



---

## Public Art Across Maryland Conservation Grant FY 2026 Guidelines

**DEADLINE:** Thursday, December 12, 2025

**SUPPORT PERIOD:**

- Planning Grants: March 2026- March 2027
- Project Grants: March 2026- September 2027

---

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

---

[arts.gov](http://arts.gov)



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](mailto: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 on the MSAC website: [www.msac.org](http://www.msac.org).

# Table of Contents

<b>Program Overview.....</b>	<b>3</b>
Purpose.....	3
Grant Cycle.....	3
Funding.....	3
Support Period.....	3
Use of Funds.....	3
Timeline.....	4
Eligibility.....	4
<b>Application, Review, and Award.....</b>	<b>4</b>
Application and Review.....	5
SmartSimple.....	5
Panelist service.....	5
Application form and review criteria.....	5
Award.....	5
Notification.....	5
Disbursement.....	6
Disbursement Status.....	6
Changes in Funded Activities.....	6
Reporting.....	6
Ineligible and Declined Applications.....	7
Application Feedback.....	7
<b>Contact Information.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>MSAC Overview.....</b>	<b>8</b>
Description.....	8
Authority.....	8
Staff.....	8
Meetings.....	8
Mission and Goals.....	8
Equity and Justice Statement.....	9
Accessibility.....	9
Accessibility Web Page.....	9
Language Access.....	9
Feedback.....	10
Grievances.....	10
Grantmaking.....	10
Appeals.....	11
Grantee requirements.....	11
Disclosure of personal information.....	12

# Program Overview

## Purpose

The purpose of the Public Art Across Maryland - Conservation grant is to support organizations in the conservation, preservation, and relocation of public artworks in Maryland.

The Public Art Across Maryland Conservation grant provides support for conservation planning efforts, including collection inventories, digitization of records and databases, community outreach, research, and assessments, as well as the implementation of conservation and relocation efforts that maintain or improve public access to artworks.

MSAC defines Public Art<sup>1</sup> as artwork that is created intentionally for a place and space in the public realm, regardless of whether it is situated on public or private property. Located indoors or outdoors, public art is available to everyone at no cost and is accessible to all. Public art can include: expressions of community values or enhancements to an environment and can raise awareness of an unseen narrative.

Public art supported by MSAC grants must have a physical presence and a lasting impact on the place and community where it is installed.

## Grant Cycle

### Funding

Public Art Across Maryland- Conservation offers two types of grant support:

- Planning grants are up to \$10,000
- Project Implementation grants are up to \$30,000

Public Art Across Maryland- Conservation grants are available annually.

Grantees of the Public Art Across Maryland- Conservation receive funding in one payment (100% of award amount). Please note that if approved for funding, 100% of the requested amount will be funded (this program does not offer a portion/percentage of the requested amount).

### Support Period

If awarded, grantees agree to spend or obligate all funds by the final report due dates indicated below:

For Planning Grants: March 30, 2027

For Project Implementation Grants: September 30, 2027

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

Grant funds may be used for:

**Planning** grants support collection management and inventory work, research, community engagement, technical assessments, and other tasks necessary in preparing a conservation project proposal.

The planning grant can support costs associated with:

---

<sup>1</sup> 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.

- Community engagement and organizing activities( may include: accessibility accommodations, public meetings, community education or information campaigns, child care, or refreshments to encourage public participation)
- Inventory work
- Digitizing records and or creation of a collection management database
- Purchase or lease of collection management software.
- Consultant or specialized service fees for a public art consultant, professional conservator, artist fees, structural engineer, material specialists, local historian, or preservationist.
- Facility or equipment rentals for meetings and gatherings
- Licensing fees for specialized software or online services ( may include software for virtual meetings, application & portfolio review, and digital design)
- Printing of flyers, maps, and photographs that are helpful in the planning process.
- Organization administration/project management fee (cannot exceed 15% of the total grant request)

**Project Implementation** supports the work of the conservation team, including the original artist (if available), in taking a project from the proposal stage through to the successful conservation or relocation of the public artwork. The project implementation grant can support costs associated with:

