

Creative Start Project Grant Guidelines

ArtsWA Fiscal Year 25 (July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025)

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About the Creative Start program:

ArtsWA's Creative Start program expands arts integration efforts in preschool to 3rd grade communities. Creative Start provides grants, professional learning opportunities, and resource development. Arts integration connects an arts discipline with non-arts curriculum in a way that meets standards and goals for both. [Learn more about the Creative Start program here.](#)

About this grant:

The Creative Start Project Grant supports projects that engage preschool to 3rd grade students in arts integrated learning. This one-year grant prioritizes the students' creative, academic, and social emotional growth. It supports collaborations between early learning educators, schools, families, arts specialists, teaching artists, and organizations. Proposed projects should increase culturally relevant student learning in and through the arts.

Funding request amounts

- Single-Site: \$5,000 - \$10,000 (*the project will take place at **one** location*)
- Multi-Site: \$10,000 - \$15,000 (*the project will take place at **more than one** location, school building or school district*)
- No matching funds required

Important dates

- Application opens: January 18, 2024
- Info session: February 6, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.
- Application closes: February 23, 2024, at 5:00 p.m.
- Notification of grant award: by May 10, 2024
- Grant-funded project activities: July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025
- Mid-Year project update due: January 1, 2025
- Year-End project update due: June 30, 2025
- Final report due: July 31, 2025

Who is eligible to apply?

- Any Washington State:
 - Head Start, ECEAP, public school, school district, or Educational Service District (ESD)
 - Tribal, state, or municipal government agency
 - Non-profit organization with 501(c)(3) status

Who is not eligible to apply?

- Individuals
- For-profit organizations
- Fiscally sponsored organizations
- Political or advocacy organizations
- Organizations seeking to fund projects or programs that promote religious content or observance
- Organizations based outside of Washington State

Funding priorities

All eligible organizations and projects are encouraged to apply. As a statewide program, our goal is to better support projects that reach Washington's distressed counties, as defined by Washington State Employment Security. Special consideration in awarding funds will be given to projects that:

- Serve students and families in one of the 17 counties identified by the state as a "[distressed area](#)": Clallam, Cowlitz, Ferry, Franklin, Grant, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Lewis, Mason, Okanogan, Pacific, Pend Oreille, Skagit, Skamania, Stevens, Wahkiakum, Yakima.

Project eligibility

Eligible projects:

- Projects that focus on PreK to grade 3 students, families, and educators
- Projects that focus on arts integration: teaching and learning that connects an arts discipline with non-arts curriculum in a way that meets standards and objectives for both
- In-school and/or out-of-school projects that strategically increase public access to arts integration for PreK to grade 3 students
- Projects that focus on sequential arts integration teaching and learning (not one-time arts experiences/performances/assemblies, product creation without links to student learning outcomes)

Ineligible projects:

- Materials and equipment only (although this can be a percentage of your project budget)
- One-time events, assemblies, or performances without links to sequential, interactive learning experiences
- Tuition-based programming that does not outline no-cost or low-cost options for public access for early learning students. If projects are tuition-based, the applicant must provide an equity and accessibility plan that includes full scholarships, reduced fees, transportation access, and/or collaboration with local public schools for outreach and partnership
- Projects or programs that promote religious content or observance
- Projects focused on grades 4 & up

Can organizations apply for multiple ArtsWA grants?

- Applicants for the Creative Start Project Grant can apply for and receive *other* ArtsWA grants if they support different projects, expenses, and services. View [other grant opportunities from ArtsWA](#).

How does ArtsWA select grant recipients?

Screening for eligibility

ArtsWA staff review Creative Start Project Grant applications for completion and eligibility. Staff send complete and eligible applications to a grant scoring panel for evaluation.

Evaluation and grant scoring panel

A panel of arts education professionals, ArtsWA Commissioners, and ArtsWA staff evaluate eligible Creative Start Project Grant applications. Panelists use criteria to give a numerical score to each application. An application's final score is the combined average of all panelists' scores. Applicants receive grant funds based on the ranking score order until available funds are exhausted.

What are the criteria used to score applications?

Panelists will assign each Creative Start Project Grant application a score up to 100 using the criteria and point system below. 100 points is the highest possible score for this grant application.

