



OFFICE OF ARTS & CULTURE
CITY OF SEATTLE

Centering Art & Racial Equity Grant 2026 Guidelines

APPLICATION OPENS: May 20, 2025

APPLICATION CLOSES: August 5, 2025

Grant Overview

Centering Art & Racial Equity is the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture's organizational support program designed to inspire Seattle's arts and culture organizations to work collectively towards a more equitable ecosystem. Arts, culture, heritage, and arts service organizations with a minimum of three years of providing accessible programming in Seattle are encouraged to apply. We prioritize support for Seattle organizations with an arts-focused mission, taking action centered in inclusive, anti-racist, and human-centered values.

For information and assistance with the application, eligibility or online technical support, contact Kathy Hsieh, Cultural Investments Strategist, at kathy.hsieh@seattle.gov or 206-733-9926.

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

Arts and culture organizations are an essential part of Seattle's ecosystem. The Seattle Office of Arts & Culture's investments are a vital way to partner with the cultural community to achieve our aim of becoming a more equitable, inclusive and anti-racist City. The Centering Art & Racial Equity grant aims to leverage the collective community action of Seattle's arts and cultural sector to create 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, regardless of race, class, gender, age, ability, education, country of birth, religion, or sexual orientation.

Application

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

https://seattle.fluxx.io/user_sessions/new

To streamline the application for organizations interested in applying to both Centering Art & Racial Equity and the [Cultural Facilities Fund](#), the two grants share the same online application.

The application for both is available through the City of Seattle's grant portal on FLUXX at the link above.

If you don't have computer or internet access, let us know and we'll work with you to find options that might work.

Due Date

Tuesday, August 5, 2025, 5:00 p.m. Pacific

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

Eligibility/Requirements

Eligible organizations are arts, culture, heritage, and arts service organizations with:

- Their primary location within Seattle city limits
- An arts and culture mission and programs or a culturally specific organization with significant arts and cultural programming
- A minimum three-year history of providing public benefit through arts and culture to Seattle residents
- A Federal Tax ID number, though not required to have 501(c)(3) status
- A commitment to and actions consistent with being an anti-racist organization through an intersectional lens
- No concurrent funding through the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture's smART ventures funding program

Funding

Awards are based on overall score in relation to this program's evaluation criteria as ranked by a diverse community panel. Organization budget size is not a factor in determining award amount. To be as inclusive as possible, the priority of this program is to fund broadly rather than deeply.

Please note that award amounts are not determined until March 31, 2026. Funding is dependent on:

- The City's budget process timeline
- Available admissions tax revenues
- The number of organizations selected for an award
- Each applicant's score from the community panel

The funding range is anticipated to be between \$500 to \$18,000 for each year of funding received. Award levels may vary from year to year and are not guaranteed pending City tax

revenues and budget process. At this time, based on City budget forecasts, we cannot guarantee how many years of funding will be provided with this application cycle.

If awarded, receipt of funds is dependent upon completing the necessary contracting and/or invoicing and reporting documents.

Centering Art & Racial Equity funds may not be used for:

- Organizations whose primary work is done outside of Seattle city limits
- Programming outside of Seattle city limits
- Programs not open and accessible to the public
- Capital improvements or purchase of equipment
- School, college and university departments or programs which are part of regular or extra-curricular school programs
- Religious services, or events or presentations in which fundraising is the primary purpose.

Important: Please note that the number of applicants continues to grow exponentially for this program. We cannot guarantee that those who have been funded continuously in the past will continue to receive the same levels of funding, if at all.

Information Workshops

Join a virtual workshop to learn more about this grant and how to submit your best application. The first hour will focus on applying for our Centering Art & Racial Equity grant. If you are interested in also learning about our Cultural Facilities Fund grant, you should plan to stay for the full 90 minutes.

Workshop 1

Thursday, May 29, 2025, 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. noon Pacific

[RSVP to 5/29](#)

Workshop 2 ASL-interpreted

Monday, June 2, 2025, 2:30 - 4:00 p.m. Pacific

[RSVP to 6/1](#)

Workshop 3

Tuesday, June 24, 2025, 12:00 - 1:30 p.m. Pacific

[RSVP to 6/24](#)

Workshop 4

Wednesday, July 9, 2025, 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. Pacific

[RSVP to 7/9](#)

Evaluation Criteria

The Seattle Office of Arts & Culture is committed to reflecting the diversity and cultural richness of our city. Organizations will be selected by an independent peer review panel of cultural workers, artists and community representatives who will evaluate applications on the following core criteria:

1. Accessibility and Community Involvement (40 points)

Excellent (38-40 points), Very Good (35-37 points), Good (31-34 points), Adequate (21-30 points), Questionable (11-20 points), Unacceptable (0-10 points)

- Provides accessible opportunities for diverse community participation: audience, artists, volunteers, donors, partners, and/or supporters
- Offers cultural, geographic, economic, disability or physical access to Seattle residents and visitors
- Reflects and is relevant to Seattle's diverse population
- Involves, represents and centers people and communities that have been most impacted by structural racism and inequities

