



Arts & Entertainment Districts Operating Support FY2027 Guidelines

DEADLINE: April 1, 2026

SUPPORT PERIOD: July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027



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



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TTY: Maryland Relay 1-800-735-2258 or 711

This publication is available as a PDF on the MSAC website: www.msac.org.

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Program Overview

Purpose

The purpose of the Arts & Entertainment Districts Operating Support (AEDOS) grant is to advance the goals of the Arts & Entertainment (A&E) District program by providing operating support to the management entities of designated A&E Districts.¹

These guidelines provide instructions for currently designated Maryland A&E Districts applying for annual operating support.

Learn more about the A&E District Program, management entity eligibility, and the designation process on the MSAC website [by clicking here](#).

Grant Cycle

Funding

AEDOS grant amounts are determined annually based on MSAC's budget and overall AEDOS program allocation. The total award amount available is divided equally among approved management entities. The individual grant amount for FY2026 was \$18,000 per district. MSAC staff will communicate with AEDOS applicants as updates about grant amounts are available.

AEDOS grants are available to management entities for a designated A&E District in the State of Maryland on an annual basis. The grant application process follows a staggered five-year cycle:

- **“On Year” Applications:** Every five years, each designated A&E District is required to submit a comprehensive application. This allows for a thorough review and evaluation of the district's management and alignment with program goals.
- **“Off Year” Applications:** During the four years in between, districts are required to submit a simplified application, streamlining the process while maintaining annual eligibility for funding.

Exceptions Requiring On Year Applications:

Certain situations may require an A&E District's management entity to submit an On Year Application outside the standard cycle:

- If a five-year plan is deemed insufficient.
- In cases of grant noncompliance.
- Following significant changes in budget, programming, operations, or leadership.

¹ 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. Access the Glossary by [clicking here](#).

- If a district skips its fifth-year On Year Application but wishes to re-enter the funding cycle in a subsequent year.
- If the designated management entity changes, the new entity must submit an On Year Application to join the funding cycle.
- Other circumstances, at the discretion of MSAC staff.

Support Period

AEDOS funds support activities taking place during the fiscal year (FY) in which funds are awarded. MSAC's FY 2027 is July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027.

Grantees agree to spend or obligate all funds by June 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:

- Salaries and administrative expenses
- Events, programming, and projects in the A&E District
- Marketing of the A&E District and/or its businesses, artists, events, etc.
- Re-granting to local organizations, artists, and schools to support arts programming or projects
- Services for district artists, businesses, and arts organizations
- Other operating expenses

Grant funds may not be used for:

- Professional development for A&E district staff (please see MSAC's [Professional Development Opportunity Grant](#) to access funds for this purpose)
- Programming and/or activities not open to the general public
- Projects, performances, expenses, and activities that are part of school curricula
- Acquisition of capital assets
- Capital improvements or purchases of permanent equipment (please see MSAC's [Arts Capital Grant](#) to access funds for this purpose)
- 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
- 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 indirect costs in excess of 15 percent of the total grant amount, for all MSAC grants not providing general operating support

Timeline

The grant timelines below are estimates and may change according to application volume, funding changes, constituent needs, staff capacity, or other factors. Learn more on MSAC's site [by clicking here](#).

- On and Off Year Applications
 - Publication: February 2026
 - Deadline: April 1, 2026
- Application review
 - April -May 2026
- Notification
 - June 2026 (accompanied by application feedback meeting with the Program Director)
- Reports
 - Deadline: August 15, 2027

Eligibility

Eligible applicants must meet the requirements listed below.

All applicants must be:

- The appointed management entity for a designated A&E District in the State of Maryland. This must be documented annually through an agreement signed by:
 - The management entity's leader,
 - The Chief Elected Official (CEO) of the county or municipality(ies),
 - MSAC's A&E Districts Program Director.
- As the management entity, the applicant must:
 - Work toward the general goals of the A&E District program and the goals outlined in their most recent application for designation, redesignation, or operating support.
 - Maintain a Board or Advisory Board with at least five (5) members responsible for overseeing A&E District activities.
 - Employ at least one part-time staff member whose responsibilities include managing A&E District activities.

