



Heritage Awards FY2024 Guidelines

DEADLINE: October 15, 2023



Individuals who do not use conventional print may contact the Maryland State Arts Council to obtain this publication in an alternate format. 410-767-6555 or msac.commerce@maryland.gov



For individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.
TTY: Maryland Relay 1-800-735-2258 or 711

This publication is available as a PDF file on the MSAC website: www.msac.org.

Maryland State Arts Council

Overview

The Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) advances the arts in our state by providing leadership that champions creative expression, diverse programming, equitable access, lifelong learning, and the arts as a celebrated contributor to the quality of life for all the people of Maryland.

The Council comprises an appointed body of 17 citizens from across the state, 13 of whom are named by the Governor to three-year terms that may be renewed once. Two private citizens and two legislators are appointed by the President of the Senate and by the Speaker of the House. All councilors serve without salary.

To carry out its mission, MSAC awards grants to not-for-profit, tax-exempt organizations for ongoing arts programming and projects. MSAC also awards grants to individual artists and provides technical and advisory assistance to individuals and groups. MSAC reserves the right to prioritize grant awards.

MSAC receives its funds from an annual appropriation from the State of Maryland, grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. and, on occasion, contributions from private, non-governmental sources.

Authority

MSAC is an agency of the State of Maryland under the authority of the Department of Commerce, Division of Tourism, Film and the Arts.

Wes Moore, Governor
Aruna Miller, Lieutenant Governor
Kevin Anderson, Secretary
Signe Pringle, Deputy Secretary
Thomas B. Riford, Assistant Secretary
Steven Skerritt-Davis, Executive Director, MSAC

Mission and Goals

MSAC's mission is to advance the arts in our state by providing leadership that champions creative expression, diverse programming, equitable access, lifelong learning, and the arts as a celebrated contributor to the quality of life for all the people of Maryland.

MSAC's most recent strategic plan outlines five goals:

1. Increase Participation: Broaden MSAC's constituency, providing avenues designed to increase pathways to engagement.
2. Provide Intentional Support: Embrace thoughtful and targeted approaches to serving known and yet to be known MSAC constituents.
3. Build Capacity: Work strategically to further build organizational and governance capacity to ensure that MSAC is capable of vigorously delivering on its mission.
4. Leverage Connections: Further enhance current relationships and involve additional collaborators, and constituents who will benefit from and advance the work of MSAC.
5. Bolster Maryland Arts: Showcase the high caliber, diverse and relevant work of Maryland's artists and arts organizations; their contributions to community vitality and MSAC's role as a catalyst.

Visit the About Us page at msac.org to read the full strategic plan and learn more about implementation actions.

Equity and Justice Statement

The arts celebrate our state's diversity, connect our shared humanity, and transform individuals and communities. The Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) and its supporting collaborators are committed to advancing and modeling equity, diversity, accessibility, and inclusion in all aspects of our organizations and across communities of our state.

MSAC and its grantees are committed to embracing equity and non-discrimination regardless of race, religious creed, color, age, gender expression, sexual orientation, class, language, and/or ability.

The driving goals of MSAC's granting processes are:

- To yield a greater variety of funded projects
- To eliminate biases that may be found in any part of the granting process (e.g., applications, panelist procedures, adjudication systems)
- To acknowledge positions of privilege while questioning practices, shifting paradigms of status quo arts activities, and taking more risks
- To expand deliberations to include criteria beyond current conventions or Western traditions

Accessibility Policy

The Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) is committed to making sure all Marylanders can access our programs and services. Everyone is welcome, and all events and activities sponsored by or operated within MSAC must be fully accessible both physically and programmatically. MSAC complies with all applicable disability-related statutes and regulations and seeks to ensure meaningful participation by all Marylanders regardless of need or ability.

Feedback Procedures

If guests would like to provide general feedback to MSAC about accessibility for MSAC's programs or programs funded by MSAC, contact MSAC at msac.commerce@maryland.gov.

Grievance Procedures

For programs or services provided by MSAC

If a program or service operated by MSAC, facilities operated by MSAC, or public meetings conducted by MSAC are inaccessible to persons with a disability or is illegally discriminatory and you want to file a grievance:

- If you have any questions or would like to discuss the situation before filing a grievance, contact the Accessibility Coordinator.
- To file a formal grievance, contact Dan Leonard, Director of EEO & Fair Practices and ADA Coordinator: daniel.leonard@maryland.gov

For programs or services that are not provided by, but are funded by MSAC

- Communicate the grievance to the sponsoring organization.
- If you think your grievance was not handled appropriately by the sponsoring organization, or if you have not received a response from the organization within thirty (30) days, contact MSAC to file a formal grievance at 410-767-6555 or msac.commerce@maryland.gov.

