Operating Support Program
Deadline: Letters of Intent: July 17, 2020 at 4:30 p.m.
Full Application and Renewals: August 28, 2020 at 4:30 p.m.

This program offers operating support for regional nonprofit arts organizations. The Operating Support grant is awarded on a one-year-plus-one-year formula. Grants of up to $8,000 will be made based on an organization's relative score and size. Actual amounts may be significantly less depending on how many qualified organizations apply. FY21 funding is dependent on grant funds being released by the Minnesota State Arts Board.

Criteria:
• Artistic Excellence and Leadership (25%)
• Management and Fiscal Responsibility (25%)
• Assessment and Evaluation (25%)
• Community Accessibility (25%)

Important Dates
Friday, July 17 to submit a Request for Site Visit form via our grant portal.
Friday, August 28 to have completed your site visit.
Applications due Friday, August 28, 2020 for support starting **January 1, 2021**
All dollars must be expended by **December 31, 2021**

If you received Operating Support grant for 2020, a renewal short-form application is due by Friday, August 28, 2020

Both of these will cover operating support for **January 1-December 31, 2021**

Eligibility
Who's Eligible?
Arts organizations 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 with a focus on the arts.
• Your organization must be an arts producing, arts presenting, or artist service agency, dedicated primarily to the arts. "Primarily" is defined as more than 75% of your organization's activities and budget must be solely dedicated to the arts.
• The majority of your programming, services, or activities must take place in Minnesota, and must primarily serve and engage Minnesota audiences and participants.

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
MN Relay Service 1-800-627-3529

- Your organization must have a history of at least one year of arts-related programs and services prior to applying.
- Your organization must have at least one paid or designated volunteer staff person.
- Local chapters of state or national organizations are only eligible to apply if they are administratively independent.

If your group has not yet received non-profit, tax-exempt status, you may apply by using a non-profit 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.

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.

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: MN State Council on Disability at 800-945-8913, council.disability@state.mn.us, www.disability.state.mn.us.

Funding Formula for Fiscal Year 2021

- All organizations that reach a minimum score of 75% in our board evaluation will receive a share of the funding. Organizations that receive a score of 70-74% may receive funding if a majority of our board supports awarding funding.
- The funding formula will be based on both the arts budget size of the organization as well as their score in our assessment. The formula will be in addition to a minimum payment of $1,500. Most organizations will receive between $2,000 and $7,000.

Distribution of Funds

All organizations that score more than 75% will be funded on a relative basis. ARAC has increased the amount of funding for operating support for the FY20 round. Depending on the number and quality of applications, the board may fund some organizations receiving a score of 70-74%. Each qualifying grantee will receive a minimum of $1,500, with the remaining amount of the $100,000 allotted to this program divided based on the following formula.

Points will be awarded on the following basis:

Merit Score	Multiplier
85% and above	5
75%-84%	4
70-74%*	3

Funded at the discretion of the ARAC board.

Organization Budget Size	Multiplier
Multiplier is the proportion of the organizational arts budget/$100,000 to a maximum of 1.	

Example:
An organization with a budget of $70,000 per year that scored a 76% on the evaluation would receive 4 x .7 points or 2.8 points. If 24 organizations received a score of 75% or higher and this organization was the average size and score, then this organization would receive $4541 for FY20. If a much smaller organization with a budget of $20,000 per year had the same score, they would receive, $2,369.04 for FY20. These amounts are for illustration only; the actual amount of the grants will depend on the total number of organizations receiving the minimum score.

What Kinds of Organizations are Ineligible for Funding?
- The organization's primary activities are designed for private audiences that are not open to the general public.
- The organization's primary activities function as graded school curriculum.
- The organization's primary activities involve political lobbying or attempts to influence state or federal legislation.
- The organization discriminates against persons or groups.

What Kinds of Activities are Ineligible for Funding?
This funding is intended for general operating support to be used as the organization sees fit subject to the following restrictions. You will be required to report how the funding was spent at the end of the funding period.
- The funds cannot be used to establish or contribute to an endowment.
- The funds cannot be used for capital improvement or construction.
- The funds cannot be used to purchase real property.
- The funds cannot be used to purchase alcohol.
- No funds from this grant may be used for out-of-state travel or to support activities out of state.

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 request, 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
- First time applicants are strongly encouraged to contact ARAC staff at 218-722-0952, 800-569-8134, or digby@aracouncil.org to discuss the eligibility of their organization and the process for operating support.
- ARAC staff will 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.
- Attend an ARAC workshop if possible.

- Contact the ARAC office to view past applications. You can learn from others' success.
- Proofread your application and make sure that your narrative addresses all parts of the questions.
- Have a person who is not involved in your proposal read your application. It helps to have a fresh set of eyes look at your application before pressing submit.

Narrative Questions
Artistic Excellence and Leadership
(25% of your score)
In this section, describe your organization's mission, programs, and services.
- What is your organization's mission and artistic vision for the next year? What are your organization's current programs?
- How do your organization's programs support area artists and/or attend to the artistic growth of your constituents?
- Who is responsible for the artistic and administrative leadership of your organization? Describe their qualifications.

Management and Fiscal Responsibility:
(25% of your score)
In this section, describe your organization's administrative, planning, and fiscal capabilities.
- What are the roles and responsibilities of your staff and board?
- Explain your organization's commitment to fiscal stability. Are your bookkeeping, fundraising, and financial strategies appropriate for your organization's size and constituent community?
- Describe your organization's fundraising strategies. List recent grant applications you have attempted. (You will be asked to attach at least one example of a grant application the organization has submitted to another funder for support.)

More points will be awarded to organizations that have a realistic and well-executed fundraising strategy.

Assessment and Evaluation
(25% of your score)
In this section, describe your organization's assessment and evaluation processes.
- In general, how does your organization use assessment, evaluation, and feedback to shape your organization's planning process, goals, strategies, and programming?
- What are the specific measurable goals that you have set for your organization?
- What are the specific tools you will use to evaluate whether or not you have reached your goals?

Community Accessibility
(25% of your score)
In this section, describe your organization's accessibility to your community.
- How do your services and programs provide a public benefit to Minnesota?
- Provide evidence or examples of what your organization does to address economic, geographic, physical, or cultural barriers?
- Does your organization's programming appropriately comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act?

Optional:
- Is there anything more you would like to tell ARAC about your organization?

What happens after I apply?

1. The staff reviews all applications and materials for completeness and eligibility.
2. Eligible applications are reviewed by a panel of Board and community members, and the panel's recommendations are approved by the full Board of ARAC. All applicants will be notified of the panel meeting and are allowed to observe the proceedings. All board and panel meetings are open to the public. Reviewers read grant applications in advance, so each proposal may not be discussed in detail at the meeting, but attendance is recommended so that applicants can understand how their application is received. Applicants are not allowed to address the review panel.
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. The final report must be completed and submitted within thirty days of completion of the funding period.
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 board subcommittee, consisting of at least three members appointed by the ARAC chair, will consider any appeals. The 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 our Foundant grant website**

- **Requirements and instructions for uploading documents**

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: