

Grants for Organizations FY2024 Narrative Questions

National arts organizations (National Endowment for the Arts, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, Americans for the Arts) have clarified and shared approaches to uncover cultural bias in the procedures and policies of state arts organizations. In response, the Maryland State Arts Council has committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion in grantmaking as all funding mechanisms continue to be examined and updated. The design of the Grants for Organizations application is meant to inspire authentic reflection and internal analysis for each applying organization, with the knowledge that the Maryland State Arts Council is to be seen and utilized as a collaborative partner in the process. The driving goals of this new vision for the granting processes connect to the application in the following ways:

- To acknowledge positions of privilege while questioning practices, shifting paradigms of status quo arts activities, and taking more risks.
- To yield a greater variety of funded projects.
- To eliminate biases that may be found in any part of the granting process (i.e. - applications, panelist procedures, adjudication systems).
- To expand the deliberations about rigor beyond current conventions or Western traditions.
- To aspire to make investments that contribute to social change and demonstrate aesthetic excellence in terms relevant to context and intent.

Narrative Questions:

Questions A1 - A3 and the chart below address why the work of your organization is important.

1. What are the vision, mission, goals and/or values of the organization?

(Excellent to Outstanding response: Clear, specific, and thorough evidence of vision, mission, goals and/or values) 4 points

Clear, specific, and thorough evidence of vision, mission, goals and/or values	Clear evidence of vision, mission, goals and/or values	Somewhat clear evidence of vision, mission, goals and/or values	Limited evidence of vision, mission, goals and/or values;	
Excellent to Outstanding	Good to Very Good	Satisfactory	Marginal to Fair	No Evidence
4	3	2	1	0

2. How have the vision, mission, goals, and/or values of the organization evolved over the last two years?

(Excellent to Outstanding response: Clear, specific, and thorough explanation of growth/evolution over the past 2 years) 4 points

Clear, specific, and thorough explanation of growth/evolution over the past 2 years	A clear explanation of growth/evolution over the past two years	Somewhat clear explanation of growth/evolution over the past two years	Limited explanation of growth/evolution over the past two years	
Excellent to Outstanding	Good to Very Good	Satisfactory	Marginal to Fair	No Evidence
4	3	2	1	0

3. a. What is the Geographic Area of Service for your organization (specific community(ies), county(ies), city(ies), statewide)?

(Your response to this question will be used to guide understanding throughout the application.)

b. Within your Geographic Area of Service, identify % of programming serving the community (other than tuition-paying constituents).
(Tuition-paying includes programming with a fee for service model, such as classes, camps, workshops, etc.)

- Dropdown Answers:
 - 0-25%
 - 25%-50%
 - 50-75%
 - 75-100%

The following chart explains how your statements in A.1, A. 2, and A. 3 are demonstrated in your day-to-day activities. The purpose of the chart is to show alignment between the organization’s intentions, processes, and programming. The List of Events/Arts Activities may be categorized by program type (i.e. Mainstage Season) and number of corresponding occurrences, if multiple rows contain the same response. If you are a Service organization, please address the chart's questions in terms of activities offered, 12 points

(Excellent to outstanding responses: 1) Clearly aligns with vision, mission, goals/values; 2) Specifically demonstrates meaningful public value, and authentic constituent collaboration and 3) Clearly demonstrates plans to reach yet to be known constituents)

List of Events/Arts Activities for 07/01/21 - 06/30/22	How does each activity connect to the vision, mission, goals, and values of the organization?	Describe the public value (importance and relevance) of the activity for the constituents in the Geographic Area of Service	How is each arts activity designed to reach yet to be known constituents in the Geographic Area of Service?	If arts activity is tuition-based, how does the activity reach beyond the tuition-paying constituents? If activity is not tuition-based, list "N/A"
(Add rows as needed)				

