

CORE Operating Support Grant Guidelines

Small Budget Organizations

Grant Cycle 2022-2023

Arts Fort Worth's Grants Program

The mission of Arts Fort Worth is to promote, nurture, and support the arts in Fort Worth. Arts Fort Worth's competitive grants programs fulfill this mission by supporting local arts organizations and the artistic programming they provide within our city. Arts Fort Worth grants are designed to:

- foster a culture of creativity and innovation;
- celebrate community diversity through inclusive artistic expression;
- increase accessibility and encourage broad-based participation in arts activities;
- strengthen the service capacity and business practices of arts providers; and
- promote tourism and economic growth in the City of Fort Worth.

Generous funding for Arts Fort Worth grants comes from the City of Fort Worth, Tarrant County, corporate donors, foundations, and local individuals.

CORE Operating Support Grant Intent

CORE Operating Support Grants provide fundamental mission support through unrestricted funding to established nonprofit arts organizations for general operations, administration, and programming costs.

Timeline

Grant Applications Open	June 2, 2022
Mandatory Applicant In-Person Training	June 9, 2022, 9:30 –11:00 AM CST
Application Deadline	July 29, 2022 by 4:00 PM CST
Panel Review	Late September, 2022
Period of Performance Begins	October 1, 2022
Award Notification	November 2022
Q1 Service Report Deadline	January 9, 2023 by 4:00 PM CST
Q2 Service Report Deadline	April 10, 2023 by 4:00 PM CST
Q3 Service Report Deadline	July 10, 2023 by 4:00 PM CST
Period of Performance Ends	September 30, 2023
Q4 Service Report & Final Report Deadlines	October 9, 2023 by 4:00 PM CST

Mandatory Applicant Training

A representative from applicant organizations planning to apply for a 2022/2023 CORE Operating Support grant **must** participate in the in-person Mandatory Applicant Training on June 9, 2022 from 9:30 – 11:00 a.m. at Arts Fort Worth, 1300 Gendy Street, Fort Worth, TX 76107. No exceptions will be made. Training participants will walk through the grant guidelines with Arts Fort Worth grant program staff, paying special attention to updates and changes. Please register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/operating-support-grant-applicant-training-mandatory-tickets-267053543337> to reserve your spot. If you have any questions on whether your representative qualifies, please email staff at grants@artsfortworth.org. Light refreshments will be served and parking at the Western Heritage Garage just south of the Arts Center will be validated. Masks are optional, but will be provided. If you are feeling ill, please send another representative.

Applicant Eligibility

To be eligible to receive funding from Arts Fort Worth CORE Grants Program, an applicant organization must:

- have an annual organizational operating budget between \$10,000 and \$99,999;
- be a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit in good standing with IRS and up to date with Form 990 filings;
- be a nonprofit arts organization whose primary mission is the presentation or production of artistic programming;
- demonstrate active operations and a history of at least 2 consecutive years of related program offerings within the City of Fort Worth;
- have a physical headquarters located within the City of Fort Worth and conduct majority (more than 50%) of its work/outreach/programming within the Fort Worth community OR have a Fort Worth based P.O. Box or residential address and conduct a minimum of 65% of its work/outreach/programming within Fort Worth;
- have a salaried full-time or part-time (15-20 hours per week) administrator that is responsible for and authorized to address the contractual obligations of the Arts Fort Worth Cultural Contract and the business management of the organization (artist fees and honorariums do not satisfy paid staffing requirements);
- compensate salaried staff at a rate no less than the federal minimum wage at the time of grant submission;
- have an active board of directors; and
- meet all compliance measures and be in good standing with the Arts Fort Worth Grants Program.

Ineligible applicants include:

- academic institutions and/or their affiliated arts groups;
- fiscal sponsors;
- governmental agencies;
- places of worship; or
- former Arts Fort Worth grant recipients with overdue, unacceptable, or falsified reports.

Eligible Requests

Eligible uses for CORE Operating Support funding include:

- administrative staff salaries;
- artistic salaries/fees;
- office supplies;

- production costs;
- facility rentals;
- marketing, printing, and other administrative costs; and
- outreach & education.

