

City of Seattle
Office of Arts & Culture

Randy Engstrom, Director

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Seattle City Council: Sally Bagshaw, Tim Burgess, John Okamoto,

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Tom Rasmussen, Kshama Sawant



2015 Cultural Facilities Fund Guidelines

Applications are online at:

http://www.seattle.gov/arts/funding/cultural_facilities.asp

DEADLINE:

Friday, September 4, 2015 at 11 p.m. PDT

Contact:

Matthew Richter, Cultural Space Liaison

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Office of Arts & Culture | Seattle

Making art work.

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Information Sessions

Learn what makes a strong application, including information about other grant programs. This interactive question-and-answer session will cover specifics on eligibility and how to apply. Please register for a session by contacting Matthew Richter at matthew.richter@seattle.gov. Sessions may be cancelled if there is insufficient advance registration.

Tuesday, July 7, 2015 – 2 – 4 p.m.

Duwamish Longhouse, 4705 W Marginal Way SW in West Seattle

Tuesday, July 21, 2015 – 2 – 4 p.m.

Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 5th Avenue, Suite 4096 in Downtown Seattle

Wednesday, July 22, 2015 – 6 – 8 p.m.

Eritrean Community Center Meeting Room, 1528 Valentine Pl S, on Beacon Hill

For additional information about funding opportunities and the Office of Arts & Culture, visit our Website at www.seattle.gov/arts, where you can subscribe to our monthly e-newsletter

Cultural Facilities Fund Overview

The Cultural Facilities Fund is intended to support capital projects that improve Seattle's arts spaces in significant and lasting ways. We're looking to help you build your facility in ways that will ultimately both advance your mission, and strengthen Seattle's cultural scene.

This program is specifically aimed at permanent facility improvements, not equipment purchases. Preference will be given to projects that address one or more of the following priorities:

- A solution to an immediate or urgent need
- Improvements to a historic property
- Renovations to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or other building code-based requirements
- Broad community impact (beyond your own programming)

The Office of Arts & Culture hopes to help you leverage other funds with our support, and preference will also be given to projects that demonstrate a broadly-based funding plan.

Some of last year's successful proposals include:

- Commercial kitchen construction at the Eritrean Community Center (\$40,000)
- Office and film library construction at Three Dollar Bill Cinema (\$5,000)
- Security system at SEEDArts Studios (\$13,122)
- Fire sprinkler installation at Washington Hall (\$24,743)
- Theatrical lighting grid and other theater upgrades at Café Nordo (\$10,800)

We will be looking to fund projects that are core to your organization's mission and programs, that help stabilize your long-term presence in the community, and have impact for those that you serve.

The maximum funding available is \$50,000. These funds are intended as finishing funds for **fundraising campaigns that are at least 50% secured**. In other words, if your total project campaign is \$100, you must have at least \$50 already committed from other sources, and you can ask us for up to the other \$50 (up to \$50,000).

Last year's (2014's) awards ranged in size from \$4,000 to \$40,000.

Eligibility

Who may apply:

- Seattle-based not-for-profit arts, cultural, heritage, or arts-service organizations
- Groups with projects funded by 2014's Cultural Facilities Fund are ineligible for funding by 2015's Cultural Facilities Fund. You will be welcome to submit a new application in 2016.

Requirements for applicant organizations:

- At least a three-year operating history as a legally established organization.

- Not-for-profit status.
- Control of the facility through ownership or a long-term lease (at least five years or with five-year unilateral option to extend).
- The ability to demonstrate a record of ongoing artistic or cultural accomplishments in Seattle.
- The majority of support for the project (not including this request) must be in place before applying. This funding can take the form of approved grants, individual pledges, organizational cash on-hand (this must be cash that is literally “in the bank”), and in-kind contributions of both labor and materials.

