

Washington State Arts Commission Capacity Building / Federal Funding Project



Project information and Application Guidelines

Project Purpose: to provide capacity-building and grant development support for smaller arts organizations in pursuit of federal funds for the arts.

INTRODUCTION

One of the primary goals of the Washington State Arts Commission (ArtsWA) is to support the cultural vitality of communities throughout the state. To accomplish this, ArtsWA directs funding and services to strengthen communities and to provide arts opportunities for the public, with a particular interest in reaching diverse populations.

In keeping with this goal, ArtsWA is working to expand opportunities for Washington State's arts and cultural organization to access funding resources beyond those provided directly through ArtsWA's grant programs. ArtsWA's **Capacity Building/Federal Funding Project** is designed to support organizations that are interested in applying for federal grant programs, but that lack the institutional capacity to do so on their own. Our goal: to provide support that helps leverage federal dollars to benefit arts and culture projects that serve Washington communities.

PURPOSE OF THE CAPACITY BUILDING/FEDERAL FUNDING PROJECT

Through the FY2015 **Capacity Building/Federal Funding Project**, ArtsWA will provide assistance to one non-profit for the process of developing and submitting a federal grant application to the National Endowment for the Arts' *Our Town* program. ArtsWA's assistance will include planning and project development support as well as grantwriting.

Arts and cultural organizations interested in securing *Our Town* funding from the NEA should submit a brief application form to ArtsWA describing your organization and your project idea. We will review all applications and interview those that most closely meet both the NEA's guidelines as well as ArtsWA's priorities, which are outlined on Page 3. **Applications to ArtsWA are due July 15, 2014.**

National Endowment for the Arts' FY2015 *Our Town* Grant

Through *Our Town*, subject to the availability of funding, the National Endowment for the Arts will provide a limited number of grants, ranging from \$25,000 to \$200,000, for **creative placemaking** projects that contribute toward the livability of communities and help transform them into lively, beautiful, and sustainable places with the arts at their core. *Our Town* will invest in creative and innovative projects in which communities, together with their arts and design organizations and artists, seek to:

- Improve their quality of life.
- Encourage greater creative activity.
- Foster stronger community identity and a sense of place.
- Revitalize economic development.

A more detailed summary of the *Our Town* grant opportunity is provided on the attached **Federal Grant Opportunity** document. We ask that after reviewing this **Project Information** document and the **Federal Grant Opportunity** document, applicants who a) have a viable project idea in mind; b) meet the basic federal eligibility requirements; and c) are aligned with ArtsWA's partnership priorities read the full *Our Town* guidelines, available on the NEA's website at <http://arts.gov/grants-organizations/our-town>, in order to determine if this opportunity is truly a good fit for your organization and your proposed project idea.

(Please note that the link provided above connects to the current information available about the *Our Town* grant program. Actual guidelines for FY2015 have yet to be released.)

Through this **Capacity Building / Federal Funding Project**, ArtsWA is looking primarily for innovative and well-developed ideas that address clear and documented arts and community needs. We are also open to working with organizations to help develop raw yet promising project ideas into feasible program plans, so please don't rule out applying even if your proposed project is only in its early design stages.

ArtsWA's intent with this **Capacity Building / Federal Funding Project** is not to do the grantwriting work FOR the applicant, but to guide them through the process of applying for federal dollars by facilitating grant planning sessions, organizing proposal writing steps, offering experienced grantwriting and project planning expertise, and helping to shape the narrative into a compelling request for funding.

