



America250 Public Art Grant Guidelines

DEADLINE: December 19, 2025

SUPPORT PERIOD:

- **February 2, 2026 - September 1, 2026**

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

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



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.

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Program Overview

Purpose

The purpose of the America250 Public Art Grant is to provide financial support to fully developed and ready-to-implement, public art initiatives that celebrate America's semiquincentennial in Maryland.

The America250 Public Art Grant is a one-time grant to support local public art initiatives in Maryland aligned with America250 celebrations. America250 is the national initiative to celebrate and commemorate the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, marking America's Semiquincentennial; more information can be found on the [America250 website](#). This one-time grant is made possible through funds provided by the National Endowment for the Arts (the "NEA") for the purpose of promoting America250.

Funds will be awarded to small or mid-sized organizations with annual operating budgets less than 10 million dollars within Maryland for projects honoring the semiquincentennial anniversary. Local public art initiatives applying for America250 Public Art Grant funding must meet MSAC's definition of Public Art¹, and align with at least one of the following goals drawn from the [America250 mission and vision statement](#):

- Inspire Americans to reflect on our past, strengthen our love of country, and renew our commitment to the ideals of democracy
- Foster shared experiences that spark imagination, showcase the rich tapestry of our American Stories, and inspire service in the community
- Honor the enduring strength and celebrate the resilience of the United States

Eligible public art initiatives may include the conservation and promotion of existing works or the creation and installation of new works within the state of Maryland.

The Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) reserves the right to revise these guidelines, including making policy/procedure updates and adjusting the timeline, as appropriate, to include updated, new, or clarifying information.

Grant Cycle

Funding

This one-time funding opportunity is made possible by the National Endowment for the Arts as part of the national America250 celebration. A total of \$25,000 in grant funds will be available. The number of grants and grant award amounts will be determined by MSAC staff.

Grant recipients will be subject to flow-down requirements from the National Endowment for the Arts, some of which are outlined in Appendix A.

Support Period

The America250 Public Art Grant supports public art initiative(s) that will be completed, installed (if applicable), and accessible to the public by June 30, 2026. All America250 Public Art Grant funds must be spent by June 30, 2026.

Use of Funds

America250 Public Art Grant funding must support a fully developed and ready-to-implement public art project aligned with America250 goals. Awarded funding may be used for:

- Administrative fees incurred by the grantee (up to 15% of total request)
- Artist fees and labor for Maryland-based artists and fabricators

¹ MSAC's definition of Public Art can be found in the [MSAC Glossary webpage](#).

- Materials (artwork, base, lighting, landscaping)
- Contracted services and equipment rental²
- Studio or space rental to fabricate and assemble the artwork
- Signage or plaques to identify the artwork³
- Dedication event expenses

Grant funds may not be used for:

- Artworks that do not meet MSAC's definition of *Public Art* (see definition under Purpose above)
- Artwork planned and produced outside of Maryland.
- Site amenities that are "off the shelf" commercial products (not artist-manufactured, not designed for the site or location)
- Commercial Signage (signs involving business names and/or products)
- Purchase, lease, or exhibition of pre-existing artworks or editions.
- 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
- 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 indirect costs in excess of 15 percent of the total grant amount
- Sub-awarding grants to other entities or individuals
- Cash reserves and endowments
- Costs to bring a project into compliance with federal award requirements
- Compensation to foreign nationals, including travel to or from foreign countries, when those expenditures are not in compliance with regulations issued by the [U.S. Treasury Department Office of Foreign Assets Control](#)
- Gifts and prizes, including cash prizes as well as other items with monetary value (e.g., electronic devices, gift certificates)
- The purchase of vehicles such as cars, vans, buses, trucks, and sport utility vehicles
- Visa costs paid to the U.S. Government (P.L. 109-54, Title III General Provisions, Sec. 406)
 - Costs associated with preparing material for submission for a visa are allowable.

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: November 24, 2025
 - Deadline: December 19, 2025 at 11:59pm
- Application review

² Note Davis-Bacon and Related Acts (DBRA) requirements described in Appendix A.

³ Please consult [Recognizing MSAC Grants](#) and share designs with Program Staff before finalizing plaque design for projects that received MSAC support.