What may be funded:

- Urgent-need remodeling or renovation of existing facilities
- Improvements to a historic building
- Projects that allow for significant organizational growth
- Projects that bring buildings into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act or other building code requirements
- Projects that can begin after November 1, 2015 and be completed before December 31, 2016
- Projects that occur within the limits of the City of Seattle

Funding may NOT be used:

- For non-capital related expenses.
- For property purchase or mortgage payments.
- For general facility maintenance and/or regular repairs.
- To purchase consumable items (i.e. tools, lighting fixtures, supplies).
- To purchase portable equipment.
- To cover general operating expenses, staff salaries or program expenses.
- To pay primarily for design or planning of a capital project.
- To pay for work completed before the award of funds.
- For projects located outside the City of Seattle.

Pro Tip:

For better or worse (hint: it's worse), there are more worthy and eligible projects proposed than our funds will allow us to support. This is true nationally. This means that the job of many funding panels is to look for reasons to say “no.” **Don't give them any.** Before you try to shoe-horn a borderline project into the eligibility requirements, either work with the program manager to identify a better-fitting project from your organization, or save your organization some staff time and don't write a proposal for a project that doesn't quite fit.

Evaluation Criteria

The Cultural Facilities Fund invests in the broad cultural community, helping organizations make a rich variety of arts, heritage and culture opportunities accessible to Seattle residents and visitors. Through this and all our programs, we are committed to removing barriers to participation and involving diverse cultures and underserved audiences and artists.

In addition to the program goals of representing the diversity in the cultural community and the residents to be served, **the following three core evaluation criteria are considered in the review of applications.**

1. Quality and Urgency of the Project in Relation to a Stated Cultural Mission

- Clearly describes the organization's mission and goals.
- Demonstrates how the project will serve the organization's mission and goals.
- Addresses the urgency of the project.

2. Impact of the Project and Public Benefit

- Demonstrates significant impact for the organization and its ability to serve its community.
- Improves access to cultural opportunities for under-served communities.
- Shows that the project will contribute to the viability and accessibility of the organization, neighborhood, community and/or region.

3. Feasibility and Organizational Capacity

- Includes a realistic, reasonable and relevant project budget.
- Demonstrates organizational fiscal stability and accountability.
- Offers a feasible project plan.
- Shows evidence of project leaders' qualifications and experience for implementation of project.

Pro Tip:

See what we did there? We told you **exactly** how the panel will be scoring your proposals. Make sure that your proposal addresses the criteria listed above.

Application Review, Notification and Funding Timeline

Following the deadline, all applications will be screened by the program manager for eligibility and completeness. Staff does not evaluate the content of applications. You are responsible for the quality and completeness of your proposal.

Organizations are recommended for funding by an independent peer panel composed of professionals from the cultural field, community representatives and a non-voting Seattle Arts Commissioner. Panels are selected for broad expertise in artistic disciplines and not-for-profit business practices, experience in the cultural community, and diversity of viewpoints. Panelists for the Cultural Facilities Fund are chosen from the pool of organizations who received support from the Cultural Facilities Fund the previous year. Panel

recommendations are forwarded to the Seattle Arts Commission, a 16-member advisory group, for final approval.

Following the Arts Commission's vote, staff will send notice of the decision to all applicants. **Applicants may expect to receive notice approximately two to three months from the application deadline.** Staff cannot release information prior to the Arts Commission vote.

Pro Tip:

Whether or not you are funded, we encourage you to contact the program manager and ask for **feedback on the peer panel evaluation**. This is a chance to learn how you can create a more competitive application.

Preparing Your Application

The Office of Arts & Culture is experimenting with a far simpler application process than in the past. You should pay close attention, because while it looks easier, it challenges you to craft more of the application on your own, without the explicit guidance of multiple questions and proscribed word counts.

The Cultural Facilities Grant application consists mainly of a **three page letter** that we ask you to write to the Peer Review Panel. Please look closely at the guidelines in this document, and respond to them concisely.