ArtsWA will enter into a **Partnership Agreement** with the selected organization to support their pursuit of *Our Town* funding. In this partnership:

ArtsWA's responsibilities will include assistance and support with:

- Developing the project proposal
- Aligning proposal with NEA guidelines and goals
- Developing and coordinating a calendar of internal deadlines in order to meet NEA deadline
- Grant writing and development of grant support materials
- Budget development
- Registration for SAM (System for Award Management) and Grants.gov databases
- Technical submission of the grant application package

The selected partner organizations will be responsible for:

- Allocating significant staff time for project development and grant proposal writing process
- Developing/expanding local partnerships to support project
- Securing necessary funding matches
- Maintaining staff and board commitment to the process and the project
- Maintaining prompt and consistent communication with the Grant Development Consultant provided by ArtsWA
- Meeting all internal deadlines in order to meet the application deadline
- Providing ArtsWA within 30 days after submittal of the NEA grant application a brief assessment of the project development/grantwriting process
- Implementing the proposed project if funded, including fulfillment of all reporting obligations to the NEA

- Managing all grant funds awarded responsibly and with transparency

ArtsWA PARTNERSHIP PRIORITIES

It is ArtsWA's goal to help arts and cultural organizations in our state access federal dollars they might otherwise not have the capacity to apply for. To this end, ArtsWA is particularly interested in working with organizations serving:

- **Rural, low-income, and/or smaller communities**
- **Culturally under-resourced communities**

ArtsWA will give priority to organizations that have **limited experience** in applying for/receiving federal funding and/or have **limited staff capacity for grantwriting**. Applicant can be an organization that is small or without an experienced development officer/grantwriter on staff. Applicant can be a medium-sized organization with *some* capacity, but not enough to take on this project and grant application without additional assistance.

There are no specific limits (minimum or maximum) to budget size for applicants, but each applicant's ability to access funding without ArtsWA's assistance will be considered during the selection process.

In addition to the characteristics and capacities listed above, ArtsWA is interested in partnering with an organization that:

- would not normally apply for these funds (or design/implement such a project) on its own.
- is well-established in its community and is capable of generating community support (in-kind or cash) for mission and/or programming.
- is well-managed and smartly governed (has a strategic plan in place, financial documents are in order, and adequate human resources in place to give time and energy to the NEA application process as well as to carrying out the proposed project).
- has a strong curatorial vision, intellectual/artistic rigor and relevance, and the ability to articulate a solid case for their chosen media, subject matter, methodologies, and goals.
- has experience with successful program provision even on a small level.
- has a strong track record of successful collaborations and community partnerships.
- demonstrates competent and cooperative financial oversight.

PLEASE NOTE:

While applications will be reviewed according to agency rules (WAC 30-12), the Capacity Building/Federal Funding Project is NOT a grant application. No funds will be awarded by ArtsWA to applicants to this program. Organizations selected as partners will receive in-kind support from ArtsWA in designing programs and writing and submitting a federal grant application. Any funds awarded from the federal government will go directly to the organizations/communities we partner with.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The application consists of a one page form and a three-page narrative. The form and the narrative questions are included on the separate **Partner Application Form** document. This document is in Word; you may type directly into this form and submit the form electronically.

Completed forms should be sent to:

Stacy Hicks, stacy.hicks@arts.wa.gov

Please do not send any additional information or attachments at this time. Additional information will be requested as needed.

Application Deadline

Priority consideration will be given to applications received by **July 15, 2014**.

Review Process

ArtsWA will evaluate applications for the **Capacity Building / Federal Funding Project** based on the following criteria:

- Basic eligibility for the federal funding program, as described in these guidelines
- Project idea aligns with the guidelines, missions, and goals of the NEA, ArtsWA, and the applying organization
- Project proposal serves applicant organization's own mission as well as supporting broader community goals
- Project proposal connects the arts with key local civic, community development, and/or economic development goals
- Project proposal has strong potential for attracting additional support and implementation success
- Applicant's capacity to work collaboratively with ArtsWA to develop and complete the federal application
- Applicant's capacity to implement the project, if funded
- Alignment with ArtsWA's partnership and project priorities, as stated in these guidelines

Following this initial review, leading applicants may be invited to participate in an interview and/or submit additional support materials. ArtsWA expects to make final selections of partner organizations by August 15, 2014. The ArtsWA Executive Director will approve the partner selections, which will then be ratified by the ArtsWA Board at their next regular meeting.

Questions

If you have any questions regarding the Capacity Building / Federal Funding Project or the application process, please contact Lisa Jaret at lisa.jaret@arts.wa.gov or 360-586-2418.