- Internal Panel Review: January 2, 2026 -January 16, 2026
- Notification
 - By January 30, 2026
- Progress check-in (two progress check-ins are required. Exact dates will be scheduled with grantee):
 - March 2026
 - May 2026
- Reports
 - The final report deadline for America250 Public Art Grant is September 1, 2026.
Please note that due to the nature of this funding, project extensions or final report extensions will not be feasible.

Federal Requirements

As this Grant is made possible through funds provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, grantees must comply with federal grant laws, regulations and guidelines that are applicable to all federal awards. These include requirements that prohibit discrimination, ensure accessibility of all facilities and programs funded with federal monies, provide for the protection of environmental and historic resources, compliance with certain federal procurement requirements, and more. For transparency and awareness, Grantee is advised to review **Appendix A** which outlines some of the key terms that MSAC is subject to under the NEA grant and will require a Grantee of the America250 Public Art Grant to comply with.

Eligibility

Eligible applicants must be Maryland-based and one of the following:

- Nonprofit organization (i.e., an organization with an IRS-designated 501(c)3 status)
- Unit of State or local government
- College or university (i.e., an established higher education institution in Maryland)

Additionally, all applicants must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) obtained from [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov).

Applicants are encouraged to start the process of obtaining a UEI as soon as possible, as it can take several days to receive one. For more information and guidance, visit the [Quick Start Guide](#) and/or [video tutorial](#).

Note: Eligible organizations may apply for both the America250 Public Art Grant and Public Art Across Maryland grants. Separate grant applications must be submitted to each program in order to be considered for a grant award. Receiving a grant award from the America250 Public Art Grant will not prevent an organization from receiving an FY26 Public Art Across Maryland grant award. Grantees receiving funding from both programs will be contacted separately to ensure that grant funds cover distinct, non-overlapping project expenses and to prevent the duplication of funding for any single expense.

Public Artwork Eligibility:

Projects funded by MSAC through the America250 Public Art Grant must:

- Be eligible public art initiatives may include the conservation and promotion of existing works or the creation and installation of new works within the state of Maryland. Eligible artworks must:
 - 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.
 - Fit within MSAC's definition of Public Art as described in the [MSAC glossary](#).
- Be located in Maryland and be the product of an artist, artisan, studio, or team based in the state of Maryland.
- Align with the intent of America250 funding, as described in the "Purpose" section above
- 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 artwork, whether temporary or permanent, at the specified location.

- Be fully developed and ready for immediate implementation. The artwork concept is finalized; all required permits and site permissions have been acquired; and the project is entering the initial stages of implementation (e.g., procurement or fabrication commencement) with the ability to complete and fully install by June 30, 2026.

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 program's goals and mission of the agency and the Department of Commerce.

Application, Review, and Award

Application and Review

SmartSimple

Applications must be submitted via the secure, online grants management system, SmartSimple. Log in or create a free account on the MSAC [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 will also be agreeing to the Terms and Privacy Policy of SmartSimple as applicable to MSAC.

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.

Applications to the America250 Public Art Grant will be reviewed by a team of MSAC staff and a representative from the Maryland250 Commission. Application evaluation is based on the review criteria required by the National Endowment for the Arts, including a “review of risk” for an applicant's ability to comply with all federal reporting requirements.

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

America250 Grant Application Questions

Application prompt

1. Describe how your project aligns with the intent of America250 funding to:

- Inspire Americans to reflect on our past, strengthen our love of country, and renew our commitment to the ideals of democracy.

- Foster shared experiences that spark imagination, showcase the rich tapestry of our American Stories, and inspire service in the community.
- Honor the enduring strength and celebrate the resilience of the United States.

2. Provide a brief, three-sentence summary of your local public art project, including how the funds will be used and how the project aligns with the America250 goal(s) listed above.

Template:

[organization], is applying for the America250 Public Art Grant to support *[primary activity or outcome]*. It will be located at *[location of artwork]* and visible to *[public audience]*. This new public artwork will align with America250 by *[reference America250 goals]*.

Example:

The Chesapeake Preservation Commission is applying for the America250 Public Art Grant to support a free-standing sculpture dedicated to Maryland's veterans. It will be located at Bayside Park and visible to all who use the park for recreational and community activities, and will serve as a site for local commemorations and remembrance services. This new public artwork will align with America250 by inspiring Americans to reflect on our past and honor the enduring strength of the United States.

3. Public Art Project Overview

Provide a detailed description of the proposed public art project. Your answer should focus on a description of the artwork, the lead artist, and what the final outcome of the project will be. Below are some prompts to help guide your answer.

