



Heritage Award guidelines

Heritage Awards recognize long-term achievement in folklife, or community-based living cultural traditions handed down by example or word of mouth. Awards are given through the Maryland Traditions state folklife program and annually recognize one recipient in each of three categories:
Person/People, Place, and Tradition



Individuals who do not use conventional print may contact the Maryland State Arts Council to obtain this publication in an alternate format by calling 410-767-6555 or emailing msac.commerce@maryland.gov.



For individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, TTY is available via Maryland Relay: 1-800-735-2258 or 711.

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Maryland State Arts Council

The Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) advances the arts in Maryland 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 the State. Its grants and programs support artists and arts organizations in their pursuit of artistic excellence, ensure the accessibility of the arts to all citizens and promote statewide awareness of arts resources and opportunities. Programs are aimed at all Maryland residents regardless of political or religious opinion or affiliation, marital status, race, color, creed, age, national origin, sex or sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, or geographic location within the State.

The Council comprises an appointed body of 17 citizens from across the state, 13 of whom are named by the Governor to three-year terms that may be renewed once. Two private citizens and two legislators are appointed by the President of the Senate and by the Speaker of the House. All councilors serve without salary.

To carry out its mission, MSAC awards grants for ongoing arts programming and projects. MSAC also awards grants to individual artists, and provides technical and advisory assistance to individuals and groups. The Council reserves the right to prioritize grants awards.

MSAC receives its funds in an annual appropriation from the State of Maryland and from grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. The Council may also receive contributions from private, non-governmental sources.

Authority

Maryland State Arts Council is an agency of the State of Maryland under the authority of the Department of Commerce, Division of Tourism, Film and the Arts.

Larry Hogan, Governor | Boyd K. Rutherford, Lieutenant Governor
Kelly M. Schulz, Secretary | Ben Wu, Deputy Secretary
Thomas B. Riford | Assistant Secretary, Division of Tourism, Film and the Arts

Professional Grants Review Panels

To assist the Council in its decision-making, professionals in the arts are appointed to a variety of grants review panels. The function of panels is to evaluate applications from organizations and individuals and to offer policy recommendations to the Council. Each year, more than 100 individuals serve as grants review panelists for the Council's programs, including Arts in Education, Community Arts Development, Creativity Grants, Grants for Organizations, Independent Artist Awards, Maryland Traditions, and Public Art Across Maryland. Anyone wishing to serve should visit msac.org for detailed information and forms.

Staff

MSAC maintains a professional staff to administer its grants programs and Council-initiated programs. Staff members are available to provide technical assistance to the arts community.

Meetings

All Council and Grants Review Panel meetings are open to the public in accordance with the Open Meetings Act set forth in Title 3 of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. The dates, times, and locations of Council and Grants Review Panel meetings may be obtained from the MSAC website at www.msac.org or by contacting MSAC offices at (410) 767-6555.

Heritage Award guidelines

CONTACT

For technical assistance	For content and programmatic assistance
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OVERVIEW

Funding: \$5,000 per award

Funding release: May 1 annually

Nomination publication: October 1 annually

Nomination deadline: December 6 annually

Notification of nomination status: April 1 annually

Timeline: A Heritage Awards timeline published on the MSAC website, msac.org, outlines the full cycle for each step of this awards process, from the announcement of nominations to the awards ceremony.

Description: Heritage Awards recognize long-term achievement in folklife, or community-based living cultural traditions handed down by example or word of mouth. Awards are given through the Maryland Traditions state folklife program and annually recognize one recipient in each of three categories: Person/People, Place, and Tradition.

Awards in the Person/People category are given to individuals or groups whose efforts demonstrate long-term achievement in areas such as:

- Performance
- Creative practice
- Research
- Documentation
- Presentation
- Entrepreneurship
- Artistry
- Community leadership

Awards in the Place category are given to locations having long-term importance in areas such as:

- Serving as gathering points for community fellowship
- Serving as sites for traditional practices
- Demonstrating continuing vitality due to the efforts of groups or individuals whose work might stretch over many generations

Awards in the Tradition category are given in honor of long-term practices that have connected communities to folklife through activities including:

- Traditional practices
- Recurring events
- Occupations
- Local knowledge
- Cultural movements
- Organizations

Eligibility: Eligible Heritage Award nominees are Maryland people, places, and traditions that demonstrate long-term achievement in folklife. Specific guidelines follow.

- People, places, and traditions may receive the Heritage Award only once
- Heritage Awards are not given posthumously
- Self-nominations are accepted
- There is no limit to the number of nominations that may be made in connection with a single form of folklife

See Appendix A for further details on eligibility.

Location: Awards are given to Maryland-based recipients only. Recipients may represent forms of folklife that have been present in Maryland for many generations, as well as those that have arrived relatively recently.

