



FY26-27 General Operating Support – Emerging and Small Organizations

Deadline: February 28, 2025, 5:00 pm

General Operating Support for Emerging and Small Organizations offers small grants to support young arts organizations. Groups that do not have 501(c)(3) nonprofit status and do not have Fiscal Sponsorship can apply for fiscal sponsorship when completing this grant application through our partnership with [Shunpike](#).

Organizations that focus on the work of communities not fully or authentically represented in their region, especially those that focus on communities impacted by historical and structural inequity, are strongly encouraged to apply. Please reach out with questions and for assistance.

Partnership with Shunpike:

ArtsWA is pleased to partner with Shunpike to offer fiscal sponsorship to new groups wishing to apply to the General Operating Support Emerging and Small Organizations grant program.

- Groups can apply for fiscal sponsorship within the grant application.
- Groups that apply for fiscal sponsorship within the Emerging grant application must attend a fiscal sponsorship info session with Shunpike on Thursday, February 20, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. online. [Register here](#).
- Groups that are awarded a grant and gain fiscal sponsorship under Shunpike must attend a 90-minute on-boarding session.



Please read Shunpike's [Applying for Fiscal Sponsorship document](#) if you are seeking fiscal sponsorship. It includes important information about fiscal sponsorship, including how you will get paid.

Definitions for this grant:

- Emerging Organizations have at least one year of experience managing their organization and providing at least one public program.
- Small Organizations have at least three years of experience managing their organization and providing regular public programming.

Purpose of funding

Small and Emerging Organization grants help cover day-to-day business expenses (operating support) so that young organizations can focus on building capacity and providing cultural experiences for their communities.

Funding amount and payment process

ArtsWA's Grants to Organizations program has experienced exponential growth since the pandemic. Our funds have not kept pace with this growth. Beginning this funding cycle our grants will be smaller than previous years.



- Applicants can request \$6,000 for general operating expenses. Funds are distributed in equal portions over two years (\$3,000 x 2). Grant amounts may vary depending on available funds and number of applications received.
- ArtsWA grants are reimbursement grants. Payments are made after expenses are incurred, normally at the end of your operating year.
- Full list of what [ArtsWA can and cannot fund](#) as a state agency.

Requirements to apply

- Organizations must have three members or more with assigned titles, roles, and duties.
- A mission that centers arts, culture, and/or heritage.
- Publicly accessible programming.
- Emerging Organizations have at least one year of experience managing their organization and providing at least one public program.
- Small Organizations have at least three years of experience managing their organization and providing regular public programming.
- Be based in Washington State.
- Organizations operating as affiliates of National Organizations must be part of a group exemption. [Read more here.](#)
- Annual operating budget between \$0-\$50,000, or
- Annual operating budget between \$50,000 and \$100,000.
- 501(c)(3) nonprofit, or
- Fiscally sponsored by a 501(c)(3). [Click here for ArtsWA's Fiscal Sponsorship Requirements](#)
- Unincorporated groups may apply but must gain fiscal sponsorship before [July 1, 2025](#).

Ineligible to apply

- Individuals
- For-profit organizations
- Religious organizations (eligible for Project Support grants only)
- Government agencies and departments not officially designated as Local Arts Agencies.
- Universities, colleges, academic departments, and K-12 schools

Required documentation

- IRS Letter of Determination. More information on Letter of Determination [here](#).
 - Fiscally sponsored groups will use the fiscal sponsor's IRS Letter of Determination.
- Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).
 - Fiscally sponsored groups will use the fiscal sponsor's UEI.
- Federal Tax ID (EIN).
 - Fiscally sponsored groups will use the fiscal sponsor's EIN.
- Statewide Vendor (SWV) number. *
 - Fiscally sponsored groups will use the fiscal sponsor's SWV.

**If you have previously received payment from Washington State, check on the status of your SWV number here: [vendor number lookup](#) or by contacting: PayeeRegistration@ofm.wa.gov. They are good for two years.*

- Washington State Unified Business Identifier (UBI) (all organizations must be registered as a WA Nonprofit/Charity with the Secretary of State).