- Artwork Concept:
 - Is the work responding to a particular narrative, theme or point of inspiration?
 - How was the site selected? Is the site important to the design of the artwork?
 - What is the intended duration for the artwork to be installed?
- Artistic Process:
 - Who is the lead artist and how were they identified or selected?
 - Who will fabricate and install the artwork?
 - What materials were used?
 - How will the work be transported to the location and installed? What kinds of permissions or permits were required for the location? Has the property owner already agreed?
- Additional key stakeholders in the project?
 - Please describe any additional key members of the project team or community who will be instrumental in ensuring the project's success.

4. Local Impact

- Describe where the project will be located.
 - What are the defining characteristics of the neighborhood or community?
 - Who is the intended audience for the public artwork?
 - Who will be involved in, or affected by, this project in the short and long term?
- Does this public art project tie into other local America250 or Maryland 250 celebrations? If so, how?
- Are there any related activities or public programs that will take place as a result of this artwork's installation? (This could include a dedication event, but also any additional programming provided by the organization or local partners that relates to the installation of the artwork).
- List any additional programming or community engagement activities that reviewers should be aware of in the context of the proposed artwork.

5. Prior Experience & Artistic Merit

- Who is the lead artist affiliated with this project?
- Describe the prior experience in successful public art, or comparable built projects that demonstrate the experience of the lead artist and any significant partners or collaborators on this project.
- Describe the organization's (and any additional partners') ability to manage and implement the public art project described in this application.

6. Project Timeline

- Use the schedule template to describe the timeline for implementing your public art project. Include all of the significant steps that are necessary to complete the project and have it fully installed and publicly accessible by June 30, 2026. Include key dates for project planning, public engagement, design, approvals, material acquisition, fabrication.

Note: The America250 Public Art Grant is only available to support projects that will be fully completed and accessible to the public by June 30, 2026. The timeline should demonstrate that your project is far enough along in the planning and development process that work is either already underway or can begin as soon as funding is secured.

7. Budget

- Indicate the grant amount requested for your public art project (requests can be up to \$25,000)
- Use the budget template to describe a clear list of all projected expenses to implement the proposed project. List income sources that will support this project.
- Indicate which expenses the America250 Public Art Grant funding will be used to cover.
- If a partial award is made (less than the full amount requested), will the project be able to proceed with implementation? How will funds be prioritized to achieve the most critical outcomes?

Note: Additional project-specific categories may be added as necessary. All applications are expected to compensate all artists and artisans involved fairly, for their time and labor. Applications that do not pay artists or count the sum of the artists time as donated or in-kind will not be considered eligible.

Required Attachments:

Each attachment below should be saved as a single combined PDF file, and labeled individually in this format before upload "[grant id#_Attachment A]" (e.g., "2028-0344_Attachment A")

Attachment A: Public Artwork Proposal

This attachment should include the following:

- a. Map(s) showing the geographic location of the artwork (the location can be marked on an aerial or satellite view Google map, or other forms of maps providing context for the location)
- b. Photos and/or drawings or plans that communicate the context and relevant details of the existing site or location where the artwork will be installed
- c. Drawings, renderings, collages, plans, or diagrams, that visually communicate the proposed artwork as designed by the artist, and how it will be installed. Text may be used to label or explain details in the drawings, such as: materials, colors/finishes, artwork or site dimensions and scale, etc,
- d. Any further documentation, such as photos or graphics that describe the community/public engagement, the artist's design process, or other relevant visuals to support your narrative responses in the application.

Attachment B: Prior Work Samples

This attachment should include the following:

- e. Images of prior artwork completed by the lead artist (s). Artwork samples should include at least 5 prior works by the artist. It is not required that prior work samples include public art

- projects or the medium the artist is proposing to work in.
- f. Images of any relevant prior projects completed by the lead applicant or key stakeholders that are relevant to the proposed project or final artwork.

Attachment C: Letter(s) of Permission

This attachment should include letters of support or acknowledgement from the property owner, or the owner's agent, that legal permission or "right-of-entry" will be granted to the applicant and/or artist to install the proposed artwork if funding is awarded.

Note: Press releases and announcements are not accepted as a Letter of Permission. Applicants and property owners are expected to abide by all state and local rules, regulations, and design guidelines applicable to the location where the artwork is to be installed. Please check with your local department of planning or permitting office to ensure you are working with the right department or agency to review and approve your public art project.

