



Maryland State Arts Council Program Policy Evaluation Committee

MEETING MINUTES

May 23, 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

Council members present: Chris Sloan, Shelley Morhaim, Jack Rasmussen, and Molline Jackson.

Staff: Chad Buterbaugh, Chris Sloan, Elizabeth Morales, Emily Sollenberger, Laura Weiss, Ryan Koons, Ryan Patterson, Liesel Fenner, Steven Skerritt-Davis, and Keyonna Penick.

Called to order at approximately 1:00 p.m. followed by guiding documents.

Chris made a motion to approve the February 28, 2023 meeting minutes Jack seconded. All in favor. Minutes approved.

Steven thanked the staff for their hard work and thanked the councilors for their time.

Grants Program Consolidation Proposal

Network Organizational Development: Capacity building for network programs; \$10,000 maximum; FY 2020 - present; Budget remainders

Special Request: Capacity building for all organizations; \$50,000 maximum; Newly revised for FY 2023; Positive public response; Staff capacity concern

Overall proposals are to address overlap and the lack of staff to effectively administer both programs.

Proposal: Pause NOD in FY24 and direct constituents to Special Request grant



Justification: Continue offering capacity building funding; Retain program to which the public has positively responded; Pause program that historically has not expended its full budget; Address staff capacity concerns

Proposal: Special Request grant range: \$2,000 - \$25,000

Justification: Serve a larger group of organizations

Proposal: "Applicants are encouraged to connect with relevant MSAC staff for application strategy assistance."

Justification: Address staff capacity

Proposal: "All proposed projects must represent a departure from the applicant's regular arts activities, as well as meet at least one of the following criteria, as defined: Innovative projects benefiting specific constituent groups; Pilot or one-time projects; Capacity-building efforts"

Justification: Clarify the program's purpose

Proposal: "Describe how the proposed activities represent a departure from the organization's regular activities. A clear, thorough description of the pilot, one-time, or short-term nature of proposed activities

Justification: Further align evaluation procedure with program purpose

Shelley made a motion to recommend the Grant Programs Consolidation Proposal for full council approval. Jack seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Chris questioned if there is a definition of what sorts of organizations can apply. Steven informed the council that there is a definition and it can be found in the guidelines. Shelley wondered if most of the funds would go to opportunities for staff and professional development. Steven shared that the most common request for funds has been for strategic planning.

All in favor. Motion approved.

Emergency Grants

The program was created out of necessity as a COVID response. Cont'd w/ dedicated funding: FY20-21: various COVID-specific funds (for organizations + ind. artists); FY22: ARPA funding (for ind. artists); FY23: Arts Relief (for ind. artists)

In FY22, expanded to include losses sustained from non-COVID



emergencies: Need is varied and great; Guidelines do not define “emergency” clearly (range of hardships described in apps); Staff/agency not equipped to evaluate/support/handle some of these events; MSAC/State payment timeline insufficient for emergency situations; Staff capacity issues (for program management and reviews)

Proposal: FY24 Proposal: Pause the program; Publish other available emergency resources; Reevaluate with intentionality to determine the best ways to support artists: Include in upcoming strategic planning discussions. For comparison, it took 18 months to develop the Grants for Artists program to address independent artists' needs. The Emergency Grant program has not gone through the same program-building or program revision process to-date

Shelley made a motion to recommend the emergency grant proposal for full council approval. Jack seconded.

Discussion: Chris asked what other emergency options are available if we’re shutting ours down. Catherine mentioned there will be a robust list of federal and local organizations and agencies that provide artist-specific resources and human services that are available on our website. She encouraged councilors to share emergency resources for artists and they will be added to the list.

All in favor. Molline abstained. Motion approved.

Arts in Education Program Revision

Program Description Policies

Proposal: Funding amounts

Justification: allows for teaching artists to increase their fees to help address concerns with rising; allows for more in-depth arts education projects

Proposal: Establishing a Lead Artist

Justification: Establishing a Lead Artist for organizations on applications will increase the transparency of funding and provide data on the number of artists AiE grants impact/serve

Proposal: Maximum on AiE Grant Awards

Justification: increases equity in the distribution of AiE grant funds across artists and organizations; recommendation from editors to use percentages



of overall AiE budget; percentage cap amounts were developed by analysis of FY23 grant data

Proposal: Identifying a Site Coordinator

Justification: removing the stipulation that the site coordinator be a paid employee, opens the opportunity for smaller, community-based organizations to apply. Due to the removal of the match requirement, site coordinator submission is unnecessary

Proposal: Site Coordinator Role

Justification: provides reasonable expectations when the site coordinator or another employee from the site must be present during an AiE-funded program. Eases the burden on the site coordinator when the artist is working with adult populations.

Proposal: Use of funds

Justification: provides further clarification on allowable expenses for applicants. Include additional use of funds to adequately support the art education project

Proposal: AiE Equitable Funding Formula

Justification: The formula is overly complex, administratively burdensome to implement, and was never implemented because of COVID. Currently, we do not have funding demands from all 24 Maryland jurisdictions. Other strategies included in this revision, such as support to underrepresented counties, aim to achieve equitable funding goals.

Application Policies

Proposal: Signature of Site Coordinator

Justification: Since there is no longer the financial requirement of a site match, this practice of site accountability is no longer necessary

Application Review Policies

Proposal: Review Criteria (site support)

Justification: Revision responds to feedback from panelists and constituents; panelists expressed difficulty in evaluating what is considered a high demonstration of site-wide support. Retains flexibility in the ways to express the site's support of the engagement. Rephrases questions for clarification

Proposal: Review Criteria (Underrepresented Counties)



Justification: operationalizes MSAC's commitment to serving all citizens throughout the State of Maryland. Provides a modest benefit to applications that the program would like to reach. The FY24 list of underrepresented counties includes Allegany, Carroll, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anene's, Somerset, and Worcester.

