



COUNTY ARTS DEVELOPMENT GRANT FY2026 Guidelines

**for County Arts Agencies of Maryland
Network Partners**

**DEADLINES: January 6, 2025 for off year applicants
January 31, 2025 for on year applicants**

SUPPORT PERIOD: July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

**NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT** for the **ARTS**

arts.gov



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

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County Arts Development Program Overview¹

Purpose

County Arts Development (CAD) grants support for County Arts Agencies of Maryland in each of the 24 jurisdictions to extend the service of the Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) with the goals of providing:

- a vital connection with artists, arts organizations, and audiences throughout the State;
- encouragement of local arts activity of all disciplines in all of Maryland's diverse communities; and
- equitable funding for the arts on the local level through transparent processes that are accessible to all county constituents.

Each county arts agency is responsible for:

- Adhering to all grantmaking and reporting requirements, as communicated by MSAC.
- Making grants to local organizations for arts activities through open, transparent, accessible, and publicized grant programs.
- Supporting local independent artists through grants, programs, and/or technical assistance.
- Supporting local Arts in Education programming outside of school curricula.
- Maintaining programs that are responsive and equitably benefit all county constituents.
- Maintaining a website that publicizes the county arts agency's grants and programs with current eligibility and grant deadlines and links to MSAC's site and relevant opportunities.
- Maintaining a distribution list of local constituents.
- Sending regular communications (email, social media, and/or print, etc.) promoting county arts agency and MSAC opportunities.
- Maintaining a current profile page on MSAC's website.
- Notifying MSAC at least two months ahead of deadlines of available local grant opportunities.
- Providing MSAC with ongoing updates of local needs and concerns through scheduled reports and additional communications.
- Communicating grant noncompliance and/or concerns about organizations that receive both county arts agency and MSAC funding so MSAC can provide appropriate technical assistance.
- Arranging regular site visits for MSAC to meet with county arts agency leadership, board, and/or constituents to assess needs and share ideas and opportunities.

MSAC is responsible for:

- Providing funding, guidance, resources, and support to aid in the creation and implementation of county arts agencies' three-year plans.
- Providing tools and resources to aid the county arts agency's infusion of equity, diversity, inclusion, and access in all aspects of its work.
- Maintaining MSAC grantmaking and reporting schedules, facilitating county arts agencies' access to MSAC application and reporting materials, and providing technical support as needed.
- Soliciting professional development needs and providing professional development opportunities for the 24 county arts agencies as well as technical assistance to individual county arts agencies and their constituents as needed or requested.
- Publicizing the county arts agency grant opportunities, programs, and events.

¹ A resource to assist with understanding this document is the MSAC Glossary, which provides an overview of terms commonly used in MSAC grant guidelines, on the website, and in other published materials. Access the Glossary by [clicking here](#).

- Sharing the impact of county arts agencies' work.
- Responding to local needs and concerns communicated by county arts agencies through scheduled reports and other communications.
- Making regular site visits to each county arts agency to meet with leadership, board, and/or constituents to assess needs and share ideas and opportunities.

Grant Cycle

MSAC uses a staggered, three-year application cycle to conduct reviews of CAD applications. County arts agencies must submit an “On Year” application every three years, and “Off Year” applications the two years in between. Applications are submitted annually by all county arts agencies, but the “Off Year” is a simplified application.

On Year Application (every 3 years)

- County arts agencies submit a three-year plan that details how the county arts agency will meet constituent needs as well as MSAC CAD goals through their grant making and programs.
- Applications are reviewed by MSAC staff and a review panel.

Off Year Application (intervening 2 years)

- County arts agencies submit an application that details any changes to its three-year plan, required financial reporting, and any requests for professional development.
- Applications are reviewed by MSAC staff.

MSAC staff, panelists or councilors can recommend a county arts agency be required to submit a full application in any subsequent fiscal year for reasons including but not limited to: submission of a weak three-year plan, grant noncompliance and/or, or significant changes in budget, programming, operations, or leadership.

Funding

County Arts Development Grants are based on a funding formula. The funding formula includes two components:

- A block grant that divides 90% of the allocated budget among the counties equally.
- And a population grant that divides the remaining 10% of the allocated budget among the counties based on the percentage of the state's population.

County Arts Development Grants are available annually.

Support Period

County Arts Development program funds support activities taking place during the fiscal year (FY26) in which funds are awarded. MSAC's FY 2026 is July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026.

Grantees agree to spend or obligate all funds by **June 30, 2026**. Obligation means that awarded funds are expended, encumbered, or otherwise legally committed to be used, such that returning the unspent funds would cause the grantee legal harm.