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.

Review Criteria

1. The public art project described in the application is clear and specific, aligned with the submitted drawings, and communicates a vision or perspective that aligns with the goals of America250.
2. The public art project described in the application is site-responsive. The artwork and accompanying programming engages the site and/or community around the America250 celebration.
3. The lead artist, fabrication team, and proposed artwork demonstrate artistic excellence and artistic merit.. The artist's prior experience demonstrates the ability to deliver a safe and durable artwork built for the public environment within the required timeframe.
4. The application provides evidence that the public art project is fully developed and ready-to-implement and that the timeline of the public art project is realistic and feasible for completion within the required timeframe.
5. The application provides evidence that the budget of the public art project is financially realistic and able to be completed within the required timeframe.

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

If multiple applications receive the same score but budget restrictions prevent all applications with that score from being funded, final selections will be based on which applications that most closely align with mission and vision of America250, in the determination of the MSAC staff.

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. 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 provide instructions on how to access the fully executed GAF 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 completing 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. Grant recipient(s) who have not received any State grants or payments previously 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 the America250 Public Art Grant is September 1, 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 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.

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 America250 Public Art 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
 - (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
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 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 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.

For all other languages, please contact MSAC at 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 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 Cathy Dombroski, Director of Human Resources for the Department of Commerce, at catherine.dombroski1@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, 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](#).

The America250 Public Art Grant will not utilize independent panelists. Applications will be reviewed by a team of MSAC staff and a representative from the Maryland250 Commission. Application evaluation is based on review criteria required by the National Endowment for the Arts.

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; 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 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.

Appendix A includes some of the key terms and conditions that apply to the funding provided to MSAC for this Grant. Since the America250 grant funding is provided from funds received by MSAC through the NEA grant, the terms and conditions that MSAC is subject to under the NEA grant flow down to grantees where applicable. The complete set of obligations will be outlined in the grant agreement. For transparency and clarity, some of the key terms are outlined below for applicants to review to ensure awareness of important terms and conditions that will most likely apply when MSAC awards the grant.

Please note that references below to “You” mean MSAC since the Terms and Conditions below govern the NEA grant to MSAC.

APPENDIX A:

NATIONAL POLICY AND OTHER LEGAL REQUIREMENTS, STATUTES, REGULATIONS, AND EXECUTIVE ORDERS THAT GOVERN YOUR AWARD

You must ensure that you implement the funded project in full accordance with the US Constitution, federal law, and public policy requirements including, but not limited to, those protecting free speech, religious liberty, public welfare, and the environment, and those prohibiting discrimination (§ 200.300). Also, you must ensure that you implement the funded project in full accordance with all applicable Executive Orders to the extent permitted by law. Executive orders are posted at [whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions](https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions) and [federalregister.gov](https://www.federalregister.gov).

As a registrant with SAM.gov, in most cases, you have already self-certified to your compliance with these policies and legal requirements through the Financial Assistance General Certifications and Representations, including attesting to the accuracy of the certification and acknowledging that you may be subjected to criminal prosecution under Section 1001, Title 18 U.S.C, or civil liability under the False Claims Act if you have misrepresented the information. A copy of this Financial Assistance Certifications Report is available in your SAM.gov entity registration record.

1. Nondiscrimination Policies

As a condition of receipt of federal financial assistance, you acknowledge and agree to execute your project, and require any contractors, successors, transferees, and assignees to comply with applicable provisions of national laws and policies prohibiting discrimination, including but not limited to:

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and implemented by the National Endowment for the Arts at 45 CFR 1110, provides that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Title VI also extends protection to persons with limited English proficiency (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.).

As clarified by **Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency**, national origin discrimination includes discrimination on the basis of limited English proficiency (LEP). To ensure compliance with Title VI, you must take reasonable steps to ensure that LEP persons have meaningful access to your programs. Meaningful access may entail providing language assistance services, including oral and written translation, where necessary. You are encouraged to consider the need for language services for LEP persons in conducting your programs and activities. For assistance and information, go to www.arts.gov/about/foia/library. On March 1, 2025, Executive Order 14224, Designating English as the

Official Language of the United States, rescinded EO 13166 but does not require or direct any change in the services provided by the federal agency.

