



Maryland State Arts Council Program Policy Evaluation Committee

Minutes
February 28, 2023
Google Meet

It shall be the duty of the Program Policy Evaluation Committee to review and assess, as necessary, ongoing programs maintained by the Council; to study new program initiatives for Council consideration; to direct the Council's ongoing planning process with respect to policies, programs, and Council operations; to make recommendations for Council action on these matters when appropriate; and to undertake such other duties as the Council may from time to time direct. The committee shall consist of no fewer than three members

Present: Shelley Morhaim, John Schratwieser, Chris Sloan, Jack Rasmussen, Julie Madden, Steven Skerritt-Davis, David Mitchell, Emily Sollenberger, Laura Weiss, Molline Jackson

The meeting was called to order after guiding documents at approximately 1:01 pm.

Julie made a motion to approve the October 25, 2022 Committee minutes. Jack seconded. Molly abstained. All in favor. Motion approved.

Creativity Grants

Eligibility after unsuccessful application - Proposal: limiting resubmission of applications for the same project. Currently, applications submitted more than three times are subject to executive director approval for future submission of the same proposal. Justification: Changes allow the staff to guide applicants towards appropriate programs or new proposals.

Chris questioned if there was a way to block reapplying for the same proposals. Staff shared the preference to offer professional development and resubmission rather than preventing applicants from applying.

Eligibility after collaborative groups - Proposal: limiting applications from collaborative groups to one per project. There are no guidelines in place. The justification: clarifies the intent of the application and program.



Multiple individuals working together as a group cannot be funded individually in the same year for related work.

Chris questioned why it would be difficult to fund individuals for group projects if it's the only funding source available. The staff assured the council that allocations for such projects would not be in alignment with MSAC's funding model. John mentioned that local county arts councils and smaller regional organizations may fund based on project and community impact.

Panel Review - Proposal: applications scoring, sending all applications to the panel for review (no staff scoring). Currently, applications over 2K are reviewed monthly by a panel, and applications under 2K are reviewed by staff. Justification: changes remove staff from the scoring process, and remove any conflict with the program director providing technical support and scoring.

John shared how the changes protect the staff in multiple ways and places the category fully in line with everything else that's independently reviewed by a multi-disciplined panel. Shelley mentioned that Chris's comments were greatly appreciated and also shared her appreciation for the changes.

John made a motion to recommend the three policies for full council approval. Jack seconded the motion. Chris abstained. All in favor. Motion approved.

Allowable expense clarification (no vote required)

There is no current guideline. Proposed addition: The funding may not support day-to-day expenses associated with the running of a for-profit business, including but not limited to LLC, C-Corp, S-Corp, etc. Justification: clarifying that business expenses are not eligible.

Touring Grant

Nothing is currently in the guidelines. Before 2012 there was a required 1:1 match removed since the pandemic. Proposed change: remove the match permanently. Justification: Supports greater availability and access, removing barriers that the match presented; Addresses the ongoing impact of the pandemic, including lower ticket sales and income; Aligns with a trust-based and equity-focused approach to the program

Staff clarified that these changes would make it possible for artists to contract supporting act work.



Jack made a motion to make a recommendation to the full council. Julie and Shelley seconded. All in favor. Motion approved.

Use of funds (no vote required)

Current Guideline: Funds may not be used for programs or events in which the Roster artist is not a primary focus of the performance...Funds may not be used for programs or events that are commercial or in which the arts are not the primary focus (e.g., sidewalk sales, food festivals, fireworks displays, home-season engagements, etc.). Clarification: clarifying types of programs or events eligible to increase artist employment opportunities.

County Arts Development

Match Requirement

Current guidelines: CAD funds must be matched at least one-to-one in cash from any non-Maryland state source. Proposal: Waive the matching requirement for FY23 and FY24 and revise future guidelines to eliminate the match requirement. Justification: Many county arts agencies have limited financial resources outside of MSAC's grant and struggle to fulfill the matching requirement. Allowing grantee matches results in matching requirements passed on to smaller local organizations. Eliminating the match aligns with MSAC's interest in equitable grantmaking.

Chris questioned how many county arts councils are disqualified from getting funds because of the match and David expressed that there aren't any disqualifications but many are struggling to match and are worried about the future. Steven shared that even before COVID, organizations expressed their concerns with the matching process. Chris wondered if removing the match would discourage applicants from pursuing other funding opportunities. John shared his view that matching is a thing of the past and an unnecessary barrier to providing funding for the arts. He went on to explain that at times the capacity of local governments and county arts councils is limited and in reality, the match is a challenge. He shared that many private funders and state agencies such as the Maryland Heritage Authority and the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development have also stepped away from matching requirements. Steven shared that while the intent for the match may have been fundraising that has unfortunately not been the case. He would like to encourage arts councils to use their time to develop relationships and focus on doing more productive things in service to their communities.



Chris made a motion to move the recommendation to the full council. Jack seconded the motion. John abstained. All in favor. Motion approved.

New Business

There will be a set of recommendations for Arts in Education sent for review. The next meeting is scheduled for May 23, 2023.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:35 p.m.