OFFICE OF ARTS & CULTURE
CITY OF SEATTLE

Artists at the Center 2026-2027 Guidelines

APPLICATION OPENS: Tuesday, March 10, 2026
APPLICATION CLOSES: Tuesday, April 21, 2026, at 5 p.m. (Pacific)

Grant Overview

Artists at the Center is a multi-year collaboration between Seattle Office of Arts & Culture and Seattle Center, with support from Uptown Arts & Culture Coalition and the communities surrounding the Seattle Center campus. This program is made possible by a 10-year community benefit grant from Climate Pledge Arena and Seattle Kraken, starting in 2021.

Artists at the Center funds individual artists, arts collectives, community groups, and organizations to develop and present pop-ups throughout the year at Seattle Center. Artistic genres may include music, dance, theater, demonstrations, and multi-disciplinary work. Pop-ups will be scheduled between October 2026 and September 2027. Awarded participants will receive either $2,000, $4,000, or $6,000 in funding based on the artist/group size and complexity of scope. Awardees from the current season (2025-2026) are not eligible to apply for the upcoming 2026-2027 season.

For information and assistance with the application, eligibility or online technical support, please refer to these Frequently Asked Questions, or contact Zach Frimmel, Project Manager for Artists at the Center, at 206-963-9226 or Zach.Frimmel@seattle.gov.

We have interpreters who can speak to you in your language, including American Sign Language (via video). Just call us and tell us what language you speak. Expect a short pause while we find an interpreter to join the call.

Grant Purpose

Artists at the Center was designed to support our vibrant arts communities by introducing emerging and established artists to Seattle Center campus, while broadening the arts and cultural experiences in the Uptown Arts & Cultural District. Selected artists reflect the city's cultural diversity and have the unique opportunity to perform at Seattle Center, enjoy technical production support, connect with new audiences, and showcase their talents. Visitors to the campus and the surrounding neighborhood benefit from ear- and eye-catching performances throughout the year.

Application

Apply online through the City of Seattle's grant website.

If you don't have computer or internet access, or have any other barriers in applying, contact the Project Manager as soon as possible. The Project Manager needs at least two (2) weeks before the application due date to provide accommodations.

Due Date

Tuesday, April 21, 2026, 5 p.m. (Pacific)

Please allow ample time to complete and submit your application. Applications submitted after the 5 p.m. (Pacific) deadline will not be accepted.

Eligibility/Requirements

You are eligible to apply for this grant if you meet the following criteria:

- You are an individual, organization, or community group that regularly presents arts and cultural-based activations in Seattle.
    - You will be asked in the application to share details about your recent activations in Seattle.
- You reside in King County or unincorporated King County within Washington State.
    - Organizations and individual artists representing communities most impacted by systemic oppression including low-income, people with disabilities, immigrant and refugee communities, and communities of color are encouraged to apply.
- You have a Federal Tax ID number (Social Security Number, ITIN, or Employee Identification Number).
    - Groups applying are not required to be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, nor are they required to use a fiscal sponsor or fiscal agent.

Your pop-up is eligible to be funded by this grant if it is:

- Free and open to the public at one of the eligible Seattle Center locations (next section)
- An arts and culture-based activation
- Between 40-90 minutes long

Please keep in mind the following additional requirements:

- You may submit only one application per cycle to this program.
- Multiple applicants cannot submit separate applications for the same pop-up.
- Awardees from the current season (2025-2026) are *not eligible* to apply for the 2026-2027 season.

Eligible Pop-up Locations

Eligible pop-up locations include (but are not limited to): Seattle Center Armory Stage, Northwest Courtyard, Founders Courtyard, Theatre Commons, Artists at Play Playground, Monorail Station Platform, Fisher Pavilion Rooftop, and Mural Amphitheatre. Other outdoor locations on Seattle Center grounds may be possible. Contact the Program Manager if you have questions about pop-up location eligibility.

Ineligible pop-up locations include: Pacific Science Center, Chihuly Garden and Glass, Space Needle, MoPOP, Seattle Rep, Seattle Children's Theatre, Cornish Playhouse, and McCaw Hall.

Funding

You may use the award funds for pop-up-related expenses, such as: artist fees, marketing and promotional fees, project management, personnel costs, supplies, equipment rentals or other production-related costs, required insurance, and up to 10% for food-related costs. Additional expenses may be allowed upon advance approval by the grant project manager.