Executive Order 14173, [Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity](#), provides that award recipients should (A) agree that its compliance in all respects with all applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws is material to the government's payment decisions for purposes of section 3729(b)(4) of title 31, United States Code; and (B) certify that it does not operate any programs promoting "diversity, equity, and inclusion" (DEI) that violate any applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, provides that no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance (20 U.S.C 1681 et seq.).

The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, provides that no person in the United States shall, on the basis of age, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance (42 U.S.C 6101 et seq.).

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended, prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment (Title I); State and local government services (Title II); and places of public accommodation and commercial facilities (Title III) (42 U.S.C 12101-12213).

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, provides that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall, solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance (29 U.S.C 794).

Access should be integrated into all facets and activities of an organization, from day-to-day operations to long range goals and objectives. Access accommodations and services should be given a high priority, and funds should be available for these services. All organizations are legally required to provide reasonable and necessary accommodations for staff and visitors with disabilities.

You must designate a staff member to serve as a 504 Coordinator and a Section 504 self-evaluation must be on file at your organization. To help your organization evaluate its programs, activities, and facilities to ensure full compliance with Section 504 accessibility requirements, the NEA's Office of Civil Rights has a Section 504 Self Evaluation Workbook available on the www.arts.gov website. The completed Section 504 self-evaluation workbook or similar compliance and supporting documentation must be kept on file for a period of three (3) years from the date the final Federal Financial Report (FFR) is filed and be made available to the public and the NEA upon request. The NEA may request the 504 workbook or your compliance documents in various instances including an Inspector General audit and/or civil rights investigation.

Design for Accessibility: A Cultural Administrator's Handbook provides guidance on making access an integral part of an organization's staffing, mission, budget, and programs. You may download this handbook and other resources from the NEA website at www.arts.gov. If you have questions, contact the Office of Accessibility at accessibility@arts.gov or (202) 682-5532.

2. Environmental and Historic Preservation Policies

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA), applies to any federal funds that would support an activity that may have environmental implications. The NEA may ask you to respond to specific questions or provide additional information in accordance with NEPA. If there are environmental implications, the NEA will determine whether a categorical exclusion may apply; to undertake an environmental assessment; or to issue a "finding of no significant impact," pursuant to applicable regulations and 42 U.S.C. Sec. 4332.

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (NHPA), applies to any federal funds that support activities that have the potential to impact any structure eligible for or on the National Register of Historic Places, adjacent to a structure that is eligible for or on the National Register of Historic Places, or located in a historic district, in accordance with Section 106. This also applies to planning activities that may affect historic properties or districts. The NEA will conduct a review of your project activities, as appropriate, to determine the impact of your project activities on the structure or any affected properties. NEA review must be completed prior to any award funds being released. You may be asked to provide additional information on your project to ensure compliance with NHPA at any time during your award's period of performance (16 U.S.C. 470).

3. Other National Policies

Debarment and Suspension. You must comply with requirements regarding debarment and suspension in Subpart C of 2 CFR 180, as adopted by the NEA in 2 CFR 32.3254. There are circumstances under which the NEA may receive information concerning your fitness to carry out a project and administer federal funds, such as:

- Conviction of, or a civil judgment for, the commission of fraud, embezzlement, theft, forgery, or making false statements.
- Any other offense indicating a lack of business integrity or business honesty that seriously and directly affects your present responsibility.
- Any other cause of so serious or compelling a nature that it affects an organization's present responsibility.

In these circumstances, the NEA may need to act quickly to protect the interest of the government by suspending your funding while investigating the specific facts. The NEA's suspension actions may be coordinated with other federal agencies that have an interest in the NEA's findings. A suspension may result in your debarment from receiving federal funding government-wide for up to three (3) years.

The Drug Free Workplace Act requires you to publish a statement about your drug-free workplace program. You must give a copy of this statement to each employee (including consultants and temporary personnel) who will be involved in award-supported activities at any site where these activities will be carried out.

You must maintain a record of the sites where work is performed under this award including the full street address, city, state, and zip code. You must notify the National Endowment for the Arts Office of Grants Management of any employee convicted of a violation of a criminal drug statute that occurs in the workplace (41 U.S.C 701 et seq. and 45 CFR 1155).