Ineligible uses of funding include:

- scholarships, purchase awards, or cash prizes;
- capital improvements, endowments, construction, or real property;
- debt reduction, interest on loans, fines, penalties, or costs of litigation;
- benefits or special events planned primarily for fundraising;
- sub-granting programs;
- activities for which college or university students receive academic credit;
- financing of political activities; or
- programming that is made inaccessible to any audience member based on gender, gender identity or expression, race, color, natural hair or hairstyles, traditional ethnic or religious attire, ethnicity, nationality, religion, creed, sexual orientation, disability, age, or any other characteristic protected by law, except in projects involving schools or school systems (K-12) or other special populations.

Application Process

Grant requests are accepted once a year in the summer. Grant cycle announcements and deadlines are posted on the Arts Fort Worth website www.artsfortworth.org/operating. All applicants must apply for funding online through the Arts Fort Worth [grants portal](#). New applicants must register for the site to begin an application.

In addition to completing the narrative portion of the application form, grant applicants are also required to submit the following attachments:

- list of current board of directors;
- IRS determination letter; (new applicants only)
- most recent IRS Form 990 and audit (must be no more than 2 years old); and
- audiovisual presentation.

It is preferred that all attachments are submitted via the grants portal. If mailed or personally submitted, all attachments must be received by the application deadline. Attachments received after the application deadline will not be considered and related applications will be marked incomplete and ineligible for review.

Mailed attachments should be addressed to:

Arts Fort Worth
 ATTN: Grants Program
 1300 Gendy St.
 Fort Worth, TX 76107

Once applications are received, each application is reviewed for eligibility and completeness by Arts Fort Worth grants program staff. Once this process is complete, the applications are assigned to a panelist evaluator for in-depth review.

Audiovisual Presentations

Requests for CORE Operating Support require submission of an audiovisual presentation. NEW: Do not submit promotional material as work samples (e.g. promotional videos about your work, your theater, explanations of your work, or reviews of your work, etc.) Select the strongest, best-documented audiovisual presentation that complements your application. High-quality documentation of your work is critical to assessing your mission, artistic quality, technical skill, and community impact. Panelists regularly cite low-quality documentation as a barrier. With less capacity to assess the scoring criteria, this often results in lower scores.

Audiovisual submissions must be received by **4:00 p.m. on July 29, 2022**. No exceptions.

PRESENTATION TIPS

Label your media with organization name, CORE Operating, FY23

Presentations are limited to no more than 5 minutes; Arts Fort Worth staff will end all presentations after 5 minutes

Presentations should begin on Track 1 or at the natural beginning of the media

Applicants are encouraged to create a new presentation every grant cycle

Test materials multiple times on different systems before submission

Submit materials on programs and operations that have taken place within the past 2 years only

Avoid submitting the same A/V for CORE Operating Support and CORE PLUS Outreach Program Support requests

Include items that demonstrate production value and programming diversity; audience reached and impact

Do not summarize your grant

Scripts will not be read during the presentation

For more good tips on submitting work samples for grants, go to Creative Capital, "Applying for Grants: Choosing Work Samples."

Email Submission Instructions

Digital audiovisual presentations may be submitted to Arts Fort Worth via email or Dropbox at grants@artsfortworth.org.

Accepted digital submission formats include:

Digital files including .mp3, .mp4, .wmv

Links to YouTube (New)

Note: PowerPoint presentations will not be accepted.

Delivered/Mailed Submission Instructions

Audiovisual presentations that are submitted via physical mail or delivered must be received by the Arts Fort Worth offices (1300 Gendy St, Fort Worth, TX 76107) by 4:00 pm on July 29, 2022. Presentations may be sent in the following formats:

CD

DVD/Video

No flash or thumb drives for security reasons. (New)

Note: We will make every effort to confirm receipt of A/V material submissions via email. We strongly urge those who choose to submit via email to do so prior to the deadline. A/V materials not received for any reason, including technical error, by the deadline, will be deemed ineligible. It is the applicant's responsibility to follow-up prior to the deadline, should a confirmation email not be received.