Funds from Artists at the Center cannot be combined with other City funding sources nor with funds supporting another Seattle Center event (e.g. Festál, Folklife, etc.). Applicants are not allowed to be funded for the same project/pop-up twice by the City of Seattle.

Applicants can apply for the following levels of funding:

- $2,000 award (typically 1-2 performers), plus $780 in-kind production support from Seattle Center
- $4,000 award (typically 3-5 performers), plus $1,420 in-kind production support from Seattle Center
- $6,000 award (typically 6+ performers), plus $1,865 in-kind production support from Seattle Center

More information about types of production support available can be found in our Frequently Asked Questions.

You may not use this funding for the following:

- Events not accessible and free to the public
- Religious services
- Events or presentations in which fundraising is the primary purpose
- Gifts/Prizes/Awards
- Organizations' administrative costs not directly related to the project
- Purchase of equipment or software

Information Sessions

Learn more about the program and how to submit your best application.

Information Session 1 (Virtual)

Thursday, March 19, 5-6:30 p.m. (Pacific)
Microsoft Teams
RSVP to March 19

Information Session 2 (Virtual)

Saturday, April 11, 10-11:30 a.m. (Pacific)
Microsoft Teams
RSVP to April 11

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals submitted to the program will be evaluated on the following criteria and can receive a maximum score of 20 points. You should address all four evaluation criteria throughout your application responses.

- **Career Advancement**: You detail how this unique opportunity will advance the career of the artist(s) showcasing their talents and/or advance the organization's mission. Panelists will also take into consideration if you have previously received this award. (Maximum 5 points)

- **Achievability**: You demonstrate relevant experience or community support (such as support from experienced partners and collaborators) to execute the proposed pop-up. The use of award funding is appropriate for the award amount requested, and the scope of the pop-up fits within the in-kind production support provided. (Maximum 5 points)

- **Artistic & Cultural Impact**: Your proposed pop-up offers a compelling and authentic artistic and/or cultural experience, which would resonate with the intended audience. (Maximum 5 points)

- **Community Connections**: Your proposed pop-up uplifts stories, creatives, and audiences from communities that represent Seattle's diversity. You demonstrate a clear connection to the represented community(s). (Maximum 5 points)

Timeline

This timeline is an estimate and is subject to change.

- **March 10, 2026 (10 a.m. Pacific)**: Application opens
- **April 21, 2025 (5 p.m. Pacific):** Application closes
- **May-July 2026:** Peer panel review process
- **August 2026:** Applicants notified of funding decisions

- **August 2026:** Awardee orientation and contracting
- **October 2026 - September 2027:** Artists at the Center performances take place, invoicing occurs, and final reporting is submitted.

Application Outline & Components

The City of Seattle uses the grant application system **FLUXX**. If you have not done so already, you will need to create a profile before you are able to access the application.

- **Contact Information:** This section provides additional contact information that is specific to this application but not already requested in the registration profile.
- **Application Questions / Pop-up Information:** The purpose of these questions is to share information about your pop-up, the community it serves, and some background about yourself.

1) **Artist/Applicant Website or Social Media Link (optional):** (Highly encouraged, since this application does not request work samples). Share one web link that showcases your work and that best aligns with the evaluation criteria. Panelists will review up to 2 minutes of the content found in the link you provide. *Do not add additional web links anywhere else in your application as panelists will be instructed to not review them.*
    - **Link Instructions (optional):** Share what section of the webpage/video you provided above that you want panelists to focus on. (Maximum 500 characters)
2) **Artistic Discipline**: Select the primary artistic discipline of your proposed pop-up.
3) **Activations in Seattle:** List up to three arts and culture-based activations you have presented/performed in Seattle in the last 18 months that best represent your work. Provide the program title(s), one-sentence description, date(s), and location(s). (Maximum 1000 characters)
4) **Seattle Center Performance History:** Have you/has your group performed at Seattle Center in the past three years? If so, share which opportunities you've had.
5) **Pop-up Title:** The title of your pop-up activation.
6) **Pop-up Length:** Performances must be between 40 – 90 minutes long.
7) **Pop-up Summary**: Describe the pop-up you would like to present at Seattle Center, if selected. How will this opportunity help advance the career of the artist(s)/group showcasing their talent and/or advance your organization's mission? Who will be performing? What communities are represented? Who is the intended audience? What authentic and compelling artistic and/or cultural experience will be shared with the audience? Who is your intended audience? Include the genre(s), whether this is new or re-mounted work, technical production needs, and anything else you feel presents a comprehensive and compelling proposal. (Maximum 2,500 characters)
8) **Use of Award Funding:** Briefly describe how you intend to use the money for your first-choice award amount (for example: paying artists, gear rental, materials, etc.). You don't