Lobbying. You must not conduct political lobbying, as defined in the statutes and regulations listed below, within your NEA-supported project. In addition, you must not use federal funds for lobbying specifically to obtain awards. For definitions and other information on these restrictions, refer to the following:

No part of the money appropriated by any enactment of Congress shall, in the absence of express authorization by Congress, be used directly or indirectly to pay for any personal service, advertisement, telegram, telephone, letter, printed or written matter, or other device, intended or designed to influence in any manner a Member of Congress, a jurisdiction, or an official of any government, to favor, adopt, or oppose, by vote or otherwise, any legislation, law, ratification, policy, or appropriation, whether before or after the introduction of any bill, measure, or resolution proposing such legislation, law, ratification, policy, or appropriation; but this shall not prevent officers or employees of the United States or of its departments or agencies from communicating to any such Member or official, at his request, or to Congress or such official, through the proper official channels, requests for any legislation, law, ratification, policy, or appropriations which they deem necessary for the efficient conduct of the public business, or from making any communication whose prohibition by this section might, in the opinion of the Attorney General, violate the Constitution or interfere with the conduct of foreign policy, counter-intelligence, intelligence, or national security activities (18 U.S.C 1913).

Lobbying (§ 200.450) describes the cost of certain influencing activities associated with obtaining grants, contracts, cooperative agreements, or loans as an unallowable project cost. The regulation generally defines lobbying as conduct intended to influence the outcome of elections or to influence elected officials regarding pending legislation, either directly or through specific lobbying appeals to the public.

Certification Regarding Lobbying to Obtain Awards. Section 319 of Public Law 101-121, codified at 31 U.S.C. 1352, prohibits the use of federal funds in lobbying members and employees of Congress, as well as employees of Federal agencies, with respect to the award or amendment of any federal grant, cooperative agreement, contract, or loan. While non-federal funds may be used for such activities, they must not be included in your project budget, and their use must be disclosed to the awarding federal agency. Disclosure of lobbying activities by long-term employees (employed or expected to be employed for more than 130 days by a recipient of federal funds) is, however, not required. In addition, the law exempts from definition of lobbying certain professional and technical services by applicants and awardees.

Davis-Bacon and Related Acts (DBRA), as amended, requires that each contract over \$2,000 to which the United States is a party for the construction, alteration, or repair of public buildings or public works (these activities include, but are not limited to, painting, decorating, altering, remodeling, installing pieces fabricated off-site, and furnishing supplies or equipment for a work-site) must contain a clause setting forth the minimum wages to be paid to laborers and mechanics employed under the contract. Under the provisions of DBRA, contractors or their subcontractors must pay workers who qualify under DBRA no less than the locally prevailing wages and fringe benefits paid on projects of a similar character.

You can find information about the laborers and projects that fall under DBRA on the U.S Department of Labor's website at www.dol.gov. DBRA wage determinations are to be used in accordance with the provisions of Regulations, 29 CFR Part 1, Part 3, and Part 5, and with DOL's Compliance Guide. The provisions of DBRA apply within the 50 states, territories, protectorates, and Native American nations (if the labor is completed by non-tribal laborers).

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 applies to any organization that controls or possesses Native American human remains and associated funerary objects and receives Federal funding, even for a purpose unrelated to this Act (25 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.). For more information see 43 CFR 10 - Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Regulations at <https://www.ecfr.gov/>

If your project includes Native American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and/or objects of

cultural patrimony, per the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) of November 16, 1990, you are required to:

- Consult with lineal descendants, Indian Tribes, or Native Hawaiian organizations on the appropriate
- storage, treatment, or handling of human remains or cultural items,
- Make a reasonable and good-faith effort to incorporate and accommodate the Native American traditional knowledge of lineal descendants, Indian Tribes, or Native Hawaiian organizations in the storage, treatment, or handling of human remains or cultural items, and
- Obtain free, prior, and informed consent from lineal descendants, Indian Tribes, or Native Hawaiian organizations prior to allowing any exhibition of, access to, or research on human remains or cultural items. Research includes, but is not limited to, any study, analysis, examination, or other means of acquiring or preserving information about human remains or cultural items.

U.S. Constitution Education Program. Educational institutions (including but not limited to "local educational agencies" and "institutions of higher education") receiving federal funds from any agency are required to provide an educational program on the U.S. Constitution on September 17 (P.L. 108-447, Division J, Sec. 111(b)). For more information, go to the U.S. Department of Education's website at www.ed.gov and the Library of Congress website at www.loc.gov

Prohibition on use of funds to ACORN or its subsidiaries. No NEA funds or cost share funds expended for your NEA project may be distributed to the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) or its subsidiaries (P.L. 111-88 Sec. 427).