Advice & Assistance

Arts Fort Worth staff are available year-round to assist with the application process and provide feedback on draft proposals, in advance of the application deadline. Draft applications are accepted for review and feedback up to 2 weeks before the application deadline. Due to the volume of requests, application assistance will not be available the final week before the deadline, however technical support related to the grants portal will be provided.

If you have questions or have access needs that make this application process inaccessible to you, please email grants@artsfortworth.org or call (817) 298-3037. The staff's role is to assist the applicant in making the best presentation for funding. Staff will not write the applications or prepare attachments for applicants.

Panelist Selection

Grant evaluation panels provide Arts Fort Worth with expert guidance so that award decisions can be made objectively. The purpose of each panel is to provide qualitative and professional evaluations of applications based on the application review criteria.

Arts Council grant review panels are composed based on diversity in artistic discipline and may be current or past artists or arts administrators of various roles. The number of reviewers within each panel varies according to the number of applications received for each grant type. Evaluators must be North Texas residents. Arts Fort Worth Board Members are not allowed to serve as panelists during their term on the Board of Directors.

Additional considerations include:

- professional qualifications;
- broad-based knowledge of the nonprofit arts industry;
- experience with nonprofits of varying sizes;
- diverse representation of gender, race, and disability, analogous with city demographics;
- geographic location (residential and professional); and
- potential conflicts of interest.

Panelist nominations/applications are accepted year-round and may be made by any individual or organization in Fort Worth. Self-nominations are permitted. Nominations and application forms may be obtained on the Arts Fort Worth website at www.artsfortworth.org/volunteer or by contacting Arts Fort Worth staff. Submitted panelist applications are reviewed by Arts Fort Worth grants program staff for eligibility and appropriate fit within panel composition. Proposed panelists are presented before the Arts Fort Worth Board of Directors for final approval. Submission of a nomination or application to serve on an Arts Fort Worth grant panel does not guarantee selection. Selected panelists are formally notified via email of their acceptance on the panels.

All panelists serve single year terms. Panelists may be asked by Arts Fort Worth staff to serve consecutive terms to take advantage of their expertise and experience on the panels. In the event of unexpected vacancies, Arts Fort Worth staff may appoint substitute panelists from a group of previously approved panelists.

Prior to the review sessions, panel members participate in a mandatory evaluation training session. During the training session, panelists are familiarized with grants program policies and procedures, as well as guidelines for objective evaluation of applications. Panelists are welcome to consult with Arts Fort Worth staff about the grant process or funding policies any time throughout the grant year.

Panel Review Process

Panelists are charged with reviewing each application within their designated grant pool online prior to the grant review sessions, paying special attention to their primary and secondary reviewer assignments. As primary reviewers, panelists will serve as discussion leaders during the panel review sessions. As secondary reviewers, they will serve as backup discussion leaders should the primary reviewer not be able to attend the session for any reason.

Grant panels convene in late September/early October to review submitted applications. Prior to the review discussions, panelists complete Conflict of Interest disclosures and are reminded of the goals and objectives of their role as volunteer reviewers. All efforts are made to seat panelists who do not have any conflict of interest within the panels. In the case that a conflict of interest is revealed on the day of the review, the panelist in question is required to remove themselves from the discussion during review of that application and will not be allowed to score that application.

Due to the volume of requests, CORE Operating Support applications are reviewed by 2 separate panels. Applications are grouped by budget size for review. Applicant organizations with the largest operating budgets being reviewed by one panel, while the applicant organizations with the smallest operating budgets are reviewed by the other.

Each application review begins with a presentation of the applicant's submitted audiovisual attachment; exactly 5 minutes are allotted for this observation. Arts Fort Worth staff will stop the presentation at 5 minutes regardless of whether or not the presentation has concluded. No exceptions. Immediately following the audiovisual review, panelists are allowed 7 minutes to discuss the organization and/or proposed programming's strengths and weaknesses. Each discussion is led by the panelist assigned to the relevant application. Panelists are instructed to present criticisms in a constructive manner and maintain a professional demeanor during the entirety of the review.