We ask that you consider the following questions and address any of them that you feel are relevant:

- **Organizational Background and Fiscal History**
 - o The panel may not be familiar with your organization. How was it founded? Who does it serve? What does it do? How has it grown?
 - o It's always helpful to know something about your financial history when deciding whether or not to give you money. In very broad strokes, how has your budget grown (or shrunk)? Where (generally) does your support come from? How do you spend it?
- **Project Description**
 - o Describe the project for which you are seeking funds.
 - o Explain why it is an urgent need for your organization.
 - o How will the project help you better serve your mission? How will it affect your operations during and after construction/renovation? Have you planned for the project's ongoing maintenance costs?
- **Project Impact**
 - o Describe the benefits this project will provide for your organization, artists, and the community you serve. How will the project contribute to greater cultural opportunities for your fellow Seattleites?

- **Relevant Expertise / Experience / Accomplishments**
 - o Who will manage this project? Why are they qualified and what role they will play?
- **Project Implementation**
 - o Describe your organization's plan for making this project happen. What contingency plans do you have in place for potential issues/delays (weather, funding shortfalls, staffing, etc.)? How did you develop the budget?
 - o What is your funding progress to date? Be as specific as possible about the funding and in-kind donations you already have confirmed for the project.
- **Project Timeline**
 - o Describe the month-by-month timeline for this project. What has happened to date and what will be accomplished by when?

Pro Tip:

Every funder has their priorities. This is ours, and it's important to understand it well: **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. Funded organizations must provide **public benefits** to citizens of Seattle equal to the amount of the award as a condition of their funding.

General Tips on Grantwriting

Read The Guidelines Carefully. Be Sure You Allow Enough Time.

We know you are multi-tasking. Take the time to plan ahead and organize – especially the parts of the application that may depend on other people's help (like the budget or timeline).

- Have you completed all required attachments and uploaded them online as requested?
- Try to allow time enough for a colleague to read your narrative and give you feedback.

Pro Tip:

These online proposal submission websites can be frustrating. They crash, they time you out without saving your work, they freeze, they don't like certain browsers and operating systems, and they can be to blame for a missed deadline if you're cutting it too close. PLEASE treat the day before the deadline as the deadline, just to be safe.

Tell Your Story.

You do not have to be a professional grantwriter to create an effective proposal. Like a good performance or exhibit, a good application tells a story that engages and informs the reader.

- Use simple, straightforward language.
- Keep the **Evaluation Criteria** in front of you. These are the themes your story should address, and they may give you ideas about what details will make your organization and project stand out.
- *How will your project make a difference?* Successful proposals speak to the impact the project will have in your organization's ability to serve your community.

- Numbers tell a story too. Be sure to explain any major financial changes from year to year. Unexplained deficits and unrealistic budgets make a bad impression and may raise questions about your management or stability.
- Look for specific details that will make your information come alive.

Remember Your Audience.

Panelists are not impressed by pretentious language and extravagant unsupported claims.

- Be concise, organized and accurate; panelists must read and evaluate a large number of applications. You can make a big impression by being brief.
- BUT assume panelists are reading about you for the first time. It's easy to forget that other people may not know things you take for granted. Tell your story clearly and use specific details and examples.

Pro Tip:

Take as many adjectives *out* of your proposal as you can. We know you think the work is brilliant, and beautiful, and important. It's your work. In plain language, tell the panel what the work is, but not what to think about it. They will supply the adjectives themselves.

Submit your application early. Follow directions and be sure your application is complete and you are ready to submit well in advance of the **September 4, 2015 deadline**. The online grant won't accept your application if there are any errors or missing information, so leave plenty of time to discover what those might be. Staff is only available on a limited basis until 5 p.m. to respond with any emergency guidance. Plan to submit early, so you have time to deal with last-minute technical issues that may arise.

Submitting Your Application and Attachments

You will be filling in your application through a third-party website called Culture Grants Online (CGO). Follow the link provided at the top of these guidelines, or from the Arts & Culture website. You will need to create a new account, or log into an existing account for your organization. Once logged in you should be taken directly to the application forms.