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

A&E District Advisory Committee

The Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) has established an A&E Advisory Committee consisting of [6] members representing various areas of state government and A&E District leadership. This committee plays a key role in the program by:

- Assessing applications,
- Providing feedback and recommendations for new designations, redesignations, expansions, and On Year AEDOS Applications, and
- Offering technical assistance as needed or requested.

Review Process

1. Staff Review
All On Year and Off Year Applications are submitted electronically and initially reviewed by MSAC staff to ensure completeness and adherence to guidelines.
2. On Year Applications
 - On Year applications undergo an additional review by the A&E Advisory Committee.
 - The committee evaluates districts' proposed use of funds to ensure alignment with program requirements.
 - Technical assistance is provided as needed.
3. Off Year Applications
 - Off Year applications are reviewed by the A&E Program Director to verify that the proposed use of funds meets program requirements.
 - The A&E Advisory Committee offers technical assistance as needed or requested.

Application forms 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.

Prompts and review criteria for both On Year and Off Year Applications are provided below, for reference.

On-Year Application

Application prompt	Review criteria
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<p><u>Five-Year Plan:</u> Describe the process for developing the district's five-year plan. Who was involved in its creation, and how was community input solicited and incorporated?</p>	<p>Excellent to Outstanding Response: The plan shows clear evidence of soliciting input from a wide variety of stakeholders and incorporating community input.</p>
<p><u>Five-Year Plan:</u> What are the district's goals and objectives over the next five years?</p>	<p>Excellent to Outstanding Response: The district's goals further the goals of the State program and address identified needs of the district and its constituents.</p>
<p><u>Five-Year Plan:</u> List the strategies the management entity will employ to support the district's goals and objective as outlined in the previous question. For each strategy, describe: (1) activities, projects, or programs that align with the strategy; (2) how this strategy addresses the district's goals and objectives; (3) how this strategy addresses the A&E District Program's goals*; and (4) the expected timeline for the strategy and anticipated outcomes.</p>	<p>Excellent to Outstanding Response: Strategies are clear, fully address the district's goals, and help meet the program's goals. Activities, projects, and programs clearly align with strategies. Timelines are realistic. Outcomes are achievable.</p>
<p><u>Five-Year Plan:</u> How will the success of the proposed activities be determined? What are the indicators and how will they be evaluated?</p>	<p>Excellent to Outstanding Response: Clear, specific, and realistic indicators of success for the proposed arts activity are communicated as is a clear process for evaluation of these indicators.</p>
<p><u>Management Structure:</u> What management structure will support the activities outlined above? Include information about paid employees, volunteers, collaborators, board, partners, etc.</p>	<p>Excellent to Outstanding Response: The management structure is clearly outlined and appropriate for the district's size and activities. The structure includes at least one part-time employee whose job responsibilities include coordination of district activities. A board of directors or advisory board - composed of at least five community members and representative of the populations, communities, and constituencies that the district serves - provides oversight of district activities.</p>
<p><u>Marketing Plan :</u> How will the management entity and the municipality(ies)/county market the proposed district to artists, businesses, and tourists? How will the state designation be recognized and marketed in broader marketing efforts?</p>	<p>Excellent to Outstanding Response: Clear description of a marketing plan that considers marketing the district to artists, businesses, and tourists and will support the activities of the district to help meet its goals.</p>

Budget: Enter the anticipated income and expenses for all A&E District activities in the coming fiscal year?	Excellent to Outstanding Response: The budget is clear and reasonable, given the activities and income sources provided.
Additional Information: Give a brief overview of the district's past five years. Include successes and challenges.	Not Scored
Additional Information: What technical assistance from MSAC or the Department of Commerce would be helpful in implementing the district's five-year plan?	Not Scored

In addition to responding to the prompts above, all applicants are required to submit the following attachments:

