



## Arts Ecosystem Grant Program

Fiscal Year 2020 Deadline: September 27, 2019 at 4:30 p.m.

The Arts Ecosystem Program provides funding of up to \$5,000 to individuals or organizations for projects that help networks of artists. This is a new program for which we are looking for innovative ideas that support building bridges and connections between artists or provide support for artists in ways that don't already exist.

We are not making many rules for this program because we want to encourage innovation and experimentation. In our discussions with artists, arts organizations, and community leaders, we have found that creating networks of support for artists and the work they do is a real need and that our existing grant programs were not necessarily helpful to these ideas. We are happy to talk through your ideas before you get too far. Please feel free to email us at [info@aracouncil.org](mailto:info@aracouncil.org) or call us at (218) 722-0952 to start a conversation.

We would love to support projects that continue or expand the work of events like the Cool and Creative Get Together, the Creative Communities Leadership Institute, or the Twin Ports Arts Align project. But there is no requirement that you

participated in one of these events to propose a project.

Our review of these applications will have three steps:

- 1.) A review committee of our board and community leaders will score the grants based on the criteria of Community Significance, Evaluation, and Ability.
- 2.) That review committee will then look at the higher scoring applications and recommend three or more projects that best represent a wide section of the region and a variety of ideas.
- 3.) ARAC's board will then review the recommendations and approve the final project proposals.

We encourage you to research ideas that have worked in other locations. Springboard for the Arts' Creative Exchange website is a good place to look to see what has worked in other places. They have a number of toolkits for artists, organizations, and communities that are worth reviewing.

<https://springboardexchange.org>

**This information can be made available in the following alternative formats: Braille, large print, and audio tape. We also can help your group find a language interpreter to translate these guidelines. To accommodate your request, the Arrowhead Regional Arts Council will need at least 10 working days.**

Arrowhead Regional Arts Council  
The Ordean Building  
424 West Superior Street, Suite 104  
Duluth, MN 55802  
218-722-0952 or 800-569-8134  
[info@aracouncil.org](mailto:info@aracouncil.org)  
MN Relay Service 1-800-627-3529

This is not a program to support festivals or similar activities. Only one of the projects may be located in Duluth.

### **Review Criteria**

**Impact (60%):** The value that your project has to the artistic community it is supposed to support. This will include how much community support (both of artists and of the arts-interested public) that you can demonstrate in your application.

**Ability and Evaluation (40%):** Your organization's capacity to undertake your project. This includes: providing a budget that is realistic, feasible, and demonstrates a clear understanding of the scope of your project; and adequate support materials, including letters of commitment and support as necessary. Your plan should have a measurable outcome and a reasonable way to show that you were successful or ways to improve your project if you'd like to continue it.

### **Application Deadlines for FY20:**

For projects beginning December 1, 2019  
**Friday, September 27, 2019 at 4:30 p.m.**  
Applications open six weeks prior to the deadline.

Your project must be completed and grant funds spent by June 30, 2021.

For Fiscal Year 2020, ARAC has budgeted \$15,000 for this one deadline.

### **Who's Eligible?**

Organizations and Individuals are both eligible for this program.

### **Individuals:**

To be eligible to apply for this program, you must be at least eighteen years old, a U.S. citizen or have permanent resident status,

and be a resident of Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, or St. Louis County for at least six months, and remain a Minnesota resident for the duration of the project. Individuals enrolled in arts-related degree programs are INELIGIBLE to apply.

### **Organizations:**

To be eligible, your organization must be located in the following Arrowhead counties: Aitkin, Cook, Carlton, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, or St. Louis.

### **What Kind of Organizations?**

- State-registered and federally recognized non-profit, tax-exempt organizations
- Accredited schools
- Tribal governments
- Units of government

If your group has not yet received non-profit, tax-exempt status, you may apply by using another nonprofit organization, accredited school, tribal government, or other unit of government as a fiscal sponsor. For information on how to use a Fiscal Sponsor, see the [Fiscal Sponsor Guidelines](#) page on our website, or contact us directly.

### **Coordination with Minnesota State Arts Board Support**

Organizations currently receiving Operating Support from the Minnesota State Arts Board (MSAB) are not eligible to apply to this or any other ARAC program, though they may serve as an eligible group's fiscal sponsor or partner. Past ARAC grant recipients with an overdue, unaccepted, or falsified final report are ineligible to apply.

Individuals with projects seeking financial support from both ARAC and the Minnesota State Arts Board (MSAB) may do so only after consulting with ARAC staff.

### **How Many ARAC Grants Can an Organization Receive in One Year?**

In a single ARAC fiscal year (July 1-June 30), an organization can receive grant funding of **up to \$20,000 total** from applications reviewed in all eligible programs.

### **How Many ARAC Grants Can an Individual Receive in One Year?**

In a single ARAC fiscal year (July 1-June 30), you may receive one grant from each eligible program, as long as they are each for separate projects.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act**

Funded applications must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA requires that organizations make access to publicly funded projects available to people with disabilities. For more information contact: VSA Minnesota at 612-332-3888, [craig@vsamn.org](mailto:craig@vsamn.org), [www.vsamn.org](http://www.vsamn.org), or the MN State Council on Disability at 800-945-8913, [council.disability@state.mn.us](mailto:council.disability@state.mn.us), [www.disability.state.mn.us](http://www.disability.state.mn.us).

