Traditional Arts Apprenticeship
Sustaining Cultural Heritage through Collaboration

Ohio Arts COUNCIL

The Traditional Arts Apprenticeship (TAA) program provides support for mentor artists to work with apprentices to build understanding and proficiency in folk and traditional art forms. By supporting exemplary practitioners working with dedicated apprentices, this program allows for concentrated study and cultural transmission. Traditional Arts Apprenticeship awards support the teaching and sharing of important cultural traditions and enrich the lives of people throughout the state.

GRANT AWARDS: Mentor artists may request up to $4,000 to work with one, and, if appropriate, two apprentices. At least 50 percent of the request must be used for mentor artist honoraria. No match is required. Traditional Arts Apprenticeship grantees generally receive a portion of their request relative to their application score. Grantees may apply for a partial payment of 50 percent of their total grant award via ARTIE, with the remainder of the award distributed after approval of a completed final report.

ELIGIBILITY: The following eligibility requirements apply to all applicants:

- Applications are submitted by the mentor artist
- Mentor artists *may* live in another state if there is no suitable artist in Ohio
- Apprentices *must* live in Ohio.
- Apprentices must demonstrate interest and competency in the traditional art form prior to the apprenticeship.
- Both mentors and apprentices must be U.S. citizens or permanent resident aliens and must have lived in the country for at least eight months prior to the deadline.

> **APPLICATION DEADLINE**
> April 1 (annually) at 5 p.m.
>
> **STAFF CONTACT**
> **Chaz O'Neil**
> *Individual Artist/Percent for Art Program Coordinator*
> chaz.oneil@oac.ohio.gov
> 614-728-4421

The OAC does not have the authority to require criminal background checks of mentor artists participating in TAA projects. In the event that an apprentice is a minor, mentor artists must complete a criminal background check upon parental/guardian request in order to participate in this program.

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS: Traditional arts are part of the cultural heritage of a group of people whose members share a common ethnic heritage, language, religion, occupation, or geographic region. Mentor artists and apprentices apply together to this program. Mentor artists should have achieved a high level of skill in a particular traditional art form, be regarded as experts by their peers, and have learned and developed their skills within a traditional context. Apprentices should demonstrate strong motivation to learn the nuances of the tradition, and a commitment to carry the tradition on in the future.

Applicants are eligible for only one award per year. Applications are accepted for apprenticeships in all forms of traditional arts, including traditional music and instrument making, sacred and secular crafts, occupational traditions, folk and ethnic dance, and traditional arts associated with annual celebrations. The applying mentor must demonstrate that they are an active member of the culture or occupational group whose tradition they are sharing, and that the tradition is being shared within a culture or community of practitioners, not learned through an academic setting.

The mentor and the apprentice work together in an intensive, yearlong, learning experience. Apprentices learn directly by observing, imitating, and refining their artistic work based on the guidance of the mentor artist. Skills are typically learned directly through observation and imitation, rather than through classes, books, or other means of instruction. The sharing of the cultural importance and history of the tradition is a key component to a successful apprenticeship.

An apprenticeship work plan should allow for in-depth learning that encompasses the context of the culture, the development of a mentoring relationship, and the acquisition of both techniques and artistry. The mentor artist is responsible for monitoring the apprentice's progress as outlined in the application work plan. The apprenticeship must include a minimum of 50 hours of direct, one-on-one instruction, provided via a number of sessions (typically bi-weekly or monthly), conducted over the course of a year. During the yearlong apprenticeship period, a site visit may be made by OAC staff or a folklorist to document the teaching/learning process. Photographs of the session may be taken and recorded interviews may be conducted. In addition, the mentor artist and apprentice are expected to give a joint community presentation near the end of the apprenticeship period (e.g., performing at a public event, offering a class, holding an open studio session, or exhibiting at a local library or gallery), which must occur in Ohio.

TAA funds cannot be used for: apprentice stipends, out-of-state travel, in-state apprentice travel, tools and supplies that will remain with the apprentice, and ongoing class or educational expenses. Please refer to the Introduction and Overview for a full list of activities the OAC cannot fund.

HOW TO APPLY: Traditional Arts Apprenticeship program applications and support materials must be submitted via the ARTIE system. Please refer to ARTIE: Individual Artist Grant Applications for a description of the process.

EVALUATION AND SCORING: A panel of folklorists, arts professionals, traditional artists, and other community members meet to evaluate and score applications. Panel meetings are open to the public through a free video conferencing platform. Applicants are strongly encouraged to listen online. For details on panel meeting dates, times, and instructions for participating, visit the OAC online grants calendar (oac.ohio.gov/Grants/Grants-Calendar).

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 grant awards. The review process is competitive, and not all applications are funded.

SUPPORT MATERIALS: Support materials are uploaded electronically into the ARTIE system. Applications that do not include support materials will not be accepted. All support materials must represent the selected folk/traditional art form. All work must have been completed within the last five years, and should include:

1. **Mentor artist support**. Up to three letters of support written by community members who are knowledgeable about the traditional art form and the mentor's artistic contribution to the community.

2. **Apprentice support**. Up to three letters of support written by community members who are knowledgeable about the traditional art form and the apprentice's experience with the art form.

3. **Digital work samples**. For both the mentor artist and the apprentice, demonstrating artistic expression and technical ability.

   Digital examples of brochures, newspaper or magazine articles, exhibition catalogs, and programs may also be uploaded as support materials; materials available online may also be hyperlinked from within the application narrative in ARTIE.

Discipline-Specific Support Materials:

1. **Traditional craft**: applicants must submit between 5-10 digital images each of both the mentor artist and the apprentice's work.

2. **Music/verbal arts**: applicants must submit at least two sound or video recordings, one of the mentor artist and one of the apprentice, with information describing the performers, instruments, and material being presented.

3. **Traditional dance**: applicants must submit at least two video recordings, one of the mentor artist and one of the apprentice, with information describing the performers, the dance form, and material being presented.

REVIEW CRITERIA: Criteria are divided into four categories: Artistic Quality, Community Engagement, Defining and Measuring Success, and Resource Management. Evidence of meeting the criteria 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.

Artistic Quality (15 points)
☐ Mentor has achieved a high level of artistry in the tradition to be recognized as an expert by their peers
☐ Mentor artist has learned skills from their particular cultural, occupational, or regional group, or from community or family traditions, and faithfully represents the art form or tradition
☐ Apprentice demonstrates competency in the tradition and shows commitment to further learning

Community Engagement (15 points)
☐ Mentor artist engages members of the public in their tradition
☐ Apprentice actively engages in the art form and shares with the public
☐ Apprentice describes their plan for carrying on artistic traditions in the community

Defining and Measuring Success (20 points)
☐ Apprenticeship includes a detailed work plan with clear benchmarks
☐ Skills to be learned during the apprenticeship are clearly defined
☐ Apprenticeship will include individual study, cultural significance, and practice of appropriate complexity
☐ Mentor artist and apprentice demonstrate dedication to sustaining the artform being studied (e.g. via a shared cultural background or other means)

Resource Management (10 points)
☐ Budget will be sufficient to accomplish the apprenticeship as described
☐ Budget aligns with proposal narrative

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

Task/Deadline	FY 2024 Applications	FY 2025 Applications
Application Available in ARTIE	November 2022	November 2023
Application Deadline at 5 p.m.	April 1, 2023	April 1, 2024
Grant Award Announcement	July 2023	July 2024
Grant Agreement Deadline	August 30, 2023	August 30, 2024
Final Report Deadline	July 30, 2024	July 30, 2025