

First Step Grant FY2020 ♦ Review Criteria

*There are four categories of criteria: **Overall Plan & Project Design**, **Arts Learning Approach**, **Partnership Capacity**, and **Budget & Management Capacity**. Each of these areas has subcategories with detailed criteria listed below.*

Panelists will provide a rating for each criteria area using a 30-point scale. Each category is weighted equally; in other words, each category is worth 25% of the total score.

Overall Plan & Project Design

- Are the intended outcomes and key activities aligned with the goals of this grant program?
- Is the narrative clear, realistic and specific? Does it demonstrate strategic thinking, creativity, energy, and enthusiasm? Does the project demonstrate forward-thinking by including program evaluation or work to build systemic support for arts education?
- Does the plan include strategies to address equity, access, and inclusion in a manner authentic to the participating community, and appropriate for the scale of the proposal?
- For returning applicants: is there evidence of success from previous years' work? Does this year's proposal demonstrate appropriate growth/change based on evolving needs, capacity, lessons learned, etc.?

Arts Learning Approach

- Does this strategy support the arts as part of basic education, meaning that it takes place during the regular school day, and serves all students within the grades/schools the project is designed to serve?
- Is arts learning at the core of the plan? Are the strategies to improve learning and/or teaching in the arts well-informed and appropriate for the students/teachers being served?
- Does the plan address the use of state standards in the arts, and approaches for assessing learning in the arts?
- Does the plan address specific local challenges/needs in the area of arts education, and is it an appropriate "first step" (or a good second or third step, building on existing work)?
- Are partners from the professional arts community and the K-12 community working together on arts learning goals, curriculum, delivery, and assessment?

Partnership Capacity

- Partnership Composition: does the partnership include at least one school or district, one arts or arts education organization, and some kind of parent/community representation? Is the partnership broader than this required minimum?
- Is there demonstrated commitment from at least one principal, superintendent, or district staff person?
- Do the partnership form, narrative, and letters of commitment present a picture of a genuine partnership, with collaborative efforts on project planning and implementation?
- Do the application materials demonstrate that there are high quality providers of arts and arts education involved, with appropriate levels of educational and artistic expertise?
- Are other key partners and contractors bringing skills, expertise, and support that are relevant and appropriate to the proposal?

Budget & Management Capacity

- Budget and Narrative Alignment: does the budget support the narrative, and vice-versa? Are expenses outlined in the narrative included in the budget, and are budget items clearly explained in the narrative?
- Matching Funds: does support from other sources, both cash and in-kind, match or exceed the request from ArtsWA? Is there cash support that demonstrates strong partner commitment?
- Realistic and appropriate budget: Is the budget well thought-out, with appropriate level of detail for the expenses? Have major expense categories been addressed accurately; are the expenses appropriate for the scope of the project?
- Management capacity: Do the program coordinator and other key players seem to have the experience, skills, and capacity to manage this project as planned?

Note: panelists should take into account whether the applicant's program focus is planning and development, student learning, or professional development, and should apply these criteria accordingly.