notification

After application review, applicants will be notified of their status as soon as possible. If the application is approved, the applicant will receive instructions to access a Grant Agreement Form (GAF) to review and sign electronically via SmartSimple.

The individual listed as the primary contact in the application will receive all notifications; for organizations, notifications will be sent to the primary contact and any other contacts on the organization's account. Automated notifications from SmartSimple will be sent from [noreply@smartsimple.com](mailto:noreply@smartsimple.com). Please adjust email notification and security settings to ensure receipt of these notifications. Check your spam folder if an application submission confirmation notification has not arrived to your inbox.

### Disbursement

The grant funds are provided in a disbursement, which is a distribution from a dedicated fund for the specific purposes outlined in your application. The disbursement process begins when the GAF is fully executed. The grantee will receive notification of full execution from SmartSimple. This notification will include a PDF copy of the fully executed GAF, which will also be accessible in the grantee's SmartSimple profile.

The grantee will receive the grant disbursement approximately six to eight weeks from the date of notification of the fully executed GAF. More information on MSAC's disbursement processing timeline can be found on the [Payment Process](#) web page.

MSAC grants are generally considered taxable income. Disbursements are issued directly by the State of Maryland, not by MSAC, and no Social Security, state, or federal income taxes are withheld. Individuals receiving grant awards of more than \$600 will receive, via mail, a 1099 form from the State of Maryland. This form will arrive after the end of the calendar year in which the grant was paid. To request or access your 1099 electronically, register and log in on the General Accounting Division (GAD) [Online Service Center site](#). Specific questions regarding the taxability of your award should be directed to the IRS, the Office of the Maryland Comptroller, or your tax advisor.

Grantees are encouraged to sign up to receive disbursement electronically via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Those with existing state vendor profiles can sign up for EFT disbursements by complete the relevant forms on the [Comptroller's EFT for Vendors site](#). Typically, those who have previously received MSAC grants have an existing state vendor profile.

New grant recipients will receive grant funds via check made payable to the name and address indicated on the grantee's W-9. They will be able to sign up for EFT for any subsequent disbursements.

## **Disbursement Status**

Grantees are encouraged to deposit grant checks immediately. If the grantee has not received grant funds within eight weeks of notification of a fully executed GAF, the grantee should contact MSAC to inquire about disbursement status. The grantee is responsible for following up with MSAC staff if disbursement is not received during the fiscal year in which it was awarded. If the disbursement was lost in transit, the State of Maryland is able to re-issue disbursement. However, MSAC is unable to guarantee that funds will be available for re-issue after the end of the fiscal year in which a grant was awarded.

If the grantee owes any Maryland state taxes or other state liabilities, GAD may intercept grant disbursements and hold them until the liability is resolved. Should this be the case, GAD will send written notice of this directly to the grantee via mail. MSAC is not provided further information, as it is confidential. Grantees can find more information and discuss options with the Central Collections Unit at (410) 767-1642. Additionally, information on held disbursements can be found by creating an account on [GAD's Online Service Center](#) site.

## **Changes in Funded Activities**

If there are significant changes to the proposed activities for which a grant has been awarded, the grantee is responsible for contacting relevant staff; any proposed changes must be shared and approved in writing before proceeding. Staff will help ensure that any proposed changes remain in alignment with the program guidelines, however there is no guarantee that proposed changes will be approved. Any approved changes that result in timeline extensions that affect the final report deadline will be reflected in SmartSimple.

## **Reporting**

All grantees must file a final report in SmartSimple. The report will be added to the grantee's SmartSimple profile as soon as the GAF is fully executed.

The final report deadline for Planning grants is March 30, 2027.

The final report deadline for Project- Implementation grants is September 30, 2027.

The final report form collects information about the grantee and grant activities, including optional demographic information, data for the National Endowment for the Arts, summary of activities and use of grant funds, and other program-specific information and documents, as relevant.

Grant funds may not be used to offset grantees' state liabilities; as such, grantees whose grant disbursements were intercepted by GAD due to state liabilities, as outlined in the Disbursements section above, are not exempt from submitting required reports. Grantees must either return the funds to MSAC or follow through with their proposed grant activities and submit reports accordingly.