Evaluation, scoring, and notification

Grants to Organizations' (GTO) grant programs support organizations of all sizes, ensuring the arts remain accessible to all Washingtonians. However, the demand for funding has surged, with some GTO programs seeing a staggering 385% increase in applications. Our available funds, however, have remained stagnant. Starting with the FY26 funding cycle, we will implement priorities-based criteria to ensure our limited funds are distributed equitably. This funding structure and process is strategically designed to maximize support for our growing community while aligning with the objectives in our strategic plan. We seek to keep diverse communities engaged in the creative economy, support the creative sector statewide, and emphasize cultural equity, community diversity, and sector growth.

Priorities for Operating Support Grants

- Annual operating budgets of \$0 to \$50,000 (first consideration).
- Annual operating budgets of \$50,000 to \$100,000 (second consideration).
- Businesses located in counties identified by the state as a distressed area: Clallam, Cowlitz, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Kittitas, Klickitat, Lewis, Mason, Okanogan, Pacific, Pend Oreille, Skamania, Stevens, Wahkiakum, and Yakima.
- Organizations serving constituencies consisting of 25% or more of an underserved group. *"Underserved" means populations whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited by geography, historical exclusion and marginalization due to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, economics, disability, or other social or institutionally imposed barriers.*

Priority scoring

Applications are reviewed and scored by staff who make recommendations for funding to ArtsWA's [Board of Commissioners](#).

Executive Director approval

Staff make recommendations for funding to ArtsWA's Executive Director for Approval.

Board of Directors ratification

Executive Director's Approval of funding is presented to ArtsWA's Board of Directors for oversight and Ratification.

Notification

Notifications of application status will be sent the last week of March 2025. Grant recipients will receive a contract and instructions a few weeks after notification. Read about [managing a grant here](#).

Important dates

- Application open period is January 21, 2025 – February 28, 2025, 5pm
- Grant application webinars:
 - Tuesday, January 28, 2025 at 11:30 am – 12:30 pm, [register here](#).
 - Tuesday, February 18, 2025 at 11:30 am – 12:30 pm, [register here](#).
- Grant office hours, [register here](#).
 - Once a week, starting Thursday, January 30, 2025 at 11:00 am – 2:00 pm



- Shunpike virtual Fiscal Sponsorship Info Session on Thursday, February 20, 2025 at 5:00 p.m., [register here](#).
 - This meeting is mandatory for groups applying for fiscal sponsorship within our grant application.
- Notification of application results: Last week of March 2025
- Funds can cover expenses for the period between July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026
- Two final reports due:
 - Fiscal year 2026 Final Report due July 31, 2026
 - Fiscal year 2027 Final Report due July 31, 2027

To apply

- ArtsWA uses Submittable to accept applications. [Log in or create an account here](#).
- [Click here to apply](#).
- If you need assistance with Submittable, take a look at our [Submittable FAQs](#).

Additional information

Accessibility

Federally funded projects must be accessible to people with disabilities. You can use [this accessibility checklist](#) when planning your programs. You do not need to check all boxes to be eligible for funding; this is simply a worksheet and resource for your organization.

Civil Rights

All applicants for funding from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) are required to certify that they are following the civil rights statutes that govern nondiscrimination in Federally assisted programs. For a FAQ on Civil Rights for applicants and to ensure your organization complies, [click here](#).

Appeals

Unsuccessful applicants can appeal in accordance with Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 30.12.036, found here: <http://app.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=30-12-036>.

About ArtsWA

ArtsWA is the [Washington State Arts Commission](#). The Washington State Legislature and the National Endowment for the Arts fund our programs. Grants are contingent on available state and federal funding. ArtsWA complies with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations concerning civil and human rights. For more information regarding Washington State Arts Commission's policies on Accessibility, Diversity, and Nondiscrimination, [click here](#).

Contact us

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