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INDIVIDUAL ARTIST AWARDS

Policy Change Recommendation 1

Strategic Planning Goal:

- 1: Increase Participation: Broaden the engagement of MSAC's constituency and beyond, providing avenues designed to increase pathways to participation with MSAC
2. Provide Intentional Support: Embrace thoughtful and targeted approaches to serving known and yet to be known MSAC constituents

Current Language

Name: Individual Artist Awards

Recommended Language

Name: Independent Artist Awards

Justification (Feedback from LISTENING SESSIONS, CREATIVE CONVERSATIONS and EDITOR SESSIONS) To clarify that awards honor the artistic accomplishments of and support Maryland artists working independent of institutions or organizations; To acknowledge that artists work in collaboration and allow submission of collaborative work.

- The term "individual" connotes working in isolation (Listening Session)
- Suggestion to shift language to "independent" to acknowledge that the program intends to reach artists creating work independent of institutions. (Listening Session)
- The current program limits submissions to work made by one artist. This ignores the reality that artists often work in collaboration and excludes many artists from participating. (Listening Session)
- Editors reacted positively to the name change.

Policy Change Recommendation 2

Strategic Planning Goal:

- 1: Increase Participation: Broaden the engagement of MSAC's constituency and beyond, providing avenues designed to increase pathways to participation with MSAC
2. Provide Intentional Support: Embrace thoughtful and targeted approaches to serving known and yet to be known MSAC constituents

Current Activity

Description: MSAC Individual Artist Awards (IAA) are grants awarded to Maryland artists to encourage and sustain their pursuit of artistic excellence.

Recommended Change

Description: Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) Independent Artist Awards (IAAs) recognize achievement by Maryland artists [working making work](#) independent of an institution or organization. [The awards](#) are accompanied by unrestricted grants that encourage artistic growth and sustained practice.

(Blue text notes changes requested by B. Bershon. Separation into two sentences added by S Skerritt-Davis)

Justification (Feedback from LISTENING SESSIONS, CREATIVE CONVERSATIONS and EDITOR SESSIONS) Revise and clarify the intent of the awards.

- See Recommendation 1 for justification of first sentence.
- Changes to sentence two distinguish between the award and the grant. (Applicant Feedback, Listening Session, Editor sessions)

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Policy Change Recommendation 3

Strategic Planning Goal:

2. Provide Intentional Support: Embrace thoughtful and targeted approaches to serving known and yet to be known MSAC constituents

Current Structure & Criteria

- \$1,000 work shows potential to achieve the highest level and should be encouraged through this award
- \$3,000 work is approaching the highest level but it has not yet been achieved
- \$6,000 work that has achieved an exceptionally high level of artistic excellence.

Recommended Structure & Criteria

Regional Awards

- Emerging - \$2,000 to encourage an artist's pursuit of promising or innovative work
- Notable Achievement - \$10,000 to recognize notable artistic achievement
- Notable Collaboration - \$10,000 to recognize notable collaborations by two or more artists

State Awards

- Outstanding Achievement - an additional \$15,000 to recognize outstanding artistic achievement by Notable Regional Awardees (Collaboration or Achievement)

Justification (Feedback from LISTENING SESSIONS, CREATIVE CONVERSATIONS and EDITOR SESSIONS) Increase award amounts to meaningful levels, accept collaborative work, ensure geographic representation in awarded artists.

- "Award amounts have not changed since I applied in 1986." (Listening Session)
- The award amounts should be revised to have more impact. \$5,000-\$10,000 awards would be more attractive and meaningful to artists. (Listening Session)
- General consensus that awarding potential through a smaller award amount should remain part of the program. (Listening Session, Editors, IAA Panelists)
- The program only recognizes artists located in the center of the state and coming from an academic tradition or contemporary aesthetic. (Constituents, Listening Session, Regional Institutes, Editors, Councilors, County Arts Councils - See Recommendation 5)

Policy Change Recommendation 4

Strategic Planning Goal:

1: Increase Participation: Broaden the engagement of MSAC's constituency and beyond, providing avenues designed to increase pathways to participation with MSAC

Current Eligibility

Maryland Residents, 18+

The artist is the applicant

May not be enrolled in high school or undergraduate classes or pursuing graduate instruction in any MSAC IAA artistic category

Collaborating artists may not apply

Recommended Eligibility

Maryland Residents, 18+

The artist is the applicant

May not be enrolled in high school or undergraduate classes or pursuing graduate instruction in any MSAC IAA artistic category

Collaborating artists may apply for Collaboration (and State) awards. A lead artist is the applicant. 50% of collaborators must be Maryland residents.

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Justification (Feedback from LISTENING SESSIONS, CREATIVE CONVERSATIONS and EDITOR SESSIONS) Accept and recognize work by collaborating artists.

- This recommendation allows for the submission of collaborative work as discussed in recommendations 1 and 2.