need to provide a budget breakdown, but you should include fair compensation for creative workers involved, plus any in-kind donations and/or volunteer services. (Maximum 500 characters)

9) **Flexibility:** If awarded, you may be asked to adjust the scale of your proposed pop-up to match available resources. Should you receive an award amount less than you requested, briefly describe how you would adjust your performance scope. (Maximum 1,000 characters)
10) **Background and Relevant Experience**: Briefly describe your key accomplishments in your artistic discipline. What relevant experience or partnerships do you have that demonstrate your ability to achieve your proposed pop-up? Which artists and/communities are you connected to and/or have you historically worked with? (Maximum 1,500 characters)
11) **Award Category Preferences**: Indicate your first, second, and last choice category, reflecting the best fit for your proposed performance. Please note that due to scheduling and funding, your first choice is not guaranteed. However, you may select the same answer more than once if you are open only to certain award category options.

    Please prioritize the award category that best fits your proposed performance:

    - Small (1-2 performers): $2,000 award, plus up to $780 in-kind production support
    - Medium (3-5 performers): $4,000 award, plus up to $1,420 in-kind production support
    - Large (6+ performers): $6,000 award, plus up to $1,865 in-kind production support

12) **Scheduling Preferences**: Please use the following questions to indicate your first, second, third, and last choice quarter of the year, reflecting your availability to perform/present. Please note that due to scheduling, your first choice is not guaranteed. However, you may select the same answer more than once if your availability is limited only to certain quarters of the year.
    - October - December 2026
    - January - March 2027
    - April - June 2027
    - July - September 2027

- **Demographic Information:** This **will not be reviewed by panelists as part of your application** but rather is used to help us learn more about the communities that we reach through our programs, so that we can continue to work towards making our

programs more equitable. *Responses are required, and applicants will have "Decline to State" options for each question.*

Application To-Do

All funding programs are highly competitive. We encourage you to:

- **Read the guidelines, Frequently Asked Questions, and the Production Support documents.** Check your eligibility and follow the online instructions carefully.
- **Explore the online application early** so you can plan ahead. Consider drafting application responses in a document outside of the online application form itself so you don't risk losing any of your work and you keep a record for yourself.
- **Attend an information session** or watch the recording on the Artists at the Center Materials webpage to receive guidance and hear other applicants' questions, especially if you are a first-time applicant.
- **Update or complete your profile** at seattle.fluxx.io.
- **Talk with the Project Manager** about any questions as early as possible. Assistance to applicants is limited, particularly the week before the application due date, due to the volume of support requests.
- **Be clear and concise in your application**, as panelists read and evaluate many applications. Panelists may or may not be familiar with you or your work, so be sure to provide essential information on who you are, your areas of expertise, or key accomplishments.
- **Save your work** as you go and re-read and preview your responses before you submit.
- **Submit your application before the due date** so you have time to deal with any potential technical issues.
- **If you do not receive a confirmation email** after submitting your application, contact the project manager to check if they received it.

Obligation of Award Recipients

If selected for funding, you must meet the requirements listed below.

Acknowledgement

When you receive funding from the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture, you must acknowledge our support in printed materials, signage visible to the public, via social media, or in other ways appropriate to the project. We will supply preferred wording and logos in digital format.

Public Benefit

State law authorizes the purchase of services on behalf of the public, but not the donation of public money to organizations or individuals. If you are funded, you must provide public benefits (such as free admission) to residents of Seattle as a condition of your funding.

Seattle Business License and Washington State UBI Number Are Required for Payment

If you are awarded funds from us, you must have a Seattle business license and a Washington state Unified Business Identification (UBI) number prior to receiving any award payment. (The business license and UBI numbers are *not* needed to apply for funds.)

