

Grants for Organizations FY2021 Narrative Questions

National arts organizations (National Endowment for the Arts, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, Americans for the Arts) have clarified and shared approaches to uncover cultural bias in the procedures and policies of state arts organizations. In response, the Maryland State Arts Council has committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion in grantmaking as all funding mechanisms continue to be examined and updated. The design of the Grants for Organizations FY2021 application is meant to inspire authentic reflection and internal analysis for each applying organization, with the knowledge that the Maryland State Arts Council is to be seen and utilized as a collaborative partner in the process. The driving goals of this new vision for the granting processes connect to the application in the following ways:

- To acknowledge positions of privilege while questioning practices, shifting paradigms of status quo arts activities, and taking more risks.
- 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 expand the deliberations about rigor beyond current conventions or Western traditions.
- To aspire to make investments that contribute to social change and demonstrate aesthetic excellence in terms relevant to context and intent.

Narrative Questions:

A. Questions A1 - A2 and the chart below address why the work of your organization is important.

1. What are the vision, mission, goals and/or values of the organization? Have the vision, mission, goals, and/or values of the organization evolved over the last two years? If so, how?

(Excellent to Outstanding response: Clear, specific, and thorough evidence of vision, mission, goals and/or values; a clear explanation of growth/evolution over the past two years clearly aligns with vision, mission, goals/values)

<p>Clear, specific, and thorough evidence of vision, mission, goals and/or values; a clear, specific, and thorough explanation of growth/evolution over the past two years</p>	<p>Clear evidence of vision, mission, goals and/or values; a clear explanation of growth/evolution over the past two years that clearly aligns with vision, mission, goals/values</p>	<p>Somewhat clear evidence of vision, mission, goals and/or values; somewhat clear explanation of growth/evolution over the past two years that clearly aligns with vision, mission, goals/values</p>	<p>Unclear evidence of vision, mission, goals and/or values; unclear explanation of growth/evolution over the past two year that clearly aligns with vision, mission, goals/values</p>	
<p>Excellent to Outstanding</p>	<p>Good to Very Good</p>	<p>Satisfactory</p>	<p>Marginal to Fair</p>	<p>No Evidence</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>0</p>

2. What is the Geographic Area of Service for your organization (specific community(ies), county(ies), city(ies), statewide)?
(Your response to this question will be used to guide understanding throughout the application.)

The following chart explains how your statements in A.1 and A.2 are demonstrated in your day-to-day activities. The purpose of the chart is to show alignment between the organization's intentions, processes, and programming. The List of Events/Arts Activities may be categorized by program type (i.e. Mainstage Season) and number of corresponding occurrences, if multiple rows contain the same response.

(Excellent to outstanding responses: 1) Clearly aligns with vision, mission, goals/values; 2) Distinctly communicates the application of creative process; 3) Specifically demonstrates meaningful public value, and authentic constituent collaboration and 4) Clearly demonstrates plans to reach yet to be known constituents)

List of Events/Arts Activities for 07/01/20 - 06/30/21	How does each activity connect to the vision, mission, goals, and values of the organization?	How does each activity demonstrate the creative process?	How does each arts activity demonstrate public value for the constituents in the Geographic Area of Service over an extended period of time?	How is each arts activity designed to reach yet to be known constituents in the Geographic Area of Service?
(Add rows as needed)				

Description of arts activities: 1) Clearly aligns with vision, mission, goals/values; 2) Distinctly communicates the application of creative process; 3) Specifically demonstrates meaningful public value, and authentic constituent collaboration; and 4) Clearly	Description of arts activities: 1) Adequately aligns with vision, mission, goals/values; 2) Somewhat communicates the application of creative process; and 3) Partially demonstrates meaningful public value and authentic constituent collaboration and 4) Somewhat	Description of arts activities: 1) Vaguely aligns with vision, mission, goals/values; 2) Poorly communicates the application of creative process; and 3) Incompletely demonstrates meaningful public value and authentic constituent collaboration and 4)	Description of arts activities: 1) Does not align with vision, mission, goals/values; 2) Does not communicate application of creative process; and 3) Does not demonstrate meaningful public value and authentic constituent collaboration and 4) Does not demonstrate plans to reach yet to be known constituents	
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demonstrates plans to reach yet to be known constituents	demonstrates plans to reach yet to be known constituents	Vaguely demonstrates plans to reach yet to be known constituents		
Excellent to Outstanding	Good to Very Good	Satisfactory	Marginal to Fair	No evidence
12	9	6	3	0