### **What Kinds of Things are INELIGIBLE for Funding?**

- The project attempts to influence any state or federal legislation
- The activity involves out-of-state travel.
- The project requires excessive entry or exhibition fees, includes tuition, fees or work toward a degree
- The project primarily involves developing school curriculum plans or teaching materials

- The project promotes religious socialization
- The project was once supported by state general fund appropriations
- The project is designed for a private audience and is not open to the general public
- The project is for capital improvement or construction
- The funds are requested to purchase more than \$600 worth of equipment or to purchase real property
- The funds are requested for general operating support
- The funds are requested for a project that serves as a benefit or fundraiser

Funding for this program comes from Minnesota's Legacy Amendment, which has a mandate that the money is to supplement activities that have traditionally been funded by other sources of money, not as a substitute for them. If you have questions about this requirement, please contact our office.

**Note:** ARAC has attempted to provide a thorough and clear articulation of its eligibility rules, but it reserves the right to declare an application ineligible for reasons not explicitly stated here. If you have questions about the eligibility of your project, please contact the office. Grantees are responsible for complying with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, regulations, and ordinances in relation to the use of these funds. Failure to comply may result in termination or forfeiture of the grant.

### **Tips on Applying for Grants**

- If you have any questions, or if you are a first-time applicant, you are encouraged to contact ARAC staff at 218-722-0952, 800-569-8134, or [grants@aracouncil.org](mailto:grants@aracouncil.org).

- ARAC staff can review your grant application if you request that review two weeks or more before the grant deadline. Staff assistance in no way implies your grant request will be funded.
- Please review our website for our Grants FAQ.

## Narrative Questions

### Impact

**(60% of your score):**

Describe what you would like to do, as well as the anticipated artistic and community value of your project.

- What is your proposed project? Where will it take place, and what is the timeline of your activity?
- How will your project create systems and/or connections that will bridge artists together?
- What is the anticipated community value of your project? The community value of your project might be a public event, increased access to the arts, or some other form of public engagement. Your event does not have to result in a public event if not appropriate, but in most cases the projects will be open to the public and have a public component.
- What else can you tell us about your project's significance to the artist community?\*

### Ability and Evaluation

**(40% of your score):**

Describe your capacity to undertake your project. This includes: providing a budget that is realistic, feasible, and demonstrates a clear understanding of the scope of your project; articulating your readiness to undertake the project; and demonstrating a clear vision of what success will look like and articulating appropriate assessment

strategies for knowing whether you achieved what you intended.

### Ability

- Tell us why we should have confidence you or your organization can complete this project.
- How will the requested ARAC funding be used? Please provide context and details for the budget you will attach.

### Evaluation

- Goal Statement. What are you trying to accomplish with this work? What are your measurable outcomes?
- How do you plan to know if the work was a success? Please tell us about how you will assess this work. How will you measure the outcomes stated above?

### Optional:

- Is there anything more you would like to tell ARAC about your proposed project or your organization?

You'll be asked to attach appropriate artistic resumes.

### What happens after I apply?

1. The staff reviews all applications and materials for completeness and eligibility. Applicants are responsible for the quality and scope of their application. Reminder: Late or incomplete applications are ineligible.
2. Eligible applications are reviewed by a panel of community and board members, who then send recommendations to the ARAC Board for final approval. All applicants will be notified of the meeting and are allowed to observe the proceedings. All board

and panel meetings are open to the public.

3. Applicants will be notified via email of the Board's decision within fourteen days of the board grant review. Successful applicants will receive a contract and a final report form which must be completed and submitted within thirty days of completion of the project. Applicants are responsible for updating ARAC in writing of any major changes to their proposed project.
4. The Board's funding decisions may be appealed solely on alleged procedural errors. An applicant must request an appeal within thirty days of notification of the Board decision. A Review Process Subcommittee, consisting of at least three members appointed by the ARAC chair, will consider any appeals. The Review Process Subcommittee reports its findings and recommendations to the full ARAC Board for action.

**Our website includes tip sheets about:**

- **Applying for grants generally**
- **How to fill out our budget document**
- **How to use the ARAC Grant Portal**

## **About Us**

**Mission:** The Arrowhead Regional Arts Council (ARAC) seeks to facilitate and encourage local arts development. This mission statement grows from a conviction that the arts improve the quality of life in the region.

**Legislative Mandate:** ARAC is one of eleven regional arts councils designated by the State of Minnesota "to make final decisions on the use of legislative appropriations for local/regional arts development." ARAC is charged to assess the needs of the seven counties in the Arrowhead Region and to plan and administer programs and services based on its assessment.

**Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund Mandate:** ARAC receives funding from the Legacy Amendment which was appropriated by the State Legislature with money from the vote of the people of Minnesota on November 4, 2008. The intent of this funding is to support and create access to the arts for artists, arts organizations, and communities; to support arts education for Minnesotans of all ages; and to support diverse ethnic and cultural arts traditions represented in this state.



**NOTES:**