<p>Description of arts activities: 1) Clearly aligns with vision, mission, goals/values; 2) Specifically demonstrates meaningful public value, 3) Clearly demonstrates plans to reach yet to be known constituents</p> <p>Excellent to Outstanding</p> <p>12</p>	<p>Description of arts activities: 1) Adequately aligns with vision, mission, goals/values; 2) Partially demonstrates meaningful public value and 3) Somewhat demonstrates plans to reach yet to be known constituents</p> <p>Good to Very Good</p> <p>9</p>	<p>Description of arts activities: 1) Vaguely aligns with vision, mission, goals/values; 2) Incompletely demonstrates meaningful public value and 3) Vaguely demonstrates plans to reach yet to be known constituents</p> <p>Satisfactory</p> <p>6</p>	<p>Description of arts activities: 1) Does not align with vision, mission, goals/values; 2) Does not demonstrate meaningful public value and 3) Does not demonstrate plans to reach yet to be known constituents</p> <p>Marginal to Fair</p> <p>3</p>	<p>No evidence</p>
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Questions B1 - B2 below address how your organization designs its programs.

1. Describe the creative process within your organization's programming. Include a description of how artistic decisions are made (Creative Process) and how the constituents of the Geographic Area of Service are involved in the programmatic development and evaluation of the resulting artistic activities

(If your organization is in the "Service" discipline, please answer the following question:

Describe the process for developing activities/programming/initiatives within your organization. Include a description of how decisions are made and how the constituents of the Geographic Area of Service are involved in the programmatic development and evaluation of the activities.)

(Excellent to outstanding response includes: Explanation clearly illustrates the creative process, which includes creative roles, responsibilities, and authentic constituent collaboration, where constituents are essential in the artistic decision making process.) (8 points)

<p>Explanation clearly and thoroughly illustrates the creative process, which includes creative roles, responsibilities, and authentic constituent</p>	<p>Explanation illustrates the creative process, which includes description of creative roles, responsibilities, and authentic collaboration,</p>	<p>Explanation includes some detail of the creative process, which includes some description of creatives roles, responsibilities, and</p>	<p>Explanation includes limited detail of the creative process, which may include limited description of creative roles or responsibilities, and</p>	
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collaboration, where constituents are essential in the artistic decision making process.	where constituents are involved in the artistic decision making process.	authentic collaboration, where constituents are occasionally involved in the artistic decision making process	authentic collaboration, where constituents are not identified as being involved in the artistic decision making process.	No Evidence
Excellent to Outstanding	Good to Very Good	Satisfactory	Marginal to Fair	0
8	6	4	2	

2. Explain the process for long-term or strategic planning. (If your organization does not have a long-term or strategic plan, how do you design programs and activities for the future, or any steps towards a formalized process?) How does this process align with your vision, mission, goals/values?

(Excellent to outstanding response includes: Clear and specific explanation of long-term/strategic planning process that directly connects with vision, mission, goals/values. 8 points)

Clear and specific explanation of long-term/strategic planning process that directly connects with vision, mission, goals/values	Clear explanation of long-term/strategic planning process that directly connects with vision, mission, goals/values	Somewhat clear explanation of long-term/strategic planning process that connects with vision, mission, goals/values	Limited explanation of long-term/strategic planning process that somewhat connects with vision, mission, goals/values	No evidence
Excellent to Outstanding	Good to Very Good	Satisfactory	Marginal to Fair	No evidence
8	6	4	2	0

Questions 1-5 below address how your organization operates.

1. In the attachment section of the application, attach a Graphic/Chart of the organization's Staffing/Board Structure (include board, staff, artists, volunteers, etc within the chart).