B. Questions 1 -3 below address how your organization designs its programs.

1. Describe the creative process within your organization's programming. How are artistic decisions made?

(Excellent to Outstanding response: The explanation of creative process 1) Clearly illustrates creative roles and responsibilities; and 2) Specifically details a creative decision-making procedure)

Explanation of creative process: 1) Clearly illustrates creative roles and responsibilities; and 2) Specifically details a creative decision-making procedure	Explanation of creative process: 1) Adequately illustrates creative roles and responsibilities; and 2) Partially details a creative decision-making procedure	Explanation of creative process: 1) Vaguely illustrates creative roles and responsibilities; and 2) Poorly details a creative decision-making procedure	Explanation of creative process: 1) Does not illustrate creative roles and responsibilities; and 2) Does not detail a creative decision-making procedure	
Excellent to Outstanding	Good to Very Good	Satisfactory	Marginal to Fair	No Evidence
8	6	4	2	0

2. How are the constituents in the Geographic Area of Service involved in the creative process, programmatic development and evaluation of the artistic activities?

(Excellent to outstanding response includes: Explanation of creative process identifies constituents from Geographic Area of Service as essentially involved in artistic decisions)

Explanation of creative process identifies constituents from Geographic Area of Service as essentially involved in artistic decisions	Explanation of creative process identifies constituents from Geographic Area of Service as regularly involved in artistic decisions	Explanation of creative process identifies constituents from Geographic Area of Service as occasionally involved in artistic decisions	Explanation of creative process does not identify constituents from Geographic Area of Service as involved in artistic decisions	
Excellent to Outstanding	Good to Very Good	Satisfactory	Marginal to Fair	No Evidence
8	6	4	2	0

3. Explain the process for long-term or strategic planning. (If your organization does not have a long-term or strategic plan, how do you design programs and activities for the future?) How does this process align with your vision, mission, goals/values?

(Excellent to outstanding response includes: Clear and specific explanation of long-term/strategic planning process that directly connects with vision, mission, goals/values)

Clear and specific explanation of long-term/strategic planning process that directly connects with vision, mission, goals/values	Clear explanation of long-term/strategic planning process that directly connects with vision, mission, goals/values	Somewhat clear explanation of long-term/strategic planning process that connects with vision, mission, goals/values	Limited explanation of long-term/strategic planning process that somewhat connects with vision, mission, goals/values	
Excellent to Outstanding	Good to Very Good	Satisfactory	Marginal to Fair	No evidence
8	6	4	2	0

C. Questions 1-6 below address how your organization operates.

1. In the attachment section of the application, attach a Graphic/Chart of the organization's Staffing Structure (board, staff, artists, volunteers, etc).
2. How is your staffing structure (board, staff, artists, volunteers, etc) successful?
3. What staffing (board, staff, artists, volunteers, etc) or financial challenges affect the operation of your organization and how are the challenges routinely identified and addressed?

