



FY2022 Independent Artist Awards Guidelines

DEADLINE: July 1, 2021

Literary Arts



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 in an annual appropriation from the State of Maryland and from grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. MSAC may also receive 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.

Larry Hogan, Governor

Boyd K. Rutherford, Lieutenant Governor

Kelly M. Schulz, Secretary

Thomas B. Riford, Assistant Secretary, Tourism, Film, the Arts, Marketing, and Communication

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 are 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 the Accessibility Coordinator at 410-767-6476 or email precious.blake@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's Accessibility Coordinator to file a formal grievance at 410-767-6476 or precious.blake@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.

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, material status, race, color, creed, sexual orientation, or national origin; of (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.

Independent Artist Awards Program Overview

Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) Independent Artist Awards (IAAs) recognize achievement by Maryland artists making work independent of an institution or organization. The awards are accompanied by grants that encourage artistic growth and sustained practice.

Applicant Eligibility

Who May Apply:

- Must be Maryland resident (owning or renting residential real property in Maryland at the time of application submission and throughout the funded project or program) and must be 18 years of age or older.
- Must be Maryland resident (owning or renting residential real property in Maryland at the time of application submission and throughout the funded project or program) at the time the Independent Artist Award, if awarded, is given to the artist/collaborative group as granted by the Maryland State Arts Council
- Collaborative groups must be composed of artists who are 18 years or older. 50% of artists in a collaborative group must meet the residency requirement above.
- Proof of residency may be required.
- The applicant or collaborative group must be the artist(s) whose original work or performance is represented in the work samples.

Who May Not Apply:

- Artists enrolled in high school or any undergraduate classes or programs during FY 2022 (July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022).
- Individuals pursuing graduate instruction in any artistic category during FY 2022 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022). This includes visual, performing, and literary arts.
- Artists who received a \$6,000 MSAC Individual Artist Award in FY 2019.
- Artists who received a State IAA in previous years. (This award can only be received once in an artist's lifetime.)
- Artists who received a \$10,000 Regional IAA in the past five years.

Additional Information:

- Applicants may only submit one application per year. An applicant may submit an application as an individual and may also be named in a collaborative group during the same year; the work samples between the two applications cannot be the same.
- An artist may receive up to three \$2,000 Regional Awards, two \$10,000 Regional Awards, and one State Award in their lifetime.
- All work samples must have been produced within the past five years.
- Previous MSAC IAA recipients may not resubmit winning work, including any portion or variation of winning work. If an IAA recipient resubmits winning work or any portion or variation of winning work, the application will be considered ineligible.
- Work completed while pursuing a high school diploma or an undergraduate or graduate degree in any MSAC IAA artistic category may not be submitted.
- Only completed work may be submitted. Works in progress and project proposals are not considered eligible. For the purposes of this program, "complete" is considered to be the point at which the work is ready for public presentation.
- When submitting as a collaborative group, applicants must identify all collaborators. Individual applicants submitting work samples of collaborative work must identify their contribution in the work sample's technical information.

The Geographic Region of an applicant is determined by the address provided on the application.

Types of Awards

Award recipients are selected through a highly competitive adjudication process.

- Applicants will be reviewed and awarded based on their residency within five Geographic Regions:
 - Western (Garrett, Allegany, Washington)
 - Washington Metro (Frederick, Montgomery, Prince George's)
 - Baltimore Metro (Carroll, Baltimore, Baltimore City, Anne Arundel, Harford, Howard)
 - Southern (Calvert, Charles, St. Mary's)
 - Eastern Shore (Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne's, Caroline, Talbot, Dorchester, Wicomico, Somerset, Worcester)
- Within each Geographic Region, the following awards will be available:
 - \$2,000 Regional Awards - awarded in each region to encourage the pursuit of promising work by an individual artist or collaborative group
 - \$10,000 Regional Awards - awarded in each region to recognize notable artistic achievement by an individual artist or collaborative group
- All \$10,000 Regional Award winners will be eligible for the State Award(s):
 - \$15,000 State Award(s) - awarded to up to two (2) artists or collaborative groups per year to recognize outstanding artistic achievement
- The funding available in each region is determined by the total amount of funding allocated to the program by the Council.