MSAC will work with you to provide assistance as appropriate.

Accessibility Web Page

MSAC has a dedicated accessibility page on msac.org that includes contact information for the accessibility coordinator, federal and state regulations, the organization's Equity and Justice statement, grievance procedures, an emergency preparedness plan, accommodation policies, and other accessibility resources for artists and arts organizations, and PECS images.

Language Access

MSAC makes language accessibility services available. Services include making translations of grant materials, remote American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation, subtitles, braille translation, translation into languages other than English, and more. Please contact msac.commerce@maryland.gov for more information.

En Español/Spanish: MSAC pone a disposición servicios de traducción y accesibilidad de idiomas. Contacte msac.commerce@maryland.gov para más información.

中文普通话/Mandarin Chinese: 马里兰州艺术委员会(MSAC)提供翻译和语言无障碍服务。请联系 msac.commerce@maryland.gov 了解更多信息。

한국어/Korean: MSAC 는 한국어 지원을 돕고 있습니다. 자세한 문의사항은 msac.commerce@maryland.gov 로 연락 주시기 바랍니다.

Professional Grants Review Panels

To assist the Council in its decision-making, professionals in the arts are appointed to a variety of grants review panels. The function of panels is to evaluate applications from organizations and individuals and to offer policy recommendations to the Council. Each year, MSAC publishes an open call, and more than 100 individuals serve as grants review panelists for the Council's programs, including Grants for Organizations, Arts in Education, Independent Artist Awards, Public Art Across Maryland, Creativity Grants, Maryland Touring Grants, Maryland Touring Artist Roster, Maryland Traditions grants, and County Arts Development. Anyone wishing to serve should visit msac.org for detailed information and application forms for any open calls.

Staff

MSAC maintains a professional staff to administer its grants programs and Council-initiated programs. Staff members are available to provide technical assistance to the arts community.

Meetings

All Council and Grants Review Panel meetings are open to the public in accordance with the Open Meetings Act set forth in Title 3 of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. The dates, times, and locations of Council and Grants Review Panel meetings may be obtained from the MSAC website at www.msac.org or by contacting MSAC offices at (410) 767-6555.

Requirements For Grant Recipients

- Must comply with Title VI, Section 601, of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which states that no persons, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination related to, the arts.
- Must comply with Title IV, Section 1681, of the Education Amendments of 1972, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Section 6101, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex or age.
- Must maintain complete and accurate records of all activities connected with the grant.
- Must have filed a satisfactory reporting with MSAC for the most recently completed fiscal year.
- Must file a final report in alignment with the program requirements. Necessary reporting methods will be provided by MSAC in ample time to meet the deadline. Failure to report may jeopardize any future grant being received by the organization and may result in the organization being required to repay grant funds.

- Must give credit to MSAC in accordance with the [Recognition Guidelines](#) whenever and wherever credit is being given.
- Must notify the appropriate MSAC staff person in writing if a significant change is made in any MSAC-funded program or project.

Accessibility Requirements for Grant Recipients

Grantees must ensure that any programming remains accessible to all, and if needed, conduct programs in accessible venues other than their own organization in order to meet accessibility requirements. Grantees are required to:

1. Comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991, as amended.
2. Prohibit discrimination on the basis of: (a) political or religious opinion or affiliation, marital status, race, color, creed, sexual orientation, or national origin; or (b) gender expression, sex, or age, except when age or sex constitute a bona fide occupational qualification; or (c) the physical or mental disability of a qualified individual with a disability.
3. Designate an Accessibility Point of Contact to ensure compliance, receive accommodation requests, and document grievances, and publish direct contact information for the Point of Contact to the public.
4. Create and publicly share a grievance procedure to allow stakeholders to address any events or programs that are inaccessible.
5. Upon request, submit documentation of operations and compliance with the above.

Notice: Certain personal information requested by the Department of Commerce is necessary in determining eligibility for grants. Failure to disclose this information may result in the denial of one or all of these benefits or services. Availability of this information for public inspection is governed by the provisions of the Maryland Public Information Act, Title 4 of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. This information will be disclosed to appropriate staff of the Department, or to public officials, for purposes directly connected with administration of the program for which its use is intended. Such information is routinely shared with state, federal, or local government agencies.

Appeals Process

MSAC takes great care during the grant review process to ensure fair and equitable distribution of grant monies based on stated criteria. Therefore, dissatisfaction with the denial of an award or with the amount of an award is not sufficient reason for an appeal. However, a grant request may be reconsidered if a procedural impropriety or error has affected its review.