Contracting and Reporting

After funding recommendations are approved, our staff will work with you to go over the required reporting documents for you to receive funding. You will need to sign a contract prior to starting engagement, events, and/or creative opportunities. Grantees are paid on a reimbursement basis after projects or services are completed and a final report with promotional materials is submitted (approximately 4-6 weeks after paperwork is received).

We require awardees for all of our programs to evaluate and report on the impact of their awards (e.g. numbers of artists paid, audience information, experience working with our staff, etc.). This information will be collected after the project is complete, via a questionnaire included in the final payment request in FLUXX.

Insurance

You will be responsible for securing and providing proof of Event Liability Insurance for your project, collaborators, and listing the City of Seattle as additionally insured.

Production/Technical Support Specifications

In order to receive the production support associated with a performance, you must supply Seattle Center Productions & Events staff with required documentation approximately one month in advance of the performance. Documents include a tech sheet, proof of insurance, marketing information, and photos.

Taxes

You are responsible for paying all applicable taxes. At the time of notification, you will need to complete appropriate paperwork and submit an updated W-9.

Our Funding Policies

Commitment to Racial Equity

The Seattle Office of Arts & Culture commits to an anti-racist work practice that centers the creativity and leadership of people of color - those most impacted by structural racism - to move toward systems that benefit us all. We also acknowledge that we are on Indigenous land, the traditional territories of the Coast Salish peoples.

We envision a city of people whose success, safety and health are not pre-determined by their race. A city where all artists, performers, writers, and creative workers have the freedom,

agency, and platform to share and amplify their stories, art, cultures, and experiences. At the same time, we acknowledge that our actions - both conscious and unconscious, past and present - have benefited some communities while limiting opportunities and outcomes for communities of color. We work toward our vision by addressing and working to eliminate institutional racism in our programs, policies, and practices.

In alignment with the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative, we seek new solutions that use arts as a strategy to drive not only our office, but the City as a whole toward racial equity and social justice. We will continue to break barriers and build arts-integrated tools that challenge the status quo and push us toward the inclusive society we envision.

If you have any questions about our commitment or would like to know more about the work we are doing, please call us at 206-684-7171 or email at Arts.Culture@Seattle.gov.

Grant Appeal Process

You may appeal the recommendations of the independent peer review panel. Appeals must be based solely on the information included in your original application.

Procedure:

- You must first contact the staff member responsible for the program to review the decision and hear a summary of the peer panel feedback: **Zach Frimmel,** Project Manager for Artists at the Center, 206-963-9226 or Zach.Frimmel@seattle.gov.
- Your appeal must be sent in writing to the director of the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture within 30 days of formal notice of the decision.
- Our director consults with staff and/or members of the peer panel for input in making the final decision.
- If our director agrees that the award should have been given based on the merit of your original application, you will be awarded a grant.
- A rejection by our director is final and ends the appeal process.
- Our director will notify you of their final decision in writing.

Application materials are public information

Application materials submitted to the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture are governed by the Washington Public Records Act and may be subject to disclosure to a third-party requester. To learn more please see Chapter 42.56 RCW and the City's Privacy Statement.

Discrimination is not allowed on City-funded projects

Applicants receiving funds from the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture must comply with Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 20.44, pertaining to prevention of discrimination in City contracts, and Chapter 5.44, pertaining to license requirements. The complete text of these City codes is available at the City Clerk's office and the Seattle Public Library.

Americans with Disabilities Act applies to City-funded projects

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law ensuring access to services and facilities for people with disabilities. The Seattle Office of Arts & Culture respects the needs of people with disabilities and seeks to make available to applicants, participants, and all interested persons information regarding the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and its applicability to the activities of our agency. For information about public meetings, accessibility, and auxiliary aids, please contact the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture at 206-684-7171 (voice), or 800-833-6388 (TDD Relay). This agency complies with all federal, state, and local laws that prohibit discrimination in employment and services.

Supports freedom of expression

The City believes a community that fosters freedom of speech and thought will advance as a society. Artists play an important role in reflecting and challenging the social concerns of the day. The strength of the United States as a nation rests in its tolerance of divergent opinions and ideas. Government support of the arts must similarly tolerate a spectrum of ideas and encourage freedom of thought.

For additional information about funding opportunities and the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture, visit our website at seattle.gov/arts, and subscribe to our email newsletter.