

# MARYLAND STATE ARTS COUNCIL GRANT REVIEW PANELS

## PURPOSE OF GRANT REVIEW PANELS

- To review grant applications from organizations and evaluate applications based on MSAC approved criteria
- To recommend policy and procedural changes to the Council

## PANELISTS' ROLE

- Panelists provide the Council's Grants Committee with expert, discipline-specific evaluation of an applicant's program by reviewing each applicant's narrative, budget, support materials and on-site evaluations and then consistently and objectively evaluating the proposal based on the criteria provided by MSAC.
- Panelists are not charged with the responsibility of recommending funding amounts. However, their evaluations will form the direct basis for funding decisions.

## ELIGIBILITY OF PANELISTS

Panelists must have experience in one of the following discipline areas which MSAC funds through the Grants for Organizations program: Arts Service, Children's Events, Dance, Folk and Traditional Arts, Literature, Multi Discipline, Music, Theater and Visual Arts/Media.

## PANELIST SELECTION

- Potential panelists are solicited by nominations through various sources including, but not limited to: Maryland State Arts Council members, current panelists, county arts councils, grantees, applicants, and artists.
- The MSAC Panel Selection Committee recommends panelists to the Council, insuring geographic, cultural, gender and professional representation.
- The full Council appoints panelists each Fall and notifies them in writing.
- Names of nominees not appointed to a panel are kept on file and may be appointed to serve on future panels.

## PANELISTS' RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Panel Orientation:** New panelists are requested to attend a panel orientation meeting to familiarize themselves with the MSAC panel process, to discuss policy issues affecting applicants, and to meet with panel colleagues, staff, and Council.
- **Panel Books and Grant Review:** Panelists will receive panel books containing all the grant applications for their discipline panel. Each application will be preceded by a rating sheet for that application. Panelists are required to read and evaluate all grant application narratives, read and evaluate all assigned support materials, and complete a rating sheet for each application prior to the panel meeting.
- **Conflict of Interest:** Panelists are required to place on file at the MSAC offices, a list of any organizations in which they have a conflict of interest - a governance or fee-earning role in the organization. Panelists must absent themselves from the panel meeting while a grant application from an organization with which they are affiliated is being discussed.
- **Site Visits:** Panelists are required to complete Artistic and In-depth site visits for specific organizations as assigned by the Program Director. Site visits are integral to the panel process and must be accomplished in order to make recommendations about the grants.

Artistic site visits require that the panelist attend an organization's artistic event, in person. These visits may take place at various times during the year depending on the organization's schedule. The panelist should call the organization for a listing of events. The panelist may advise the organization of their plans to attend an activity or they may visit an artistic event without advising the organization.

The purpose of the visit is to evaluate the artistic merit of the organization.

In-Depth site visits require the panelist to schedule a meeting/interview with the director or contact person for the organization. The panelist should discuss any questions about the application, familiarize themselves with the organization, request updated information about the organization, and tour the facility if applicable. The purpose of the visit is to determine the organizational effectiveness and community service of the organization.

Lead Reader telephone calls require the panelist to schedule a short telephone call with the director or contact person for the organization. The panelist should discuss any questions about the application, and familiarize themselves with the organization, taking into account the previously mention three review criteria for evaluation.

- **Written reports:** Each panelist is required to submit written evaluations for their assigned organizations to their Program Director. Pre-printed forms for this purpose will be provided by MSAC.
- **Panel Meeting:** Panelists are required to attend a one-day or two-day Panel Meeting, in the Spring, to review and evaluate all applicants and make recommendations on the quality of each applicant, based on the criteria provided by MSAC. Panelists will also discuss issues of concern arising from the grant application and organization reviews and make recommendations to the Council on policy changes.

The Chair of the MSAC appoints a member of the Council as a liaison to each panel. The Panel Liaison observes the panel meeting and serves as a resource to the Grants Committee of the Council. The Liaison has no voting privileges and does not participate in the panel's discussion, except for policy issues.

Grant Review Panel information and forms are available at the MSAC Web Site, [http:// www.msac.org](http://www.msac.org).