Grounds for such reconsideration are:

- A decision based on review criteria other than those stated in these guidelines.
- A decision based on material provided to panelists and/or Councilors that was substantially incorrect, inaccurate, or incomplete despite the applicant having provided the staff with correct, accurate, and complete application information.

Based on the above, if an applicant believes there is legitimate reason for an appeal, the following steps must be taken:

- The applicant must discuss the problem with the program director who handled the application.
- To pursue an appeal, the applicant must write a letter to the MSAC Executive Director within 60 days following receipt of the grant award or denial letter requesting a reconsideration of the Council's decision and stating the grounds for the request.

- The applicant will receive written notification on the determination of the appeal within 90 days of the receipt of the written request for reconsideration.

Overview

Purpose

Heritage Awards recognize long-term achievement in the traditional arts. MSAC defines traditional arts as community-based living cultural traditions handed down by example or word of mouth. Awards are given through the Maryland Traditions state traditional arts program and annually recognize up to six awardees from among the categories of Person/People, Place, and Tradition.

Awards in the Person/People category are given to individuals or groups whose efforts demonstrate long-term achievement in:

- Artistry
- Community leadership
- Creative practice
- Documentation
- Entrepreneurship
- Presentation
- Performance
- Research

Awards in the Place category are given to locations that:

- Achieve long-term prominence over a period of generations
- Serve as gathering spaces for community fellowship
- Serve as sites for traditional practices

Awards in the Tradition category are given in broad recognition of activities that connect communities to folklife in areas such as:

- Traditional practices
- Recurring events
- Occupations
- Local knowledge
- Cultural movements
- Organizations

Grant Cycle

Funding

Heritage Awards are \$10,000 each and are disbursed annually.

Timeline

- Nominations
 - Nomination publication: September 1, 2023
 - Nomination deadline: October 15, 2023
- Panelist evaluation
 - Call for panelists opening: August 1, 2023
 - Call for panelists closing: September 14, 2023
 - Review of nominations: December 2023

- Award processing
 - Nominators notified of status: January 2024
 - Funds processed for awardees: February 2024
- Final reports
 - Final report instructions release: June 2024
 - Final reports due: August 15, 2024

Eligibility

Eligible Heritage Award nominees are people, places, and traditions located in Maryland that demonstrate long-term achievement in the traditional arts. Recipients may represent forms of traditional arts that have been present in Maryland for many generations, and forms of traditional arts that have arrived relatively recently.

- People, places, and traditions may receive the Heritage Award only once.
- Heritage Awards are not given posthumously.
- Self-nominations are accepted.
- There is no limit to the number of nominations that may be made in connection with a single traditional art.

Multiple nominations of the same nominee are reviewed by staff prior to going to panel, with only the strongest nomination going to the panel for review.

Contact Information

MSAC staff offer the following technical assistance throughout the application process:

- Traditional arts nomination strategy and programming guidance
 - Ryan Koons, Folklife Specialist
 - ryan.koons@maryland.gov
 - 410.767.6568 (O); 443.536.8368 (C)
- Grants logistics and technological assistance
 - Tammy Oppel, Grants Management Associate
 - tammy.oppel@maryland.gov
 - 410.767.8851 (O)
- Professional development related to grant writing and program requirements
 - Professional Development Opportunity grant: <https://www.msac.org/programs/professional-development>
 - Online offerings: <https://www.msac.org/events/virtual-events>

Nomination Process, Review, and Reporting

Process

Before You Nominate

The purpose of the Heritage Awards is to recognize long-term achievement in traditional arts, or community-based living cultural traditions handed down by example or word of mouth. Maryland's traditional arts are defined as the body of living cultural traditions located in Maryland. People, places, and traditions that have been features of Maryland culture for many generations may be recognized by a Heritage Award, as may

people, places, and traditions that have come to Maryland more recently through patterns of migration, immigration, or the movement of refugees. Those interested in making a Heritage Award nomination should contact the Folklife Specialist to discuss their ideas.

SmartSimple

All nominations must be submitted via the online grants management system SmartSimple. Log in or create a free account at marylandarts.smartsimple.com. Nominators using SmartSimple for the first time will be asked to create a profile labeled with one of several categories (e.g., Independent Artist, County Arts Council, etc.). Nominators should select the profile category that best describes them. If no profile category is an exact match, nominators should select "Independent Artist".

Use of Funds

Each Heritage Award includes an unrestricted grant of \$10,000. All Heritage Award funds must be disbursed to individuals who reside in Maryland (i.e., own or rent residential property in Maryland), or to nonprofits, colleges and universities, or units of government located in Maryland. MSAC staff work with winners to determine the preferred recipient of funds. Grants are disbursed upon announcement of Heritage Award winners. Funds may be expended at the winners' discretion.