Artistic Categories

Artistic categories rotate in a three-year cycle. Applicants self-select the category which they feel best represents their work. Applicants' work should be *primarily based* in the category (performance, visual/media, literary) in which it is submitted, even if the components of the work are interdisciplinary. If, upon review, the panelists feel the applicant's work would be better represented by a category different than the one in which it was submitted, they may choose to lower the overall score of the application. MSAC staff reserve the final right to determine whether or not the work submitted is eligible in any given category.

FY 2022 Artistic Category

This is the only category offered for the July 1, 2021 deadline. See below for the other categories that will be offered in coming years.

- Literary Arts

FY 2023 Artistic Category

Do not apply in this category for the July 1, 2021 deadline. Applications will be denied.

- Performing Arts

FY 2024 Artistic Category

Do not apply in this category for the July 1, 2021 deadline. Applications will be denied.

- Visual/Media Arts

Review Process

Each application submitted by July 1, 2021 will be reviewed by the MSAC staff for eligibility from July - August 2021.

Each eligible application is then reviewed by a panel of evaluators with a wide range of experience in the artistic category. Panelists score each applicant based on a rubric and make final recommendations for Regional and State Awards based on the combined scores and discussion of applicants' work. Panel meetings are directed and overseen by Council staff. The panelist review period takes place from September 2021 - January 2022.

Round 1 of Review

Prior to the Regional Panel meetings, applications will first be reviewed by panelists on their own time using the following rubric during Round 1 of reviews. An application can receive up to 15 points total per panelist in each round. Average panel scores determine which applications advance to Round 2..

Round 1 Rubric - an Excellent to Outstanding score of 15 total points will include:

- Clear evidence of outstanding achievement in presenting promising and/or engaging work
- Excellent communication of creative process
- The described creative process/vision are very clearly evident in the work samples

Round 2 of Review - Regional Panel Meetings

Those applications that score high enough will move to Round 2 of reviews, which takes place at the Regional Panel Meetings. Regional Panel Meetings will occur in late November and early December, 2021. Details for the meetings will be posted on the MSAC website. Panelists use the following rubric to guide the discussion, and score each application in Round 2. An application can receive up to 15 points total per panelist in each round. Average panel scores determine which applications advance to the final round, and are recommended for a Regional Award

Round 2 Rubric - an Excellent to Outstanding score of 15 total points will include:

- The work samples provide evocative experiences and heightened sensations based on the intention.
- The work samples communicate collective meaning that goes beyond the artist's(s') perspective and experience.
- There is a strong connection between the concept statement and the work samples demonstrating contemporary perspectives (remaining open, fluid, transparent, subject to influence, and able to hold contradiction). 0

State Panel Meeting

The State Panel Meeting will take place in early January 2022. Those applicants recommended for a \$10,000 Regional Award will move forward to the State Panel Meeting, for consideration of an additional \$15,000 State Award, which is awarded to up to two artists/collaborative groups. Panelists will use the two rubrics from Round 1 and Round 2 to guide the discussion of each applicant. Panelists will make funding recommendations based on the discussion. Those with a majority of recommendations will be recommended for the State Award(s).

Panel Review Meetings Open to Public

In accordance with Maryland's Open Meetings Act, IAA panel meetings are open to the public for observation only. Artists are encouraged to attend and hear the panel's comments about applications. If you are interested in observing a panel meeting discussion, please visit www.msac.org for updated information about meeting dates, times, and locations and/or call MSAC for details.

Grant Recommendations and Approval

After the panel reviews are completed, recommendations are presented to the Council for approval, where recommendations are reviewed and final funding decisions are made. The Council's decisions are forwarded to the Secretary of Commerce for final approval.

Notification of Awards

Applicants will be notified of award decisions in writing no later than **March 1, 2022**. MSAC notifies all applicants, whether they receive an award or not.

How To Apply

All IAA applicants must submit an online application through MSAC's Smart Simple system. Applicants must create an account and login in order to access the application.

- The IAA application consists of:
 - Applicant contact information
 - Collaborator Information (for collaborative groups)
 - Creative Process Statement (100 word limit)
 - Up to 8 work samples with technical information and work sample description

SmartSimple

MSAC utilizes the cloud-based grant system SmartSimple to accept grant applications.