Use of Funds

Allowable use of CAD grant funds include the following types of expenses:

- Re-granting to local organizations, artists, and schools to support arts programming or projects that benefit county residents
- Arts programming that serves county residents

- Services to artists and arts organizations working within the county
- Administrative and operating expenses of the county arts council (a maximum of 60% of annual grant funds may be used for administration and operating expenses)

Grant Funds (including re-granted funds) may not be used for:

- Activities not open to the general public
- Operating grants to organizations outside of the county
- Programming or projects outside of the county
- Non-arts programming or projects
- Projects, performances, expenses, and activities that are part of school curricula
- Capital expenses, improvements, or purchases of permanent equipment
- Accessions
- Allocations to cash reserve
- Acquisition of capital assets
- Depreciation
- Deficits
- Loan principal payments
- Contributions to endowments
- Scholarships awarded by the applicant for its own activities
- Contributions to any persons who hold, or are candidates for, elected office
- Contributions to any political party, organization, or action committee
- Activities in connection with any political campaign or referendum

Timeline

The grant timelines below are estimates and may change according to application volume, funding changes, constituent needs, staff capacity, or other factors. Learn more on MSAC's site [by clicking here](#). Subscribe to MSAC communications to be notified of any public information sessions and other program updates [by clicking here](#).

- Application Deadline
 - January 6, 2025 for Off Year Applicants
 - January 31, 2025 for On Year Applicants
- Application review
 - Panelist review period (On Year):
 - Written Application Review: February - April 2025
 - Extension Assignments (In-depth conversation): March - April 2025
 - Panel meeting (virtual): late April 2025
 - Staff review period (On Year and Off Year): February - April 2025
- Program Director finalize formula for Grant Recommendations: May 2025
- Council and Commerce Review and Approval: June 2025
- Notification: late July 2025
- Final Report Deadline: August 15, 2026

Eligibility

To be eligible for CAD funding, the county arts agency must be designated by the jurisdiction's government as the official arts agency or council of the jurisdiction. If the county arts agency is not a branch of the county or city government, it must be registered as a not-for-profit corporation in Maryland exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Application, Review, and Award

Application and Review

SmartSimple

Applications are submitted via the secure, online grants management system, SmartSimple. Log in or create a free account by [clicking here](#).

- Except in the situation of certain accessibility requests, as described later in this document, applicants are required to complete and submit applications by electronic means, including the use of an electronic signature
- Technical support for SmartSimple is available during regular office hours
- Lost, misdirected, or late applications are the sole responsibility of the applicant
- Applicants must meet any revision deadlines requested after submission, as specified in writing, or the application will be withdrawn

Application form

The grant application is a digital form available in SmartSimple and consisting of prompts requiring dropdown menu selections, fill-in answers, and external file uploads.

Application prompts are provided below, for reference.

On Year Application

- I. State the mission, vision, goals and values of the county arts agency.
- II. Plan Context
 - A. Describe the county. Include general descriptions of the county’s demographics and data points to support the description.
 - B. What are the current needs of your constituents when it comes to arts funding, programming, and services?
 - C. How did the county arts agency determine these needs?
 - D. How does the mission of the county arts agency connect to the identified constituent needs?
 - E. Has the county arts agency identified any trends that could impact its service to the county over the three-year period, and in what ways does the agency plan to address these changes?
- III. Describe the process for developing the county arts agency’s three-year plan. Who was involved in the plan’s creation, and how was community input solicited and incorporated?
- IV. Plan:
 - A. List up to five priorities of the county arts agency for the next three years.
 - B. Complete the chart below for each activity, project, or program of the county arts agency.

Activity, Project or Program (<i>identify as established, new, or planned</i>)	How will the activity, project or program address the county arts agency’s priorities identified above?	How will the activity, project, or program address identified constituent need(s)?	How will the activity, project or program address the CAD program’s goal(s)?

- C. Provide details about the county arts agency’s grantmaking process. In your response, include:
 - 1. How the county arts agency will ensure all constituents have access to grant programs;
 - 2. How the county arts agency's grant application, adjudication, and award processes will reflect a commitment to equity; and
 - 3. How will transparency be reflected in the grantmaking process?
- D. Describe how the county arts agency’s programs and grantmaking will serve all arts disciplines, diverse communities, and the entire county over the next three years. Refer to the map of the agency’s previous fiscal year’s programs and grantmaking provided by MSAC.
- E. State the county arts agency’s goals for Arts in Education and how it plans to meet those goals in school and/or community settings over the three-year period. Include what amount the county arts agency plans to allocate to Arts in Education programming or grantmaking for each fiscal year. (Note - MSAC funds may not support activities that are part of a school’s curriculum.)
- F. Estimate the use of MSAC CAD FY2025 funding based on the county arts agency’s FY2024 grant amount.

