



2026 CityArtist Guidelines

APPLICATION OPENS: June 17, 2025

APPLICATION CLOSES: July 29, 2025

Grant Overview

The CityArtist grant supports Seattle-based individual artists/curators in the research, development, and presentation of creative work. **The 2026 application is open to artists/curators working in Literary, Media/Film (including Screenwriting), and Visual Arts.** Awarded artists will need to offer a public presentation within Seattle city limits. The Seattle Office of Arts & Culture supports a broad range of artistic and cultural expression reflecting the city's diversity.

This program is open to specific discipline clusters in alternate years:

- Even Years (2026, 2028): Literary, Media/Film (including Screenwriting), and Visual Art
- Odd Years (2025, 2027): Dance, Music, and Theater (including Playwriting)

PROGRAM YEAR	DISCIPLINE CLUSTERS	APPLICATION YEAR	TWO-YEAR CONTRACT
2026 CityArtist	Literary, Media/Film (Screenwriting) & Visual	2025: Application/Panel 2026: Notification	2026-27 Contract, Project, Payment, Event, Final Report
2027 CityArtist	Dance, Music & Theater (Playwriting)	2026: Application/Panel 2027: Notification	2027-28 Contract, Project, Payment, Event, Final Report

For information and assistance with the application or eligibility, contact Project Manager, Irene Gómez, at (206) 684-7310 or Irene.Gomez@seattle.gov. **For online technical support,** contact Marshonne Walker at Marshonne.Walker@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

CityArtist sustains individual artists, makers, and curators who are at the core of Seattle's cultural sector. Ensuring that creative careers and work can develop and adapt over time is critical to artists' professional growth and business insight. Providing financial support for creative entrepreneurs contributes to the broader economy and quality of life in neighborhoods across the city.

Application

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

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

If you don't have computer or internet access, contact staff as soon as possible.

Due Date

Tuesday, July 29, 2025, 5 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

You are eligible for this grant if you meet these criteria:

- You are an individual, generative artist/curator who produces/presents art.
- You are a Seattle resident OR have a permanent studio/workspace in your name within Seattle city limits where you receive mail. It cannot be a P.O. Box*.
- You are at least 18 years of age by the application due date
- If you are the lead artist/curator of an arts or cultural group/organization, you must clearly distinguish work for this award from the ongoing/seasonal work of your group/organization.

You are *not* eligible for this grant if:

- You reside outside the Seattle city limits and have no permanent work/studio space in Seattle.
- You are enrolled in a degree-granting program related to your own artistic work or career.
- You are a current award recipient from any Office of Arts & Culture program with an active contract.

Seattle-based artist/curator

***You must provide a street address within Seattle city limits for your home or a permanent studio/rehearsal space in your name.** A post office box, temporary rehearsal space or studio under a name other than the funded artist/curator does *not* fulfill the residency requirement. If you are uncertain about your address (not all "Seattle" zip codes are actually in the city limits), [check this interactive city map indicating boundaries](#). Contact Project Manager, Irene Gómez, at irene.gomez@seattle.gov or 206-684-7310 for clarification.

Funding

Awards are set at a single amount of **\$8,000 for all recipients.**

Scope of work and final public event details are determined **after awards are official** and during the contracting phase in early 2026.

Funding may be used for:

- Direct expenses (research, development, professional development, and presentation)
- Salaries and fees
- Supplies and materials
- Online platform fees, apps, and/or service costs
- Equipment or space rentals
- Insurance, licenses, permits
- Publicity/marketing
- Transportation/mileage
- Documentation (photography/videography)

Funding may NOT be used for:

- Organization or related administrative fees (Lead artist of an organization must distinguish expenses of proposed scope of work from their organization's work and expenses).
- Organizational administrative costs
- Purchase of equipment or food
- Fundraising or benefit activities

If awarded, our Project Manager will ensure the use of City funds are in line with City policies. Receipt of funds is dependent upon completing the necessary contracting and/or invoicing and reporting documents.

Virtual Information and Draft Review Workshops

Join a virtual workshop to learn more about this grant and how to turn in your strongest application. We highly encourage first-time applicants to attend:

Workshop 1

Thursday, June 26, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. Pacific

[RSVP to June 26](#)

Workshop 2

Tuesday, July 8, 1 – 3 p.m. Pacific

[RSVP to July 8](#)

Group Draft Review 1

Thursday, July 17, 4 – 6 p.m. Pacific

[RSVP to July 17](#)

Group Draft Review 2

Tuesday, July 22, 3 – 5 p.m. Pacific

[RSVP to July 22](#)

Open e-Office Hours

June 25 - July 16, 3 – 5 p.m. Pacific

Evaluation Criteria

Grants will be evaluated based on three (3) criteria. You are encouraged to respond to these criteria in your application materials. Each criterion below is assessed at an equal value of 20 points each for a total of 60 points.