You do not have to navigate sequentially (in order of the pages). Use the navigation bar at the top to move around. Fill out whatever you can quickly, and get the "feel" of the site. **But be sure to save whatever you have entered using the Save Work button at the bottom of each page.**

A COMPLETE APPLICATION will include the following:

- **Applicant Profile** – This is an online form you will complete and save; if you have applied through the CGO system in the past it will populate with your organization's information automatically.
- **Project Information** – This is a page of information to be inputted into an online form and saved
- **Project Narrative** – Generate and upload a **three-page** letter on letterhead – must be saved as a **PDF**

- **Project Budget** – Download the blank form template provided at the Arts & Culture website and upload completed form
- **Operating Budget** – Download the blank form template provided at the Arts & Culture website and upload completed form showing budget information for your last completed, current and next fiscal years
- **Budget Notes** – Download blank form template provided at the Arts & Culture website and upload completed form, noting any significant budget changes between years
- **Images** – Attach up to three images for the proposed project. These can be an architect's renderings, or sketches on a napkin. They can be photos of the site, or stock photos of the type of renovation or the materials to be used. They can be images of the problem to be solved, or of solutions you've spotted elsewhere. Make your images compelling and part of your case for funding.
 - **Important note about image file format:** Please convert your images to PDF files and submit them as separate PDF's, maximum file size of 10Mb per image.

Pro Tip:

Be as realistic as you can be in your budget forecasts. Savvy panelists can see straight through inflated budgets and last-minute guesses. Remember that these panelists are your peers, and have done projects like yours before.

Obligations of Award Recipients

Acknowledgement

Organizations and individuals receiving awards from the Office of Arts & Culture must acknowledge the City of Seattle's support in printed materials, signage visible to the public or in other ways appropriate to the project. The Office 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. Funded organizations must provide public benefits to citizens of Seattle equal to the amount of the award as a condition of their funding.

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

Individuals and organizations awarded funds from the Office of Arts & Culture 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.)**

Contracts and Payment

After funding recommendations are approved, the Office of Arts & Culture staff will work with the applicant to develop a contract, including a scope of services (public benefit). These contracts will govern project evaluation and the payment of funds. Contractors are paid on a reimbursement basis.

Appeal Process

Applicants for the Cultural Facilities Funding Program may appeal the recommendations of the independent Peer Panel. Appeals must be based solely on the information included in the original application.

Procedure

- Applicants wishing to appeal must first contact the staff member responsible for the program to review the decision and hear a summary of the Peer Panel feedback.
- Appeals must be sent in writing to the Director of the Office of Arts & Culture within 30 days of formal notice of the Commission-approved decision.
- The Director shall consult with members of the Cultural Facilities Funding Program Peer Panel for input in making his/her final decision.
- A rejection by the Director is final and ends the appeal process.
- The Director will notify the applicant of his/her final decision in writing.

Office of Arts & Culture Funding Policies

Application Materials Are Public Information

Applications submitted to the Office of Arts & Culture become public information. Members of the public may see and copy them if they make a formal request. This is required by the Washington State Public Disclosure Act (PDA:RCW 42.17). To request a copy of the act, contact the State of Washington Code Revisers' Office in Olympia at (360) 786-6777. To review funding applications, call the Project Manager.

Discrimination Is Not Allowed On City-Funded Projects

Applicants receiving funds from the 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 the differently-abled. The Office of Arts & Culture respects the needs of people with differing abilities 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.

Office of Arts & Culture 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 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.

Office of Arts & Culture Respects Diverse Cultures

The City respects and seeks to achieve cultural and aesthetic diversity in its programs and administration through:

- Ensuring culturally diverse representation in decision-making through attention to cultural diversity in panel selection, hiring of staff and Commission appointments.
- Developing policies, documents and procedures that remove barriers to participation.
- Encouraging arts organizations to broaden representation on boards of directors and in employment.
- Identifying ongoing needs and opportunities within the arts for involving diverse cultures and underserved audiences and artists.