Arts Fort Worth staff keeps time and directs the panel discussion to ensure that all discussions are active and consistent with the evaluation criteria. Arts Fort Worth staff does not contribute to the evaluation discussion or score applications. Staff can, however, provide factual clarifications, application updates (such as major staffing changes) and current or past grant program compliance information. Panel comments are recorded by Arts Fort Worth staff. Immediately following each discussion, Arts Fort Worth staff provides an oral overview of key panel comments for reinforcement and necessary correction. After each review is completed, panelists record their scores for the relevant application on the ballots provided. Panelists do not make recommendations on dollar allocations or funding decisions.

Evaluation Criteria

Applications are evaluated and scored by panelists on the merits listed below. Awards are not based on need.

Artistic Merit/Mission	50 points
Impact	25 points
Capability	25 points
Total	100 points

Artistic Merit/Mission:

- Does the organization demonstrate progress towards their stated mission and goals?
- Does the organization and its artistic staff demonstrate innovation, excellence, and creativity in mission-driven programming?
- Does the organization engage quality artists/present quality artworks that advance the mission of the organization?
- Does the program have importance to the artistic field, artists, audience, and/or community?

Impact:

- Does a program or initiative noted in the application address underserved populations?
- Does the organization have key metrics and evaluation plans to track success against stated goals?
- Does the organization offer programs that are relevant to the broader community?
- Does the organization make efforts to reach new audiences and offer programs that attract both visitors and residents?
- Do the organization's activities have local, regional, national and/or international impact?
- Does the organization generate economic growth for the City of Fort Worth?

Capability:

- Is there stability within the organization and its leadership?
- Does the organization have the administrative capacity to carry out its goals today and plan for tomorrow?
- Does the organization have financial stability, including diversified revenue sources?
- Does the organization present a clear, realistic budget?
- Is there evidence of support from the community?
- Is the board actively involved in the organization?

Awards

Awarded funds can only be expended on the proposed activities that take place within the City of Fort Worth.

Grant awards are determined by the following factors:

- amount of funding available;
- number of eligible applications;
- review panel scores; and
- award compliance (including timely submission of required reports from previous grant years).

Once average panel scores are finalized, awards are allocated by Arts Fort Worth staff through use of a predetermined funding matrix. Funding matrixes are developed prior to the grant review sessions to ensure award allocations are fair and replicable. Matrix award values are based on available funds and the number of eligible applications within each grant pool. Total funds requested traditionally exceed the funds available. Funding is not guaranteed. Award determinations are approved and finalized by the Arts Fort Worth Board of Directors.

Award notifications are sent to each applicant organization via email through the Foundant grant management system. As such, all applicants should add the email address administrator@grantinterface.com to their contact list to ensure timely notification delivery. Application scores and panelist comments for all applicant organizations are then uploaded to the [grants portal](#). For grant recipients, award details and grant agreements stipulating the terms of the award are also made available through the grants portal. Grantees must return the fully executed grant agreement by the stated due date. Grant agreements not received by the deadline will be voided and funding will be reallocated. Grant recipients will also be asked to share quality photos for promotional use. All awards are made public via the Arts Fort Worth website and through various agency publications.

Matching Requirement

CORE Operating Support Grant recipients are required to procure and provide evidence of a 1:1 cash match of the funds awarded through any combination of earned or unearned income. The grant recipient's failure to meet the match will result in a proportionally reduced grant award and may require reimbursement to Arts Fort Worth.

Equity

Through this program we continue an ongoing commitment to support arts for all. Creativity transcends all barriers, real and perceived. We commit to challenging systemic and historic barriers by building a platform where all have an opportunity to express and see themselves in the arts. Arts Fort Worth recognizes historical and structural disparities and a need for alleviation of these wrongs and is taking steps to create a culture of equity.