(Excellent to Outstanding response includes: Clear and specific explanation of: 1) Staffing structure, 2) Specific indicators of success, 3) Clear mechanisms for identifying and addressing staffing and financial challenges; and 4) A regular commitment to identifying and addressing challenges)

<p>Clear and specific explanation of: 1) Staffing structure; 2) Specific indicators of success; 3) mechanisms for identifying and addressing staffing and financial challenges; and 4) A regular commitment to identifying and addressing challenges</p> <p>Excellent to Outstanding</p> <p>12</p>	<p>Clear explanation of: 1) Staffing structure; 2) Indicators of success; 3) mechanisms for identifying and addressing staffing and financial challenges; and 4) a regular commitment to identifying and addressing challenges</p> <p>Good to Very Good</p> <p>9</p>	<p>Somewhat clear explanation of: 1) Staffing structure; 2) Indicators of success; 3) mechanisms for identifying and addressing staffing and financial challenges; and 4) a commitment to identifying and addressing challenges</p> <p>Satisfactory</p> <p>6</p>	<p>Limited explanation of: 1) Staffing structure; 2) Indicators of success; 3) mechanisms for identifying and addressing staffing and financial challenges; and 4) a commitment to identifying and addressing challenges</p> <p>Marginal to Fair</p> <p>3</p>	<p>No Evidence</p> <p>0</p>
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4. How are the finances monitored and approved?

5. If an income surplus of 20% or more has been identified in your budget submission how is the surplus being allocated? If a deficit of 20% or more has been identified in your budget submission how is the deficit being addressed?

(Excellent to Outstanding response includes: 1) Detailed procedure for monitoring and approving finances; 2) Complete processes for addressing budget surpluses/deficits with respect to vision, mission, and goals/values

<p>Explanation shows: 1) Clear and detailed procedure for monitoring and approving finances; 2) Complete processes for addressing budget surpluses/deficits with respect to vision, mission, and goals/values</p> <p>Excellent to Outstanding</p> <p>4</p>	<p>Explanation shows: 1) Detailed procedure for monitoring and approving finances; 2) Complete processes for addressing budget surpluses/deficits with some respect to vision, mission, and goals/values</p> <p>Good to Very Good</p> <p>3</p>	<p>Explanation shows: 1) a procedure for monitoring and approving finances; 2) Processes for addressing budget surpluses/deficits with some respect to vision, mission, and goals/values</p> <p>Satisfactory</p> <p>2</p>	<p>Explanation shows: 1) a limited procedure for monitoring and approving finances; 2) Some processes for addressing budget surpluses/deficits with limited respect to vision, mission, and goals/values</p> <p>Marginal to Fair</p> <p>1</p>	<p>No Evidence</p> <p>0</p>
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6. How does your staffing (board, staff, artists, volunteers, etc) reflect the population of your Geographic Area of Service?
- Optional Supplemental Material for Question C6: Biography paragraphs and/or relevant listings for key artistic and management personnel, all regularly employed artists, current board members and arts program committee members

(Excellent to Outstanding response includes Organization staff and board clearly reflecting the constituency of the Geographic Area of Service)

<p>Organization staff and board clearly reflect the constituency of the Geographic Area of Service.</p> <p>Excellent to Outstanding</p> <p>8</p>	<p>Organization staff and board somewhat reflects the constituency of the Geographic Area of Service</p> <p>Good to Very Good</p> <p>6</p>	<p>Organization staff and board has a limited reflection of the constituency of the Geographic Area of Service</p> <p>Satisfactory</p> <p>4</p>	<p>No evidence</p> <p>2</p>	<p>0 Points</p>
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D. Questions 1 - 3 below address how your organization evaluates what it does.

1. What is the sensory or emotional experience hoped to be achieved through your organization’s arts programming?

(Excellent to Outstanding responses: Programming process directly considers intended sensory and emotional impact)

Programming process directly considers intended sensory and emotional impact	Programming process somewhat considers intended sensory and emotional impact	Programming process vaguely considers intended sensory and emotional impact	Programming process does not consider intended sensory and emotional impact	
Excellent to Outstanding	Good to Very Good	Satisfactory	Marginal to Fair	No Evidence
8	6	4	2	0

2. How do programmed arts activities assume risk by considering non-dominant norms, values, narratives, standards, or aesthetics?