Inspiration / Challenge + Background Information (20 Points)

Strong responses clearly describe how your next venture's work is inspired or shaped by the development or continuation of your most recent work. They will show thoughtful awareness and clear connections between your past and next body of work. They will make a convincing case on how your practice will be stretched in your next work. They will offer thoughtful insight and some detail into which areas will be pushed.

Plan / Potential (20 Points)

Strong responses will present different forms of research or exploration and a well thought-out plan with detailed, actionable steps to expand skills, knowledge, or connections. The steps will clearly show strong growth potential with strategies that reflect purpose and vision.

Work Sample (20 Points)

Strong work samples will clearly showcase your key skills, style, and craft at your current career stage with recent work or close-ups highlighted. Samples will reflect or mirror your creative development, progress and/or potential.

Each year a new peer review panel of artists/curators from specific disciplines evaluate the applications. Collectively the panel brings a range of experience and knowledge through different career stages and perspectives.

When the panel reviews your application, you can score up to a total of 60 points across three criteria. Each criterion is valued at 20 points each. The points earned will determine your final score. Description of points for each criterion is listed in the *Application Outline & Components* section below.

Timeline

- **June 17, 2025:** Application opens
- **July 29, 2025:** Application closes
- **November 2025:** An independent panel of arts administrators and community representatives review and score applications based on the program's priorities, eligibility, and criteria.
- **January/February 2026:** Applicants are notified whether they have been approved for funding or not.
- **March/April 2026:** Contracting/payments begin

- **Nov. 30, 2027:** Public presentation and final report completed
- **Dec. 31, 2027:** Contract expiration date

Application Outline & Components

The CityArtist application focuses on growth and development of artists' practice, work, and career. Applicants are asked to discuss how their ideas, processes, and artwork are shaped over time. Responses and materials reveal what sparks new and different creative paths, skills and networks over time.

Please note: Proposed project and budget are discussed *after* awards are determined, during the contracting phase.

NARRATIVE QUESTIONS

Narrative questions ask about your practice, process, and experiences to complete an artwork. Descriptions of your creative journey can include theme, planning, technique, materials, presentation or other *steps that contribute to artistic growth from one project to the next*. Share how this elevates your career.

NOTE: Narrative Questions have been modified since last cycle in 2024.

Three narrative questions (1A, 1B, and 2) are listed below in numerical order.

Question 1A: Information About Last Artwork

Give summary of your LAST body of work, what it was, and what approach you took to complete it.

Question 1B: Inspiration / Challenge of Current/Next Artwork (20 Points: 1A & 1B)

Describe inspiration and different scope of NEXT work compared to last work. How will it stretch your practice artistically or administratively through skills, knowledge, venue, or networks? Consider personal or lived experience, cultural origins, book, travel, community issue, solo/group approach.

Question 2: Plan / Potential of Current/Next Artwork (20 points)

Tell what steps you will take to plan and develop new skills, knowledge, or networks to complete and present NEXT artwork. Show how past work inspiration, size, technique or other areas of your practice change and challenge you from last to next artwork.

Work Sample (20 Points)

Submit work samples from past seven (7) years that represents your strongest work and aligns with narrative responses and resume. Samples should be accessible, audible, legible, visible, and within eligible limit. Single format equals to or combination format is equivalent to a **maximum of 5-minutes**.

Note: If work sample submissions go beyond the limits asked for, panelists will be instructed to only view/listen up to the allowed amount indicated below. Voiceovers and montage/collage style work samples are discouraged.

Work samples have a time or amount limitation that is equivalent to 5-minutes maximum.

Single format work samples below show what is equivalent to 5-minutes:

- Literary: 10 pages
- Media/Audio: 5-minutes
- Visual: 8 images

Mixed format work samples below show what is equivalent to 5-minutes:

- Literary: 5 pages + Visual: 4 images
- Media/Audio: 2.5 minutes + Literary: 5 pages
- Visual: 4 images + Media/Audio: 2.5 minutes

Application To-Do

CityArtist receives a high volume of applicants. We strongly encourage you to:

- **Read the guidelines, check eligibility and cycle disciplines, explore application early, and follow online registration and instructions carefully.**
- **Attend an information or draft review session** where you can ask and hear fellow applicant questions and receive feedback *especially if you are a first-time applicant*.
- **Contact the project manager early** via email or open e-office hours in the *Grant Overview* section. We are available to assist, but last-minute help is limited due to timing and demand.
- **Be clear and concise in your application.** Panelists review 100-200 applications.
- **Save often and be sure to re-read and preview your work** and uploads before you submit.
- **Submit your application at least 45-minutes before** the deadline to address any potential technical issues.

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 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.)

Insurance

You will be responsible for securing Event Liability Insurance for your project, collaborators, 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: **Irene Gómez:** Irene.Gomez@seattle.gov or (206) 684-7310.
- 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 us 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](#).