- Artist fees for the original artist to consult on the conservation effort.
- Relocation of a public artwork within, or to, the state of Maryland in a way that preserves or increases public access to the artwork and contributes to its long-term preservation (it is intended that any relocated artwork include a maintenance or conservation treatment as part of relocation).
- Conservation and maintenance treatments that will contribute to the long-term sustainability, public access and ability to appreciate an artwork. This includes but is not limited to:
  - Cleaning, waxing, re-coating, and painting conducted by a professional service provider or contractor.
  - Replacement, refabrication, or rebuilding of components to restore the work and improve structural stability to the artwork, frame, plinth, pedestal, base or foundation that is integral to the safety and public accessibility of the artwork.
- Landscape site improvements such as drainage, plant pruning, maintenance, and/or replacement.
- Lighting and electrical work that contributes to public accessibility by increasing visibility and safety, or improves energy efficiency of outdated lighting and other digital lighting controllers/components
- Conservation of existing or the creation of new identification and interpretive signage, including writers, designers, fabricators, or installers.
- Organization administration/project management fee (cannot exceed 15% of the total grant request)

Grant funds may not be used for:

- Artworks that do not meet MSAC's definition of *Public Art* (see definition under Purpose above)
- Commercial Signage<sup>2</sup> (signs involving business names and/or products)
- Purchase, lease, or exhibition of artwork or editions
- Artwork that is not publicly accessible
- Site amenities that are pre-manufactured "off the shelf" commercial products (not artist-manufactured, not designed for the site or location)
- Ongoing operational expenses of the lead applicant or its partners beyond permitted project management costs and administrative costs.
- Acquisition of capital assets
- Capital improvements or purchases of permanent equipment not related to the public artwork
- Activities for the exclusive benefit of an organization's members

---

<sup>2</sup> Local organizations or businesses interested in commissioning custom signage from an artist may want to consider looking for "facade improvement" grants or funding which is sometimes available through local and regional economic and community development organizations.

- 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
- Lobbying activities
- Expenses for activities or projects already completed at the time of grant application
- Expenses for which the applicant has been awarded funds through another MSAC grant program. (i.e., an applicant may only be awarded MSAC funds once for any individual project expense; contact MSAC staff with questions)
- Institutional or administrative indirect costs in excess of 15 percent of the total grant amount

## Timeline

The grant timelines below are estimates and may change according to application volume, funding changes, constituent needs, staff capacity, or other factors. Subscribe to MSAC communications to be notified of any public information sessions and other program updates by completing [the signup form on our webpage](#).

- Applications
  - Publication: September 83, 2025
  - Deadline: December 12, 2025
- Application review
  - Independent Panel Review: January 5 to February 13, 2026
  - Public Panel Meetings: February 24-27, 2026 (exact dates TBD and posted on the [Meeting Notices](#) page of MSAC's website)
- Notification
  - Early March 2026
- Reports
  - For Planning grants: March 30, 2027.
  - For Project Implementation grants: September 30, 2027.

## Eligibility

Eligible applicants must meet the requirements listed below

Arts organizations or arts programs may apply for either **Planning or Project Implementation** grants, and must be one of the following:

- Nonprofit organization (i.e., an organization with an IRS-designated 501(c)3 status)
- Nonprofit, Maryland-based fiscal sponsor organization applying on behalf of a Maryland-based group, project, or artist with whom it has a Model A fiscal sponsorship agreement in place (i.e., comprehensive sponsorship, in which the assets, liabilities, and exempt activities collectively referred to as "the project" are housed within the fiscal sponsor)
- Unit of government (e.g., town, city, county, state, etc., with the capacity to undertake an arts program)
- College or university (i.e., an established higher education institution in Maryland)
- School (i.e., a public or private school serving students in grades pre-Kindergarten through 12)

Independent artists interested in pursuing a Public Art Across Maryland- Conservation Grant should partner with a local organization or contact Program Staff for recommendations on programs they could partner with in preparing an application.

**Applicants may only submit one PAAM grant application per fiscal year.**

**Grantees receiving Project Grants (New Artworks or Conservation) in the prior fiscal year (FY25) are not eligible to apply for any PAAM Project Grant in the subsequent fiscal year (FY26).**

- The following organizations listed under the FY25 Conservation Project grants at the link [here](#) and under

the FY25 Conservation Project grants at the link [here](#) are ineligible to apply for any PAAM Project grant in FY26.