1. Arts integrated learning: (20 points possible) The proposal describes:
 - student-centered project summary
 - activities/curriculum that integrates art and non-art content areas
 - student learning goals connected to learning standards or frameworks
 - sequential learning
2. Project design: (20 points possible) The proposal describes feasible:
 - project budget
 - timeline
 - staffing
 - partnerships
3. Educator and artist support: (20 points possible) The proposal describes:
 - planning and collaboration time
 - learning opportunities for participating educators and artists
 - financial support for educators and artists
4. Community and family engagement: (20 points possible) The proposal describes:
 - efforts to invite student and family knowledge, culture, language, and experiences into the project
5. Plans for accessibility: (20 points possible) The proposal describes:
 - actions that increase access to arts integration for a diversity of learners

Notification of grant awards

ArtsWA sends notifications to Creative Start Project Grant applicants as soon as possible after the ArtsWA Board of Commissioners meet and approve final panel scores. Applicants will receive notifications via email no later than May 10, 2024.

What is required to apply?

All Creative Start Project Grant applicants must provide:

- **Two letters of commitment**: Applications must include (2) letters of commitment from individuals who would be directly involved in the proposed project, including:
 1. Letter 1: Administrative leadership from the early learning center, school, district, ESD, or organization (i.e. director, principal, superintendent)
 2. Letter 2: A participating early learning educator
- **SWV number**: Organizations must have an SWV ([Statewide Vendor number](#)) to receive grant funds from the state. Applicants do not need a SWV number to apply but they need a registered and up to date SWV number before they can receive funds. You can check on the status of your SWV number by using the [vendor number lookup](#).
- **UEI (SAM)**: Organizations must have a Unique Entity ID (UEI) to receive grant funds from the state. To view your UEI, login to [SAM.gov](#) and follow the steps outlined in [this guide](#). If you do NOT have a Sam.gov account registration, complete the steps outlined in the [Guide to Getting a Unique Entity ID](#).

How to apply

Online application

Applicants to the Creative Start Project Grant must complete their application through the online grant platform, [Submittable](#). ArtsWA will accept Creative Start Project Grant applications in Submittable starting January 18 through **February 23, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.**

Please see ArtsWA's [Submittable FAQ](#) for additional information on using this platform.

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General grant policies

- **Payments.** ArtsWA will send payments after the recipient provides complete and approved deliverables and invoice forms. Deliverables include:
 - Mid-Year Project Update by Jan 1, 2025
 - Year-End Project Update by June 30, 2025
- **Documentation.** Grant recipients must track expenses, keep clear records, and provide appropriate and timely documentation.
- **Final reports.** Grant recipients must submit a final report to ArtsWA by July 31, 2025.

Use of ArtsWA funds

Examples of what we fund:

- Fees for project staffing can include:
 - Artists, Teaching Artists, and Arts/Community Organizations
 - Project Planning, Curriculum, and Resource Development
 - Project Management or Outside Consultants
- Fees for professional learning opportunities for early learning staff, parents, caregivers, or community members.
- Travel expenses for in-state teaching artists and consultants.
- Materials, supplies, software, and technology that clearly aligns with expected project goals. **Note:** Material fees covered by ArtsWA grant funds cannot exceed \$5,000.
- Administrative expenses, including printing costs, postage, and other administrative fees.
- Fees for project related student tickets and transportation expenses.
- Fees for increasing access to programming such as closed captioning, translation services, interpreters, differentiated materials, or consultant support on these efforts.

We cannot fund:

- Tuition-based programming that does not outline no-cost and/or low-cost options for public access.
- Hospitality expenses such as food, flowers, receptions, and similar items.
- Purchase of materials, supplies, software, and technology not aligned with project goals and/or that exceed \$5,000.
- Building construction, renovation, or other permanent capital projects.
- Stand-alone field trips, events, or assemblies not aligned with project goals.
- Travel out of the state of Washington, or fees to out-of-state contractors.

Additional information

Accessibility

Federal and state funded projects must be accessible to people with disabilities. You can use this [accessibility checklist](#) when planning your programs. You do not need to check all boxes to be eligible for funding; this is simply a worksheet and resource for your organization.

ArtsWA accepts grant applications via an online form. If you require an alternate format or assistance to access the application, please reach out to us at the contact information below or Alexis Sarah, ArtsWA Accessibility Coordinator, alexis.sarah@arts.wa.gov or at 360-228-6359.

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 the 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 (ArtsWA staff, commissioners, consultants, contractors, current grant scoring panelists, or immediate family members, etc.). This is for transparency only. The grant scoring panel will review your application without bias. [Read our full Conflict of Interest policy](#).

Appeals

Unsuccessful grant applicants may appeal in accordance with Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 30.12.036, found [here](#).

Contact us

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