Failure to submit reports may jeopardize current MSAC grants, eligibility for future MSAC grants, and may result in the required return of grant funds. Before any funds are distributed, grantees are also required to submit any outstanding reports or satisfy obligations for any other MSAC grants they have received.

## **Ineligible and Declined Applications**

Applications that do not receive funding generally fall into one of two categories: ineligible or declined.

An application is marked ineligible if it is not complete or does not comply with the eligibility requirements of a particular grant program. An application can be marked ineligible at any time during the review process.

After an application is considered eligible, it may be declined for several reasons. An application may be declined due to funding allocation limitations at the time, or for the following reasons:

- Required information is incomplete or insufficient to make an award determination
- There are material inconsistencies between the application and the organization's actual operations
- There are significant operational, financial, or other circumstances that reasonably suggest the applicant is, or may become, unable to use the grant funds in alignment with the grant guidelines and agreement.

## Application Feedback

Applicants may request feedback on their applications—whether ineligible or declined for funding—by submitting a feedback request form. A link to this form will be provided in grant notification emails.

## Contact Information

MSAC staff offer technical assistance when feasible throughout the application process. This includes professional development related to grant writing and program requirements; one-on-one conversations; and tailored feedback.

For more information on the Public Art Across Maryland grant application process, contact:

- Program and application strategy assistance
  - C. Ryan Patterson, Program Director, Public Art
    - [Ryan.Patterson1@Maryland.gov](mailto:Ryan.Patterson1@Maryland.gov)
    - (443) 721-3085
- Grants logistics and technological assistance
  - Catherine Teixeira, Grants Director
    - [catherine.teixeira@maryland.gov](mailto:catherine.teixeira@maryland.gov)
    - (443) 799-7256
  - Tammy Oppel, Grants Management Associate
    - [tammy.oppel@maryland.gov](mailto:tammy.oppel@maryland.gov)
    - (410) 326-5555
  - Kirk Amaral Snow, Grants Management Associate
    - [kirk.amaralsnow@maryland.gov](mailto:kirk.amaralsnow@maryland.gov)
    - (410) 767-8865

# MSAC Overview

## Description

MSAC is an appointed body of 17 Maryland citizens, 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 nonprofit arts organizations, arts programs, and individual artists, and provides application assistance, professional development, and other resources 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.

Wes Moore, Governor  
Aruna Miller, Lieutenant Governor  
Harry Coker, Jr., Secretary of Commerce  
Steven Skerritt-Davis, Executive Director, MSAC

## Staff

MSAC maintains professional staff to administer its programs. For staff listing, visit the [MSAC staff page](#).

## Meetings

Council and panelist 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 panelist meetings may be obtained on the [Meeting Notices page](#), or by contacting MSAC at [msac.commerce@maryland.gov](mailto:msac.commerce@maryland.gov) or (410) 767-6555.

## 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 strategic plan outlines five pillars and goals:

1. Access: Bolster access to arts experiences and resources
2. Awareness: Amplify the stories of Maryland's arts sector and the value of public support
3. Connection: Foster networks within and beyond the arts sector
4. Equity: Cultivate a thriving arts ecosystem centered in equity
5. Leadership: Commit to a culture of care and innovation

Read [MSAC's full strategic plan](#) to 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. 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, disability, class, language, and/or ability.

The driving goals of MSAC's grant 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

MSAC is committed to making sure all Marylanders can access its programs and services. Everyone is welcome, and all MSAC events and activities must be 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. See the "Grantee Requirements" section below for more information on the accessibility-related expectations of all grantees.

### Accessibility Web Page

MSAC has a dedicated [accessibility page](#) available on our website. It 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, other accessibility resources for artists and arts organizations, and Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) images.

### Language Access

MSAC offers language accessibility services. Services include making translations of grant materials, remote American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation, subtitles, braille translation, translation into languages other than English, and more.

En Español/Spanish: MSAC pone a disposición servicios de traducción y accesibilidad de idiomas. Contacte [msac.commerce@maryland.gov](mailto:msac.commerce@maryland.gov) para más información.