#### Public Artwork Eligibility:

- Planning efforts and Projects funded through the Public Art Across Maryland grant program must fit within MSAC's definition of Public Art as described above under "Purpose" and included in the [MSAC glossary](#).
- Artworks supported through Public Art Across Maryland grants should be either an architectural enhancement of artistic significance or an installation of artwork. Eligible mediums include, but are not limited to: murals, tile mosaics, paintings, or sculptures. Functional amenities such as benches, bike racks, creative way-finding, fences, screens, gateways, light-based works, shading and trellises, etc.. are also eligible as long as they meet MSAC's definition of public art and are manufactured by an artist or artisan.
- All conservation efforts and projects supported through Public Art Across Maryland grants are expected to comply with all local regulations, permit procedures, and permitting requirements as mandated by the local jurisdiction or property owner where the work will be installed. [Applicants and grantees are required to conduct their own research](#) to fully understand and meet the requirements for installing and/or conserving artwork, whether temporary or permanent, at the specified location.

The eligibility guidelines listed above provide an overview only. In some cases, MSAC staff might make eligibility determinations addressing situations not described here but in support of the mission of the agency and the Department of Commerce.

## 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 on the [SmartSimple registration page](#).

- Applicants are required to complete and submit applications by electronic means, including the use of an electronic signature. To make an accessibility request for an alternative submission method, please contact the program director listed in the Contact Information section.
- Technical support for SmartSimple is available. See contact information section.
- Applicants must meet any revision deadlines requested after submission, as specified in writing, or the application will be considered withdrawn
- By submitting an application to MSAC, whether via electronic means or otherwise, applicant agrees to allow MSAC to retain records per state and federal document retention laws and policies. Applicant is also agreeing to the Terms and Privacy Policy of SmartSimple as applicable to MSAC..

#### Panelist service

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 [Ways to Get Involved](#) webpage.

## Application form and review criteria

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 evaluation is based on review criteria that correspond with the prompts in the application form. The review criteria provide guidance on rating an applicant's response to a prompt.

Application prompts and review criteria are provided below, for reference.

Conservation Planning Grant Questions	
Application prompt	Review criteria
<b>1. Describe the artwork(s) to be conserved, the proposed planning process, and intended goals, including:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Why the artwork is important to the collection it is a part of and the community where it is located</li><li>• Description of the community that will be impacted by the proposed public artwork conservation, including the primary stakeholders who will be involved in and affected by this project</li><li>• Any additional information about the historical and/or cultural relevance of the artwork</li></ul>	<b>Excellent to Outstanding - 30 Points</b>  Clear, specific, and detailed description of the artwork, planning process, and community, demonstrating strong importance to the collection and community with strong evidence of community partner involvement.
<b>2. Conservation Planning Schedule</b> In SmartSimple fill out the schedule chart with dates for the planning process outlined in Question 1. Activities cannot start until grant status notification mid-March, 2025.	<b>Excellent to Outstanding - 15 Points</b> A clear, specific, and realistic planning schedule including dates and activities/tasks in strong alignment with the planning process outlined in Question 1.
<b>3. Conservation Planning Budget</b> In SmartSimple, fill out the budget chart and list budget expenses and income applicable to the planning process outlined in Question 1.	<b>Excellent to Outstanding - 15 Points</b> A clear, specific, and realistic planning of expenses and income in strong alignment with the planning process outlined in Question 1.

Conservation Project Implementation Grant Questions	
Application prompt	Review criteria
<b>1. Describe the artwork(s) to be conserved and intended goals, including:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Why the artwork is important to the</li></ul>	<b>Excellent to Outstanding - 35 Points</b>  Clear, specific, and detailed description of the artwork and community, demonstrating strong importance to