Administrative and Operating Expenses (<60% of total)	
Arts-in-Education Programming or Grantmaking	
Programs and Projects	
Other (specify)	
TOTAL	

V. Support Documents

- A. Completed Budget Worksheet
- B. Financial Statement or Audit (most recently completed FY)
- C. Grant Guidelines (including eligibility requirements, review criteria, and reporting requirements), Application(s), and Contract(s)
- D. Arts Education Funding Guidelines, Application(s), and Contract(s)
- E. Bylaws
- F. Current list of board members with contact information
- G. Biography paragraphs for key staff and current board members
- H. Enabling legislation or document naming the agency as the county arts agency or council for the jurisdiction
- I. IRS Letter of Determination (if applicable)
- J. W9

Off Year Application

I. Narrative

- A. Describe any significant changes that have occurred or changes that are anticipated for the county arts agency.
- B. Summarize the county arts agency’s proposed activities for the upcoming fiscal year.

- C. What professional development needs has the county arts agency identified in the organization or county over the past year? How can MSAC be of assistance?
- II. Estimate the use of MSAC CAD FY2025 funding based on the county arts agency's FY2024 grant amount.

Administrative and Operating Expenses (<60% of total)	
Arts-in-Education Programming or Grantmaking	
Programs and Projects	
Other (specify)	
TOTAL (FY2021)	

- III. Support Documents
 - A. Completed Budget Worksheet
 - A. Financial Statement or Audit (most recently completed FY)
 - B. Bylaws
 - C. Current list of board members with contact information
 - D. Biography paragraphs for key staff and current board members
 - E. IRS Letter of Determination (if applicable)
 - F. W9

In addition to responding to the prompts above, all applicants are required to submit a current, signed [W-9 form](#) upon application submission. The address on the W-9 form must match the address entered in SmartSimple, both on the application form and under the SmartSimple account profile. If awarded, grant funds will be made payable to the person or entity indicated on the W-9 and sent to the address listed in the form.

Financial Requirements

Financial information is an essential part of your application. All applicants must submit a signed financial statement or independent external audited financial statements* for your last completed and finalized fiscal year at the time of application submission.

NOTE -County Arts Agencies with an allowable income of \$750,000 or more are required to submit an independent external audit at the time of the application deadline.

Review Process

Staff Review

After both the "On Year" applications and "Off Year" applications are received electronically, they are reviewed by staff for completeness and adherence to CAD guidelines. Applicants will be notified if their application is incomplete and if additional information or corrections are necessary; applicants will be given a specific deadline in writing to provide any revisions and/or other necessary information. Applicants must meet all of these specified deadlines for completing/providing revisions and information or the application will be considered withdrawn. "Off Year" applications are reviewed by staff only and do not receive a panel review.

Panelist Service and Review

MSAC convenes panelists, representing a range of arts expertise statewide, to evaluate applications electronically. Panelists are selected via public application process and based on relevant experience and expertise. Opportunities to serve as panelists for various grant programs are posted throughout the year; individuals interested in panel service are encouraged to learn more and apply on MSAC's site [by clicking here](#).

The CAD Panel is engaged to review and evaluate On Year applications only. The panel will meet formally as a group and will participate in discussions regarding the application and offer recommendations. MSAC staff take panelist feedback into consideration for final funding recommendations.

After the staff and panel reviews (if applicable) are completed, recommendations are presented to the Council's Grants Committee, a committee composed of Councilors appointed by the Council Chairperson. Following this review, the Grants Committee presents the funding recommendations for each category to the full Maryland State Arts Council. The Council meets in June to review the recommendations and reach funding decisions. The Council's decisions are forwarded to the Secretary of Commerce (or their designee) for final approval.

Award

Notification

All applicants will receive notification of their grant award in late July 2025. The notification will include instructions to access a Grant Agreement Form (GAF) to review and sign electronically via SmartSimple.

The individual listed as the primary contact in the application will receive all notifications; for organizational applicants, notifications will be sent to the primary contact and any other contacts on the organization's account. Automated notifications from SmartSimple will be sent from noreply@smartsimple.com. Please adjust email notification and security settings to ensure receipt of these notifications. Check your spam folder if a notification has not arrived to your inbox.