See Appendix B for further details on the Heritage Awards funding process.

Nominator expectation

Heritage Award nominators make nominations on behalf of nominees. Nominators may reside in Maryland or outside of Maryland and must provide contact information during the nomination process. Nominators serve as the primary point of contact for a nomination until winners are selected.

Nomination components

A completed nomination consists of the following components:

- Answers to prompts soliciting a description of the nominee's long-term achievement in folklife:
 - What is the relationship of the nominator to the nominee? (100 words)
 - Describe the cultural history and community of origin of the form of folklife being considered in this nomination. (250 words)
 - Describe the current community participating in the form of folklife being considered in this nomination. (250 words)
 - Explain and provide evidence of the nominee's importance to the current community participating in the form of folklife described above. (250 words)
 - Explain and provide evidence of the nominee's sustained engagement with the form of folklife described above, either as an individual (for Person/People nominations); a community gathering place (for Place nominations); or a traditional practice (for Tradition nominations). (250 words)
 - Describe how receiving this award provides a direct benefit to the culture from which the tradition originated. (250 words)
- Optional supplemental materials:
 - Supplemental materials include but are not limited to letters of recommendation, media coverage, or audiovisual examples of past work not exceeding 10 pages and 5 minutes of combined audiovisual review time.
 - Supplemental materials may reflect any point in the nominee's career or existence.
 - Supplemental materials may be accepted in the following file formats: mp3, .mp4, .mov, .pdf, .jpg, .tif.

Recording option

Heritage Award nominations include the option of uploading an audio or video recording answering narrative questions. This option is intended to benefit nominators who prefer to nominate verbally, rather than through written materials. Instructions for uploading application recordings are included in SmartSimple.

- Application recordings must be uploaded either as .mp3, .mp4, or .mov files not exceeding 20 minutes total.
- Applicants are responsible for formatting and producing application recordings in keeping with the technical specifications above; inaccessible or inaudible recordings are considered incomplete and will not be considered.

Review Criteria

The review of all Heritage Award nominations is based on the following criteria. Panelists will score Heritage Award nominations according to the rubrics below. The questions accompanying each criterion are taken directly from the nomination form.

Criterion 1: Nomination’s identification of a form of folklife

- Nomination questions:
 - Describe the cultural history and community of origin of the form of folklife being considered in this nomination.
 - Describe the current community participating in the form of folklife being considered in this nomination.

Excellent (17-20 points)	Good (13-16 points)	Fair (9-12 points)	Poor (8 or fewer points)
Nomination clearly identifies a living cultural tradition strongly connected to a cultural community of origin over a generational period of practice	Nomination identifies a living cultural tradition connected to a cultural community of origin over a moderate period of practice	Nomination partially or ambiguously identifies a living cultural tradition connected to a cultural community of origin over a limited or unclear period of practice	Nomination’s connection to folklife and cultural community of origin is negligible or not present

Criterion 2: Nominee’s connection to the folklife of a particular community of origin

- Nomination questions:
 - Explain and provide evidence of the nominee’s importance to the current community participating in the form of folklife described above.

Excellent (17-20 points)	Good (13-16 points)	Fair (9-12 points)	Poor (8 or fewer points)
Nominee’s importance to the folklife of a cultural community of origin is clearly demonstrated	Nominee’s importance to the folklife of a cultural community of origin is demonstrated	Nominee’s importance to the folklife of a cultural community of origin is somewhat demonstrated	Limited or no connection made between nominee and the folklife of a cultural community of origin

Criterion 3: Nominee’s sustained engagement with folklife as a person or people, place, or tradition

- Nomination questions:
 - Explain and provide evidence of the nominee’s sustained engagement with the form of folklife described above, either as an individual (for Person/People nominations); a community gathering place (for Place nominations); or a traditional practice (for Tradition nominations).

Excellent (17-20 points)	Good (13-16 points)	Fair (9-12 points)	Poor (8 or fewer points)
Nominee’s engagement with folklife clearly extends over a substantial period of time	Nominee’s engagement with folklife extends over a moderate period of time	Nominee’s engagement with folklife extends over a limited or unclear period of time	Nominee’s length of engagement with folklife is negligible or not stated

Financial Requirements

All awardees are required to submit a current signed [W-9 Form](#) upon notification of their award. The address on the W-9 Form must match the address of the nomination information entered in SmartSimple.

Re-submission

Nominations that are initially unsuccessful may be revised and re-submitted during the following cycle but are not automatically carried over from year to year.