<p>collection it is a part of and the community where it is located</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Description of the community that will be impacted by the proposed artwork conservation, including the primary stakeholders who will be involved in and/or affected by this project</li> <li>• Any additional info about the historical and/or cultural relevance of the artwork</li> </ul>	<p>the collection and community with strong evidence of community partner involvement</p>
<p><b>2. Describe the proposed conservation work to be performed and the outcomes of the work</b></p> <p>Description can include a narrative from the Conservator's proposed Scope of Work.</p>	<p><b>Excellent to Outstanding - 20 Points</b></p> <p>Clear, specific, and detailed description of the proposed conservation work to be performed and the outcomes of the work.</p>
<p><b>3. Provide a roster with the names of the conservation team members and a brief narrative of relevant education and experience.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artist, or Artist's representative (member of artist's estate or closest living relative, or gallery rep). <i>If Artist or representative cannot be identified or included please describe the reason why, and/or the best efforts taken by the applicant.</i></li> <li>• Professional Conservator(s)</li> <li>• Owner of artwork or owner's rep (i.e. local public art administrator, collection manager, applicant organization's property attorney, etc.)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Excellent to Outstanding - 15 Points</b></p> <p>Clear, specific, and detailed description of the conservation team and their education/experience communicates the strong feasibility of completing the project.</p>
<p><b>4. Conservation Project Schedule</b></p> <p>In SmartSimple, fill out the schedule template. Provide details of how the work will be staged and implemented in alignment with Question 2. Activities cannot start until grant status notification, in mid-March 2025.</p>	<p><b>Excellent to Outstanding - 15 Points</b></p> <p>Clear, specific, and realistic schedule of dates and activities that demonstrate strong project feasibility and align with Question 2 and Attachment B.</p>
<p><b>5. Conservation Project Budget</b></p> <p>In SmartSimple, fill out the budget template detailing project expenses and income. Expenses may include: Administrative fees; Transportation (personnel or materials); Artwork and Conservation Materials; Equipment &amp; Site Preparation; Installation Costs; Conservator, Artist, contractor, or consultant fees; Plaque/signage, Dedication event costs, Marketing and Communications; Other (applicants must list) that align with Question 2 and Attachment B.</p>	<p><b>Excellent to Outstanding - 15 Points</b></p> <p>Clear, specific, and realistic project expenses and income that demonstrate strong project feasibility and align with Question 2 and Attachment B.</p>



Attachments Required	
<p>A. Upload one (1) PDF file with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A map of the artwork location (can be a Google Map)</li> </ul> <p>B. Upload one (1) PDF file with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Photos of the artwork to be conserved, including an overall perspective of the artwork as well as detailed close-ups of critical areas for conservation focus. (May include original installation documentation and/or current photos to help demonstrate conservation needs and/or what the work may look like after conservation treatment).</li> <li>• If applicable, include plans, drawings, renderings or other specifications that illustrate proposed public art conservation project.</li> </ul> <p>C. Letter of Permission from site owner and/or artwork overseer/owner citing that the applicant has permission to conserve and/or relocate the artwork.</p>	

The complete scoring rubric can be found on the program website [here](#).

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.

## Award

### Notification

After application review, applicants will be notified of their status as soon as possible. If the application is approved, the applicant will receive 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 organizations, 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](mailto:noreply@smartsimple.com). Please adjust email notification and security settings to ensure receipt of these notifications. Check your spam folder if an application submission confirmation notification has not arrived to your inbox.

### Disbursement

The grant funds are provided in a disbursement, which is a distribution from a dedicated fund for the specific purposes outlined in your application. The disbursement process begins when the GAF is 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.

The grantee will receive the grant disbursement approximately six to eight weeks from the date of notification of the fully executed GAF. More information on MSAC's disbursement processing timeline can be found on the [Payment Process](#) web page.

MSAC grants are generally considered taxable income. Disbursements are issued directly by the State of Maryland, not by MSAC, and no Social Security, state, or federal income taxes are withheld. Individuals receiving grant awards of more than \$600 will receive, via mail, a 1099 form from the State of Maryland. This form will arrive after the end of the calendar year in which the grant was paid. To request or access your 1099 electronically, register and log in on the General Accounting Division (GAD) [Online Service Center site](#). Specific questions regarding the taxability of your award should be directed to the IRS, the Office of the Maryland Comptroller, or your tax advisor.

Grantees are encouraged to sign up to receive disbursement electronically via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Those with existing state vendor profiles can sign up for EFT disbursements by complete the relevant forms on the [Comptroller's EFT for Vendors 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 disbursements.

### **Disbursement Status**

Grantees are encouraged to deposit grant checks immediately. If the grantee has not received grant funds within eight weeks of notification of a fully executed GAF, the grantee should contact MSAC to inquire about disbursement status. The grantee is responsible for following up with MSAC staff if disbursement is not received during the fiscal year in which it was awarded. If the disbursement was lost in transit, the State of Maryland is able to re-issue disbursement. 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 disbursements 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 disbursements can be found by creating an account on [GAD's Online Service Center](#) site.