Payment

The payment process begins when the GAF has been fully executed. The grantee will receive notification of full execution from SmartSimple. This notification will include a PDF copy of the fully executed GAF, which will also be accessible in the grantee's SmartSimple profile.

Unless otherwise notified by the Program Directors, funds are distributed in one installment– 100% after the Grant Agreement Form has been fully executed. Grantees will receive payment approximately 6 to 8 weeks after receipt of the fully executed GAF. More information on MSAC's payment processing timeline can be found by [clicking here](#).

Please note that at the discretion of the Program Director, grantees experiencing significant organizational change or transition may be required to submit additional reports with funding distributed on an adjusted schedule, after each required report is submitted and approved. For such grantees, their first installment will not be distributed until final reports from the previous FY are submitted and approved. Grantees in such situations will be notified directly by the Program Director.

Grantees are encouraged to sign up to receive payment electronically via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Those with existing state vendor profiles can sign up for EFT payments [by clicking here](#) to complete the relevant forms on the Comptroller's site. Typically, those who have previously received MSAC grants have an existing state vendor profile.

New grant recipients will receive grant funds via check made payable to the name and address indicated on the grantee's W-9. They will be able to sign up for EFT for any subsequent payments.

Payment Status

Grantees are encouraged to deposit grant payment checks immediately. If the grantee has not received payment within eight weeks of notification of a fully executed GAF and/or approval of necessary reports, the grantee should contact MSAC to inquire about payment status. The grantee is responsible for following up with MSAC staff if payment is not received during the fiscal year in which it was awarded. If the payment was lost in transit, the State of Maryland is able to re-issue payment. However, MSAC is unable to guarantee that funds will be available for re-issue after the end of the fiscal year in which a grant was awarded.

If the grantee owes any Maryland state taxes or other state liabilities, GAD may intercept grant payments and hold them until the liability is resolved. Should this be the case, GAD will send written notice of this directly to the grantee via mail. MSAC is not provided further information, as it is confidential. Grantees can find more information and discuss options with the Central Collections Unit at 410.767.1642. Additionally, information on held payments can be found by creating an account on GAD's online service center, which can be accessed at the link [here](#).

Changes in Funded Activities

If there are significant changes to the proposed activities for which a grant has been awarded, the grantee is responsible for contacting relevant staff to inform them of such changes before proceeding. Staff will help ensure that any proposed changes remain in alignment with the GAF and program guidelines.

Reporting

All grantees must file a final report in SmartSimple. The report will be added to the grantee's SmartSimple profile as soon as the GAF is fully executed.

The final report deadline for the CAD program is August 15, 2026.

The final report form collects information about the grantee and grant activities, including optional demographic information, data for the National Endowment for the Arts, summary of activities and use of grant funds, and other program-specific information and documents, as relevant.

Grant funds may not be used to offset grantees' state liabilities; as such, grantees whose grant payments were intercepted by GAD due to state liabilities, as outlined in the Payments section above, are not exempt from submitting required reports. Grantees must either return the funds to MSAC or follow through with their proposed grant activities and submit reports accordingly.

Failure to submit reports may jeopardize current or future MSAC grants and may result in the required return of grant funds. Before any funds are distributed, grantees are also required to submit any outstanding reports or address requirements for any other MSAC grants they have received.

Ineligible and Declined Applications

Applications that do not receive funding generally fall into one of two categories: ineligible or declined.

An application is marked ineligible if it is not complete or does not comply with the eligibility requirements of a particular grant program. A rating of ineligible is typically made by staff early in the review process. However, an application can be marked ineligible at any time during the review process.

An application is declined if it is eligible and reviewed according to the review criteria but did not meet the grant program's requirement for funding (e.g., minimum panel score, panel recommendation, etc.). The level of MSAC's funding does not allow for the funding of all eligible applications.

Application Feedback

Applicants may request feedback on their applications by contacting the County Arts Development Program Director.

Contact Information

MSAC staff offer technical assistance throughout the application process. This includes professional development related to grant writing and program requirements; one-on-one conversations; and tailored feedback.

For more information on the County Arts Development Program application process, contact:

- Program and application strategy assistance
 - David D. Mitchell, Program Director
 - David.Mitchell1@maryland.gov
 - 443.584.5287
- Grants logistics and technological assistance
 - Catherine Teixeira, Grants Director
 - catherine.teixeira@maryland.gov
 - 443.799.7256
 - Tammy Oppel, Grants Management Associate
 - tammy.oppel@maryland.gov
 - 410.326.5555
 - Kirk Amaral Snow, Grants Management Associate
 - kirk.amaralsnow@maryland.gov
 - 410.767.8865

MSAC Overview

Description

MSAC is an appointed body of 17 Maryland citizens, 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 nonprofit arts organizations, arts programs, and individual artists, and provides application assistance, professional development, and other resources 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 of Commerce
Steven Skerritt-Davis, Executive Director, MSAC

Staff

MSAC maintains a professional staff to administer its programs. For staff listing, visit the MSAC website by [clicking here](#).