Documentation: Heritage Award winners are documented with a photo shoot and interview session upon announcement of their status. MSAC staff facilitate winners' participation in documentation activities.

See Appendix A for further details on documenting the work of Heritage Award winners.

Ceremony: Heritage Award winners are celebrated each year in a public ceremony. Winners are invited to participate in the ceremony, which is free and open to the public. The ceremony features the forms of folklife for which the winners are known. MSAC staff facilitate winners' participation in the ceremony.

See Appendix A for further details on the Heritage Awards ceremony.

FISCAL

Use of funds: Each Heritage Award includes a \$5,000 grant with no administrative reporting requirement. Winners may expend funds at their discretion.

See Appendix A for further details on the Heritage Awards funding process.

NOMINATION and EVALUATION

SmartSimple: All nominations are submitted via the online grants management system SmartSimple. Log in or create a free account at marylandarts.smartsimple.com.

Nominator expectation: Heritage Award nominators are those making nominations on behalf of nominees. Nominators may reside anywhere and must provide contact information during the nomination process. Nominators serve as the primary point of contact for a nomination until winners are selected.

Nomination components: A completed nomination consists of the following components:

- Answers to prompts soliciting a description of the nominee's long-term achievement in folklife
- Optional supplemental materials
 - Supplemental materials include but are not limited to letters of recommendation, media coverage, or audiovisual examples of past work not exceeding 10 pages and 5 minutes of audiovisual review time
 - Supplemental materials may reflect any point in the nominee's career or existence

Panelist review: MSAC convenes a group of panelists to evaluate nominations. Each nomination is evaluated using a three-part rubric. Panelists assign as many as 20 points and supply qualitative comments for each of the three parts:

- Nomination's identification of a form folklife
- Nominee's connection to the folklife of a particular community
- Nominee's sustained engagement with folklife as a person or people, place, or tradition

Panelists review Heritage Award nominations twice:

- Once remotely and independently, at which time an initial score is made
- Once after conversation with other panelists at a meeting facilitated by MSAC staff, including the state folklorist, at which time all panelists will discuss nominations and have the opportunity to amend their score based on discussion
- Final scores will be reviewed by the MSAC board and Department of Commerce leadership for final approval, denial, or requests for further information

Panelist scores directly determine the Heritage Award recommendations presented to the MSAC board and Department of Commerce leadership, with the highest scores taking precedence. In the event

multiple nominations with the same score are being considered, the state folklorist will facilitate further panel discussion in accordance with scoring rubric guidelines until a final selection is made.

See Appendix B for the scoring rubric panelists use to evaluate nominations.

Panelist selection: Panelists are selected via public application process. Applicants who are folklife artists, folklife specialists, arts administrators, and other cultural workers possess the necessary expertise to evaluate applications, though all potential panelists are given consideration.

Re-submission: Nominations that are initially unsuccessful may be revised and re-submitted but are not automatically carried over from year to year.

Appendix A: Purpose of Heritage Awards

The purpose of the Heritage Awards is to heighten the profile of Maryland folklife by annually providing funding and public recognition to three examples of long-term achievement in living cultural traditions. Maryland folklife is defined as the body of living cultural traditions located in Maryland. Traditions that have been features of Maryland culture for many generations are eligible for Heritage Awards, as are traditions that have come to Maryland more recently through patterns of migration, immigration, or the movement of refugees.

Heritage Awards have no requirement in terms of the length of time a winner has resided in Maryland, but all winners are selected based on folklife activities occurring in Maryland. All Heritage Award funds must be disbursed to Maryland-based individuals, nonprofits, colleges and universities, or units of government. MSAC staff work with winners to determine the preferred recipient of funds.

Heritage Award winners are documented with a professional photo shoot and interview session. Pending winners' permission, MSAC uses photos and recordings to publicize winners' work. An MSAC-led production team works with each winner to arrange documentation activities, which typically occur at a location relevant to the winner's folklife activities. Pending winners' permission, all documentation is deposited in the Maryland Folklife Archives, a public archive of living cultural traditions housed at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, with MSAC oversight.

Heritage Award winners are honored at a public ceremony. An MSAC-led production team produces the ceremony and works with winners to facilitate their participation in it. The ceremony typically features performances and demonstrations relevant to the winners' folklife activities. The ceremony is always hosted in Maryland.

Anyone interested in making a nomination is strongly encouraged to review the list of past winners at msac.org as a first step. For detailed questions, the primary point of contact is the Maryland State Folklorist, which has been a permanent, full-time position at MSAC since 1974.

Appendix B: Scoring rubric

Panelists use the rubric below to score Heritage Award nominations.