中文普通话/Mandarin Chinese: 马里兰州艺术委员会(MSAC)提供翻译和语言无障碍服务。请联系 [msac.commerce@maryland.gov](mailto:msac.commerce@maryland.gov) 了解更多信息。

한국어/Korean: MSAC 는 한국어 지원을 돕고 있습니다. 자세한 문의사항은 [msac.commerce@maryland.gov](mailto:msac.commerce@maryland.gov) 로 연락 주시기 바랍니다.

For all other languages, please contact MSAC at [msac.commerce@maryland.gov](mailto:msac.commerce@maryland.gov) for more information.

## Feedback

If constituents would like to provide general feedback about the accessibility of programs funded or produced by MSAC, contact MSAC at [msac.commerce@maryland.gov](mailto:msac.commerce@maryland.gov) or (410) 767-6555.

## Grievances

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 a constituent wishes to file a grievance, see the following steps.

- For questions or discussion prior to filing a grievance, contact MSAC at [msac.commerce@maryland.gov](mailto:msac.commerce@maryland.gov) or (410) 767-6555
- To file a formal grievance, contact Elaine McNeil, Director of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Fair Practices for the Department of Commerce, at [elaine.mcneil2@maryland.gov](mailto:elaine.mcneil2@maryland.gov).

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

- Communicate the grievance to the sponsoring organization
- For situations in which a constituent feels a grievance was not handled appropriately by the sponsoring organization, or if a response from the organization has not been provided within 30 days, file a formal grievance by contacting MSAC at [msac.commerce@maryland.gov](mailto:msac.commerce@maryland.gov) or (410) 767-6555

MSAC will work with constituents to provide assistance as appropriate.

## Grantmaking

### Review Panels

To assist MSAC in its decision-making, Maryland residents with expertise in the arts are selected to serve on a variety of grant application review panels. The function of panels is to evaluate applications from organizations and individuals. Each year, MSAC publishes several open calls, and approximately 150 individuals serve as panelists for MSAC grant programs, including Grants for Organizations, Arts in Education, Independent Artist Awards, Public Art Across Maryland, Creativity Grants, Presenting and Touring, Professional Development Opportunity, Folklife Network, Folklife Apprenticeships, Heritage Awards, Capacity Building, Arts Capital, and County Arts Development. In addition, MSAC occasionally releases calls for residents to serve as program editors evaluating grantmaking policies and procedures, and jurors or judges for various arts activities supported by MSAC. Anyone wishing to serve is encouraged to visit MSAC's [Ways to Get Involved page](#) for detailed information and links to application forms for any open calls.

Constituents may also get involved with MSAC by creating a profile on the [Arts Directory](#), an online resource for raising the profile of Maryland artists and arts organizations; or by attending regularly scheduled virtual and in-person professional development sessions posted on [MSAC's Eventbrite page](#).

## Appeals

MSAC strives to ensure fair and equitable distribution of grant monies based on stated criteria. Therefore, dissatisfaction with the denial or amount of an award is not sufficient reason for an appeal. However, an application 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 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 notification; the letter should (1) request a reconsideration of the decision, (2) state the grounds for the request, and (3) certify that the applicant first discussed the problem with the program director and provide the date and time the discussion occurred.

The applicant will receive written notification on the determination of the appeal within 90 days of the receipt of the written request for reconsideration.

## Grantee requirements

All MSAC grantees 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
- Comply with Title IX, Section 1681 et seq. of the Education Amendments of 1972
- Comply with the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Section 6101-6107
- Comply with relevant State and federal laws
- Maintain complete and accurate records of all activities connected with the grant
- Give credit to MSAC in accordance with published [recognition guidelines](#), whenever and wherever credit is being given
- Notify the appropriate MSAC staff person in writing if a significant change is made in any MSAC-funded program or project

In addition to the requirements above, all MSAC 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:

- Comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991, as amended
- Prohibit discrimination on the basis of: (a) political or religious opinion or affiliation, marital 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
- Designate an Accessibility Point of Contact to ensure compliance, receive accommodation requests, and document grievances, as well as publish direct contact information for the Point of Contact to the public

- Create and publicly share a grievance procedure to allow stakeholders to address any events or programs that are inaccessible
- Upon request, submit documentation of operations and compliance with the above

### **Disclosure of personal information**

Certain personal information requested by MSAC's parent agency, 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 benefits or services, including funding, provided by MSAC. 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 may be shared with state, federal, and local governments if legally required.