Meetings

Council and panelist 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 panelist meetings may be obtained from the MSAC website by [clicking here](#), or by contacting MSAC at msac.commerce@maryland.gov or (410) 767-6555.

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 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

[Click here](#) to read MSAC's 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. 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

MSAC is committed to making sure all Marylanders can access its programs and services. Everyone is welcome, and all MSAC events and activities 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. See the "Grantee Requirements" section below for more information on the accessibility-related expectations of all grantees.

Accessibility Web Page

MSAC has a dedicated accessibility page available by [clicking here](#). It 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, other accessibility resources for artists and arts organizations, and Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) images.

Language Access

MSAC offers language accessibility services. 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 at msac.commerce@maryland.gov or (410) 767-6555 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.

Feedback

If constituents would like to provide general feedback about the accessibility of programs funded or produced by MSAC, contact MSAC at msac.commerce@maryland.gov or (410) 767-6555.

Grievances

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 a constituent wishes to file a grievance, see the following steps.

- For questions or discussion prior to filing a grievance, contact MSAC at msac.commerce@maryland.gov or (410) 767-6555
- To file a formal grievance, contact Dan Leonard, Director of EEO & Fair Practices and ADA Coordinator for the Department of Commerce, at 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
- For situations in which a constituent feels a grievance was not handled appropriately by the sponsoring organization, or if a response from the organization has not been provided within 30 days, file a formal grievance by contacting MSAC at msac.commerce@maryland.gov or (410) 767-6555

MSAC will work with constituents to provide assistance as appropriate.

Grantmaking

Review Panels

To assist MSAC in its decision-making, Maryland residents with expertise in the arts are selected to serve on a variety of grant application review panels. The function of panels is to evaluate applications from organizations and individuals. Each year, MSAC publishes several open calls, and approximately 150 individuals serve as panelists for MSAC grant programs, including Grants for Organizations, Arts in Education, Independent Artist Awards, Public Art Across Maryland, Creativity Grants, Presenting and Touring, Professional Development Opportunity, Folklife Network, Folklife Apprenticeships, Heritage Awards, Special Requests, Arts Capital, and County Arts Development. In addition, MSAC occasionally releases calls for residents to serve as program editors evaluating grantmaking policies and procedures, and jurors or judges for various arts activities supported by MSAC. Anyone wishing to serve is encouraged to [click here](#) for detailed information and links to application forms for any open calls.

Constituents may also get involved with MSAC by creating a profile on the Arts Directory, an online resource for raising the profile of Maryland artists and arts organizations, by [clicking here](#); or by attending regularly scheduled virtual and in-person professional development sessions by [clicking here](#).

Appeals

MSAC strives to ensure fair and equitable distribution of grant monies based on stated criteria. Therefore, dissatisfaction with the denial or amount of an award is not sufficient reason for an appeal. However, an application 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 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 notification; the letter should (1) request a reconsideration of the decision, (2) state the grounds for the request, and (3) certify that the applicant first discussed the problem with the program director and provide the date and time the discussion occurred.

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

Grantee requirements

All MSAC grantees 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
- Comply with Title IX, Section 1681 et seq. of the Education Amendments of 1972, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Section 6101-6107, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex or age
- Maintain complete and accurate records of all activities connected with the grant
- Give credit to MSAC in accordance with published recognition guidelines, available by [clicking here](#), whenever and wherever credit is being given
- Notify the appropriate MSAC staff person in writing if a significant change is made in any MSAC-funded program or project

In addition to the requirements above, all MSAC 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:

- Comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991, as amended
- Prohibit discrimination on the basis of: (a) political or religious opinion or affiliation, marital 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
- Designate an Accessibility Point of Contact to ensure compliance, receive accommodation requests, and document grievances, as well as publish direct contact information for the Point of Contact to the public

- Create and publicly share a grievance procedure to allow stakeholders to address any events or programs that are inaccessible
- Upon request, submit documentation of operations and compliance with the above

Disclosure of personal information

Certain personal information requested by the Department of Commerce, MSAC's parent agency, is necessary in determining eligibility for grants. Failure to disclose this information may result in the denial of one or all benefits or services, including funding, provided by MSAC. 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 may be shared with state, federal, and local governments if legally required.