



WASHINGTON STATE ARTS COMMISSION

ARTS IN EDUCATION

FIRST STEP GRANT | FY21 GUIDELINES

Program Goals

Through this program, ArtsWA (the Washington State Arts Commission) invests in partnerships between **schools** and **community organizations** that strengthen K-12 arts education experiences as a fundamental part of basic education in service of students, families, and communities. This grant also supports professional development for arts education providers and/or capacity-building arts education initiatives. First Step Grants are intended to build capacity towards potentially more robust and sustainable partnerships eligible for [Community Consortium Grants](#).

- **Partnerships:** develop, implement, and evaluate high-quality arts learning programs for students in K-12 schools as part of the regular school day. Partnerships engage school and district leadership, arts organizations, and community members in support of arts education as part of basic education.
- **Sustainability:** is identified and implemented as part of the most needed “first steps” towards achieving high-quality arts education programming. Emerging and/or new arts education partnerships are working towards long-term, participatory, equitable, and meaningful arts learning experiences for all students.

Who Can Apply?

Any Washington State **public school, school district, government agency, or non-profit organization** with 501(c)(3) status is eligible to apply and serve as the lead partner. The lead partner is the legal entity with whom ArtsWA will contract and will be responsible for submitting invoices and the final report.

Who is Not Eligible to Apply?

Washington State law prohibits funding of parochial schools or other organizations with a religious affiliation or purpose. Individual artists, parents, or community members may not apply on their own, however, these individuals are encouraged to initiate and support projects in partnership with their local school, school district, or arts organization.

Selection Process and Review Criteria

A panel of arts education professionals, ArtsWA commissioners, and staff review your application alongside other applications in the same category. Applications are reviewed in detail and scored by each panelist using the **review criteria** listed below. The panel meets as a group to review their scoring decisions and recommends high scoring applications for funding. ArtsWA’s [Board of Commissioners](#) ratify all funding recommendations.

Review Criteria are standards panelists use to score applications (for more details, see [Planning Guide](#)) Strong applicants demonstrate strength in all four categories below.

1. **Overall Plan & Project Design** (25 percent of total points):
What is standing in the way of “arts for every student” in the K-12 schools in your community?
 - Goals and key activities are aligned with the **program goals** of the First Step grant program.
 - The project is clearly described, realistic, and specific. The narrative demonstrates creativity and strategic future-oriented thinking.
 - The project includes plans to address equity and access.
 - For returning applications, past success and continuing evolution will be considered.
2. **Arts Learning Approach** (25 percent of total points):
What focused and achievable “first steps” can be taken to support effective arts education experiences in your community?
 - The plan supports the arts as part of basic education.
 - Arts learning is at the core of the plan. The arts learning strategies are well-informed and appropriate to the audience.

GRANT FUNDING

\$1,000 - \$5,000

FUNDING TIMELINE

Applications Due:

March 17, 2020, 5:00pm

Applicant Notification by:

May 31, 2020

Program Implementation:

July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021

Final Report Due:

July 31, 2021

- The plan includes the use of state standards in the arts, and effective approaches for assessing arts learning.
 - The plan addresses local challenges and needs in arts education.
 - Arts partners and Education partners are collaborating on development and delivery of the project.
3. **Partnership Capacity** (25 percent of total points):
What types of collaborative partnerships in your community have the potential for growth and sustainability?
- Appropriate partners are on board and committed to active collaboration, including school or district leadership.
 - Project leaders and contractors bring necessary expertise and experience to the project.
4. **Budget & Management Capacity** (25 percent of total points):
What is a realistic budget for achieving your stated goals?
- The project budget is accurate, in-line with partnership capacity, and aligned with the project proposal.
 - The budget includes 1:1 matching funds, and a mix of income sources.
 - Project managers have the experience, skills, and capacity to successfully manage this project.

Application Requirements

Grant applicants **must** have:

- A primary partnership that includes a minimum of: (1) school/district, (1) professional arts education provider, and the local PTA or parent representation.
- At least (1) school principle or district leader engaged in the project.
- Demonstrated budgetary support that matches the amount of grant funding requested.
- Applications **must** be completed in full and submitted by the deadline.

For more information on **what we do and don't fund**, please refer to the [Budget Support & Use of Funds](#) guide.

Grant Policies

- **Payments** will be made after the approved program elements have been delivered, and after appropriate expense documentation and invoice forms have been submitted. Grantees will need to track expenses and keep clear records.
- **Final Reports.** Grant recipients are obligated to submit a final report at the end of the contract period. Final grant invoices will not be paid until the final report is received.
- **Documentation.** We encourage grantees to document their projects with either digital photos, video, or both and to share this documentation as part of their final report. This helps ArtsWA demonstrate the value of our investments, and helps grantees demonstrate this to local leaders.
- Applicants may not apply for both First Step and Community Consortium Grants through Arts in Education (AIE) programs per fiscal year.

How to Apply:

Applications are submitted through our online grant platform, Zoom Grants, until **5:00pm** on the deadline date. Applications open on January 27th 2019, please visit our [website](#) for the application link.

For more application resources in support of a successful grant application, please refer to the following:

- [Building the Story](#)
- [Budget Support](#)
- [Planning for Equity](#)
- [How to Apply](#)

Contact Us

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About ArtsWA

ArtsWA is the [Washington State Arts Commission](#). The Washington State Legislature and the National Endowment for the Arts fund our programs. Grants are contingent on available state and federal funding. ArtsWA complies with all local, state and federal laws and regulations concerning civil and human rights. For more information regarding Washington State Arts Commission's policies on Accessibility, Diversity, and Nondiscrimination, [click here](#).

Transparency

Let us know if individuals involved with your organization also have an affiliation with ArtsWA. Individuals that are ArtsWA staff, commissioners, consultants, contractors, current grant panelists, or the immediate family members, etc. are included. This is for transparency only; the panel will review your application without bias.

[Read our full Conflict of Interest policy.](#)