### **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; any proposed changes must be shared and approved in writing before proceeding. Staff will help ensure that any proposed changes remain in alignment with the program guidelines, however there is no guarantee that proposed changes will be approved. Any approved changes that result in timeline extensions that affect the final report deadline will be reflected in SmartSimple.

### **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 Public Art Across Maryland Conservation Planning grants is March 30, 2027.

The final report deadline for Public Art Across Maryland Conservation Project Implementation grants is September 30, 2027.

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 disbursements were intercepted by GAD due to state liabilities, as outlined in the Disbursements 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 MSAC grants, eligibility for 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 satisfy obligations 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. An application can be marked ineligible at any time during the review process.

After an application is considered eligible, it may be declined for several reasons. An application may be declined due to funding allocation limitations at the time, or for the following reasons:

- Required information is incomplete or insufficient to make an award determination
- There are material inconsistencies between the application and the organization's actual operations
- There are significant operational, financial, or other circumstances that reasonably suggest the applicant is, or may become, unable to use the grant funds in alignment with the grant guidelines and agreement.

### **Application Feedback**

Applicants may request feedback on their applications—whether ineligible or declined for funding—by submitting a feedback request form. A link to this form will be provided in grant notification emails.

## **Contact Information**

MSAC staff offer technical assistance when feasible 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 Public Art Across Maryland grant application process, contact:

- Program and application strategy assistance
  - C. Ryan Patterson, Program Director, Public Art

- Ryan.Patterson1@Maryland.gov
  - 443-721-3085
- Grants logistics and technological assistance
  - Catherine Teixeira, Grants Director
    - [catherine.teixeira@maryland.gov](mailto:catherine.teixeira@maryland.gov)
    - (443) 799-7256
  - Tammy Oppel, Grants Management Associate
    - [tammy.oppel@maryland.gov](mailto:tammy.oppel@maryland.gov)
    - (410) 326-5555
  - Kirk Amaral Snow, Grants Management Associate
    - [kirk.amaralsnow@maryland.gov](mailto: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  
Harry Coker, Jr., Secretary of Commerce  
Steven Skerritt-Davis, Executive Director, MSAC

## Staff

MSAC maintains professional staff to administer its programs. For staff listing, visit the [MSAC staff page](#).

## 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 on the [Meeting Notices page](#), or by contacting MSAC at [msac.commerce@maryland.gov](mailto: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 pillars and goals:

1. Access: Bolster access to arts experiences and resources
2. Awareness: Amplify the stories of Maryland's arts sector and the value of public support
3. Connection: Foster networks within and beyond the arts sector
4. Equity: Cultivate a thriving arts ecosystem centered in equity
5. Leadership: Commit to a culture of care and innovation

Read [MSAC's full strategic plan](#) to 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, disability, class, language, and/or ability.

The driving goals of MSAC's grant 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 on our website. 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.

En Español/Spanish: MSAC pone a disposición servicios de traducción y accesibilidad de idiomas. Contacte [msac.commerce@maryland.gov](mailto: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](mailto:msac.commerce@maryland.gov) 了解更多信息。

한국어/Korean: MSAC 는 한국어 지원을 돕고 있습니다. 자세한 문의사항은 [msac.commerce@maryland.gov](mailto:msac.commerce@maryland.gov) 로 연락 주시기 바랍니다.

For all other languages, please contact MSAC at [msac.commerce@maryland.gov](mailto:msac.commerce@maryland.gov) for more information.

## 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](mailto: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](mailto:msac.commerce@maryland.gov) or (410) 767-6555
- To file a formal grievance, contact Elaine McNeil, Director of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Fair Practices for the Department of Commerce, at [elaine.mcneil2@maryland.gov](mailto:elaine.mcneil2@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](mailto: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, Capacity Building, 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 visit MSAC's [Ways to Get Involved page](#) 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; or by attending regularly scheduled virtual and in-person professional development sessions posted on [MSAC's Eventbrite page](#).

## 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
- Comply with the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Section 6101-6107
- Comply with relevant State and federal laws
- Maintain complete and accurate records of all activities connected with the grant
- Give credit to MSAC in accordance with published [recognition guidelines](#), 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; or (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 MSAC's parent agency, 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 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.