- Letter of Agreement with required signatures
 - Memorandum of understanding (MOU) or contract (required for 501(c)(3) management entities)
 - IRS Letter of Determination (if applicable)
 - Management Entity board and/or advisory board list and biographies
 - Management Entity staff list and biographies
 - Management Entity's financial statement or audit: all applicants must submit one of the following for the organization's most recently completed and finalized FY at the time of application submission:
 - A signed financial statement, **or**
 - An independent external audit*
- *A&E District management entities with an annual operating budget of \$750,000 or more are required to submit an independent external audit by the application deadline.
- 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 entity indicated on the W-9 and sent to the address listed in the form.
 -

Off-Year Application

Application prompt	Review criteria
District Updates: Have the District's goals, management plan, budget, or activities changed significantly since the district's most recent designation or AEDOS application?	Excellent to Outstanding Response: Any changes to goals, management plan, budget, or activities are clearly described, in alignment with the program's goals, and serve to strengthen the district and its service to its constituents.
District Updates: If yes, provide an update about the District's staffing, goals, activities, budget, etc. Include	

any changes to goals, management plan, budget, or activities	
<u>Activities:</u> What activities will be supported with AEDOS funding in the coming fiscal year?	Excellent to Outstanding Response: Clear description of activities that are allowable and align with district goals as stated in the district's most recent designation, redesignation, or AEDOS application.
<u>Activities:</u> How will the success of the proposed activities be determined? What are the indicators and how will they be evaluated?	Excellent to Outstanding Response: Clear, specific, and realistic indicators of success for the proposed arts activity are communicated as is a clear process for evaluation of these indicators.
<u>Management Structure:</u> What management structure will support the activities outlined above? Include information about paid employees, volunteers, collaborators, board, partners, etc.	Excellent to Outstanding Response: The management structure is clearly outlined and appropriate for the district's size and activities. The structure includes at least one part-time employee whose job responsibilities include coordination of district activities. A board of directors or advisory board - composed of at least five community members and representative of the populations, communities, and constituencies that the district serves - provides oversight of district activities.
<u>Budget:</u> Enter the anticipated income and expenses for all A&E District activities in the coming fiscal year?	Excellent to Outstanding Response: The budget is clear and reasonable, given the activities and income sources provided.
<u>Additional Information:</u> What technical assistance from MSAC or the Department of Commerce would be helpful in implementing the district's five-year plan?	Not Scored

In addition to responding to the prompts above, all applicants are required to submit the following attachments:

- Signed Letter of Agreement with required signatures
 - Memorandum of understanding (MOU) or contract (required for 501(c)(3) management entities)
 - IRS Letter of Determination (if applicable)
 - Management Entity board or advisory board list and biographies
 - Management Entity staff list and biographies
 - Management Entity's financial statement or Audit
- Financial information is a required component of the application. All applicants must submit one of the following for the organization's most recently completed and finalized FY at the time of application submission:
- A signed financial statement, or

- An independent external audit*
*A&E District management entities with an annual operating budget of \$750,000 or more are required to submit an independent external audit by the application deadline.
- 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, and, if approved, 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 organizational applicants, 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. Please adjust email notification and security settings to ensure receipt of these notifications. Check your spam folder if a 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.

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 FY2026 AEDOS grants is August 15, 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.

Contact Information

MSAC staff offer technical assistance 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 A&E District redesignation application process, contact:

- Program and application strategy assistance
 - David D. Mitchell, Program Director, County Arts Development and Arts & Entertainment Districts
 - david.mitchell1@maryland.gov
 - (443) 303-9506
- Grants logistics and technological assistance
 - Catherine Teixeira, Grants Director
 - catherine.teixeira@maryland.gov
 - (443) 799-7256
 - Tammy Oppel, Grants Management Associate
 - tammy.oppel@maryland.gov
 - (443) 326-5555
 - Kirk Amaral Snow, Grants Management Associate
 - 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 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 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 了解更多信息。

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

For all other languages, please contact MSAC at 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 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 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.

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 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.