2. Merit and Impact of Programming in Relation to a Stated Artistic/Cultural Mission (40 points)

Excellent (38-40 points), Very Good (35-37 points), Good (31-34 points), Adequate (21-30 points), Questionable (11-20 points), Unacceptable (0-10 points)

- Clarity of organization's mission and goals
- Alignment of programming with organization's mission
- Creates meaningful and relevant arts and cultural experiences
- Offers unique opportunities
- Diversifies the arts and cultural activities available within Seattle
- Contributes meaningful impact to arts discipline and/or cultural/heritage community

3. Inclusive and Anti-Racist Values and Action (10 points)

Excellent (10 points), Very Good (8-9 points), Good (6-7 points), Adequate (4-5 points), Questionable (2-3 points), Unacceptable (0-1 points)

- Honors values that are inclusive and welcoming of all people including those who have been most marginalized by our society's inequitable systems and structures
- Demonstrates an anti-racist, human-centered work practice and/or evolution and progress towards that end

- Centers and reflects those who have been most marginalized by our society's inequitable systems and structures¹

4. Organizational Resilience and Evolvment (10 points)

Excellent (10 points), Very Good (8-9 points), Good (6-7 points), Adequate (4-5 points), Questionable (2-3 points), Unacceptable (0-1 points)

- Resilience as an organization
- Flexibility and adaptability of the organization to evolve in ways that keep them relevant and able to offer consistency for their communities
- Ability to offer meaningful programming with whatever resources are available
- Realistic budgets in relation to programming scope
- Fiscal accountability

Timeline

This timeline is subject to change.

- **August 2025:** Staff processes applications in preparation for community review process.
- **September - November 2025:** An independent panel of arts administrators and community representatives review and score applications based on the program's priorities, eligibility and criteria.
- **December 2025 – February 2026:** The community reviewers meet to discuss applications and submit their final rankings.
- **February - March 2026:** The Director and the Cultural Investments Committee of the Seattle Arts Commission review final ranking and recommendations.
- **March 31, 2026:** Applicants are notified whether they have been approved for funding or not.
- **April - May 2026:** Awarded organizations will work with staff to develop a scope of service representing the public benefit connected with the funding.
- **April – November 2026:** Staff will work with awarded organizations to complete necessary paperwork. Payments can only be made after paperwork is received and processed.

Application Outline & Components

For the first time, organizations interested in applying to both the Centering Art & Racial Equity grant and the Cultural Facilities Fund may submit a single application and be considered for both opportunities. Or applicants may choose to only apply to one or the other program. Please refer to the Centering Arts & Racial Equity Application Preview document and/or the Cultural

¹ In the arts and cultural sector, those who have been most marginalized are BIPOC people of the global majority across all social categories based on class, gender, age, ability, education, country of birth, religion and sexual orientation.

Facilities Fund Application Preview document for a complete listing of the application questions.

Core Information – Both Applications

- Organization Information
- Fiscal Sponsor Information (if applicable)
- Community Involvement and Demographics

Centering Art & Racial Equity Application Questions (only required for those applying to this program)

- Aims and Actions
- Programming Form and Links
- Financial Organization Information
- Racial Equity Self-Evaluation

Cultural Facilities Application Questions (only required for those applying to this program)

- Project Information
- Facility Project Budget
- Image Work Samples

Application To-Do

We encourage you to:

- **Read the guidelines, check your eligibility, and follow the online instructions carefully.**
- **Explore the online application early** so you can plan ahead.
- **Attend an information session** where you can ask and hear other applicant questions, *especially if you are a first-time applicant.*
- **Check-in with the project manager for this program before you start applying** to ensure you are properly registered in the City of Seattle's online grant portal and so you receive important updates related to this opportunity.
- **Reach out to the project manager** with any questions, or to review a portion of your draft application well before the deadline. We are happy to assist, but last-minute help is limited due to timing and volume of requests received. Email is the best way to reach us, from which we can schedule time to chat virtually or over the phone.
- **Schedule plenty of time in advance to work on this application**, especially for the Racial Equity Self-Assessment and/or if you're also applying to the Cultural Facilities Fund.
- **Prepare and connect with others in your organization** as early in the process as possible so that they also have enough time to provide the information needed.
- **Be clear and concise** in your application. Panelists review hundreds of applications.
- **Save often and be sure to re-read and preview your work** before you submit.
- **Submit your application early** so you have time to deal with any potential technical issues.

- Make sure you **upload the required attachments** before submitting.
- **Breathe.** You've got this!

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 electronic 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 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 final payment. The business license and UBI numbers are NOT needed to apply for funds.

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 may 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.)

Insurance

You will be responsible for securing Liability Insurance for your organization and listing the City of Seattle as additionally insured.

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: **Kathy Hsieh**: kathy.hsieh@seattle.gov and 206-733-9926.
- 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 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 www.seattle.gov/arts, and [subscribe to our email newsletter](#).