2019 Small Arts Grant Fund – APPLICATION TIPS

Potential applicants should read the instructions below to gather the information requested, understand the review process, reduce errors and increase the opportunity for an application to be funded. For more information, please call Program Officer Liana Riesinger at 816-531-0077 or e-mail her at liana@francisfoundation.org.

Starting an Application

To Apply: http://www.francisfoundation.org/grants/

Log-In: The account can be accessed by using the e-mail address and password from a prior application or grant report, changing the password or creating a new account.

Return: If an application is started and saved, it can only be accessed by using the “Return” link.

Preliminary Eligibility Information

To be eligible for a Small Arts Grant, an organization should be:

▪ Located within the greater Kansas City area (60-mile radius), AND
▪ *A tax-exempt 501(c)(3) public charity with a federal Employer Identification Number (EIN), or partner with another organization that can serve as a fiscal sponsor, AND
▪ An arts organization with annual revenues of less than $300,000 in the most recent fiscal year

OR

▪ A non-arts organization – regardless of budget size or mission – with a community-based arts program that provides access to arts and culture opportunities in traditional and non-traditional sites throughout the greater Kansas City area.

*To confirm an organization’s current IRS tax status, the Foundation uses the GuideStar® website (www.guidestar.com), a national database linked to the IRS. A copy of the original IRS determination letter is not required.

Program vs General Support

An organization matching either description below, will request Program or Project Support …

▪ Not a public charity but will use a fiscal sponsor
▪ Non-arts organization of any budget size or mission with an arts and culture program
Small Arts organizations will request **General Operating Support** …

- General Support grants are the most flexible and can be used for many things, including program and operating expenses, to further the organization’s charitable purposes.
- In the application, do **not** designate how the funds will be used.

**Completing the Application**

**NEW:** Some questions carry more weight than others. Please read each question carefully and note the **scoring rubric** to determine the importance of the answer. The higher the point value, the more weight is given to that answer during the review process.

**Format Caution**

- Use only plain text when completing the application. Quotation marks, $ signs, parentheses and hard returns are allowed.
- Do not use bold, underline or italics as the software may not recognize the formatting. Auto-numbered or auto-bulleted lists may also be problematic.
- Do not use the browser’s back button. Instead, click “Next” or use the four-step navigation bar at the top of the screen to advance to the next screen.

**Submit**

- Upload attachments prior to “Review.”
- “Review” application, ensuring that all questions are answered and correcting any errors.
- After reviewing the completed application, “Submit.”
- A confirmation e-mail is sent after an application is submitted. If the e-mail is not received, check Spam or call the Foundation at 816-531-0077.

**Note**

- The grant period should be the start and end dates of the organization’s fiscal year (2019-20 or 2019).
- Please include a description of any donated goods or other in-kind support under “Finances.”
- Word limits were added for the narrative questions at the request of the Small Arts Grant Fund Committee.
- Organizations with three grants in a row cannot apply in the fourth year but may reapply in the fifth year or after.
- Grants are not made to individuals, fraternal organizations or political parties for any purpose.
- No invitation is ever needed to apply to the Small Arts Grant fund.

**Small Arts Grant Fund History and Philosophy**

**What is the purpose of the fund?**
The Foundation launched the Small Arts Grant Fund in 2004. Since then, the Small Arts Grant Fund Committee reviews 70-to-100 eligible applications each year.

The intent stated in 2004 fundamentally remains the same …

*To promote grass roots development and excellence in the arts, funding is designed to provide both resources for programs that create better opportunities for all individuals to have meaningful arts and culture experiences, and to help strengthen the capacity of small arts and culture organizations.*
In other words …

- To help local groups working from the ground-up to broaden, deepen and diversify participation in arts and culture in the region and promote excellence in the arts
- To help local organizations and artists, that are committed to excellent artistic quality, provide meaningful, innovative experiences in the arts

What is funded …

- General support to small arts and culture organizations
- Resources to help organizations and the artists served to work successfully
- Programs that give more chances for all people to have meaningful arts and culture experiences

Priority is given to eligible …

- Organizations that include or reach the underserved, especially minorities or those with low incomes. Groups that are historically discriminated against and people with access or equity issues, such as LGBT, elderly, disabled, or a community with few arts and culture services, may also be included.
- Applications for program or project support that embraces arts innovation by increasing an individual’s opportunities to broaden and deepen creative expression, or provide services to artists or on behalf of the arts sector.

Why “small” arts and culture organizations?

A grant like this can make a difference to a group with few staff or all volunteers, and those with small budgets.

What is an arts and culture experience?

Art is a means of expression, usually influenced by culture, which in turn helps to change culture. From early cave painting to modern day tagging, art is a way to communicate.

What are the desired long-term results from arts and culture investments, including the Small Arts Grant Fund?

From the 2013-2017 Francis Family Foundation Strategic Framework:

*Foundation funding promotes the principle that arts and culture are fundamentally important for all people. The Foundation’s desired grant making results are: (1) An excellent ecology of the arts grows and is sustained regionally; (2) Well-rounded children, youth and adults, who can thrive in the 21st Century.*