

General Project Support for Organizations

The ArtSTART program provides flexible, accessible funding to help organizations complete short-term projects addressing a wide variety of goals and objectives. Most awards support the programming of new or emerging organizations, including first-time OAC applicants, as well as established organizations in areas not served by other arts providers.

GRANT AWARDS: Applicants may request between \$1,000 and \$5,000. All awards require a 1:1 cash match.

ELIGIBILITY: All applicants must possess nonprofit status or nonprofit intent, but need not be registered with the IRS as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Applicants may be: 1) arts and cultural organizations in any arts discipline (literature, performing arts, visual arts, traditional arts, multidisciplinary arts, etc.); 2) other organizations that provide arts programming (government entities, social service agencies, etc.); or 3) educational organizations (public, private, charter, and parochial schools from pre-kindergarten through university level) that demonstrate a commitment to arts programming in a larger community setting.

Organizations receiving support through the Sustainability or Arts Access program are ineligible to apply.

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS: ArtSTART grants are one-year awards for organizational project support. Funds may be used for a wide variety of expenses in an organization's overall operations, or in the execution of a given activity or suite of related activities. Many grantees use ArtSTART funds to support artistic or administrative expenses, but other allowable expenses include marketing, program planning, education, and evaluation. The budget section of the ArtSTART application provides a full list of allowable expense areas. Please refer to the [Introduction and Overview](#) for a list of activities the OAC cannot fund.

Sample activities might include:

- dance performances at a community arts festival
- exhibition costs for a seasonal visual arts show
- printing costs for a community theatre's large print programs and sign language interpreter
- a weekly summer concert series
- production of a new literary journal
- an annual theatre production featuring local performers
- personnel costs to hire a local arts council's first paid staff member
- the yearlong suite of arts programming of a non-arts organization

HOW TO APPLY: ArtSTART program applications must be submitted via the [ARTIE](#) system. Please refer to [ARTIE: Organizational Grant Applications](#) for a description of the process.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: April 1
(annually)

STAFF CONTACTS

Brianna Dance

Organizational Investment Coordinator
for organizations in the Eastern Region

brianna.dance@oac.ohio.gov

614-728-4427

Jim Szekacs

Organizational Investment Coordinator
for organizations in the Western Region, and
Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, and Lorain counties

jim.szekacs@oac.ohio.gov

614-728-4449

[VIEW REGIONAL MAP](#)

EVALUATION AND SCORING: A panel of arts and cultural professionals, educators, artists, and other community members evaluate and score ArtSTART grant applications. Panel meetings are open to the public and audio-streamed online. Representatives of applying organizations are encouraged to attend or listen online. Visit the calendar on the OAC’s [Grants](#) page for meeting details and instructions for participating.

At the panel meeting, panelists discuss how well each application satisfies the program's evaluation criteria. Panelists highlight strengths and weaknesses, discussing all aspects of the application and its support materials. Following the public discussion, each panelist enters a final score for each application. Later, OAC staff use averages of these scores to determine funding award recommendations. The OAC Board is the only body authorized to make final funding decisions and must approve funding recommendations. The review process is competitive, and not all applications are funded.

REVIEW CRITERIA: Criteria are divided into four categories: Program Quality, Community Engagement, Defining and Measuring Success, and Resource Management. Criteria evidence may be found in any portion of an application or associated support materials. Each criterion is worth up to five points, for a maximum of 60 points.

Program Quality (10 points)

- Project will result in activities of artistic, educational, or cultural value
- Artistic and/or educational leaders are qualified to carry out project as described

Community Engagement (20 points)

- Efforts to engage participants are energetic and focused
- Organization works to attract a diverse range of participants, including people with disabilities
- Project will be promoted using up-to-date tools and an understanding of targeted communities
- Engagement with the broader community is evident

Defining and Measuring Success (20 points)

- Project has been thoughtfully planned
- Planning processes involve a wide range of voices
- Successful outcomes for the project are clearly defined
- Documenting activities will help organization know to what degree success was achieved

Resource Management (10 points)

- Appropriate financial and other resources have been sought out to support project
- Sound administrative practices are led by qualified personnel

TIMELINE: The following timeline outlines the ArtSTART grant lifecycle. Any deadline falling on a Saturday, Sunday, or state holiday, is extended until the next business day.

YEAR	DATE	TASK/DEADLINE
2016	November 1	Application Available in ARTIE
2017	April 1	Application Deadline
	May	Panel Meeting
	July	Grant Award Announcement
	August 30	Grant Agreement Deadline
2018	July 30	Final Report Deadline