(Excellent to Outstanding responses: Programming process indicates regular consideration of non-dominant norms, values, narratives, standards, and aesthetics)

Programming process indicates regular consideration of non-dominant norms, values, narratives, standards, and aesthetics	Programming process indicates some consideration of non-dominant norms, values, narratives, standards, and aesthetics	Programming process indicates occasional consideration of non-dominant norms, values, narratives, standards, and aesthetics	Programming process indicates no consideration of non-dominant norms, values, narratives, standards, and aesthetics	
Excellent to Outstanding	Good to Very Good	Satisfactory	Marginal to Fair	No Evidence
8	6	4	2	0

3. Please give a recent example of one of the organization's greatest successes and explain why it is considered successful.

(Excellent to Outstanding responses: Evaluation clearly articulates why a specific program or event was determined to be successful)

Evaluation clearly articulates why a specific program or event was determined to be successful	Evaluation somewhat articulates why a specific program or event was determined to be successful	Evaluation poorly articulates why a specific program or event was determined to be successful	Evaluation does not articulate why a specific program or event was determined to be successful	
Excellent to Outstanding	Good to Very Good	Satisfactory	Marginal to Fair	No Evidence
8	6	4	2	0

Financials:

Financial information indicates a strong commitment to multiple, diverse income streams	Financial information indicates adequate commitment to multiple, diverse income streams	Financial information indicates multiple income streams	Financial information indicates a single income stream	
Excellent to Outstanding	Good to Very Good	Satisfactory	Marginal to Fair	No Evidence
4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Points	0 Points
The organization does not display any significant financial changes; Any significant financial changes (surplus or deficit >20%) are supported with programmatic cause in alignment with the organization's mission and vision.	Any significant financial changes (surplus or deficit >20%) are recognized and somewhat supported with programmatic cause in alignment with the organization's mission and vision.	The organization is operating with significant financial changes (surplus or deficit >20%) that are recognized but not addressed.	The organization is experiencing a surplus or deficit greater than 20% and there is minimal or no support for this circumstance.	
Excellent to Outstanding	Good to Very Good	Satisfactory	Marginal to Fair	No Evidence
4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Points	0 Points
If budget size indicates (>600K), the organization is operating with a cash reserve of (at least) one year.	If budget size indicates (>600K), the organization is operating with a cash reserve of (at least) 6 months.	If budget size indicates (>600K), the organization is operating with a minimal cash reserve (less than 6 months).	If budget size indicates (>600K), the organization is operating without any cash reserve.	
Excellent to Outstanding	Good to Very Good	Satisfactory	Marginal to Fair	No Evidence
4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Points	0 Points

Attachments:

- Latest certified, audited financial report, due at time of application submission (even if it reflects the previous fiscal year's income and expenses) for organizations operating over \$600,000
- Financial activity report that coincides with the submission date of the application for organizations operating below \$600,000
- Graphic/Chart of the organization's (program's) Staffing Structure (Board, Staff, Regularly Employed Artists).
- IRS Letter of Determination.
- Optional Supplemental Material for Question C: Biography paragraphs for key artistic and management personnel, all regularly employed artists, current board members and arts program committee members

Definitions for Reference:

Outreach -

Often means programming that is designed to serve an identified group or community rather than including the identified group or community in the organization's overall program design and constituency.

Creative Process -

The process by which an idea moves from initial thought to fruition. This may include inspiration, intention, and philosophy that influences the evolution of the idea to implementation.

Public Value -

The importance, worth, relevance, or usefulness of the artistic programs or activities to the intended Geographic Area of Service.

Non-dominant norms, values, narratives, standards and aesthetics -

Non-relevant and Eurocentric standards of excellence and beauty often prevail in describing and assessing the aesthetics of work that is socially and civically engaged. Non-dominant norms go against these standards of excellence. Non-dominant norms consider renewing and promoting a dynamic critical paradigm, reflective of diverse cultures as embodied by community-based, social, and civic arts practices.