Excellent to Outstanding response includes a clear and specific explanation of the organization's staffing/board structure (4 pts)

Clear and specific explanation of the organization's staffing and board structure	Clear explanation of the organization's staffing and board structure	Somewhat clear explanation of the organization's staffing and board structure	Limited explanation of the organization's staffing and board structure	No Evidence
Excellent to Outstanding	Good to Very Good	Satisfactory	Marginal to Fair	0
4	3	2	1	

2. How is your staffing and board structure (board, staff, artists, volunteers, etc) currently successful?

Excellent to Outstanding response includes a clear and specific explanation of indicators of a successful staffing and board structure (4 pts)

<i>Clear and specific explanation of indicators of a successful staffing and board structure</i>	<i>Clear explanation of indicators of a successful staffing and board structure</i>	<i>Somewhat clear explanation indicators of a successful staffing and board structure</i>	<i>Limited explanation of indicators of a successful staffing and board structure</i>	No Evidence
<i>Excellent to Outstanding</i>	<i>Good to Very Good</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Marginal to Fair</i>	0
4	3	2	1	

3. What staffing/board (board, staff, artists, volunteers, etc) and/or financial challenges affect the operation of your organization; and how are the challenges routinely identified and addressed?

Excellent to Outstanding response includes a clear and specific commitment to regularly identifying and addressing staffing/board and/or financial challenges.

<p><i>Clear and specific commitment to regularly identifying and addressing staffing/board and/or financial challenges.</i></p> <p><i>Excellent to Outstanding</i></p> <p>8</p>	<p><i>Clear commitment to regularly identifying and addressing staffing/board and/or financial challenges.</i></p> <p><i>Good to Very Good</i></p> <p>6</p>	<p><i>Somewhat clear commitment to identifying and addressing staffing/board and/or financial challenges.</i></p> <p><i>Satisfactory</i></p> <p>4</p>	<p><i>Limited commitment to identifying and addressing staffing/board and/or financial challenges.</i></p> <p><i>Marginal to Fair</i></p> <p>2</p>	<p><i>No Evidence</i></p> <p>0</p>
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4. What procedures are in place for monitoring and approving the organization's finances? In your response, include details on how the organization develops and approves its annual budget.

(Excellent to Outstanding response includes a Detailed procedure for developing, monitoring, and approving finances. 4 points)

Explanation shows a clear and detailed procedure for monitoring and approving finances	Explanation shows a detailed procedure for monitoring and approving finances;	Explanation shows a procedure for monitoring and approving finances;	Explanation shows a limited procedure for monitoring and approving finances	
Excellent to Outstanding	Good to Very Good	Satisfactory	Marginal to Fair	No Evidence
4	3	2	1	0

5. Based on demographics (which may be found here: <https://www.unitedstateszipcodes.org/>), how does your staffing (board, staff, artists, volunteers, etc) reflect the population of your Geographic Area of Service?

(Excellent to Outstanding response includes Organization staff and board clearly reflecting the constituency of the Geographic Area of Service; and have strategies in place to further diversity of their staff and board in future.) 8 points

Organization staff and board clearly reflect the constituency of the Geographic Area of Service.	Organization staff and board mostly reflects the constituency of the Geographic Area of Service	Organization staff and board somewhat reflects the constituency of the Geographic Area of Service	Organization staff and board has a limited reflection of portions of the Geographic Area of Service	
Excellent to Outstanding	Good to Very Good	Satisfactory	Marginal to Fair	0 Points
8	6	4	2	

Questions 1 - 3 below address how your organization evaluates what it does.

1. What is the sensory or emotional experience hoped to be achieved through your organization's arts programming?

(Excellent to Outstanding responses: Programming process directly considers intended sensory and emotional impact) 8 points

Programming process directly considers intended sensory and emotional impact	Programming process somewhat considers intended sensory and emotional impact	Programming process vaguely considers intended sensory and emotional impact	Programming process does not consider intended sensory and emotional impact	
Excellent to Outstanding	Good to Very Good	Satisfactory	Marginal to Fair	No Evidence
8	6	4	2	0

2. How do programmed arts activities assume risk by considering non-dominant norms, values, narratives, standards, or aesthetics?

If your organization is in the "Service" discipline, please answer the following question:

How do your activities/programs/initiatives consider and/or support non-dominant norms, values, narratives, standards, or aesthetics?