- Applicants are required to complete and submit their applications in its entirety by electronic means, including the use of an electronic signature, by the deadline listed in the guidelines.
- All work samples are accepted digitally as uploads within the online application in SmartSimple.
- Lost, misdirected or late applications are the sole responsibility of the applicant.
- **Applicants must meet all revision deadlines after submission, as specified in writing, or the application will be withdrawn.**

Deadline

11:59 PM EST on July 1, 2021

All 2022 IAA applications must be successfully submitted by the deadline. Applications submitted after the deadline will not be considered. No exceptions will be made to the deadline.

Work Samples

Applicants may provide up to eight work samples in whichever file type (audio, image, video, or PDF) or combination of file types they feel best showcases their work. Technical information may be provided for each work sample.

Work Sample File Requirements

All files types and sizes will be accepted. The total combined length of all audio and video files may not exceed 10 minutes per application. The total combined length of manuscripts and compositions may not exceed 20 pages per application. The following file types and sizes are preferred:

AUDIO FILES:

- File type: .MP3
- File size: 20 MB maximum for each upload
- File must be stripped of any identifying metadata

IMAGE FILES:

- File type: .JPG
- Recommended dimensions: 1240 pixels in the longest dimension
- Recommended file size: 2 MB maximum for each image

VIDEO FILES:

- File type: .MP4 or .MOV
- File size: 250MB per video file
- File must be stripped of any identifying metadata

MANUSCRIPTS and COMPOSITIONS:

- File type: .PDF
- All pages of the manuscript or composition should be compiled into a single .PDF document

ALL FILES

To help avoid errors in the online application, the names of all uploaded in the application should follow these guidelines. When naming your work sample files:

- Do not use punctuation marks, symbols or any other non-alphanumeric characters
- Do not include any accents or non-Latin letters (e.g. è, Ø, Ð, ü, ñ, etc.)

Creative Process Statement

Within the application, it is required for artists to provide a creative process/vision statement. This statement should convey to the panel information that further informs any additional processes, inspiration, intention, philosophy, evolution of style, current direction of the artist's work that is being submitted for review.

Reporting Requirements

If awarded an Independent Artist Award, the recipient must file a final report online by the end of the calendar year in which they were awarded (December 31, 2022 for the FY22 Awards). The report contains a brief summary request as well as some demographic requirements of the NEA (National Endowment for the Arts). Failure to submit reports may jeopardize current and/or future MSAC grants and may result in repayment of grant funds back to the State of Maryland. Before any funds are distributed, IAA grantees are also required to submit any outstanding reports/requirements for any other MSAC grants they have received.

Grant Funds Use: Funds are intended to encourage artistic growth and sustained practice. Grant funds may not be used to make contributions to any persons who hold, or are candidates for, elected office; to any political party, organization, or action committee; or in connection with any political campaign or referendum. Grant funds may not be used for any lobbying activities.

Contacting MSAC

If you have reviewed the available resources and need assistance with the content of your application, or have questions pertaining to the program guideline requirements, please contact:

Emily Sollenberger
Program Director, Arts Services
Visual/Media Arts
Maryland State Arts Council
emily.sollenberger@maryland.gov
410-767-6484

Laura Weiss
Program Director, Arts Services
Literary Arts, Performing Arts
Maryland State Arts Council
laura.weiss@maryland.gov
410-767-6545

If you have questions about Smart Simple or need assistance submitting your application, please contact:

Tammy Oppel
Grants Management Associate
Maryland State Arts Council
tammy.oppel@maryland.gov
410-767-8851

- Support is available 8:00 AM through 4:00 PM EST, Monday through Friday.
- *Applicants are encouraged to request assistance as early in the application process as possible.* Applicants receive assistance from MSAC staff on a first-come, first-served basis and should be aware that demand increases significantly as the deadline approaches.
- MSAC is not able to assist with the recording or editing of work sample content.
- Due to the high volume of applications, MSAC is not able to verify receipt of applications by telephone. The online SmartSimple application provides electronic notification via email of application submission. If you do not receive a confirmation email, please check your email spam folder then contact Tammy Oppel via email to request confirmation of receipt.