



## Emergency Grant Guidelines Independent Artists

**DEADLINE: August 3, 2020 5:00 PM**  
**SUPPORT PERIOD: Rolling**

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# Maryland State Arts Council

## Overview

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

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

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

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

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

## Authority

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

Larry Hogan, Governor

Boyd K. Rutherford, Lieutenant Governor

Kelly M. Schulz, Secretary

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

## Mission and Goals

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

MSAC's most recent strategic plan outlines five goals:

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

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

The driving goals of MSAC's granting processes are:

- To yield a greater variety of funded projects
- To eliminate biases that may be found in any part of the granting process (i.e. - 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

## Professional Grants Review Panels

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

## Staff

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

## Meetings

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

## Requirements For Grant Recipients

- Must comply with Title VI, Section 601, of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which states that no persons, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination related to, the arts.
- Must comply with Title IV, Section 1681, of the Education Amendments of 1972, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Section 6101, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex or age.
- Must comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991, as amended.
- Must maintain complete and accurate records of all activities connected with the grant.
- Must have filed a satisfactory reporting with MSAC for the most recently completed fiscal year.
- Must file a final report in alignment with the program requirements. Necessary reporting methods will be provided by MSAC in ample time to meet the deadline. Failure to report may

jeopardize any future grant being received by the organization and may result in the organization being required to repay grant funds.

- Must give credit to MSAC in accordance with the Recognition Guidelines whenever and wherever credit is being given.
- Must notify the appropriate MSAC staff person in writing if a significant change is made in any MSAC-funded program or project.

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

## Appeals Process

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

Grounds for such reconsideration are:

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

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

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

# Emergency Grant Overview

The purpose of the Emergency Grant is to support needs of independent artists as they adjust to losses sustained because of programming and/or events that have been modified or cancelled as a result of the Governor's declared State of Emergency in relationship to COVID-19. Applicants may only receive funding for one application per fiscal year (July 1 - June 30).

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

## Eligibility

### Who May Apply:

- Independent Artists are defined as artists who earn income from artistic activities and are not directly affiliated with a larger arts organization or programs that may provide any form of compensation.
  - Independent Artist income is not derived from the creation or execution of artistic work for industry-oriented or industry-related production.
  - Independent Artists are not full-time salaried employees.
- Artists 18 years of age or older who meet the Maryland residency requirement below.
- Applicants must be Maryland residents (owning or renting residential real property in Maryland at the time of submission of the application and throughout the funded project or program).
- Applicants must provide an estimate of any unemployment benefits in the budget submission.

### Who May Not Apply:

- Artists enrolled in high school or any undergraduate classes or programs during FY 2021 (July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021).
- Individuals pursuing graduate instruction in any artistic category during FY 2021 (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021). This includes visual, performing, and literary arts.
- Artists who received a \$6,000 MSAC Individual Artist Award in FY 2019.
- Artists who received a State Independent Artist Award in FY20.
- Artists who received a \$10,000 Regional Independent Artist Award in FY20.
- Artists who are salaried employees of an organization.

## Review Criteria

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

1. **Identify programming/events that have been modified or cancelled as a result of the Governor's declared State of Emergency. Be detailed in your explanation of how these modifications/cancellations have caused significant impact.**  
*(Recommended Response: Clear, specific, and thorough explanation of the modifications/cancellations with detailed evidence of significant impact to the artist(s).)*
2. **Identify the need(s) for any additional funding required (if applicable) as a result of the Governor's declared State of Emergency. Be detailed.**

(Recommended Response: Clear, specific, and thorough explanation of the proposed funding need(s) with detailed evidence.)

**3. What is the budget for the funding request? Include the items below in the submitted budget.**

Recommended template is available here: <https://www.msac.org/grants/emergency-grant>

- Amount of the request
- Specific line items indicating expenses of how the funding will be used
- A comparison report to a similar time period. (In this column, highlight which months mirror a similar period of income prior to the Governor's declared State of Emergency. For example, if you are requesting funding to cover lost income from March to May 2020, highlight the periods of activity from March to May 2019.)
- Any anticipated revenue from other federal/state resources and how that income will be used

(Recommended Response: Financial information is clearly tied to the loss and offers obvious evidence to support the request.)

**4. Enter the minimum amount needed from MSAC in the Grant Request Box below. Explain here the essential operations and/or significant need that this funding will be used to support.**

(Recommended Response: Use of funding supports essential operations and/or significant need.)

### Additional Application Questions

Write a statement explaining why you consider yourself an independent artist including a list of income sources from July 1, 2019 to the present.

Please list other sources of financial support and dollar amounts that you have received, or are scheduled to receive, including, but not limited to, Small Business Grants/Loans, Payroll Protection Funds, National Endowment for the Arts or National Endowment for the Humanities CARES Act Funds, MD Humanities Funds, and unemployment insurance.

## Application Process

### Smart Simple

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

- Applicants are required to complete and submit their applications by electronic means, including the use of an electronic signature.
- Technical support for SmartSimple is available during regular office hours, 9:00 AM through 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday.
- Lost, misdirected or late applications are the sole responsibility of the applicant.

## Grant Review and Evaluation Process

Applications for Emergency Grants are reviewed by the MSAC staff (requests under \$2,000), MSAC Executive Committee (requests \$2,000 - \$5,000) or the full Council (requests over \$5,000).

Funding is based on application submission (rather than funding grantees across the board without an application as is being done in some other states).

Applications are due by 5PM on Monday, August 3, and will be reviewed within two weeks. Funding will be recommended through a comparison model of rubric scores (rather than each application standing alone, without comparison).

## Notification

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

## Reporting Requirements

If awarded an Emergency Grant, the grantee must file a final report online through Smart Simple by December 31, 2020. The report contains a brief summary request as well as some demographic requirements of the NEA (National Endowment for the Arts) and Commerce Economic Impact Department. Failure to submit reports may jeopardize the grantee's current and/or future MSAC grants and may result in repayment of grant funds. Before any funds are distributed, grantees must submit any outstanding reports/requirements for any other MSAC grants they have received.

**Grant Funds May Be Used For:** Losses sustained because of programming and/or events that have been modified or cancelled as a result of the Governor's declared State of Emergency in relationship to COVID-19.