(Excellent to Outstanding responses: Programming process indicates regular consideration of non-dominant norms, values, narratives, standards, and aesthetics) 8 points

Programming process indicates regular consideration of non-dominant norms, values, narratives, standards, and aesthetics	Programming process indicates some consideration of non-dominant norms, values, narratives, standards, and aesthetics	Programming process indicates occasional consideration of non-dominant norms, values, narratives, standards, and aesthetics	Programming process indicates no consideration of non-dominant norms, values, narratives, standards, and aesthetics	
Excellent to Outstanding	Good to Very Good	Satisfactory	Marginal to Fair	No Evidence

8	6	4	2	0
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3. Please give one recent example of the organization's greatest successes and explain why it is considered successful.

(Excellent to Outstanding responses: Evaluation clearly articulates why a specific program or event was determined to be successful) **8 points**

Evaluation clearly articulates why a specific program or event was determined to be successful Excellent to Outstanding 8	Evaluation articulates why a specific program or event was determined to be successful Good to Very Good 6	Evaluation somewhat articulates why a specific program or event was determined to be successful Satisfactory 4	Evaluation poorly articulates why a specific program or event was determined to be successful Marginal to Fair 2	No Evidence 0
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Financials:

Financial information indicates a strong commitment to multiple, diverse income streams	Financial information indicates adequate commitment to multiple, diverse income streams	Financial information indicates multiple income streams	Financial information indicates a single income stream	
Excellent to Outstanding	Good to Very Good	Satisfactory	Marginal to Fair	No Evidence
4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Points	0 Points
The organization does not display any significant financial changes; Any significant	Any significant financial changes (surplus or deficit >20%) are recognized and	The organization is operating with significant financial changes (surplus or deficit	The organization is experiencing a surplus or deficit greater than 20% and	

financial changes are supported with programmatic cause in alignment with the organization's mission and vision.	somewhat supported with programmatic cause in alignment with the organization's mission and vision.	>20%) that are recognized but not addressed.	there is minimal or no support for this circumstance.	
Excellent to Outstanding	Good to Very Good	Satisfactory	Marginal to Fair	No Evidence
4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Points	0 Points
If budget size indicates (>600K), the organization is operating with a cash reserve of (at least) one year.	If budget size indicates (>600K), the organization is operating with a cash reserve of (at least) 6 months.	If budget size indicates (>600K), the organization is operating with a minimal cash reserve (less than 6 months).	If budget size indicates (>600K), the organization is operating without any cash reserve.	
Excellent to Outstanding	Good to Very Good	Satisfactory	Marginal to Fair	No Evidence
4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Points	0 Points

Attachments:

- Latest certified, audited financial report, due at time of application submission (even if it reflects the previous fiscal year's income and expenses) for organizations operating over \$600,000
- Financial activity report that coincides with the submission date of the application for organizations operating below \$600,000
- Graphic/Chart of the organization's (program's) Staffing Structure (Board, Staff, Regularly Employed Artists).
- IRS Letter of Determination.

Definitions for Reference:

Outreach -

Often means programming that is designed to serve an identified group or community rather than including the identified group or community in the organization's overall program design and constituency.

Creative Process -

The process by which an idea moves from initial thought to fruition. This may include inspiration, intention, and philosophy that influences the evolution of the idea to implementation.

Public Value -

The importance, worth, relevance, or usefulness of the artistic programs or activities to the intended Geographic Area of Service.

Non-dominant norms, values, narratives, standards and aesthetics -

Non-relevant and Eurocentric standards of excellence and beauty often prevail in describing and assessing the aesthetics of work that is socially and civically engaged. Non-dominant norms go against these standards of excellence. Non-dominant norms consider renewing and promoting a dynamic critical paradigm, reflective of diverse cultures as embodied by community-based, social, and civic arts practices.

Tuition Paying -

Tuition-paying includes programming with a fee for service model, such as classes, camps, workshops, etc.