



Request for Proposals

Ohio Arts Council's (OAC) Main Stage to Main Street Initiative

Introduction

Launched in FY2016, the OAC's Main Stage to Main Street initiative (MSMS) is designed to advance and broaden the agency's Ohio Artists on Tour (OAOT) program so that it can better serve rural and underserved regions of Ohio. MSMS also highlights Ohio's diverse communities and artistic main stage treasures, increases performance opportunities for Ohio artists, and introduces them to a wider audience.

The goals of MSMS include:

- 1) support arts and arts education opportunities in rural and/or underserved communities;
- 2) provide funding for communities and presenting arts organizations to work together on behalf of communities and schools;
- 3) empower mid-sized Ohio arts organizations and broaden their impact, and
- 4) connect rural areas of Ohio with traditional and folk arts from various regions of the state.

Grant Awards

Applicants may request up to \$10,000 toward the presenting fee of an Ohio performing arts organization. A 1:1 match is required, which can come from cash and/or allowable in-kind donations. Presenters in search of performing artists are encouraged to consider artists and ensembles listed in the OAC's [Ohio Artists on Tour roster](#), though other Ohio-based artists may be used as well.

How the Initiative Works

MSMS is a pilot initiative that began in FY2016. Funded organizations are expected to 1) provide at least one free community performance; and 2) provide community engagement activities including educational outreach for schools, masterclasses, and/or other appropriate activities that engage the community.

MSMS funds may be used to support artistic or administrative expenses, in addition to other allowable expenses such as marketing or outside contractor fees. Please refer to the [Introduction and Overview](#) of the OAC's *Guidelines* for a complete list of activities the OAC cannot fund. An executed contract should be provided with the application, or, if unavailable at the time of application, with the final report.

The first half of each award is paid at the start of the award period, with the remaining half paid following submission of an acceptable final report, due 30 days following the project end date. Funding priority for MSMS is given to Ohio's rural and Appalachian counties.

Grantees will be required to participate in an evaluation process to gauge the initiative's effectiveness.

Examples of MSMS-funded projects might include contracting with performer(s) to present:

- a music series at a local festival, followed by outreach activities in local schools;
- a weekly summer concert series, with related masterclasses at a nearby university;
- a special performance by a traditional artist or ensemble to celebrate a community milestone, followed by a lecture/demonstration discussing related community history;
- a three-day artist residency in a school or other community location, with a culminating community performance, or
- a theatre production by a professional cast, with afternoon workshops for preschool students.

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) that demonstrate a commitment to arts programming in a larger community setting. Organizations receiving other OAC support may be eligible to apply for additional funding through MSMS.

Review Process and Criteria

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis, with reviews taking place monthly. Funded applications will meet the following review criteria:



Program Quality: The proposed project demonstrates artistic, educational, and/or cultural value, aligns with organization's mission, and involves qualified personnel.

Community Engagement: The proposed project will be accessible to the community being served, well-promoted, and engaging for potential participants.

Defining and Measuring Success: The proposed project has been well-planned, has realistic goals for success, and includes plans to capture feedback on that success from participants.

Resource Management: The proposed project will be carried out by qualified leaders and has a complete and realistic budget.

How to Apply: MSMS applications are submitted and managed online via the OAC's [ARTIE](#) online grants system; the process is straightforward and simple to complete. To learn more about this initiative or begin an application, contact an OAC Organizational Investment Coordinator.

For counties in the western region (yellow), contact Jim Szekacs (614-728-4449 or jim.szekacs@oac.ohio.gov). For counties in the eastern and central regions (green), contact Brianna Dance (614-728-4427 or brianna.dance@oac.ohio.gov).