Chris questioned if there is a need for help in underrepresented counties. Elizabeth shared that it is unclear why the counties are not asking for funds Steven mentioned that from his perspective the applications from some of these counties are just under the funding line. This would give them a modest benefit to take advantage of funding opportunities to make sure the portfolio of this program is statewide.

Proposal: Review Criteria (Scores/Points)

Justification: Adjust the weights of questions more evenly throughout the application and adjust the point scale to rounded numbers to ease the scoring process for panelists

Teaching Artist Roster Revision

Application Process

Proposal: Application Process

Justification: Streamlines process into one step; creates a more efficient process for artists to join the roster and staff onboarding of new artists to the roster; revision adds public vetting to the "site visit" component; eliminating the two-phase process aligns with most other MSAC programs

Proposal: 30-minute meeting w/ AiE staff or consultant in advance of beginning an application

Justification: provides technical assistance

Proposal withdrawn. The AiE program director would like the flexibility to try different ways to provide technical assistance throughout the year

Application Form Policies

Proposal: Application (Artist Statement)

Justification: more direct and focused questions; questions ensure the applicant's work is aligned with MSAC's values; remove the ambiguity of the term "creative process"

Proposal: Application (Recording of instruction/performance)



Justification: provide consistency and fairness by having all panelists review and score the recordings; maintains the importance of the site visit component but in a one-step process

Application Rubric/Review Criteria

Proposal: Rubric (Examples of PRogramming)

Justification: The rubric is clearly aligned with the question that is being asked of the application; standards of learning are only relevant for school programs

Proposal: Rubric (Short Answer Questions)

Justification: the rubric is consistent and connected back to the artist's content, instruction, and/or performance that is under review

Proposal: Rubric (Recording)

Justification: the rubric is aligned with the question, consistent with other rubric criteria, and connected back to the artists content, instruction, and/or performance that is under consideration

Proposal: Review Criteria

Justification: adjust weights of questions more evenly throughout the application; adjust the point scaled to rounder numbers that ease the scoring process for panelists

Chris made a motion to recommend the Arts in Education Program revision for full council approval. Jack seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion approved.

Emily presented the Independent Artist Awards Revision Update

Emily of the revision team with Laura and Chad provided updates on the ongoing revision process. Program revision process to date: surveys; listening sessions; staff input; councilor input; editing process and staff review. The revision team has determined that additional staff or contractor is required to facilitate the program. Recommendations would result in minimal change; staff to revisit the process in mid-July and update PPE Committee at the August meeting

Liesel presented the Public Art Across Maryland New Artworks Proposals

Proposal: one annual deadliner per year



Justification: a significant amount of time is spent on technical assistance; historically there has been one deadline; staff are over capacity due to the time required to manage both the grant program and Artwork Commission projects

Proposal: "Public Art Across Maryland New Artwork Grants may support: Artworks that fall under MSAC's definition of Public Art."

Justification: Clarifies the types of projects allowable for public art across Maryland grants for constituents.

Liesel shared the proposed art definition. Chris asked what language is used to define what the planning grant can be used for and where can it be found. Liesel informed the council that there was an increase to an honorarium that assist with bringing projects to full fruition. The definition is located in PAAM guidelines.

Proposal: Planning Grant Requests up to \$10K; Project Grant Requests up to \$30K

Justification: Returning to the standard public art budget allocation and to accommodate anticipated demand

Ryan Patterson presented the Conservation Grant Proposal

Proposal: The Conservation Planning Grant awards up to \$10K; The Conservation Implementation Grant awards up to \$30K

Justification: align with the New Artworks Project grant cap and to accommodate demand combined with the public art annual budget returning to the FY22 level

Proposal: "Public Art Across Maryland Conservation Grants may support: Artworks that fall under MSAC's definition of Public Art"

Justification: Clarifies the types of projects allowable for public art across Maryland grants for constituents.

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

Steven presented the Panelists, Jurors, Editors, and Judges' Approval Policy

There was a policy sent via email for a vote that brought up a question about what business can be sent via email.



Proposal: Votes to approve slates of panelists, editors, jurors, and judges are not the business of the council subject to the Open Meetings Act and may be conducted via email.

Justification: Clarification of policy that allows for administrative business to be conducted outside of an open meeting

Chris made a motion to send the recommendation for full council approval. Jack seconded. All in favor. Motion approved.

New Business

Steven presented the Grants for Organizations Formula - Significant Increase/Decrease

FY24 GFO Formula

Proposal: Keep the current language and add a definition of significant increase" defined as a 50% or more growth in allowable income from the previous fiscal year; Add significant decrease to the current language, defining it as a 50% decrease in allowable income from the previous fiscal year

Justification: Clarifying current practice and adding to the FY25 guidelines for transparency

Proposal: For FY24, amend the significant decrease threshold to 40% or more decrease in allowable income from the previous year to have the significant change formula applied; one year FY24 recommendation only

Justification: Due to the impacts of the pandemic, many organizations have seen significant losses. In alignment with supporting organizations, including those with 40%+ loss would provide further support during this transitional time; align with stabilizing small to mid-sized organizations

Chris made a motion to recommend the GFO Formula proposal for full council approval. Jack seconded. All in favor. Motion approved.

Steven reiterated the volume of grants and the capacity needs of staff. Chris asked how councilors can help capacity. Steven mentioned that the same question was raised during the Executive Committee meeting and Assistant Secretary Tom Riford recommended advocacy from the councilors



on the staff's behalf and assured councilors that he will share ways that can be done.

Shelley congratulated the staff on their great work and acknowledged the full agenda for the annual meeting in June.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:00 p.m.