Appeals

Written appeals must be submitted to the Chair of the Board within thirty days of the initial ineligibility notification. Appeals are considered by a review process committee, appointed by the Arts Fort Worth Board Chair. The review process committee will report its findings and recommendations to the Arts Fort Worth Board of Directors for further action. Appeal responses are sent via mail. All decisions of Arts Fort Worth and its Board of Director's are final.

Payment

Grant awards are paid in full in January of the funded year. All payments are contingent upon the satisfactory completion of Arts Fort Worth grant requirements, including but not limited to the execution of the grant contract, satisfactory past grant reporting, and completion of any Arts Fort Worth site visit action items. All payments are subject to the availability of funds from City contracts. All payments are made via check.

Acknowledgement

Grant recipients must acknowledge Arts Fort Worth and the City of Fort Worth in the following ways:

- a credit line and/or Arts Fort Worth logo must appear in all published materials and announcements regarding grant-supported activities with language similar to: "[Organization or project] is supported in part by a grant from Arts Fort Worth";
- one page of each season program or playbill must be reserved for a listing of Arts Fort Worth donors; and
- the City of Fort Worth should be recognized whenever Arts Fort Worth funding is acknowledged.

Donor listings and logos are available for download at www.artsfortworth.org/grantee-resources.

Reporting

Grantees are required to submit quarterly service reports throughout the year, sharing presentation numbers, attendance figures (broken down by age group), and percentage of free admission. Grant recipients will also submit a comprehensive final report to Arts Fort Worth detailing the use of funds, additional income sources, activities assessment, and statistical outcomes, at the end of the grant period.

All reports are to be obtained and completed via the online [grants_portal](#). Failure to complete reporting requirements as specified below is considered a breach of contract with Arts Fort Worth:

- each delinquent report will result in a 5 point demerit per day from the organization's next application score (there will be a 2 point demerit if the report is submitted on the due date but past the 4:00 PM deadline);
- organizations with outstanding reports are ineligible to sign any new contracts for funding;
- organizations with outstanding reports are deemed ineligible for funding;
- organizations with 3 or more late reports in the current grant cycle are deemed ineligible for funding for the next grant cycle; and
- failure to submit a final report within thirty (30) days after the contract end date will result in forfeiture of all remaining award payments to Arts Fort Worth and result in an automatic void of any new/pending award contracts executed between Arts Fort Worth and the grantee.

Site Visits

Periodically, Arts Fort Worth staff will conduct in-person site visits with awards recipients. During these visits, Arts Fort Worth staff reviews financial records for received Arts Fort Worth grants. Report forms submitted to Arts Fort Worth are the basis for these reviews. Grantees must show copies of checks, bank statements, and/or other financial documentation that supports the expenditure line items on the report forms. Any pending or future grants are contingent on the satisfactory outcome of the monitoring visit and resolution of any inaccuracies found in the report form.

Compliance

Arts Fort Worth grant recipients are expected to complete funded activities as proposed in the grant application. Award recipients are responsible for informing Arts Fort Worth, in writing, of any substantial or fundamental changes to funded activities. A written request for approval of changes, including related justification, should be sent to Arts Fort Worth prior to the expenditure of grant funds. Approval is not guaranteed.

If the organization's capacity or proposed programming changes significantly, the grant award may be revised or withdrawn. In some instances, awarded funds may be subject to repayment to Arts Fort Worth by the recipient organization.

The compliance measures listed herein are non-negotiable. Any pending or future grants are contingent upon satisfactory compliance with all measures listed above.

Marketing Support

Arts Fort Worth will share general grantee announcements via its social media channels. To request a post, contact Elena Greer, Communications Manager, at egreer@artscouncilfw.org and she will happily accommodate your request as her schedule allows. When requesting a post, please provide 2-3 images with credit information, and a short caption (which Arts Fort Worth reserves the right to edit as needed). Please note that Arts Fort Worth will not advertise ticketed events or promote fundraisers. Arts Fort Worth does provide links to grantee organizations on its website.