Review

MSAC convenes a group of panelists to evaluate nominations. Each nomination is evaluated using a three-part rubric. Panelists assign as many as 20 points and supply qualitative comments for each of the three parts:

- Nomination’s identification of a form of folklife.
- Nominee’s connection to the folklife of a particular community.
- Nominee’s sustained engagement with folklife as a person or people, place, or tradition.

Panelist Selection

Panelists are selected via a public application process. Applicants who are traditional artists, folklife specialists, arts administrators, heritage professionals, and other cultural workers possess the necessary expertise to evaluate applications, though all potential panelists are given consideration.

Panelist Review

Panelists review Heritage Award nominations twice:

- Once remotely and independently, at which time an initial score is made
- Once after conversation with other panelists at a meeting facilitated by MSAC staff, including the Folklife Specialist, at which time all panelists will discuss nominations and have the opportunity to amend their score based on discussion
- Final scores will be reviewed by the MSAC Council and Department of Commerce leadership for final approval, denial, or requests for further information

In the event multiple nominations with the same score are being considered, the state folklorist will facilitate further panel discussion in accordance with scoring rubric guidelines until a final selection is made.

See Appendix B for a full overview of the review process.

Notification and Payment

The grantee will receive payment six to eight weeks from the date of receipt of a fully executed Grant Agreement Form.

To receive grant payments via direct deposit, please follow the instructions and complete the required forms from the [Comptroller of Maryland](#).

Reporting

Documentation

Heritage Award winners are able to request site visits in which they are documented with a photo and/or video shoot and interview session free of charge to the awardee. MSAC staff facilitate recipients' participation in documentation activities. See Appendix A for further details on documenting the work of Heritage Award winners.

Final report

Successful completion of a final report is a required condition of the Heritage Award. A final report describes how grant funds were spent and collects information about the grant's impact on the grantee's traditional arts activities. The final report also collects narrative, fiscal, and demographic information in keeping with MSAC and National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) requirements. Successful completion of a final report is a required condition of the Heritage Award. Final reports are completed in SmartSimple, the same online grants management system used for nominations. Final reports are available at the end of each granting period. MSAC notifies grantees in writing when final reports are available and due.

Failure to submit reports may jeopardize current and/or future MSAC grants and may result in the required return of grant funds to the State of Maryland.

Appendix A

Documenting the Heritage Awardees

To support artists and their careers, MSAC makes site visits available to Heritage Awardees as a free service during the granting period. Site visits consist of professional photo, audio, and/or video recording to document the awardee and their tradition. Site visits are optional; waiving site visits will not negatively affect the status of the award.

MSAC staff work directly with awardees to arrange site visits and strive to ensure that awardees are clear about the purpose of the visit, comfortable with the duration and nature of the documentation activities, and aware of their importance to the work of MSAC. Photo, audio, and video documentation collected during site visits is deposited in the Maryland Traditions Archives, a public archive of Maryland's living cultural traditions housed at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, with MSAC oversight. Documentation is also used to promote MSAC's traditional arts work to the public.

Though each site visit is unique to each Heritage Award recipient, the following guidelines broadly describe the intention behind all site visits:

- Scheduled in accordance with dates and times of day that best illustrate the recipient (e.g., arranging to shoot oystering during oyster season or Cambodian New Year music during the April New Year observed in Cambodian communities).
- Illustrate recipients in the contexts in which they would normally be occurring (e.g., arranging to shoot traditional Irish music performance at an Irish traditional music session or gospel quartet music at a Sunday church service).
- Photo documentation site visits last approximately 2-3 hours.
- Video documentation site visits last approximately 8 hours, and can be split up to occur on multiple days.

See msac.org for examples of previous Heritage Award recipients over the past five years.

Appendix B

Review process

- **Staff Review:** After a nomination is received, it is reviewed by staff for completeness and adherence to Council guidelines. Nominators will be notified whether their nomination is complete or if additional information or corrections are necessary. The nominator must meet all subsequent deadlines as specified in writing or the nomination will be considered withdrawn.
- **Grant Review Panel:** When the nomination is complete, it is assigned to members of a Grant Review Panel for evaluation. Grant Review Panels meet formally to evaluate the nominations submitted.
- **Council Decision:** The full Council meets to reach funding decisions.
- **Department of Commerce Approval:** The Council's decisions are forwarded to the Department for review, analysis, and final approval by the Secretary of Commerce or a designee.
- **Notification:** All nominees are notified in writing of the Council's decision when final approval is obtained.
- **Payment:** Signed Grant Agreement Forms must be received and the awardee must meet all reporting requirements before grant funds for the next fiscal year are disbursed.