Policy Change Recommendation 5

Strategic Planning Goal:

- 1: Increase Participation: Broaden the engagement of MSAC's constituency and beyond, providing avenues designed to increase pathways to participation with MSAC
2. Provide Intentional Support: Embrace thoughtful and targeted approaches to serving known and yet to be known MSAC constituents

Current Restrictions

Artists who received a \$6,000 IAA in past 2 years may not apply

Artists may only submit to one category per year

Artists may not re-submit winning work or work completed while a student

Only completed work may be submitted

Only work completed in the last three years may be submitted

Applicants may not identify themselves in their work samples

Recommended Restrictions

Artists who receive a Notable Achievement Award are eligible to re-apply after sitting out one cycle

Lifetime limits:

- Emerging - 3
- Notable or Collaboration Lead Artist - 2
- State - 1

Artists may not re-submit winning work or work completed while they are a student

Only completed work may be submitted (defined as ready for public presentation)

Limit acceptable work sample window by discipline

Applicants may not identify themselves in their work samples, unless identity is central to the work

Once an artist receives a notable award, or if an artist has received a \$6,000 Individual Artist Award, they are not eligible for an Emerging award

Once an artist receives a State award, they are not eligible to reapply

Artists listed as collaborators may not apply with their own work or as a Lead Artist in the same year

(Blue text notes changes added based on questions posed by L. Bengfort.)

Justification (Feedback from LISTENING SESSIONS, CREATIVE CONVERSATIONS and EDITOR SESSIONS) Clarify restrictions, encourage participation, and add flexibility in work sample submission by discipline.

- A longer waiting period after being awarded would give previously unawarded artists more of a chance. (Listening Session, Applicant Feedback)
- The same awardees appear to win year after year, resulting in a lack of interest in applying to the program by non-awarded artists. (Listening Session, applicants, County Arts Councils, Councilors)
- The current requirement of submitting two or four work samples completed in the past three years is impractical and limits participation from some disciplines. (Applicant Feedback, Listening Session, Editor Sessions)

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- “The anonymity restriction is limiting because all of my work is personal and comes from life experience. It is impossible to remove myself from my work. So, I can’t apply?”
(Editor Session)

Policy Change Recommendation 6

Strategic Planning Goal:

- 1: Increase Participation: Broaden the engagement of MSAC’s constituency and beyond, providing avenues designed to increase pathways to participation with MSAC
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Current Categories

19 Discipline categories accepted over a three-year cycle

Recommended Categories

Applicants apply in three broad categories accepted over a three-year cycle. For collaborative applications, the lead artist must fit the year’s category.

Year 1 (2020): Performance

Year 2 (2021): Visual

Year 3 (2022): Literary

Justification (Feedback from LISTENING SESSIONS, CREATIVE CONVERSATIONS and EDITOR SESSIONS) Encourage participation by broadening categories to be more inclusive.

- Confusion about where specific art or artists fit in current categories. (Applicant Feedback, Listening Session, Editing Sessions)
- If I don’t see myself in the categories, I may not apply. The categories should be broad and more inclusive. (Editing Sessions)
- Separation of Music categories communicates a bias toward Western forms by framing non-western forms as “other” (World and Non-Classical). (Listening Session, Applicant Feedback)

Policy Change Recommendation 7

Strategic Planning Goal:

- 3: Build Capacity: Work strategically to 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 partners, collaborators, and constituents who will benefit from and will advance the work of MSAC

Current Panel Structure

Three-person panels of non-Maryland residents with expertise in a category review submissions to the category and determine funding amount recommendations

Recommended Panel Structure

Five to eight regional panels of Maryland residents with expertise in the category review applications and determine Regional Awards.

One panelist from each regional panel serves on the State panel. One out-of-state panelist advises State award selection.

The number and breadth of applicant work determines the size and composition of regional panels. Minimum panel is three people.

Justification (Feedback from LISTENING SESSIONS, CREATIVE CONVERSATIONS and EDITOR SESSIONS) Applicant work receives regional review, while state award benefits from an out-of-state lens

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- It's a fact that high-quality artists are not being selected, perhaps because their art is more regional or rural in subject and style. Jurors perhaps don't understand or are not predisposed to reward it. "Could you select jurors from areas that represent the full cultural diversity in Maryland?" (Listening Session)
- "(This) area is competing with other larger areas and that is challenging. Can the structure be redone?" (St. Mary's Regional Institute)
- "I just assume you have to be high-falutin' to get a grant." (Frederick Regional Institute)
- Panelists are likely biased toward more urban (contemporary) work because they are drawn from academia and population centers. Artists living in rural areas might be better judges of work from rural areas. (Listening Session)
- "It feels like MD is trying to be NYC by using outside people; the award winners seem to come out of new york art market profile; such great indigenous work happening in MD, (it) doesn't need to compete in New York." (Listening Session)
- Having an "outside eye" on work of Maryland artists benefits artists and Maryland by giving exposure and validating results. (Listening Session, Editor Sessions)
- "I really like the idea of the tiered jurying system that starts with Maryland-based jurors.... Despite the concerns about nepotism expressed by a few people, ... if you pick jurors who are local, they may help solve the bias toward "urban" or "university" artists that some people raised.... It would also introduce panelists to people within the state that they might otherwise not know about, and for curators, that's a plus.... Then have the out of state panelists at the top level, which is also good, because it shows them what's going on here, and puts strong Maryland artists on their radar." (Listening Session Written Feedback)

Proposed Timeline

April-June 2019 - Draft guidelines and plan rollout of new structure, design application

June-July 2019 - 2020 IAA new structure and 2020 application announcement

October 1, 2020 - IAA Application Open

November 15, 2020 - IAA Deadline

November 2019-February 2020 - Staff review and panel organization

March 2020 - Regional Panels

Early April 2020 - State Panel

April 15, 2020 - 2020 Awardee Notifications

May 15, 2020 - 2020 Award Announcement

June 2020 - 2020 Award Ceremony (Summit)

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