Criterion 1: Nomination’s identification of a form of folklife

Excellent (17-20 points)	Good (13-16 points)	Fair (9-12 points)	Poor (8 or fewer points)
Nomination clearly identifies a living cultural tradition strongly connected to a cultural community over a generational period of practice	Nomination identifies a living cultural tradition connected to a cultural community over a moderate period of practice	Nomination partially or ambiguously identifies a living cultural tradition connected to a cultural community over a limited or unclear period of practice	Nomination’s connection to folklife and cultural community is negligible or not present

Criterion 2: Nominee’s connection to the folklife of a particular community

Excellent (17-20 points)	Good (13-16 points)	Fair (9-12 points)	Poor (8 or fewer points)
Nominee’s importance to the folklife of a cultural community is clearly demonstrated	Nominee’s importance to the folklife of a cultural community is demonstrated	Nominee’s importance to the folklife of a cultural community is somewhat demonstrated	Limited or no connection made between nominee and the folklife of a cultural community

Criterion 3: Nominee’s sustained engagement with folklife as a person or people, place, or tradition

Excellent (17-20 points)	Good (13-16 points)	Fair (9-12 points)	Poor (8 or fewer points)
Nominee’s engagement with folklife clearly extends over a substantial period of time	Nominee’s engagement with folklife extends over a moderate period of time	Nominee’s engagement with folklife extends over a limited or unclear period of time	Nominee’s length of engagement with folklife is negligible or not stated

Appendix C: Requirements for MSAC grantees

- Incorporation in Maryland as a not-for-profit and documented tax exempt status from the U. S. Internal Revenue Service; or, verifiable status as a unit of government, college, or university.
- Must comply with Title VI, Section 601, of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which states that no persons, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination related to, the arts.
- Must comply with Title IV, Section 1681, of the Education Amendments of 1972, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Section 6101, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex or age.
- Must comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which states that no otherwise qualified person shall, solely by reason of his or her handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination related to, the arts.
- Must maintain complete and accurate records of all activities connected with the grant.
- Must have filed a satisfactory reporting with MSAC for the most recently completed fiscal year.
- Must file a final report in alignment with the program requirements. Failure to report may jeopardize any future grant being received by the organization and may result in the organization being required to repay grant funds.
- Must give credit to MSAC in accordance with the Recognition Guidelines whenever and wherever credit is being given.
- Must notify the appropriate MSAC staff person in writing if a significant change is made in any MSAC-funded program or project.

Notice: In accordance with Executive Order 01.01.1983.18, the Department of Commerce advises as follows regarding the collection of personal information: Certain personal information requested by the Department of Commerce is necessary in determining eligibility for grants. Failure to disclose this information may result in the denial of one or all of these benefits or services. Availability of this information for public inspection is governed by the provisions of the Maryland Public Information Act, Title 4 of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. This information will be disclosed to appropriate staff of the Department, or to public officials, for purposes directly connected with administration of the program for which its use is intended. Such information is routinely shared with state, federal, or local government agencies.

Appendix D: Review process

- **Staff Review:** After the application is received, it is reviewed by staff for completeness and adherence to Council guidelines. Applicants will be notified whether their application is complete or if additional information or corrections are necessary. The applicant must meet all subsequent deadlines as specified in writing or the application will be considered withdrawn.
- **Grants Review Panel:** When the application is complete, it is assigned to members of a Grant Review Panel for evaluation. Grant Review Panels meet formally to evaluate the applications submitted.
- **Council Decision:** The full Council meets in early June to reach funding decisions.
- **Department of Commerce Approval:** The Council's decisions are forwarded to the Department for review, analysis, and final approval by the Secretary of Commerce or a designee by July 1.
- **Notification:** All applicants are notified in writing of the Council's decision when final approval is obtained.
- **Payment:** Signed Grant Agreement Forms must be received and the grantee must meet all reporting requirements before grant funds for the next fiscal year are disbursed.

Appendix E: Appeals process

MSAC takes great care during the grant review process to ensure fair and equitable distribution of grant monies based on stated criteria. Therefore, simple dissatisfaction with the denial of an award or with the amount of an award is not sufficient reason for an appeal. However, a grant request may be reconsidered if a procedural impropriety or error has affected its review.

Grounds for such reconsideration are:

- A decision based on review criteria other than those stated in these guidelines
- A decision based on material provided to panelists and/or Councilors that was substantially incorrect, inaccurate, or incomplete despite the applicant having provided the staff with correct, accurate, and complete application information

Based on the above, if an applicant believes there is legitimate reason for an appeal, the following steps must be taken:

- The applicant must discuss the problem with the staff member who handled the application
- To pursue an appeal, the applicant must write a letter to the MSAC Executive Director within 60 days following receipt of the grant award or denial letter requesting a reconsideration of the Council's decision and stating the grounds for the request
- The applicant will receive written notification on the determination of the appeal within 90 days of the receipt of the written request for reconsideration